

institutions, activities and/or movements which focused on the pedagogic-didactic dimension, in the sense of creating the conditions for learning to be a teacher, began to emerge. The authors of this paper have mentioned this issue on several occasions (Leite, 2005 and Leite e Ramos, 2007).

The acknowledgement that social situations today are riddled by a complexity that requires that professionally competent teachers get involved in the conception and development of actions and projects that give meaning to the training of the students they work with has also contributed to this movement for change (Leite, 2006). That is, it is within the framework of these challenges that the need to acquire professional teaching knowledge capable of promoting, in teachers, the development of competences to deal with the situations that social changes have generated has been mentioned. The UNESCO (1998) declaration points in this same direction, by presenting a vision that calls for this level of education to answer to the demands of a world in constant change – as a result of globalisation and the new nature of information in the context of a *knowledge society* – and to intervene in emerging themes, such as globalisation, multiculturalism, virtualisation. What we are stating is that this declaration also defends attention to the student and to the student's learning and global education processes as teaching responsibilities. It is in the context of this understanding that we defend pedagogic-didactic training and actualisation, since it represents a sphere for accessing a knowledge and a living experience which, while configuring a positive change in teaching practice, can also confer a sense of *humanising scientific* culture, that is, of enabling a reflection on teaching as a profession that is realised in the context of human relations.

Acknowledging due caution in not bestowing on these actions a redeeming power but, rather, highlighting their mediatory nature, in this paper we describe research currently in progress at the University of Porto which aims to identify the possibility of these actions being configured as spaces for dialogue between *humanistic culture* and *scientific culture* – in the sense of helping to break through disciplinary barriers and focusing on pedagogic-didactic knowledge as a structuring element of responsibility towards the social dimension of university teaching.

The analysis of this movement and the actions that have been developed allows us to identify aspects which help us configure a space for dialogue between *humanistic culture* and *scientific culture*, to the extent that they enable a (re)contextualization of knowledge and practice.

Identities, cultures and elementary school teacher training: realities and challenges

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If we accept that the “knowledge society” is developing, we must also consider that elementary school teachers are key players in building a world in which the decisive issues of efficiency and productivity are well-matched with the communicational questions of human training and ordinary life. In fact, it is while children are at elementary school that conceptions and ways of access to knowledge are transmitted and acquired and with them the cognitive, affective and social processes that connect us to it. On the route toward the knowledge society the training of elementary school teachers in new molds is, therefore, an important dimension to invest in.

However, training elementary school teachers has revealed difficulties in transforming teaching practices and school cultures, which have been built up throughout years of organization of mass teaching processes. The gap between the challenges presented at that teaching level by the knowledge society and the real practices taking place in it is, the majority of times, something to be questioned.

In this communication we want to discuss ways of training teachers for elementary education aimed at the knowledge society, starting from the conceptions of teachers whose professional life and work we investigated.

From the theoretical point of view they are studies about teaching identity and school cultures, in whose environment we are emphasizing the perspectives of Woodward (2002), Claude Dubar (1995) and of the authors themselves (Tura, 2000; Lopes, 2002 and 2008), which we chose to identify and discuss the situations being examined. On one hand, it is considered that identity is constructed in a dynamic, continuous and inventive process, which in the current context contains a plurality of significations and referents and on the other that the

possibilities of invention are limited by cultural representations and sedimented institutional practices. It is also felt that the change involves people in their entirety, as well as the different levels of the ecological system in which they move around.

From an empirical standpoint, the results of two research projects are correlated, one done by Brazilian teachers (Tura and Marcondes, 2005/2006) and the other by Portuguese teachers (Lopes, Pereira, Ferreira, Silva e Sá, 2007). The research done in Brazil involved semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and a free word association test. The research done in Portugal involved biographical interviews and analyzing documents.

The conjugation of the studies enabled us to throw light on one and the other and to identify categories of common analyses: the conception of teacher (including the reasons for choosing the profession, motivations for being a teacher and professional ideologies); the first years of work; professional socialization and training; the current configuration of pedagogic work and the conception of school knowledges.

The joint results point to the persistence of pedagogic work methods fed by traditional conceptions of knowledge and the sparse communication between the world of the school and the world of training. When discussing these results, in terms of the theoretical picture, various factors are considered, in themselves and in their inter-relationship: the expectations of those who choose to be teachers; the representations of those training them about their role; the representations of the population about the role of the elementary school teacher; the characteristics of the more typical school cultures, and training policies.

In-Service Teacher Training in Portugal: Assessing the (im) pact of the Formative Paradigm

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