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Submitted: 31 July 2021
Accepted: 21 Aug. 2022
Published: 20 Sep. 2022

[doi: 10.20396/riesup.v9i00.8666552](https://doi.org/10.20396/riesup.v9i00.8666552)
e-location: e023029

ISSN 2446-9424

Anti-plagiarism Check



Distributed under



Continued training in a community university in the teachers' perspective

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to analyze what are the perceptions that university professors have about Continuing Education, based on their participation in the Program designed for this purpose. The main authors who supported this research were: Nóvoa (1992; 2012; 2019), Nóvoa and Amante (2015), Pérez Gómez (1998), Garcia (1999), Tardif (2000), Masetto (2003), Cunha (2008; 2009) and Contreras (2012). The research is based on the assumptions of a qualitative approach and, as an instrument, it uses a semi-structured interview. The research subjects were eight university professors who had more participation in the Continuing Education Program proposed by the university in 2018. Of these eight, two professors were selected by area of expertise, namely: Humanities Science and Education (HCE), Science, Engineering and Technologies (CET), Health Sciences (SAU) and Applied Social Sciences (CSA). The interviews were recorded, transcribed and organized into three blocks of analysis, called: Profile of interviewees; Analysis of the Program and Concepts of Continuing Education and Impacts of Continuing Education in the constitution of University Teaching. With the research, it was possible to see that teachers understand Continuing Education as an important space for critical reflection on the teaching profession. The professors point out that Continuing Education provides access to pedagogical knowledge for liberal professionals, since they do not have specific training in the area of education.

KEYWORDS

University teaching. University pedagogy. Continuing education.

A formação continuada em uma universidade comunitária na perspectiva de seus docentes

RESUMO

O presente artigo visa analisar quais são as percepções que os docentes universitários possuem acerca da Formação Continuada, a partir da participação no Programa destinado para este fim. Os principais autores que embasaram essa pesquisa foram: Nóvoa (1992; 2012; 2019), Nóvoa e Amante (2015), Pérez Gómez (1998), Garcia (1999), Tardif (2000), Masetto (2003), Cunha (2008; 2009) e Contreras (2012). A pesquisa alicerça-se nos pressupostos da abordagem qualitativa e, por instrumento, utiliza-se da entrevista semiestruturada. Os sujeitos da pesquisa foram oito professores universitários que tiveram mais participação no Programa de Formação Continuada proposto pela universidade no ano de 2018. Destes oito, foram selecionados dois professores por área de atuação, sendo: Humanidades Ciências e Educação (HCE), Ciências, Engenharias e Tecnologias (CET), Ciências da Saúde (SAU) e Ciências Sociais Aplicadas (CSA). As entrevistas foram gravadas, transcritas e organizadas em três blocos de análise, denominados: Perfil dos entrevistados; Análise do Programa e Concepções de Formação Continuada e Impactos da Formação Continuada na constituição de Docência Universitária. Com a pesquisa foi possível perceber que os professores compreendem a Formação Continuada como um espaço importante de reflexão crítica acerca da profissão docente. Os docentes apontam que a Formação Continuada oportuniza o acesso aos conhecimentos pedagógicos para os profissionais liberais, uma vez que não possuem formação específica na área da educação.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Docência universitária. Pedagogia universitária. Formação continuada.

La formación continua en una universidad comunitaria desde la perspectiva de sus profesores

RESUMEN

Este artículo tiene como objetivo analizar cuáles son las percepciones que tienen los profesores universitarios sobre la Educación Continuada, a partir de su participación en el Programa diseñado para tal fin. Los principales autores que apoyaron esta investigación fueron: Nóvoa (1992; 2012; 2019), Nóvoa y Amante (2015), Pérez Gómez (1998), García (1999), Tardif (2000), Masetto (2003), Cunha (2008; 2009) y Contreras (2012). La investigación se basa en los supuestos de un enfoque cualitativo y, como instrumento, utiliza una entrevista semiestructurada. Los sujetos de investigación fueron ocho profesores universitarios que tuvieron mayor participación en el Programa de Educación Continuada propuesto por la universidad en 2018. De estos ocho, dos profesores fueron seleccionados por área de especialización, a saber: Humanidades Ciencia y Educación (HCE), Ciencias, Ingeniería y Tecnologías (CET), Ciencias de la Salud (SAU) y Ciencias Sociales Aplicadas (CSA). Las entrevistas fueron grabadas, transcritas y organizadas en tres bloques de análisis, denominados: Perfil de los entrevistados; Análisis del Programa y Conceptos de Educación Continuada e Impactos de la Educación Continua en la constitución de la Docencia Universitaria. Con la investigación se pudo constatar que los docentes entienden la Educación Continuada como un espacio importante para la reflexión crítica sobre la profesión docente. Los profesores señalan que la Educación Continuada brinda acceso a los conocimientos pedagógicos a los profesionales liberais, ya que no cuentan con una formación específica en el área de la educación

PALABRAS CLAVE

Docencia universitaria. Pedagogía universitaria. Educación continua

Introduction

Teacher training for teaching in Higher Education has found support in the field of University Pedagogy. Many liberal professionals are invited to assume the teaching function in universities without the necessary pedagogical knowledge. As specified in Art. 66 of Law 9.394/96, the preparation for the exercise in higher education will be done in *lato sensu* and *stricto sensu* post-graduation programs. However, a good part of the graduate programs focus their efforts on the formation of researchers, not showing the dimensions of teaching and extension as attributions of the university teacher. It can be emphasized that university teaching consists of initial training, reflection on professional experience, and continuing education. In many universities, the training of university teachers takes place through continuing education programs designed for this purpose.

Thus, this study sought to answer what are the perceptions of Continuing Education built by teachers who participate in the Continuing Education Program at a community college? It is understood that continuing education becomes more meaningful to the extent that it meets the needs of teachers and provides opportunities for other possibilities for professional development to be built in a critical-reflective dialogue.

The article is organized in six sessions: initially it presents the introduction, then, in the first session, it discusses Higher Education and University Pedagogy, using as theoretical basis: Masetto (2003), Chiarello (2004); Cunha (2008); Nóvoa (2012, 2019), Contreras (2012) and Nóvoa and Amante (2015). In the third session, we address Continuing Education and Teacher Professionalization through the research conducted by Nóvoa (1992), Pérez Gómez (1998), Garcia (1999), Tardif (2000) and Masetto (2003). Subsequently, the methodology, the presentation and analysis of data, and finally, the final considerations, the references used in the theoretical foundation of the research and the annex with the semi-structured interview script used in the research.

Higher Education and University Pedagogy

To understand the perceptions of university teachers about continuing education implies looking at the university and the educational processes that take place there. It is necessary to think of University Pedagogy as a field of knowledge under construction. Therefore, this section intends to establish a dialog with authors and their respective researches about the university and University Pedagogy as spaces of production of teaching for higher education.

The university has changed in the last 30 years in view of the educational reforms engendered by social, political, economic, and cultural transformations. According to Nóvoa

(2012), the changes have happened quickly and profoundly, changing the panorama of the university space in several countries. The author states that these transformations are presented in the form of massification of higher education, which expresses the increase in enrollment of students entering universities; the place of science in the university, which became centralized and the model of government and the relationship of the university with society, which aims at social development. These transformations have contributed to give new contours to universities, especially the private ones, which have been getting closer and closer to the demands of the work world.

Chiarello (2004) presents three basic functions of the university: teaching, research, and extension, and emphasizes interdisciplinarity. The author places teaching as one of the most traditional functions of the university, since, through it, the "systematization of knowledge, experiences and culture takes place, refers to the acquisition and practice of new knowledge, attitudes and values." (CHIARELLO, 2004, p. 49). He explains that through research, new knowledge can be produced from the challenges posed by reality. Research enables discoveries through inquiries and hypotheses in order to lead to other forms of action and also to the expansion of knowledge. Paraphrasing the author, research must be characterized as a creative and innovative process that goes beyond the acquired knowledge and opens itself up to new discoveries. To think of the university without research, according to Chiarello (2004) is to understand it as an institution that reproduces knowledge and transmits a predetermined culture. In extension, the university establishes a dialogue with other segments of society in order to build collective projects for transforming reality. Thus, according to the author, one can see that it is through extension that the university faces up to social problems and invests in the shared construction of projects and programs with the community. In this way, through extension programs, it is possible to spread the knowledge gained through teaching and research and take it to the most distant parts of society.

Within a proposal of articulation between teaching, research, and extension, Chiarello (2004) states that one must overcome the idea of fragmentation between both functions and work within an interdisciplinary proposal, in order to ensure the overcoming of knowledge fragmentation. Thus, university professors need to dialogue with these three dimensions in order to fulfill the university's mission and provide quality education. Here it is possible to see how teaching in higher education becomes more complex, since university professors perform their work based on teaching, research, and extension activities. Besides these three activities, many university professors also develop management activities in course coordination, academic directorships, pro-rectories, and other sectors that require a professor as a manager.

Cunha (2008) characterizes the university as a space for teacher training. From the relationship that takes place inside and outside the campus, by means of teaching, research and extension programs, the university can build a significant relationship, becoming a place of formation for all subjects that experience the university environment. From the perspective of

University Pedagogy, teaching is a complex activity that requires careful and continuous preparation in order to be exercised. Cunha (2009) emphasizes that being a teacher requires a multiplicity of knowledge and expertise that is different from the fragmented work that manifests itself in the curricular organization, in the separation between those who think and execute pedagogical actions. Teaching is constituted in the permanent reflection on the relations that are established between theory and practice, in the authorship and teaching autonomy conferred by the continuous process of professional training.

Masetto (2003) presents some premises for a professional to better perform his or her teaching function at the university. The author explains that teaching at a higher education level requires that the teacher be competent in a certain area of knowledge; mastery in the pedagogical area; and the exercise of the political dimension. By requiring a teacher to be competent in a certain area of knowledge, the author highlights the importance of research:

[...] that activity that the teacher performs through studies and critical reflections on theoretical issues or personal experiences reorganizing their knowledge, reconstructing them, giving them new meaning, producing texts and 'papers' that represent their contribution to the subject and that can be read and discussed by their students and their peers. [...] specific papers prepared by teachers to be presented at conferences and symposia [...] writing book chapters, articles for specialized magazines, etc. (MASETTO, 2003, p. 26).

Research as an academic dimension gives teachers the opportunity to expand their knowledge and contributes to their professional development as teachers. In dealing with teaching at the higher education level, Masetto (2003) says that pedagogical knowledge is one of the weakest points in the training of university professors. He explains that teachers need to have the opportunity to study and understand the teaching-learning process of university students. Teaching requires the appropriation of pedagogical knowledge that involves the dimensions of planning, organizing, executing, and evaluating the teaching and learning processes, always based on a conception of man, education, and society. There is, therefore, always a political dimension in teaching that problematizes the so-called myth of neutrality.

From this perspective, Contreras (2012) states that the depoliticization of teachers happens when teachers' autonomy is taken away. For the author, it is necessary for teachers to be aware of the social and political changes and transformations that come from society with a critical eye so that they do not conduct their teaching activity anchored in technical rationality. Proposing a critical reflection in the classroom, between teachers and students, within a political vision provides a reflective and creative teaching in which the subjects of the teaching and learning process can (re)build knowledge and (re)mean new knowledge. University teachers need to be in constant training in research groups, projects, and extension programs, and in Continuing Education Programs, because in this way teachers are challenged to redefine their teaching practice.

Continuing education and the professionalization of teachers

The Continuing Education appears more intensely from the twentieth century with the emergence of the so-called knowledge¹ society. The transformations produced in the world of work have contributed to give new contours to the training of students and also of their teachers. Thus, continuing education is placed as a permanent strategy for the professional development of teachers:

[...] at work, seeking development in the various skills required today by professional careers, for the exercise of leadership, criticality, creativity, and new services; in the various stages of school life, during university education and after graduation with specialization courses, masters, doctorate, and all sorts of updates; in personal, family, and social life. (MASETTO, 2003, p. 44).

According to the author, one can see that Continuing Education involves not only aspects of the professional dimension, but also the personal dimension. Nóvoa (1992) approaches this discussion by stating that the teacher identity articulates the professional and personal dimensions. Regarding continuing education, Garcia (1999) calls it an "[...] area of knowledge, research, and theoretical and practical proposals [...] in learning experiences through which teachers acquire or improve their knowledge, skills, and dispositions [...]" (GARCIA, 1999, p. 26). The author emphasizes that teachers' initial training is only the first stage of their professional development. Professional development involves the articulation of initial training, insertion in the professional field, and continuing education.

There are different perspectives of teacher training that were brought to the discussion in this article in order to contribute to the reflection on the constitution of teaching. In the case of teacher training for higher education, it is observed that the adoption of continuing education programs is the main strategy adopted by universities to accomplish this purpose. Pérez Gómez (1998) presents four basic training perspectives that encompass teacher training programs, namely: the academic perspective; the technical perspective; the practical perspective; and the perspective of social reconstruction. Within the framework of analysis, we can observe how teaching and the roles of teachers take place in each perspective. Table I makes these perspectives explicit and shows the purposes of each in teacher education.

¹ It appeared at the end of the 20th century, coming from the expression Globalization. It is a process of transition from the information society to the knowledge society.

Chart 1. Perspectives on teacher training according to Pérez Gómez (1998)

Perspective	Quality of Teaching	Teacher	Teacher Education Approach
	The process of transmitting knowledge from the acquisition of the public culture accumulated by humanity.	A specialist in the different disciplines that make up culture; Must have mastery of the specific disciplines of the area of knowledge in order to better transmit them.	<i>Encyclopedic</i> : teacher as a specialist in the different subjects. little importance is given to the teacher's pedagogical training. <i>Comprehensive</i> : acquisition of scientific research in a given area of knowledge.
	The quality of teaching is focused on the quality of the products and on the efficiency and economy of its realization; Technical rationality.	Teacher: a technician, who must learn knowledge and develop skills and attitudes appropriate for intervention in practice.	<i>Training Model</i> : Training the teacher in the techniques, procedures, and skills that demonstrate effectiveness. <i>Decision-making</i> : Transferring scientific knowledge about teaching effectiveness into practice.
	Process of reflection in action .	Teacher training will be based on practice and for practice ; Learning through practical experience and scientific knowledge.	<i>Traditional</i> : Teaching as a craft practice. <i>Reflective on practice</i> : It aims at the development of a reflective knowledge that avoids the transmission, reproduction, uncritical and conservative character of the traditional approach and of the academic and technical perspectives.
	Teaching is seen as a critical activity , a social practice that involves an ethical character in which values are part of the teaching and learning process.	Autonomous professional who critically reflects on classroom practice and understands the social context in which the teaching and learning process takes place. Intellectual practice. The teacher learns how to teach and teaches because he or she learns through classroom exchanges.	<i>Critical and social reconstruction</i> : Focuses on the cultural baggage (political and social) of the teacher, the development of the capacity for critical reflection on practice. <i>Teacher action-research for understanding</i> : the teacher is an investigator, not a mere technician. Reality is transformed from the processes of innovative interactions. By reflecting on his intervention, the teacher develops his own understanding.

Source: (PÉREZ GÓMEZ, 1998, p. 353-379). (Our emphasis).

The perspectives raised by Pérez Gómez (1998) reveal some characteristics that encompass the professional teaching knowledge and the conceptions of training that are constituted by university teachers. Through this framework of analysis, one can (re)think and evaluate the teaching professionalization practices that are developed in Continuing Education Programs in universities.

Tardif (2000) presents characteristics that encompass professional knowledge. The author explains that this knowledge "is temporal", that is, the knowledge is built over time and

through the experiences that the teacher carries in his/her baggage during his/her professional career. He expresses that teachers' professional knowledges are "plural and heterogeneous." According to the author, this occurs in three perspectives, first that the teacher presents his personal culture that comes from his life history, second, he also draws on scientific knowledge of his area of knowledge through research and theoretical studies, and in a third point, the author expresses the curricular knowledge that is linked to the teacher's work experience. Finally, he points out that knowledge is also "personalized and situated", so that it involves the person's personality and experiences. For the author, this knowledge engages the teacher's training within a conception that values contextualized, meaningful and creative learning, which must also be grounded in the Continuing Education of university professors.

Methodology, data presentation and analysis

This study sought to analyze the perceptions that university teachers have about Continuing Education, from their participation in the Continuing Education Program at a community university in southern Santa Catarina. The research can be classified as descriptive, since "its main objective is to describe the characteristics of a certain population or phenomenon or to establish relationships among variables. (GIL, 1991, p. 46). Through this type of study, the aim is to describe specific facts about a given reality. As an instrument of data collection, we used semi-structured interviews with university professors, which brings the research closer to the assumptions of the qualitative approach. The research was developed in a community university in the south of Santa Catarina with eight university professors who compose different areas of knowledge of the university researched.

The teachers were chosen through a survey conducted with the Board of Education that identified the name of two teachers per area of expertise who most participated in the Continuing Education Program in 2018, thus totaling eight teachers. The areas of performance of the researched university are thus named: Humanities Sciences and Education (HCE); Engineering Sciences and Technologies (CET); Health Sciences (SAU); and, Social and Applied Sciences (CSA). After defining the two teachers per area of knowledge by the criterion of greatest participation in continuing education activities, the interviews were scheduled individually. The interviews were recorded by cell phone and later transcribed, which generated a 20-page file.

From the careful reading of the data collected in the interviews and considering the research objectives, it was decided to organize the data analysis considering three blocks of analysis: *Profile of the interviewees; analysis of the program and the conceptions of Continuing Education constituted by the teachers and the impacts of Continuing Education on the constitution of University Teaching.*

Profile of the interviewees

With the objective of getting to know the interviewees of this research, we sought through this block of analysis to establish the profile of the subjects researched. We chose to keep the identity of the subjects confidential by using fictitious names. All the research subjects signed the free and informed consent form so that the transcribed answers could be used after the interviews. In the Humanities, Sciences, and Education (HCE) area, we named: Isabel/HCE and Maria/HCE; in the Engineering and Technology Sciences (CET), one finds José/CET and Pedro /CET; in the Health Sciences (SAU), the interviewees Ana/SAU and Verônica/SAU; finally, in the area of Social and Applied Sciences (CSA) the interviewees Miguel/CSA and Madalena/CSA. To better analyze the data, Table II presents the initial and continuing education of the university professors at the researched university.

Chart 2. Initial and Continued Education of University Professors

Subject	Graduation	Area of operation	Post-graduation	Masters	Doctorate
ANA/SAU	Pharmacy	SAU	05 specializations oriented to the specific acting field	Master's degree in the specific field	Studying
ISABEL/HCE	Biological Sciences	HCE	Biology	Education	Health Sciences
JOSÉ/CET	Computer Science	CET	Post-Graduated in Higher Education Management (ongoing)	Materials Science and Engineering	Studying
MADALENA/CSA	Administration	CSA	Graduate in the specific field of expertise (CSA)	Socioeconomic Development	-----
MARIA/HCE	Pedagogy/ Geography	HCE	Didactics and Methodology of Higher Education	Studying	-----
MIGUEL/CSA	Electrical Engineering	CSA	Business Management and, Economic and Production Engineering	-----	-----
PEDRO/CET	Surveying Engineering	CET	Graduate in the specific field of expertise (CET)	Geodetic Sciences	-----
VERÔNICA/SAU	Psychology	SAU	Graduate in the specific field of expertise (SAU)	Clinical Psychology	-----

Source: survey data (2019).

Table II allows us to infer that of the eight teachers interviewed, six have their initial training as bachelor's degree, in the areas of Computer Science, Engineering, Administration, Pharmacy and Psychology. In the field of undergraduate studies, there are two teachers with degrees in this area: Isabel/HCE, with a degree in Biological Sciences, and Maria/HCE with degrees in Pedagogy and Geography.

In the *lato sensu* post-graduation level, all teachers have a specialization. In the *stricto sensu* level, six have a master's degree, and only Isabel/HCE has a Ph. There are signs that the interviewed teachers are seeking to broaden their education at the master's and doctorate levels. In addition to initial and continuing education, we sought to analyze the length of service of the research subjects in higher education. At first, it was asked how long the professors have worked in the teaching profession in general, and also how long they have worked at the university researched.

Table III shows that the teachers' length of service varies from 8 to 20 years, and that only Pedro has more than 30 years. One can notice that only the interviewees Maria/HCE and Verônica/SAU had professional experiences in other universities before working in the researched institution.

Chart 3. Professional teaching experience: professionals' length of service in higher education and in the university researched

Subject	Length of service in higher education	Length of service in higher education at the researched university
ANA/SAU	17 years	17 years
ISABEL/HCE	18 years	18 years
JOSÉ/CET	16 years	16 years
MADALENA/CSA	10 years	10 years
MARIA/HCE	11 years	11 years
MIGUEL/CSA	18 years	18 years
PEDRO/CET	34 years	34 years
VERÔNICA/SAU	08 years	08 years

Source: survey data (2019).

The experiences lived during this work path provide university professors with the opportunity to develop professional teaching knowledge. Tardif (2000) states that this knowledge is "temporal", which can be developed throughout the professional career "of long duration, which includes dimensions of identity and dimensions of professional socialization, as well as phases and changes. (TARDIF, 2000, p. 14).

Thus, the teaching experiences from the experiences in the classroom with the students, the exchanges with their peers in the participations in Continuing Education Programs or in graduate courses in *sensu lato* and *sensu stricto*, are important spaces for the construction of the profession in university teaching. One must also think of the other training spaces for university

teachers such as participation in research and extension projects, in research groups, and in academic production that contribute a lot to giving new meaning to the teaching work.

Analysis of the Program and the teachers' conceptions of Continuing Education

It was sought through this block of analysis some elements related to the continuing education program, such as the forms of access, the periodicity, the themes developed, who defines them, in addition to identifying which themes are of most interest to the professors. These aspects help to understand which are the conceptions of Continuing Education that are constituted by the university professors from their participation in the Program destined for this purpose.

At first, when questioned about the ways teachers have access to the continuing education program, the eight interviewees answered that they receive invitations from the Board of Education via e-mail to participate in the editions of the Program. They informed that enrollments are made directly on the website, so that they can choose the themes and workshops that most attract their attention. Within this context, Maria/HCE and Miguel/CSA recognize that their course coordinators encourage them to participate in the training courses.

The interviewees Maria/HCE, Isabel/HCE and Madalena/CSA emphasize that there is a concern from the university for the teachers to be engaged and motivated to participate in the Program. In this context, Maria/HCE exteriorizes that, "the Rectory, not only this one, but all the others have always supported the issue of Continuing Education, because it understands that the teacher needs to be updated, [...], because he has to keep up with society and be ahead of it." With this, one can see the university's concern in keeping its professionals updated in face of the current demands that encompass the social context, so that they can fulfill the university's mission².

Even though the university provides these training moments, Miguel/CSA states that because it is an invitation, many professionals fail to participate. The teacher says: "I think it should be a call, because the invitation is open, the person decides if they want to participate or not. So, I think there would be a greater gain if, in fact, it was a call." (MIGUEL/CSA). However, it is understood that the meaning of Continuing Education is not only to provide the fulfillment of a task through calls, but also necessary to create a professional culture that values the training spaces.

² The mission of the university researched, aims to: Educate, through teaching, research, and extension, to promote the quality and sustainability of the environment.

In this context, Nóvoa and Amante (2015) express that the ability to reflect on pedagogical practice is important for the commitment of a renewal in teaching. These spaces dedicated to Continuing Education, as the authors postulate, need to provide sharing, discussions, and group analysis, and this does not happen through a call, but through collective work that mobilizes toward awareness of the importance of training. In this way, "it is not a matter of providing technical, normative, bureaucratic instructions that further complicate teachers' daily lives, but of consolidating an academic culture [sic] that also values the dimensions of teaching and pedagogy." (NÓVOA, AMANTE, 2015, p. 28).

The interviewees Ana/SAU and Maria/HCE also state that sometimes they cannot attend the trainings, not because they don't want to, but because there are some factors that prevent them from going. Among them, they express the lack of time due to the demands of the work developed in the institution and also that the time of some trainings coincides with their working hours. In this sense, Ana/SAU says that

[...] usually, during the semester we have a very full schedule, with other things too, and it is difficult to be able to participate. And so, at least during the breaks in February and July, I can stay more focused, without that rush of thinking about going to class or something like that.

In this same line of thought Verônica/SAU emphasizes that: "[...] we live in a very busy day to day and when we have that stop, even if it's not in summer or winter, you have that meeting of people. For me, particularly, it's more fruitful than having the access there on the site to do something." This led us to ask how these trainings happen if it is in a continuous way or with punctual activities. The interviewees: Maria/HCE, Isabel/HCE, José/CET, Pedro/CET, Miguel/CSA, and Madalena/CSA, expressed that in the old format of the Program, the trainings were held every semester, that is, at the beginning of each semester. With the change of management, the teachers reported that there were modifications in the format, and that now there were not only in the beginning of each semester, but throughout the year, continuously, providing teachers with a culture of valuing Continuing Education.

Subsequently, we tried to understand from where the themes of the trainings emerge, as well as to identify who chooses them and with what intentionality. With the answers obtained, it can be observed that the university is in a process of change regarding the choice of themes for the courses. Both interviewees stated that the themes came from the institution's Board of Education. After the new administration, the Teaching Directorate was concerned about choosing the themes for the training together with the teachers, based on a survey to diagnose the teachers' needs.

Maria/HCE and Isabel/HCE express that the choice of themes is directed to the tripod that involves teaching, research, and extension. This concern of the university in dealing with the functions that comprise it, as presented by the interviewees, is in line with Chiarello's (2004)

statement that this tripod needs to be worked on in an interdisciplinary manner so that the university may fulfill its social role in the community.

Furthermore, Isabel/HCE and Ana/SAU point out that in the last edition of the Continuing Education Program of the university, at the beginning of the semester 2019/01, innovative themes were included in Higher Education. In general, each interviewee pointed out the themes of greatest interest in a specific way, which reveals their conceptions of training. Thus, we present some clippings of the interviewees' statements indicating that the topics of greatest interest are focused on teaching methodologies and techniques that provide them with tools in their profession:

The professions of the future, the competences that this professional must have for the labor market, it is fundamental. [...] the issue of competences, the professions of the future, to make the adaptations and adjustments for our students to be prepared for the labor market [...] (ISABEL/HCE).

I really like the themes that give me tools in the classroom. [...] I like things that give me tools, I like to know what I'm doing. These are things that make my work easier (ANA/SAU).

As a coordinator when you talk about changes in teaching, evolution in teaching and new methodologies [...] (PEDRO/CET).

[...] whenever it involves the pedagogical processes. [...] What techniques, what situations I can use and use in the classroom for this to happen, for me to stop being a reproducer of knowledge. (MIGUEL/CSA).

These perceptions of training that are pointed out by university teachers are in line with what Pérez Gómez (1998) postulates about the technical and practical perspective, when they state that the training topics that most generate their interest in participating are those that instrumentalize them for know-how. Within this perception, the author explains that in the technical rationality, there is an overvaluation of the practice through the use of techniques and instruments that aim to help the teachers' pedagogical action in the classroom during the application of the contents.

This view of technical rationality present in the authors' statements is also postulated by Contreras (2012), when he expresses that this model of professional practice "[...] consists of the instrumental solution of problems through the application of a theoretical and technical knowledge [...] that comes from scientific research (CONTRERAS, 2012, p. 101)". Still, one can notice another view of perception of Continuing Education constituted by teachers. The interviewees Maria/HCE and Verônica/SAU present a broader view of training, which aims at critical reflection on the practice for social reconstruction. Below we highlight Verônica/SAU's speech:

This theme, which was about Education in Contemporary Times, was one of the ones that impressed me the most. It was in the format of a lecture, I was able to ask questions and I think that, given our context, our current economic scenario, all the repercussions that are being had, I thought it was very important that they brought

this up. [...] Education today, what perspectives are we going to have from now on, critical positioning of what is happening, how to position ourselves in face of the situations that are happening to our students, in short.

By analyzing this statement, one can see that there is in the interviewee the concern with the current perspectives of education, since it expresses the importance of the teacher to position himself critically facing the current scenario, whether in political, cultural, economic, social, and educational areas. In the light of the referential, the perception posed by Verônica/SAU, differently from the other interviewees, meets the perspective of critical reflection on the practice for the social reconstruction postulated by Pérez Gomez (1998), since

The teacher is considered an autonomous professional who critically reflects on daily practice to understand both the characteristics of the teaching-learning processes and the context in which teaching occurs, so that reflective action facilitates the autonomous and emancipatory development of those who participate in the educational process. (PÉREZ GÓMEZ, 1998, p. 373).

According to the author, this vision of critical reflection on the practice in favor of social reconstruction, enables autonomous professional development, leading the teacher to have a more emancipating professional profile in front of peers and students who participate in the educational process. Thus, one can see that in a university, perceptions of Continuing Education may vary according to the academic culture that is constituted during the process of teachers' professional development.

Impacts of Continuing Education on the constitution of University Teaching

In order to understand if the Continuing Education has added knowledge that can favor the pedagogical practice of university professors, we tried through this block of analysis to understand how the participation in the Continuing Education Program, made available by the university or in other places intended for this purpose, has impacted the constitution of university teaching.

At first, the interviewed teachers reported that the Continuing Education is fundamental as a support for pedagogical practice since their knowledge is focused on the technical aspects of the profession. The interviewee Isabel/HCE, who has an undergraduate degree, emphasizes the view that it is important for university teachers to participate in the editions of the Continuing Education Program, since the specialization of teaching professionals is often not focused on education. Isabel/HCE explains that:

[...] university teachers end up graduating and come to work, or even if they have a master's or doctorate in teaching, many times your area of work is not focused on the teaching and learning process, that is, it is not focused on education.

Along the same line of thought, José/CET expresses that participation in the Program, "[...] brings new visions in the area of education, especially for those who are from a more exact area [...]". Pedro/CET reports that he often cannot appropriate the specific themes of the pedagogical domain, saying that "[...] we who are from a more technical area, have some difficulties in dealing with the classes, in a different way, I particularly, speaking for myself, I have some difficulties."

These difficulties encountered by professional teachers who are technicians and specialists who work as liberal professionals during the day and at night are hired to work as teachers in universities can be observed when they are faced with the reality of the classroom. This is in line with what Masetto (2003, p. 27) postulates when he says that the pedagogical domain "[...] is the most lacking point of our university professors, when we are going to talk about professionalism in teaching". Thus, we bring some clippings of the interviewees' statements that indicate that through Continuing Education, they seek support for their pedagogical practice, in the constitution of university teaching:

[...] when we get to the reality of the classroom, that's when the problem appears, because I may know a lot technically about my subject, but planning a lesson, the classroom time, [...] the pedagogical issues, really are a headache and, what I seek in continuing education is that we have a space, some moments to really instrumentalize. So, what the undergraduate courses do for the students, we end up seeking through training and other training to complement this gap that we have. (MADALENA/CSA).

We come from a professionally oriented education, [...] we don't have anything like that in terms of training to teach, for example. [...] Continuing Education provides instruments for this teacher in relation to pedagogical practices as a whole. (ANA/SAU).

The interviewees Miguel/CSA and Madalena/CSA emphasize that what is taken into consideration during the hiring of professionals to work at the university is their professional experience. Madalena/CSA puts that she finds herself as a teacher at the university today, not because of pedagogical mastery, but "[...] because I have a professional experience in my area of training and, that brings me into the classroom." Still, Miguel/CSA explains that professionals who have a bachelor's degree in undergraduate courses, are "hired for the technical aspect, to be a teacher" and, reports, "today I am a teacher because of this process." (MIGUEL/CSA). In view of these statements, we can observe that teaching professionals are recruited based on professional experiences and highlight their difficulties in relation to the mastery of pedagogical knowledge.

Continuing Education can contribute to the pedagogical training of university professors so that they do not become mere transmitters of knowledge, but that they have the ability to make a critical reflection about the (re) construction of their teaching professional practice. In this sense, José/CET points out that Continuing Education is also seen as a "moment of reflection", in which "[...] many times new methodologies are exposed, for example, and that

we can, in a certain way, share, use or not use, depending on the understanding." This position meets a vision of Continuing Education constructed by Nóvoa (1992, p.16) that propitiates the professional development of teachers where "it is important to value training paradigms that promote the preparation of reflective teachers, who take responsibility for their own professional development [...]. Contreras (2012) expresses that the technical rationality of teaching can lead to the reproduction of knowledge and not the construction of new knowledge, thus leading to the deintellectualization of the teaching work.

Ana/SAU, Madalena/CSA, Miguel/CSA, and Pedro/CET express that they have participated in few on-site trainings, apart from those made available by the university due to the demand of working time. However, the interviewees point out that they seek distance learning due to the flexibility of time, thus being able to reconcile the working hours with the time allocated for Continuing Education.

In addition to making the time that distance learning provides more flexible, the interviewees also say that they seek other forms of access to Continuing Education. Among them, we can highlight readings of texts, presented by Ana/SAU and Maria/HCE; participation in symposiums, congresses and seminars held within the institution or in partnership with other universities, exposed by Ana/SAU, Maria/HCE, Madalena/CSA and Pedro/CET; specialization in stricto and lato sensu level, within this more formal conception in the specific area of professional knowledge, as reported by Ana/SAU; and also, the involvement of teachers with research and extension projects.

When expressing the engagement in research and extension projects, Isabel/HCE explains that "all this qualifies you professionally." That is, the interviewee posits that these actions aim at the qualification of the teaching profession. Cunha (2008) reveals that through Continuing Education, one can improve the practices involving teaching and learning, which are elements that are intertwined in the teaching work.

About the impacts of Continuing Education on pedagogical practice, the interviewees' speeches highlighted: the (re) thinking about pedagogical practice under a critical view, the change in the way teachers plan their classes, the expansion of reading and research in order to innovate pedagogical practice, the importance of content and integration among teachers, and the humanization of education. Regarding the (re) thinking about the practice, the interviewees Isabel/HCE, José/CET and Madalena/CSA express that through the trainings they manage to make a critical analysis of their pedagogical practice, and that under this action, good results have been achieved in the classroom. Here are some excerpts of the interviewees' statements that express this view:

We need to rethink our pedagogical practices, bring in new methodologies, because the undergraduate student arrives at the university tired, sometimes discouraged, so

if we only apply theoretical, very traditional classes, it will not motivate the student. We have to involve the student in the methodologies that are emerging, which are active methodologies, problematization, making the student think, reflect and participate. (ISABEL/HCE).

[...] we can reflect on how we have been working. (JOSÉ/CET).

In general, if I am going to evaluate my own teaching practice, it has a lot of contributions from the training courses, there are subjects, themes that I started to hear about here and then by researching a little more, I get to know them, but there is a lot that comes from the training and then, through it, we try to improve. (MADALENA/CSA).

Nóvoa (1992) argues that by (re)thinking about their teaching practices, university teachers become subjects of their own professional development. In this line of thought, the interviewee Madalena/CSA points out that the training has impacted the deepening of content (knowledge) and the integration with peers. The interviewee says that the training has helped her a lot, because she became a teacher inside the university. Other interviewees who are not undergraduate students pointed out that by reflecting on their pedagogical practice through their participation in the continuing education program, they were able to improve their work in the classroom, so that they could understand how important the pedagogical aspects are in the construction of their planning. From this perspective, continuing education:

does not represent any devaluation of theoretical or scientific knowledge, but rather the will to re-signify them in the space of the profession. It is in the complexity of a training that expands from experiences and professional cultures that we may find a way out of the teachers' dilemmas. (NÓVOA, 2019, p. 11)

Along the same lines, the interviewee Ana/SAU explains that "whenever I go and learn something, I like it a lot. I think it's really cool that the education person talks about how the student learns, what are the techniques. So, that's what we miss. We don't have that contact." Miguel/CSA also emphasizes that they have sought to put into practice what is developed in the continuing education courses. The statements pronounced by these teachers are in line with what Nóvoa and Amante (2015, p. 31) postulate when they say that "it is the ability to bring pedagogy to the center of the university that allows the creation of new cultures of learning, training and higher education. It is in human relationship that education finds its fundamental meaning." By putting into discussion, the aspects that encompass pedagogical knowledge through university pedagogy, teachers will have other possibilities to (re)think and (re)build themselves as teaching professionals, especially teachers who have a bachelor's degree.

Teachers Maria/HCE and Isabel/HCE point out that the trainings motivate them to search for new readings and to do research that has contributed to innovate. In addition to all the factors that encompass professional training, the interviewee Pedro/CET, expresses that through Continuing Education, he has changed his "tough" way of being, as he himself exposes in his speech: "[...] we don't need to have such a hard heart, we need to be human." This view

expresses the importance of the rescue of human relations in the practice of the university teacher.

Conclusion

The present work aimed at analyzing the perceptions that university professors have about Continuing Education, based on their participation in the Program for this purpose at a community university. It was possible to verify that the university professors understand the Continuing Education, proposed by the university, as a possibility of critical reflection about their pedagogical work. Through the continuing education, the teachers express that they (re)mean their teaching, research, and extension practices. The training program developed by the university provides an opportunity to train university teachers through specific activities, but there is a continuity during the school year. Thus, we think of Continuing Education for and with teachers, in order to build training spaces that are meaningful and that are also based on listening to the teachers' needs.

It was observed through the interviews that teachers are invited to participate in the Program's editions without the convocation strategy. It is understood that training does not materialize by invitation, but by the invitation and the motivation. Faced with this process that encompasses professional teacher training, the teachers mentioned in the interview that the themes that cause most interest are those related to pedagogical processes, active methodologies, and teaching techniques, that is, focused on the instrumentalization. The choice of these topics, which remain at the know-how level, indicates that instrumental reasoning may be the trigger for the choice of these professors. Thus, the view of university professors is geared toward a more practical and technical conception of teaching, and in some moments, it is manifested in the interviewees' statements that they are in a movement toward the construction of a critical-reflective perception of practice. From this point of view, the teachers understand the Continuing Education as an opportunity to expand and reflect on their teaching practice.

Finally, it can be seen that participation in the Continuing Education Program has had an impact on the teaching practices of the interviewees. However, a fact that draws attention in the research is that the interviewees pointed out that Continuing Education provides a more human look, so that one does not think only in the construction of the professional, but in the human formation that constitutes teachers and students, through the process of teaching and learning.

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