



THE METAMORPHOSIS OF TEACHING PRACTICE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ANTÓNIO NÓVOA AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY OF THE TEACHER

O METAMORFOSEAR DA PRÁTICA DOCENTE SEGUNDO A ÓTICA DE ANTÓNIO NÓVOA E SUA CONTRIBUIÇÃO PARA A IDENTIDADE PROFISSIONAL DO PROFESSOR

LA METAMORFOSIS DE LA PRÁCTICA DOCENTE EN LA PERSPECTIVA DE ANTÓNIO NÓVOA Y SU CONTRIBUCIÓN A LA IDENTIDAD PROFESIONAL DEL PROFESOR



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ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to discuss metamorphosis, that is, the rapid and intense changes in teaching practices, based on António Nóvoa's (2019) reflections, which influence the constitution of teachers' professional identity in contexts of transformation. From initial training and throughout the teaching career, continuing education provides an essential foundation for pedagogical practices and for meaningful, contemporary, and high-quality teaching. This article seeks to understand how valuing teaching and building a critical and committed identity can become factors for educational and social strengthening. In dialogue with Tardif's (2002) contributions on teaching knowledge and Imbernón (2006), and based on a qualitative approach with hermeneutic and analytical character, the text examines the relationship between teacher education, pedagogical practice, and regional development. The conclusions indicate that investing in teacher education and in the recognition of the teaching profession has a positive impact not only on educational indicators but also on community progress. Teaching practice, therefore, is revealed to be in constant metamorphosis and essential to processes of social transformation.

Keywords: Teacher Identity. Teacher Education. Pedagogical Practice. Regional Development.

RESUMO

O objetivo deste artigo é debater a metamorfose, as mudanças rápidas e intensas na prática docente a partir das reflexões de António Nóvoa (2019) que influenciam na constituição da identidade profissional dos professores em contextos de transformações. Desde a formação inicial e, no decorrer da trajetória profissional docente, a formação continuada proporciona

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um importante alicerce para as práticas pedagógicas e um ensino significativo, contemporâneo e de qualidade. Este artigo busca compreender como a valorização da docência e a construção de uma identidade crítica e comprometida podem se tornar fatores de fortalecimento educacional e social. No diálogo, com os aportes de Tardif (2002), sobre os saberes docentes, e Imbernón (2006), com base em uma abordagem qualitativa, de caráter hermenêutico e analítico, o texto examina a relação entre formação docente, prática pedagógica e desenvolvimento regional. As conclusões são de que investir na formação e no reconhecimento da profissão docente impacta positivamente não apenas os indicadores educacionais, mas também o progresso das comunidades. A prática docente, portanto, revela-se em constante metamorfose e essencial para processos de transformação social.

Palavras-chave: Identidade Docente. Formação de Professores. Prática Pedagógica. Desenvolvimento Regional.

RESUMEN

El objetivo de este artículo es analizar la metamorfosis, es decir, los rápidos e intensos cambios en las prácticas docentes, a partir de las reflexiones de António Nóvoa (2019), que influyen en la constitución de la identidad profesional docente en contextos de transformación. Desde la formación inicial y a lo largo de la carrera docente, la formación continua proporciona una base esencial para las prácticas pedagógicas y para una enseñanza significativa, contemporánea y de alta calidad. Este artículo busca comprender cómo la valoración de la docencia y la construcción de una identidad crítica y comprometida pueden convertirse en factores de fortalecimiento educativo y social. En diálogo con las contribuciones de Tardif (2002) sobre el conocimiento docente e Imbernón (2006), y con base en un enfoque cualitativo de carácter hermenéutico y analítico, el texto examina la relación entre la formación docente, la práctica pedagógica y el desarrollo regional. Las conclusiones indican que invertir en la formación docente y en el reconocimiento de la profesión docente tiene un impacto positivo no solo en los indicadores educativos, sino también en el progreso comunitario. Por lo tanto, la práctica docente se revela en constante metamorfosis y esencial para los procesos de transformación social.

Palabras clave: Identidad Docente. Formación Docente. Práctica Pedagógica. Desarrollo Regional.



1 INTRODUCTION

The last decades have been marked by significant transformations in the ways of teaching and learning, driven by constantly changing social, cultural and technological processes. The school, as a historically situated institution, directly feels the effects of these changes and is challenged to re-signify its roles, practices and objectives.

In this context, the teacher occupies a central position, being called upon to constantly review and adapt his professional performance, in a process that requires more than simple pedagogical updating, a "true metamorphosis", that is, repeated changes and transformations throughout his journey.

António Nóvoa, a full professor and one of the most relevant thinkers in contemporary education, proposes in his writings an in-depth reading of teacher identity and the urgency of rethinking teacher training and professional practice.

In particular, in the essay "Teachers and their training in a time of metamorphosis of the school" (2019), the author invites reflection on the meanings of teaching at a time when the traditional landmarks of the profession are diluted and new challenges emerge. The choice of the term "metamorphose" is not accidental, it is about indicating a profound, structural transformation, which affects not only the form, but the essence of the profession.

The teacher's professional identity, far from being a static or innate characteristic, is built throughout the formative and practical trajectory. It is constituted in the articulation between academic knowledge, lived experiences, institutional links and sociocultural contexts. By understanding this identity as something dynamic and relational, it becomes possible to understand why training, both initial and continued, is decisive in the construction of a critical, autonomous professional engaged with the educational and social processes of his community.

On the other hand, it is important to highlight that teaching does not occur in a vacuum, in isolation, unrelated to a set of circumstances. The teacher's performance is directly implicated in the historical and regional conditions of which he or she is inserted. In regions that face specific social, economic and educational challenges, as occurs in many locations in Brazil, the teaching work can constitute a strategic factor for local and regional development, processes of economic and social growth.

The qualification of education, driven by committed and conscious teaching practices, represents not only the improvement of school learning, but also the strengthening of community bonds, citizenship and regional human capital.

In this sense, this article aims to reflect on the "metamorphose" of teaching practice from the perspective of António Nóvoa, analyzing how this transformation impacts the



constitution of the teacher's professional identity and its relationship with regional development.

The relevance of this discussion lies in the need to understand that structural changes in education will only be effective if they include the teacher as a protagonist and not only as an executor of policies.

The study of Nóvoa's thought allows us to illuminate ways for teacher training and professional recognition to go hand in hand with the educational and social development of the regions, overcoming dichotomies between theory and practice, between discourse and action.

2 THE METAMORPHOSIS OF TEACHING PRACTICE: REFLECTIONS FROM ANTÓNIO NÓVOA

Teaching, as a historically constituted profession, is going through a moment of profound inflection. Changes in social relations, forms of communication, cultural values and educational expectations call into question the old references that sustained the identity and practice of teachers. It is in this scenario that António Nóvoa (2019) proposes the concept of "metamorphosis", not only as a metaphor, but as an interpretative key to understand the new configurations of the school and the teaching profession.

In his text "Teachers and their training in a time of metamorphosis of the school" (2019), Nóvoa points out that the current time requires teachers to stop anchoring themselves in fixed professional models and start building their trajectories in a more autonomous, critical, and reflective way. For the author, the idea of metamorphosis expresses the need for profound changes, which are not just superficial adaptations, but structural transformations in the ways of being and acting professionally.

Nóvoa points out that it is not a matter of denying tradition, but of dialoguing with it based on contemporary challenges, such as teaching practices, community participation, technologies and innovations. Today's school is no longer the same as in past centuries, and teachers cannot be trained based on models that no longer respond to the demands of the present. In this sense, the teacher of the twenty-first century cannot be trained with the models of the twentieth century to teach students in contemporary times, denouncing the gap between training, practice and educational reality.

One of the central axes of Nóvoa's thought is in the valorization of the knowledge of experience and in the construction of the teaching identity as a continuous process. The teacher is not only trained on the benches of the university, but above all in the daily exercise of the profession, in the challenges of the classroom, in the relationships with students,



colleagues and the community. For this reason, continuing education is understood as an essential dimension of professionalization, not as a complementary stage.

Another important point in Nóvoa's analysis is the shift of the focus of teacher education from a prescriptive model to a reflective model, from fixed norms to a critical analysis. This implies recognizing the teacher as a subject of his own training, capable of thinking about his practice, building knowledge, sharing experiences and making informed pedagogical decisions. The author proposes a break with the logic of technical and expository courses, advocating more collaborative, contextualized training spaces focused on the reality experienced by teachers.

The metamorphosis of teaching practice also involves facing the tensions between autonomy and control, between innovation and tradition, between individualization and collective work. Nóvoa points out that these tensions should not be erased, but understood as part of the training process and the constitution of the teacher's identity. Recognizing oneself as a professional in constant training is one of the possible ways to deal with these contradictions.

In addition, the author's proposal is aligned with a conception of school as a space for the construction of knowledge, dialogue and social transformation. Valuing the teacher, therefore, is not only a technical or administrative aspect, but a fundamental condition for the school to fulfill its social function, to provide access to knowledge with scientific knowledge and the reduction of inequalities as well as political, in the formation of critical citizens in order to strengthen democratic values. In this sense, to think about the metamorphosis of teachers is also to think about the reinvention of the school as a living, pulsating institution connected to the needs of society.

António Nóvoa's reading thus offers a solid basis for rethinking training practices and teacher identity in times of change. His writings invite us to look at teaching in more depth, considering not only the contents taught, but the meanings that teachers attribute to their profession, the bonds they establish with the school and society, and the role they play in the process of educational transformation.

By understanding teaching as a practice in permanent reconstruction, with reflections on the process of metamorphosis of teaching practice in the light of António Nóvoa, we have to consider the general changes in the educational scenario, the regional challenges in Brazil and the importance of thinking about teacher training that is rooted in local realities, in order to contribute. Thus, for the strengthening of professional identity and for the development of the communities where the teacher works.



We live in a time of intense and continuous transformations, with the ways of teaching and learning, with school structures and the meanings attributed to education that change in the face of new social, cultural and technological demands. In this constantly moving scenario, António Nóvoa (2019) proposes a reflection on the need to metamorphose teaching practice, that is, to rethink it deeply, in its bases, methods and purposes. More than adapting, the teacher needs to resignify his role and his professional identity, assuming himself as an active subject of the changes that cross the school and society.

Teaching practice, historically marked by transmissive models and institutional rigidity, has been called upon to dialogue with the diversity of contexts, languages and subjects that make up the school routine. This metamorphosis does not occur in a linear or homogeneous, sequential way, it involves tensions, resistances and constant learning. Changing teaching practice implies revisiting teaching conceptions, breaking with rigid patterns, welcoming the unpredictable and building new ways of being in the profession.

When observing Brazil in its plurality, it is impossible to ignore the regional particularities that directly influence the ways of teaching and learning. The different social, economic, cultural and geographical realities impose unique challenges to pedagogical practice. In inland regions, for example, the conditions of infrastructure, the valorization of teachers and access to continuing education can present significant contrasts in relation to large urban centers. These regional specificities require that the training and performance of teachers be contextualized, respecting the singularities of each territory, its unique and specific characteristics, whether social, cultural, economic or political.

It is at this point that the reflection proposed by António Nóvoa becomes even more pertinent: the construction of the teaching professional identity cannot be thought of as a fixed, standardized model detached from reality. On the contrary, it is built from the experiences lived, the relationships established with students, peers and the community, in addition to the objective conditions of work and training. The teacher identity, therefore, metamorphoses along with practice, with the school and with society.

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3 TEACHING PRACTICES AND THEIR METAMORPHOSES IN TIME

With the advance of social and cultural transformations, especially in the twentieth century, teaching practices began to be questioned and resignified. The New School movement, with names like John Dewey and Anísio Teixeira, brought a new conception of teaching, based on the activity, experience and appreciation of the learning subject. The teacher, in this new model, is no longer the only holder of knowledge and starts to act as a mediator.

In Brazil, educational reforms in the 1930s and 1940s, influenced by New School ideas, sought to promote a more democratic school. However, teaching practice was still strained by centralizing policies and lack of investment in training. In the second half of the twentieth century, authors such as Freire (1996) began to highlight the political dimension of teaching, stating that "teaching is not transferring knowledge", but rather creating possibilities for the construction of knowledge.

Maurice Tardif (2002) contributes to the understanding that teaching knowledge is built in practice and social interactions, breaking with the idea of a teacher who is only technical. He defends the valorization of experience, reflective practice and the collective construction of teaching knowledge.

In this historical context of transition and dispute for educational models, António Nóvoa (1992, 2009 or 2019) reaffirms that the teacher needs to be thought of as an autonomous professional, author of his practice, who builds his identity in the intertwining between what is lived and what is learned. The author proposes that the focus of teacher training and practice is not only the content or the technique, but the construction of an ethical, reflective subject committed to the context in which he or she acts.

In Brazil, regional diversity is a determining factor for the configuration of teaching practices. The country is home to different socioeconomic, cultural, and structural realities that directly impact the performance of teachers. In regions further away from large centers, such as rural, riverside or sertanejo areas, the challenge of teaching is amplified in the face of the precariousness of resources, the lack of continuing education and the low professional appreciation.

Even in urban contexts, marked by social inequalities and high teacher turnover, teaching practices need to be constantly reinvented to meet the real needs of students. It is in this scenario that the teacher identity is built in a unique way, mediated by material conditions, local public policies and the educational history of each community.

Francisco Imbernón (2006) highlights that teacher training needs to be attentive to regional realities and promote critical reflection on practice, valuing the knowledge built on



the school floor. Likewise, Dermeval Saviani (1998) draws attention to the importance of educational policies committed to equity and to valuing the work of teachers in the various regions of the country.

Closing this discussion, António Nóvoa (2009, 2019) defends a training that takes into account the concrete contexts of the teacher's performance, recognizing that there is no professional identity without a strong anchorage in the territory where it is taught. For him, the metamorphosis of teaching practice is directly linked to the ability to understand and act in the particularities of the local reality. This requires an attentive, ethical and critical look on the part of teachers, who are, at the same time, products and producers of the school and society.

4 PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY OF THE TEACHER IN TIMES OF METAMORPHOSES

The professional identity of teachers is a continuous process of construction and reconstruction. Far from being a fixed or static characteristic, it is constantly shaped by lived experiences, social interactions, institutional conditions and the challenges that emerge from the educational context, multiple and complex, especially in quality and methodologies. As Tardif (2002) points out, the teacher's identity is woven in the articulation between knowledge acquired in initial training, experiences accumulated in the exercise of the profession and the specific demands of the social and institutional environment in which he or she is inserted.

In times of accelerated transformations, such as those experienced in contemporary times, this identity process becomes even more complex, requiring from the teacher a reflective, critical and adaptive posture in the face of the new demands that are imposed on the profession.

The understanding of teacher identity as a dynamic phenomenon is anchored in several studies that recognize the teacher as an active subject in the construction of their own professional path. This identity is constituted by multiple dimensions, personal, social, ethical and pedagogical that are articulated from the individual trajectory and the insertion in institutional collectives (Imbernón, 2006).

In this sense, initial training offers the foundations of teaching practice, but it is in the daily exercise of the profession that the most significant marks of professional identity are consolidated. As Nóvoa (1992) points out, the teacher's identity is built "through a process of constant (re)construction, which integrates life history, training and professional practice".

Authors such as Dubar (2005) and Tardif (2002) emphasize that the professional identity of teachers is a dynamic construct, formed from socialization processes and continuous interactions.



Dubar (2005) emphasizes that identity is not something definitively given, but results from a constant negotiation between personal histories and social expectations, being shaped by the biographical trajectory and the relationships established in professional contexts.

Tardif (2002) argues that the teacher's identity is built on the dialogue between the knowledge built throughout the training and that acquired in daily practice, highlighting that this knowledge is situated and influenced by the working conditions, the current educational policies and the institutional culture of the school. Thus, the teacher's professional identity emerges as a result of a complex network of interactions between the individual, the institution and society.

Thus, the teacher builds his identity in a constant intertwining between the individual and the collective, between autonomy and normativity, between the desire for transformation and the limitations imposed by the system.

The changes that have occurred in recent decades, such as the expansion of access to school, the diversification of the student public, the intensification of the use of technologies and the reconfiguration of family and social relationships, have directly impacted the way teachers perceive and live their profession. Many face feelings of devaluation, overload and loss of meaning, which compromises not only the quality of pedagogical practice and its interaction with regional particularities and characteristics, but also the permanence of these professionals in their careers.

In view of this, it is urgent to strengthen policies and practices that contribute to the appreciation and recognition of teacher identity. This implies, on the one hand, investing in training that not only technically qualifies, but also promotes the human, ethical, and relational development of teachers, with the creation of institutional spaces that favor listening, dialogue, and collective work, rescuing the feeling of belonging to the school and the profession. In this sense, António Nóvoa (2019) argues that teaching should be understood as a permanent process of construction and reconstruction, a true metamorphosis, in which the teacher continuously reinvents himself in response to social, cultural and educational transformations.

The notion of professional identity is also related to the teacher's autonomy to make informed pedagogical decisions, actively participate in school management and contribute to contextualized curricular proposals. This autonomy, however, is not to be confused with isolation, on the contrary, it is strengthened in collaboration, in the sharing of knowledge and in the collective construction of educational projects.



The teacher identity, in this scenario, appears as one of the fundamental pillars of the quality of education. Teachers who recognize themselves as committed, reflective, and respected professionals tend to be more engaged in transforming their practices and seeking better educational results. For António Nóvoa (2019), the strengthening of this identity does not occur only through technical skills, but above all through the teacher's ability to recognize himself as a historical subject, capable of metamorphosing his practice in constant dialogue with social and educational demands.

The recognition of the centrality of the teacher in educational processes demands, therefore, a careful look at the constitution of his identity. Training teachers goes beyond transmitting pedagogical or methodological content, in reality it is about promoting conditions for these professionals to appropriate their history, elaborate meanings for their practice and build solid bonds with the school and the community. As Paulo Freire (1996) argues, teaching requires understanding education as an act of freedom, in which the teacher becomes an active subject in the construction of knowledge and in the strengthening of his own professional identity.

In this sense, the teacher's professional identity should be understood as a strategic element for the strengthening of public schools and for the promotion of social and educational development. When valued, this identity enhances the teaching performance as an agent of transformation, contributing to the school fulfilling its mission of forming critical, participatory subjects prepared for the challenges of the contemporary world. As Nóvoa (1992) points out, the teaching profession is built at the intersection between the personal and the collective dimensions, requiring a continuous commitment to training and reflection so that the teacher can fully exercise his or her transformative role.

Thus, teacher training, both in its initial and continued dimensions, is configured as a fundamental axis for the consolidation of the professional identity of teachers and for the improvement of the quality of education. It is a process that goes beyond the acquisition of technical knowledge, also covering the ethical, political and human development of the educator, in order to promote the development of a more inclusive, critical, meaningful school and respecting the cultures in which they are inserted.

Initial training, traditionally offered by undergraduate courses and pedagogical programs, has the function of preparing the future teacher for the fundamentals of teaching practice; however, many studies indicate that this training, in many cases, still has significant gaps that hinder the construction of a solid professional identity, as highlighted by Garcia (1999).



To overcome these limitations, several proposals have been defended by researchers and institutions; among them, according to Perrenoud (2000),

The importance of an initial training that articulates theory and practice from the first periods of the course is emphasized, that values the knowledge of experience and that promotes critical reflection on the role of the teacher in society

For Nóvoa (2009), training should enable future teachers to understand the complexity of the classroom, develop autonomy to make pedagogical decisions and build an ethical commitment to social transformation through education.

Complementary to initial training, continuing education assumes an equally strategic role, that is, it extends throughout your professional career. In other words, the teacher is always "in training", since educational practice is marked by constant challenges, curricular changes, new technologies, new subjects and contexts, transformation. As Nóvoa (1992) states, "there is no initial training that can account for a profession that is built every day in the exercise of practice and in reflection on it".

António Nóvoa (1992) is one of the main authors to defend a conception of continuing education as a process integrated into teaching practice, which in his view, is not enough for the teacher to participate in occasional courses or receive specific training, but rather, it is necessary to create training environments in the school spaces themselves anchored in the real needs of the school, respecting the time, the context, the local culture and the trajectory of each teacher.

Continuing education, in this sense, must have an emancipatory character, promoting the teacher's protagonism in the definition of their training paths. Programs that impose content that is detached from the school reality tend to generate disinterest and resistance. According to Freire's (1996) considerations, "no one educates anyone, no one educates himself, men educate themselves, mediated by the world".

It is also worth highlighting the importance of institutional support for teacher training. Public policies must guarantee conditions for teachers to have access to quality continuing education, with adequate time, professional appreciation and career incentives. In addition, it is essential that education networks foster a culture of study, research and critical reflection within schools, creating an environment conducive to permanent professional development and its transformation required for current times, that is, its "metamorphosis".

The integration between initial and continuing education is another crucial point, two dimensions of teacher training that should dialogue with each other and should not be treated as isolated stages, forming a coherent and articulated path in order to favor the construction of a consistent professional identity committed to the improvement of pedagogical practice.



For Imbernón (2006), teacher training should be conceived as a continuum that favors the construction of knowledge throughout the professional life.

Therefore, thinking about teacher training is thinking about the future of education. It is to recognize that no educational policy will be effective if it does not consider the teacher as a central agent of school transformation. Investing in teacher training is investing in the quality of teaching, in valuing the profession so that changes, transformations and "metamorphoses" provide the true development of society.

This identity, when strengthened, promotes the teacher's commitment to his social function and contributes to the qualification of pedagogical practice. Teachers who recognize themselves as reflective, autonomous professionals capable of acting critically in their context tend to seek more effective teaching and learning strategies, to dialogue with their peers and to engage in continuous training processes and, consequently, directly related to educational results.

5 CONCLUSION

The discussion developed in this article sought to highlight the metamorphosis of teaching practice according to António Nóvoa's perspective and the contribution to the teacher's professional identity as essential factors for improving the quality of education.

It is verified that teaching is a practice in a constant process of transmutation, marked by movements of adaptation, resignification and reinvention in the face of social, cultural and technological changes, whose practice reflects and influences the direction of the school and society.

When the teacher is recognized as an active subject in the construction of knowledge and social transformation, the need for educational policies and practices that value their trajectory, their training and their professional autonomy is reinforced.

By reflecting on the metamorphosis of teaching practice, we understand that such transformations are not restricted to the methodological field, but reach identity and ethical dimensions, requiring from the teacher a reflective posture and an education that goes beyond technical aspects.

The historical analysis of teaching practices reveals that, although education has taken on different formats over time, the centrality of the teacher as a mediator of learning and an agent of transformation persists, which requires policies that value and support their work.

Initial and continuing education appears, therefore, as a fundamental instrument for this strengthening. It should be understood as a continuous, articulated and critical path, which considers the specificities of school contexts and promotes the articulation between



theory and practice. The construction of training spaces within schools, the encouragement of collaborative work and the promotion of a culture of study are strategies that need to be valued and encouraged by consistent public policies.

In current times, marked by rapid transformations and multiple social and technological challenges, the teacher's professional identity emerges as a strategic element for the consolidation of a democratic and socially influenced education by working conditions, educational policies and school culture.

Teacher identity, far from being something fixed or merely individual, is a process built over the course of experience, fed by interactions with school contexts, educational policies and relationships established in the daily exercise of the profession. When this identity is strengthened, the teacher tends to act with more security, a sense of belonging and responsibility in the face of the challenges of pedagogical practice.

Thus, the need to invest in initial and continuing education that articulates theory and practice, values the knowledge of experience and strengthens teacher protagonism is reaffirmed. As Nóvoa (2019) emphasizes, "it is necessary to create conditions for teachers to become authors and actors of their training, protagonists of a profession that reinvents itself every day".

In this sense, the valorization of teaching, combined with quality training and critical analysis of educational results, can contribute significantly to the construction of a fairer, more democratic school committed to regional and social development. Investing in the teacher is investing so that he can metamorphose, transform himself into a teaching professional increasingly prepared to build a better future for all.

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