









“[The most important thing] is to give [the students], essentially, a panoply of situations in which they can position themselves more in one or another [...], essentially, to awaken... my values are my values, what I try is for each one of them to build their own values of democracy, justice, critique.” (Interview nr. 18, course of 93/97).

“[...] especially [the] part, not so much of teaching them to read and write, that’s important and that’s what we have to respect, but especially [the part of] teaching people to live with each other and to get along.” (Interview nr. 1, course of 97/00).

The basic professional identities identified show that pre-service training can make a difference and also that, if we consider the testimonies of the teachers who trained in the different periods, pre-service training has improved, although it has not always been measured against the same benchmark.

### **2.3. The process of socialization of teachers: training and first years**

The transition from the situation of student to a professional situation comes as a decisive stage in the passage of life of those interviewed, given the contradictions between the conceptions of education propagated by the training period (evident in the visions of oneself as a person and as a professional at the end of the training) and professional practice. This discrepancy leads teachers who are at the beginning of their career to adopt strategies of survival and control, generating a lack of investment in their profession, above all if the idealized future and/or the representations of the ideal school that they still possess vanishes and in its place appear disenchantment, insecurity and the consequent routine nature of teaching:

“When leaving the course I had certain expectations that I didn’t achieve at all! [...] My greatest anguish is to have to give up or to relegate some of my ideas to second place if I find that I am not going to carry them out and to verify that there is some contradiction between what I do and what I think.” (Interview nr. 9, course of 78/79).

“I was very lonely and the distance between what I experienced in the initial training and the reality that I had to face was so frightening that I didn’t know what to do, except put my head between my hands!” (Interview nr. 12, course of 80/81).

“I had to change the idealistic vision that I had of the profession.” (Interview nr. 5, course of 93/94).

“I left with some ideals, some of which I had given up on. Some adaptations had to be made!” (Interview nr. 8, course of 95/96).

It is worth emphasising that the more demanding the training (both in pedagogic and in scientific terms), the larger the shock of reality will be. In effect, the 2nd and 4th periods are the ones where the shock of reality is most evident. In the 1st period, it is not mentioned by any teacher.

### **2.4. School work and the relevance of training**

In the interviews, teachers highlighted the long-lasting importance of their first experiences. In general, to deal with the “shock of the real” [7], the teachers disclosed that their training, referring to the theoretical-practical knowledge learned in the Teachers’ Training Courses, was not enough. So they then had to make use of the school culture in the place they were working.

The analysis makes it clear that, soon after their professional initiation, the basic professional identity undergoes a process of re-composition that varies from one person to another. In general, the construction of the teaching profession, and consequently of their professional identity, seems more than anything to fit into an informal, individual, intuitive process, carried out in the day to day activity, that is to say fundamentally in terms of the pedagogical relationship in the context of classroom (the resource that Montero Mesa [8] designates by latent models) and in the contact with their peers (in explicitly rewarding situations, most of them in situations of discrete suffering). Relations with children is the main source of attachment to a profession that, in practice, is economical with specific professional knowledge to their profession, to adopt the traditional forms of pedagogical work that continue to characterize school cultures, to which are associated traditional concepts about school knowledge.

Apparently, in a related manner, the interviewees from all periods tend to find that pre-service training had little value. Actually, the interviewees devalue the formal curriculum in their training which they perceive in terms of subjects.

Nevertheless, the informal curriculum is the one they effectively recognize as having had a training result. Informal curriculum concerns especially learning that happened outside the classroom, even though, here and there, it also regards learning that took place in the classroom. Those resulting from the peer group, from teaching reflection meetings between teachers and students, from areas of the curriculum not considered to be subjects (disciplines) and those intrinsic to the teaching-learning process in classes are the ones that stand out. In general, for the

interviewees, the 'value' of their initial training is connected with its practical character, concerning the experience of teaching children (internship, autonomy in the teaching practices, going beyond the plan), the ways of teaching-learning, the areas of expression and the professional/academic character of the training (centred or not in the profession). The relevance of the training for the contexts of action is considered higher by those trained in the revolutionary period (professional training) and lower by those trained in the 1990s, indicating that the integration of teachers training in higher education institutions made the training more academic.

### 3. Conclusion

Two aspects show up from the results: on one side the way ideas and practices transmitted in training and by social changes affect the construction of the identities of the teachers; on the other, the manner in which that impact of training on identity is wasted in the work contexts.

In most schools, there persists a collective identity that corresponds to a single identity form, which is still guided by traditional work practices. There appears to be a large gap between school work (collective identity) and the basic professional identities (individual), forcing them to adopt a process of accommodation that strips teachers of a large part of the ideals on which their first identity was based.

The distance between training – which is a transmitter of new perspectives – and the real contexts of work – where traditional ways of work prove to be difficult to modify – has a parallel in the teachers as people, where the ideal professional and the more down to earth maintain a difficult relationship.

Given our advance towards the information society, it is important to reflect on the construction of primary teachers' professional identities in the context of training and the contexts of work. The results also give us the topics for this reflection. As far as the part of the training is concerned, we should raise the level of training without making it too academic, but instead making it more relevant for the contexts of work. Basic professional identity of the interviewees from the second period analysed is very close to the profile advocated for teachers today – definition of the teacher as a professional, capable of lifelong learning [9]. The manner in which they value and define the informal curriculum in pre-service training suggests a pre-service training based on the profession, on practice, on learning and on debate. The importance currently given to independent work and project methodologies in higher education is, in this respect, an important opportunity which should not be wasted, especially

given that the conditions that information and communication technologies offer today multiply the possibilities, for teachers and students.

With regard to the work contexts it is a question of being bold enough to give up for good conceptions about knowledge, and to adhere to ways which are more active, meaningful and part of the knowledge of daily life.

The manner in which tradition still tends to play a major role in primary education is associated with its long history and to the place that it has occupied in the social division of work. A large part of the organisation of spaces and times in the traditional primary school remains and it is associated with particular forms of behaviour and conceptions of knowledge. The new conceptions of knowledge and of access to knowledge require new organisational forms and new systems of communication between teachers and between teachers and students, which will correspond to new and varied identity forms.

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