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## Perceptions of university students about the assessment practice of their professors

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** The assessment practice at the university is one of the main concerns of students, especially in a context in which assessment is still the central element to enable the progression of students in the university course. **Objective:** In this sense, this article seeks to understand, from the perspective of students, how teachers perform assessment practices at the university. **Methodology:** The research is quantitative in nature and reveals the results of a survey-type questionnaire, with 36 questions, applied to 997 students from the State University of Feira de Santana – UEFS, from 28 different undergraduate courses at the institution. The students are mostly female; they declare themselves black; are single; do not have children; they live with parents and/or relatives in their own or relatives' homes, in Feira de Santana; and do not engage in paid activity. **Results:** Regarding the development of assessments, the students said that the teachers explain how they will be carried out, but that they do not always explain the criteria that will be used to correct the assessment instruments. They reveal that teachers do not return assessments with comments. **Conclusion:** There is also the perception of students that the way they relate to professors interferes with the development of their learning at the university.

### KEYWORDS

University education. Teaching. Didactics. Teacher-student relationship.

## Percepções de estudantes universitários sobre a prática avaliativa de seus professores

### RESUMO

**Introdução:** A prática avaliativa na universidade constitui uma das principais preocupações dos estudantes, sobretudo num contexto em que a avaliação ainda é o elemento central para possibilitar a progressão dos estudantes no curso universitário. **Objetivo:** Neste sentido, este artigo busca compreender, pelo olhar dos discentes, como os professores realizam práticas avaliativas na universidade. **Metodologia:** A pesquisa é de natureza quantitativa e revela os resultados de um questionário do tipo survey, de 36 questões, aplicado a 997 estudantes da Universidade Estadual de Feira de Santana – UEFS, de 28 distintos cursos de graduação da referida instituição. Os estudantes, em sua maioria são do sexo feminino; se autodeclararam pretos; são solteiros; não possuem filhos; moram com pais e/ou familiares em residências próprias ou de parentes, em Feira de Santana; e não desenvolvem atividade remunerada. **Resultados:** Sobre o desenvolvimento das avaliações, os estudantes disseram que os professores explicam como as mesmas serão realizadas, mas que nem sempre explicam os critérios que serão utilizados para a correção dos instrumentos avaliativos. Revelam que pouco os professores devolvem as avaliações com comentários. **Conclusão:** Há, ainda, a percepção dos estudantes de que a forma como eles se relacionam com os professores interfere no desenvolvimento de suas aprendizagens na universidade.

### PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Ensino superior. Ensino. Didática. Relação professor aluno.

## Percepciones de los estudiantes universitarios sobre la práctica evaluativa de sus profesores

### RESUMEN

**Introducción:** La práctica evaluativa en la universidad es una de las principales preocupaciones de los estudiantes, especialmente en un contexto en el que la evaluación sigue siendo el elemento central para posibilitar la progresión de los estudiantes en la carrera universitaria. **Objetivo:** En este sentido, este artículo busca comprender, desde la perspectiva de los estudiantes, cómo los docentes realizan prácticas de evaluación en la universidad. **Metodología:** La investigación es de naturaleza cuantitativa y revela los resultados de un cuestionario tipo encuesta, con 36 preguntas, aplicado a 997 estudiantes de la Universidad Estadual de Feira de Santana - UEFS, de 28 cursos de pregrado diferentes de la mencionada institución. Los estudiantes son en su mayoría mujeres; se declaran negros; Son solteros; no tienen hijos; viven con sus padres y / o familiares en casa propia o de familiares, en Feira de Santana; y no participan en actividades remuneradas. **Resultados:** En cuanto al desarrollo de las evaluaciones, los estudiantes dijeron que los docentes explican cómo se realizarán, pero que no siempre explican los criterios que se utilizarán para corregir los instrumentos de evaluación. Revelan que los profesores no devuelven evaluaciones con comentarios. **Conclusión:** También existe la percepción de los estudiantes de que la forma en que se relacionan con los profesores interfiere con el desarrollo de su aprendizaje en la universidad.

### PALABRAS CLAVE

Enseñanza superior. Enseñando. Cosas didácticas. Relación profesor-alumno.

### CRedit

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## Introduction

The assessment of learning in the university environment has been discussed by researchers, such as Luckesi (2002), Silva, Ribeiro and Almeida (2018), who understand it as central to the development of student learning. Assessment is also a moment to produce conditions for the student to learn and apprehend the knowledge he builds throughout his formative journey. To evaluate means to build conditions so that an atmosphere can be created where the student can not only demonstrate, but also produce knowledge derived from his immersion in the studies he develops at the university. It is, therefore, a relevant moment in the action of learning at university.

Evaluation is not a unilateral practice, conceived only by the one who evaluates, but a practice that must take place in the relationship between teachers and students, aiming at learning objectives that, consequently, are produced by mutual interests and objectives. Thus, it is not the content, the knowledge, that is being evaluated, but how the subject produced this knowledge in relation to knowledge and to those who mobilize him/her to learn, that is, in relation to teachers.

The teacher-student relationship at university has been problematized by researchers, such as Silva (2020), who defends the idea that this relationship is of fundamental importance to understand how the promotion of teaching and learning processes occurs. The mentioned author calls attention to the criterion of reliability that must exist between teacher and student at the university, given the need to ensure safe conditions so that the student can establish dialogic relationships with his teachers and, as a result, feel welcomed and able to become the protagonist of the learning processes.

To be a protagonist of the learning process means that the student must be able to understand his role in the university, especially when it comes to evaluation. It is also necessary to consider, in this problematic, the self-evaluation processes that take place in the relationship with oneself and with the objectives that each student develops in his formative journey. Evaluating, therefore, implies a self-formative dimension, which involves both the one who evaluates and the one who is evaluated.

However, in university education, evaluation has been a space for measuring learning, a moment when teachers need to convert what students have revealed about their learning into grades and concepts in order to, at the end of a curricular component, be able to feed the systems and generate results of the course, but that do not necessarily represent the result of learning, because the assessment, in this perspective, remains a reductionist practice of converting what has been learned into numbers and / or concepts.

However, it must be considered that, in university teaching, there are teachers who seek to overcome the reductionist character of assessment and conceive it as an experiential movement to produce reflections on knowledge taught, using assessment as a way to build

realignments of the educational process. In this direction, teachers have been using teaching strategies and assessment practices that have as a fundamental principle the development and effectiveness of student learning. According to Silva, Ribeiro, and Almeida (2018, p. 667) "It is under the condition of favoring dynamic and feasible forms of knowledge acquisition that teachers resort to educational actions, and reflect on them from the perspective of understanding them in their formative essence for students."

This has to do with the operative mode in which assessment occurs in the university context that, for teachers assumes one logic, but for students, the logic may be another. While for the former, assessment implies a mapping of what was learned, for the latter, assessment is just a necessary phase to achieve approval in a curricular component or course. The intentionality of the agents involved in the evaluation may not coincide, generating tensions and discomforts that put the process in check. Creating dialogic conditions about the evaluative act in the university, invites teachers and students to maintain a relationship of trust and intentions that converge to understand the evaluative practice as a moment of learning development and realignment of processes.

This implies a dimension of understanding that the evaluation practice is not necessarily limited to the collection of data to verify learning and grades. It goes much further, in the sense that evaluation integrates the educational practice itself, which is interwoven in the pedagogical action of the teacher. It becomes perennial, integrating the teacher's teaching practice in a continuous and fluid way. According to Luckesi (2002), the evaluation of learning becomes useful and necessary for teachers and students to seek the best construction of themselves and, consequently, the best way of being in life, that is, in the university and in the learning achieved in the formative paths.

Concerned with what the students of the State University of Feira de Santana (UEFS) say, the present research sought to map how the relationship between teacher and student has occurred in the university, facing several processes, such as: the students' own identity profile; affectivity; the teachers' evaluation practices; the teaching of reading and writing; the pedagogical relationship mediated by technologies; among other topics. For this article, we analyze the issues inherent to the evaluation practices, focusing on what the students say about how the professors develop the evaluation at the university.

In this context, we sought to anchor the discussion in three axes: the first, considering the questions inherent to previous explanations about the weaving of the evaluations, then, going through the discussions about the criteria of correction of the evaluations, and finally, about records of comments in the return of the evaluations. In all axes, we transversalized the discussion by the theme of the relationship between teacher and student.

In this sense, this article emerges from a matrix research, financed by the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq). The objective of the study is to understand, from the students' point of view, how professors carry out evaluation practices at the university. The article is divided into five sections, starting with this

introduction, which discusses the theme of evaluative practice in university teaching and presents the objective of the research. In the next section, we will briefly deal with the methodological course, discussing the epistemology of the quantitative basis in which the study was developed. In the third section, we present the results, focusing on what the 997 students answered about the questions inherent to the way teachers produce evaluation at the university. In this section, we make the analyses based on the three axes. Finally, we present the article's final considerations, summarizing the research findings and opening questions for new studies.

## Methodological Path

The research is quantitative in nature because the existing thoughts of external reality can be analyzed objectively, and the research results can be copied and generalized, so that it is possible to obtain more comprehensive information (HAYATI; KARAMI; SLEE, 2006). Thus, we can understand that quantitative research is the detailing of a given phenomenon, which was analyzed, in the light of mathematical methods, justified from the collection of numerical data, which are inclined to highlight the rules of logic, deductive reasoning and measurable characteristics of human experience.

In this dynamic, the quantitative data subsidized the reflections, which emerged from a quantifiable universe, feasible to research movements with large populations, but that reveal singularities of a group, such as teachers and students, in contextual learning relationships. This evidences a character of intersectionality of types of research, in which the quantitative data are not only there to illustrate data segregated from the meanings that are attributed to them by the bias of a qualitative research.

As an information gathering device, the research was developed from a questionnaire prepared by a group of researchers and students of university teaching, who develop the research entitled Teacher-student relationship at university<sup>1</sup>.

It is a questionnaire built by dialogical relations established by professors and students in the Núcleo de Estudos e Pesquisas sobre Pedagogia Universitária (NEPPU), at Universidade Estadual de Feira de Santana (UEFS). Thus, for the cut produced in this article, the construction of the instrument was based on questions related to the evaluation practices that teachers develop at the university. The questionnaire was applied during the months of September to December 2020, through the Google forms platform. In this dynamic, a link was created for access to the questionnaire, which was sent by e-mail to all the coordinators of the collegiate departments of the institution, with the request that it be replicated to all regularly enrolled undergraduate students. From a total of approximately 10,000 students of the

<sup>1</sup> Research funded by the Universal Call MCTI/CNPq n°28/2018, approved by the Ethics Committee of UEFS, through opinion no. 3.413.070. The study has a partnership with the Interdisciplinary Center for Studies on Social Inequalities in Health (NUDES), of the State University of Feira de Santana (UEFS).

institution, in the 28 existing undergraduate courses, 997 accessed and answered the questions, which represents a sample that is not representative, but by convenience, since we took as a criterion the fact that the invitation would be sent to all students and that the questionnaires that were fully answered would be considered valid.

Having presented such an overview, it is convenient to point out that a response was obtained from 997 students from all 28 courses at the university, with a higher frequency for undergraduate courses. It is worth mentioning that the students voluntarily accessed the questionnaire and answered the 36 questions, 20 of which were inherent to the socio-identity profile, and 16 related to pedagogical situations experienced by teachers at the university, among which are included the questions related to the educational practices, object of the analysis produced in this article.

The questionnaire was elaborated considering situations reported by teachers and student researchers, regarding pedagogical relational experiences in the scope of planning situations, the production of teaching strategies, educational evaluation, and the investments that teachers make in continuing education. Regarding the aspects of the socio-identity profile, the options sought to map age, sex, color/race, marital status, number of children, with whom the student lives, type of residence, family income, type of resource that keeps him/her at the university, among others.

Considering most of the respondents, it is possible to trace the socio-identity profile of students who, according to the research data, are mostly in an age range between 21 and 24 years, are female, self-declare black, single, have no children, live with parents and relatives, live in their own homes or those of relatives, live in Feira de Santana, city where the university is located. They have a monthly income of up to one minimum wage, usually coming from some kind of scholarship from programs linked to the university, and do not develop any other paid activity. They are students who live in close distances to the institution, taking 15 to 45 minutes by car, which they pay with their own resources. In their majority, they are students coming from the public network of Basic Education, from schools that were located in urban areas.

Structured according to the principles of a Likert-type scale, the research questions were composed of statements, followed by the alternatives: never, sometimes, frequently, and always. Faced with these four options, the participant could only mark only one. This is a very useful scale for analyzing people's behavior when faced with a given phenomenon. In the field of education, it is a reference scale for understanding the levels of frequency with which students and teachers behave when faced with situations of a pedagogical nature and, in the case of the research at hand, also of a relational nature. The statements originated, in this study, from behavioral beliefs that are commonly seen in university classrooms. Thus, the beliefs reveal the attitudes that teachers adopt in their relationship with the student when facing the challenge of teaching and enabling learning.

We clarify that the cut defined and worked on in this text was kept in a perspective of

analyzing 4 of the 16 questions, inherent to evaluation practices developed by teachers, from the Likert-type questionnaire. This was due to the set of questions that are closely related to the strategies that teachers use to develop evaluation practices in university teaching.

The choice to work with a Likert scale with 4 points (never, sometimes, frequently, and always) was the result of discussions held by the group of researchers, who strove to understand the scale and how it could clarify and bring out meanings of what was asked of the collaborators in the study. We assume that, in research group settings, this kind of choice is not such an easy task.

The constitutive nature of a Likert-type scale is that each item to be worked on in the research is presented in the form of a question, with each gradation as a possible answer. It was based on this configuration that we asked the questions, presenting four variations of answers, starting with never and ending with always. We clarify that, although it is interesting to develop statistical crossings to interpret the data, we were interested, at this point, in focusing on the percentages of the results and, based on them, discuss the meanings that emerge from the relationship between teacher and student when facing the challenges of understanding how the evaluation practices take place at the university.

It is an interesting clue to develop understandings about the ways teachers and students make decisions for teaching and learning at the university, revealing knowledge of how the relationships between these subjects are organized, pedagogically, in the context of university teaching.

## Representations of Evaluation Practices

Concerned with understanding how the evaluation practices take place in the general scenario of the university, we sought to know from the students three elements that we consider to be essential in this scenario. The first concerns the weaving of the evaluations, that is, how they are present in their form to the students through the teachers' speeches. In this sense, the composition of the evaluative nature and how this nature materializes in an evaluation proposal was of interest, and was materialized in one of the questions. Based on this, we also tried to find out from the students if they know the criteria the teachers use to correct the evaluations. In this respect, we tried to find out if there are any explanations from the teachers about these criteria. Finally, we tried to focus on the feedback of the evaluation process, asking the students about the fact that teachers return the evaluations with comments.

In the weft of understanding how evaluative practices are configured, the questions related to evaluative practices are crossed by other sets of questions that focus on how the teacher-student relationship takes place at the university. We believe, however, that the evaluative practices are better understood if we consider that in these practices there is the existence of dialogical relations, affection and welcoming of students by their teachers. In this

sense, we will go on to deal with each situation expressed in the evaluation questions, starting with the data that reflect the nature of the evaluations.

### Nature of Evaluations

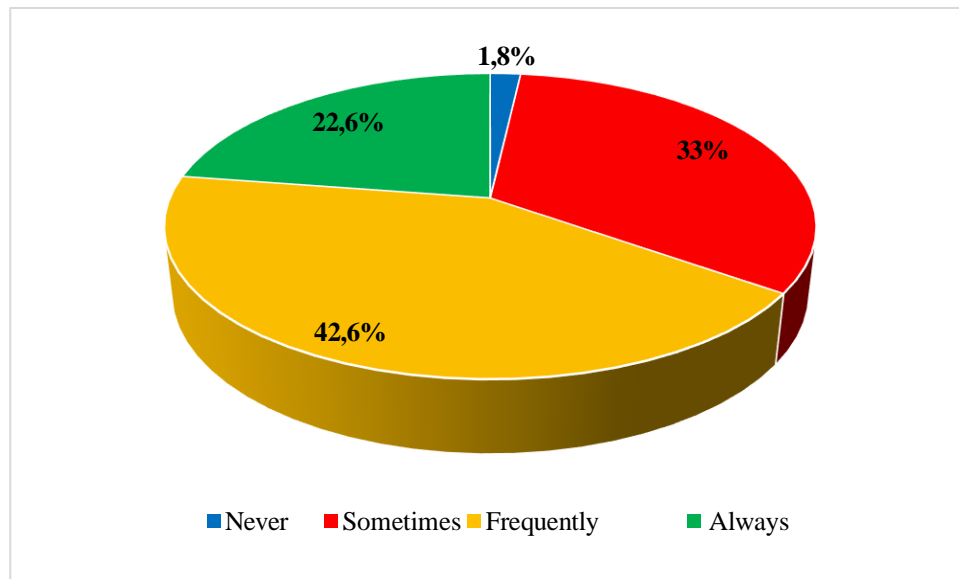
In order to think of an epistemology of evaluation practice, it is necessary to understand that the nature of evaluations brings together principles of value between those who evaluate and those who are evaluated. The construction of knowledge is the basic movement that emerges from pedagogical relations between teachers and students at the university. The evaluation also needs to gather in its constitutive epistemology the texture of constituting itself as an element that favors the experiential movement of learning and knowing what has not been learned. There is, in this understanding, a reflexivity logic that is evident in the evaluative practice as a basis to think about the learning development processes. In this logic, Silva, Ribeiro, and Almeida (2018), consider that there are different conceptions of the evaluative process, but that there are singularities in an evaluation of constructivist nature, about which the referred authors argue that:

Evaluating in the constructivist learning conception of the emerging paradigm presupposes a dialogical construction between different subjects - teacher and student - which involves a paradigm that is based on the idea of construction of cognitive processes that highlights the reflective action of knowledge construction, therefore, of learning development (SILVA; RIBEIRO; ALMEIDA, 2018, p. 666- 667).

And in this same line of reasoning, these authors consider that the evaluation presents itself as a mobilizing dynamic of understanding the reflective action, woven into the very epistemology of the act of evaluating, which is translated into the nature of the evaluative device. In this logic, the action of evaluating promotes conditions for the learning subject to build around himself, mechanisms of production about learning. But for this to occur, it is essential, as Luckesi (2002) asserts, that the information is widely understood and understood both by those who evaluate, as for the students, those who will be evaluated. In this dynamic, knowing the evaluation texture is a fundamental condition for the evaluation to have the desired effect, to generate learning conditions and to enable the realignment of the teachers' educational practice.

When we asked the students if their teachers explain in advance how the learning evaluations will be, more than 40% said that teachers often do this, and another 22.6% said that this action always occurs. The data can be seen in Chart 1, below.



**Chart 1.** Early explanation of what learning assessments will look like

Source: Field research data (11/10/2020).

With only 1.8% of the students informing that the professors never explain beforehand how the evaluations will be, it is possible to say that, in general, there is a concern on the part of the professors in making the structure of the evaluations known, opening, with the students, a dialogical action that is centered in the movement of making known the organizational dynamics of the evaluation process. This situation can also be explained by the fact that teachers have the practice, on the first day of class at the university, of explaining how the evaluations will occur. In the set of questions, we tried to find out if the professors present the teaching plan and, in it, explain how the evaluations will take place.

the teaching plan and, in it, the evaluation process to be adopted. In this context, the data reveal that 35.8% of the respondents say that teachers often present the plan, which in the universe of 997 respondents, 357 say this, and another 218, totaling 21.9%, say that teachers always present the plan.

Thus, there seems to be a relationship between presenting the teaching plan and, consequently, dealing with how the evaluation will be. Somehow, this makes the evaluation practice known and discussed with the students. In the two occurrences of answers, frequently and always, regarding the fact that the teacher explains how the evaluations will be, there is a slight increase in the number of those responding, which if added together would give us a total of 650 students, thus a percentage of 65.2% stating that teachers do so. We must also consider that a total of 33% say that sometimes this happens, increasing, a little more, the number of teachers who present, in advance, how the evaluations will be.

Knowing such dynamics creates a more favorable atmosphere for the performances that students can obtain, besides allowing the evaluation to transcend the fact of being a mere condition to collect data, as stated by Silva, Ribeiro, and Almeida (2018).

Understanding, proposing and managing the assessment of learning considering its

complexity has been posed as a challenge that university teachers launch in an attempt to transpose the practice of assessment as verification of learning (SILVA; RIBEIRO; AMLEIDA, 2018 p. 666).

To transpose the evaluation practice, consolidating it beyond a mere assessment, it is necessary to think of evaluation in a formative logic, in which there is clarity of its existence in the relationship between teachers and students, as well as in the relationship with the production of knowledge. To evaluate is also an act of welcoming, an act of trying to understand what the other does not know, and to build mechanisms so that he or she can learn. This is one of the central ideas that Luckesi (2000) has been developing by always putting in his studies the concern with what the act of evaluating is. The action of evaluating is not built disconnected from the epistemologies of the evaluative act and, consequently, from the weaving of the devices with which the teacher evaluates, including both the evaluative instruments and the dialogical relationship to produce the intentionalities of the evaluation act.

In this sense, we understand evaluation as a constitutive process of organization and reorganization of the paths developed by the teacher in his/her teaching practice and which are crossed by the students' formative needs. Hence the relevance that the evaluation happens in the relationship between teachers and students, in which the objectives of the act of evaluating emerge from what is lived by these subjects at the university. Silva, Ribeiro, and Almeida (2018) state that assessment at the university should maintain a close relationship with the ways of teaching and learning that the teacher manages in the classroom, producing a set of actions in their practice 10 educative, which considers the act of evaluating as transversal to the practice.

When most of the students say that the teachers explain how the evaluation will take place, there is an indication that the evaluation is at the basis of the concerns of a teacher who understands it as a fundamental element for, according to Luckesi (2002), the improvement of student learning. By improvement of learning we mean the conditions in which the student can perceive the functionality of assessment to produce his own self-regulated activity, which demands, on the part of the student, the awareness that assessment is not just a grade, but evidences the procedural mechanism by which his learning in university life is constituted.

To clearly explain how the evaluations will be constituted demands in university teaching possibilities to build formative paths, in which learning is constructed from the realities and interests of the students, as well as the intentions of the teachers, who in the dialogical relationship with the students, gain meaning in the formative path. However, it is necessary to create mechanisms in university teaching to produce strategies with the purpose of giving meaning to teaching and to the other activities that the teacher performs in his professional practice. As Pozo (2009, p. 200) states, the teacher is understood as

As a strategic subject who makes decisions from his theories and beliefs before, during, and after the interaction with students. The content of teachers' ideas thus becomes the priority of study for understanding and improving the activity in class.

When seeking to explain the weaving of the evaluative devices in advance to the

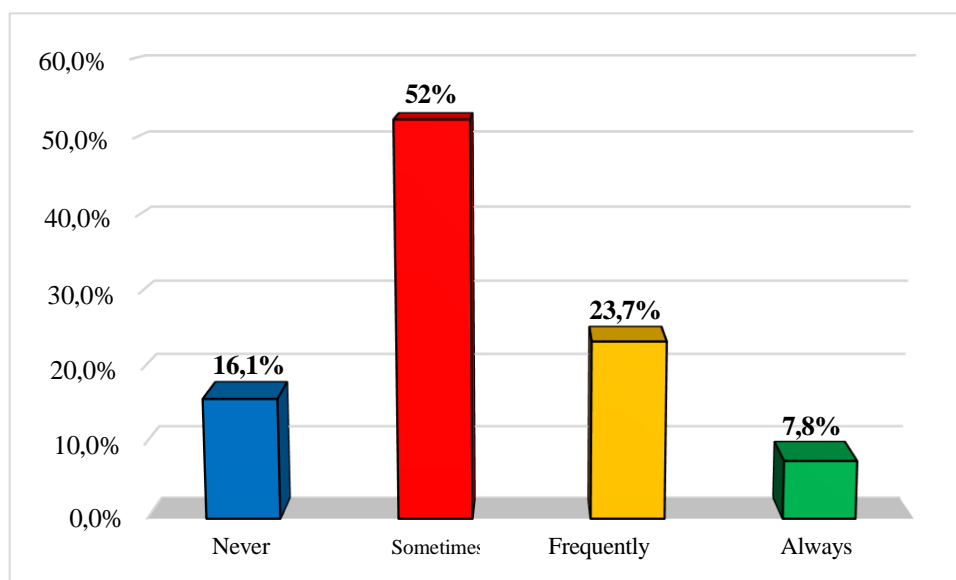
students, the teachers engender their evaluative modes in a dialogic perspective with their students in a more flexible dynamic, through which the evaluative practices come to figure as effective mechanisms that generate the development of learning. Moreover, this dialogicity occurs, above all, when teachers explain to students the criteria with which they will correct the evaluations.

### Clarity of the Evaluation Correction Criteria

For students, it is extremely important to know the criteria adopted by teachers, both to evaluate and to correct what was evaluated. This implies a condition for the student to self-evaluate the course and build, as recommended by Luckesi (2002), conditions to understand the functionality of the evaluation in their formative journey. It is, therefore, the knowledge of the assessment correction criteria that is essential for the student to know how his performance was and in which he still needs to invest energy to develop learning.

If, on the one hand, the students say that the teachers explain how the 11 assessments, this does not occur with the action of explaining the criteria with which the assessments will be corrections. When we asked the research collaborators if their teachers explain which criteria will be used for the correction of the students' evaluations, it was surprising to find that more than half of the participants affirm that this happens sometimes, and 16.1% affirm that this never happens. The data can be seen in Graph 2.

**Graph 2.** Explanation of the criteria used for the correction of the evaluations



Source: Field research data.

It is curious to observe that only 7.8% of the participants affirm that teachers always explain the criteria. This data is worrisome because, considering the total number of participants, the number of students who ratify the lack of explanation of the criteria for

correction of their evaluations is quite expressive. If evaluation is a practice that should enable the reorientation for the best conditions for the student to learn, then the criteria need to be known, both by those who evaluate and those who are evaluated.

According to Demo (1996) in the context of higher education it is necessary to evaluate in such a way that the student can know the evaluation rules, the judgment criteria adopted so that he/she can defend him/herself and create, within this logic, learning conditions. In this way, it is necessary to consider that the evaluation criteria, as qualitative as they should be, need to be constructed and shared with the students, so that they are easy to understand by the students, and that they conjugate easy access to understanding by the students, without generating doubts and confusion. In Demo's (1996) understanding about the evaluation criteria, the author considers that

The evaluation criteria, as qualitative as they should be, need to be reformulated in such a way that they are easily accessible and unimpeded, especially when it involves the use of a transparent definition. One cannot accept as evaluation criteria, subjective judgments that are impossible to be reconstructed by others, especially by the interested parties [...] Especially the university, which does everything to privilege quantitative criteria - length of service, administrative dedication, class hours, etc. - under the allegation that academic merit is something impractical as an evaluation criterion, reveals how distant and divorced it is from formal quality (DEMO, 1996, p. 37).

According to what the author also recommends, situations that complicate the understanding of who is being evaluated cannot be adopted as criteria. It is necessary to strive for transparency regarding the evaluation processes in the relationship between teachers and students, which occurs, even on a qualitative basis, although the quantitative is also present, depending on the nature and purpose of the evaluative device, especially by those interested. Thus, it is not a good idea that the teacher, in his teaching and evaluative practice, does not make clear the evaluation criteria, especially those that are adopted in the correction process.

Therefore, when we are faced with data that show that students do not explain the evaluation criteria inherent to the correction, an atmosphere of concern is created, since it is fundamental that teachers make clear to students the rules that are adopted in the evaluation process, especially the rules for the validation of answers. One cannot deny that the criteria are constructed, regardless of the type/nature of the evaluative device, to diagnose the students' performance and, based on this, to realign the educational practice.

The evaluation criteria, whether the teacher uses objective or subjective questions, must be an element to diagnose school performance, verifying which students need help or specific pedagogical assistance. No student should ever be compared to another, but rather to his or her own progress. Verification must be constant and continuous. Tests should no longer be used as a weapon against the student, causing him all kinds of trauma. They should be, above all, a means to confirm the student's progress, the achievement of the established objectives (SANT'ANNA, 1995, p. 65).

But there is no way to observe the student's progress, if in the evaluation process, the criteria were not clear to him. In university teaching, as well as in basic education the lack of knowledge interferes with the performance and the results achieved by the student and may lead

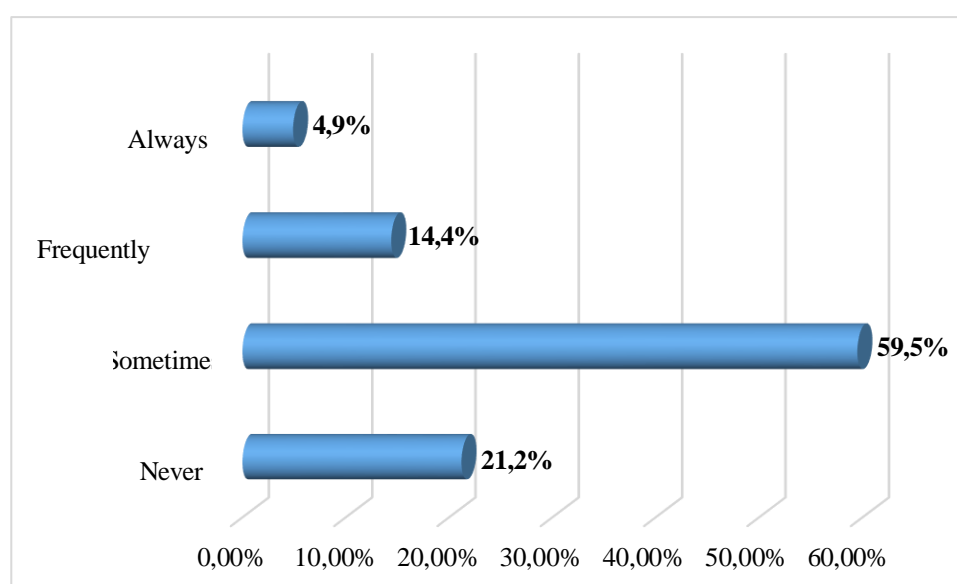
the teacher to make a wrong diagnosis, as well as commit injustices in the process. Furthermore, the teacher-student relationship seems to be shaken when dialogue and clarity are not present.

When we asked the students if the way their teachers relate to them influences their learning, we obtained 54.4% of the respondents saying that this always occurs, and another 28.9% saying that frequently the way this relationship happens interferes with learning. From this data, it is possible to infer that the way the teacher explains how the evaluation will take place, as well as the criteria for correction, interferes in the results achieved by students and, consequently, in the learning developed.

### Teacher Comments on Student Responses

There is another factor about the teachers' evaluative practice that we take into consideration in this research. It is the action of giving feedback to students, explaining, through comments on their answers, how their performance was. In this sense, we asked the students if, when returning their evaluations, the teachers included comments about their answers. The result is shown in Graph 3.

Graph 3. Inclusion of comments when returning evaluations



Source: Field research data.

The results suggest that few teachers include comments in the evaluation. For almost 60% of the students, teachers sometimes do this. It is noteworthy that 21.2% stated that teachers never comment on the answers given by the students. This suggests that the student needs to understand by himself the reason for the error, and that the teachers do not give him feedback. It is very complicated for students to understand how their performance was evaluated, because teachers do not explain how the evaluations will be done, nor do they

explain the criteria for correction, and they also do not comment on the students' answers. In this context, the evaluative practice becomes unilateral, often being under the teacher's point of view, which, in the absence of clarity for students, becomes meaningless and merely an instrument to approve or disapprove.

For Luckesi (2002), evaluation must be an act of welcoming the student, creating conditions so that he or she can understand the reason for being evaluated and evaluate themselves at the university. However, the lack of clear criteria and comments on the answers does little to enable students to invest in understanding their performance, much less in understanding how the assessment is central to the realignment of the teacher's practices, as well as how this student will need to reorganize the studies in order to learn what, as revealed in the evaluations, they have not yet learned.

Not commenting on the answers creates a gap in the students' understanding, especially with respect to the mechanisms that they themselves use to produce their answers and reflections in the evaluations, whether they are written or orally, as it is very common to occur in evaluative practices in laboratories or in the supervised internship field, not to mention the evaluations whose instruments are seminars, exhibitions, scientific communications, among other evaluative instruments, commonly used by teachers in university teaching.

Boaler (2015), based on his studies in the area of mathematics, emphasizes the importance of feedback to students in their evaluations. This mobilizes the student to create by himself a way to seek other ways of developing his learning, in search of even more significant results, which reveal to the student his own learning.

In this sense, the orientation feedback aims to help students improve their techniques, increase their knowledge, but it can also serve to address their feelings regarding what is being studied and how to change them. It is, therefore, a fundamental action in the teachers' evaluative practice, responsible, also, for being another moment of learning development, after all, when reading the teachers' comments, in some way, the student learns, and in some cases, learns what needs to be done to move forward, or to retrace the path of his learning.

Regarding feedback in evaluations, several authors in the field of psychology, such as Elawar and Corno (1985) and Butler (1987, 1988) have historically devoted themselves to studying feedback, including working with different ways of giving feedback to students. According to these authors' study, students who received diagnostic feedback on an assessment increased their scores when compared to those who received numerical grades.

Thus, just putting grades and/or concepts in the assessments, without making comments to the students, does not create the conditions for the students' understanding to reveal how they themselves understand the learning outcomes. It is not a matter of making generic or comparisons among students, a practice condemned by Sant'anna (1995), but to create comments that can provoke, in the students, a sense of creating comments that can

provoke, in the university student, reflections on his or her performance and on the way his or her answer was constructed, leading him or her to understand the path taken, creating, for him or her, the possibility of building other paths to develop his or her learning at university.

In studies conducted by the researchers Elawar and Corno (1985) and Butler (1987, 1988), assigning only grades in the evaluations implies low learning conditions for the students and demotivation for not knowing the reason for the mistakes made. In some of their studies, these authors conclude that assigning only grades in assessments negatively affects student performance. Elawar and Corno (1985), for example, compared the ways in which teachers produced responses to homework assignments for 6th graders - half of them received grades, and the other half, diagnostic comments without grades. According to the data obtained in the researchers' study, those who received comments learned twice as fast as the group that only received the grade.

These data show the importance of comments in university student evaluations and are also an excellent opportunity for teachers and students to create conditions for learning through the motivational relationship they establish with each other in the pedagogical relationships they experience at the university. As argued by Silva, Ribeiro and Almeida (2018), as well as Luckesi (2002), the evaluation of learning needs to be seen as a rich space for learning development, both for students and teachers, who can review their practices, develop improvements in teaching and, consequently, in the educational work they develop at the university.

### Final Considerations

The results of the study showed that the teacher-student relationship is fundamental in the development of assessment practices at the university. The university student reveals that the teachers' evaluative practices have significant relevance in their learning. It is in the answer given to the questions of the representation of how the professors at the Universidade Estadual de Feira de Santana develop and deal with the evaluations, especially regarding the explanations of how they happen, what criteria are used for correction, and if there are comments from the professors when returning the evaluations.

In summary, the data reveal that the majority of students at the university are female, self-declare black, are single, have no children, live with parents and relatives, live in their own homes or with relatives, and live in Feira de Santana, the city where the university is located. These are factors that, although we did not cross-reference to analyze variables in the answers, in general, constitute a group of popular class students, who find in the university the opportunity to build knowledge and practices that will enable them to develop professionally and enter the job market, as a way to support themselves and their families. In this scenario, the teacher-student relationship, especially in terms of assessment practices, is of fundamental importance for these young people to succeed in university.

Regarding the nature of the evaluations, it was observed that, in general, the professors explain how the evaluations will take place, showing a concern with the evaluation practice, relating it to the teaching context they develop at the university. This explanation is usually done when the teachers present the teaching plan to the students. It is clear that knowing how the assessment of learning takes place provides the student with better conditions to build successful paths in the assessment process, besides the fact that the assessment practice is a practice that also generates learning.

Less frequently, the data show that the teachers, despite explaining how the evaluations will take place, revealing their structure, do not explain the criteria for correction, not making it clear to the students how they will be evaluated. This implies a difficulty for the student to know what the rules are for assessing and building learning in the evaluation process. There is no point in explaining how the evaluation will take place, without also explaining what the criteria will be for validating the answers.

With even less occurrence, the data show that teachers rarely comment on students' answers. This is another factor that negatively impacts learning conditions, since the student is left without feedback, which is often necessary to realign study practices and ways to achieve success in their learning.

However, it is necessary to consider the data mapped by the students' answers, which does not mean, in theory, that this is the way professors conduct their evaluation practices. As the research in development deals with the teacher-student relationship at the university, the application of the questionnaire to the teachers is in progress so that these professionals can also be listened to regarding the questions that were asked to the students. However, this is not about creating data for comparison, but to understand what students and professors at the State University of Faria de Santana say about how the evaluation of learning has occurred. Such data can be disseminated among the participants, mobilizing them to think about the role of learning evaluation in their practices, but also to think about the effect of this on the formation for life of others.

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