

**Article**

## Learning Communities and collaborative practices in the processes of professional insertion

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### Abstract

Collaborative work presents itself as a response to individualism, historically marked in the culture of school institutions. The paper analyzes the modes of collaboration that constitute the professional learning communities, their relations with the school culture and with the process of novice teacher's insertion. The forms of interaction among teachers in the workplace described as collaborative do not always express goals, common actions and broader decisions that involve the improvement of practices, knowledge and concepts that result in the quality of teaching and management. The school institution needs to take a stand in relation to these decisions and create conditions so that new forms of collaboration can benefit the teacher pedagogical work. The characteristics and dimensions of collaborative groups constituted as learning communities are explored based on criteria presented in literature, in the perspective of ensuring teacher's learning and professional development. The analysis of a collaborative learning pedagogical experience in the scope of teacher research and the university-school relationship is presented as an enhancer for reflection, for questioning beliefs and values, as well as for problematizing the didactic choices that will guide teachers practice in the classroom.

**Keywords:** Learning communities, Collaborative groups, School culture, Professional insertion.

### Introduction

At a time when the world community experiences forced isolation for the first time, feelings of solidarity and learning of how to deal with a new situation are shared<sup>5</sup>, and the recognition of individual and collective responsibility express the community's search and value in people's lives. In this context, the

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<sup>5</sup> We are herein referring to the isolation caused by the Covid-19 epidemic during the month of March 2020, when this paper was finished.

reflections proposed herein reinforce the importance of the school in promoting mechanisms to build a collectivity that becomes the basis for the work of professionals therein and not a mere slogan of official decisions that often mobilize instrumental practices. Interactions take place in the collectivity, thus it is where professional learning processes can be enhanced and take effect on the professional development of teachers, managers and other professionals working in school institutions, as well as in education systems.

Literature has shown that the forms of interaction between teachers in the workplace, which are described as collaboration, do not always express goals, common actions and broader decisions that involve the improvement of practices, knowledge and concepts leading to the quality of teaching and management. These decisions put the school institution in the process of professional teacher development (CALVO, 2014) and, when considering the role of the collectivity and collaboration, the concept is broadened from the perspective of collective and institutional professional development, as indicated by Imbernón (2009). In this sense, the concept of collaboration encompasses not only the processes that improve professional knowledge, skills and attitudes, but also the working conditions of the staff in schools.

In this light, the degrees and modes of professional collaboration within schools mark out their culture and the ways in which teachers and managers integrate or resist it (PEREZ-GÓMES, 2001; THURLER, 2001). The defense of a teaching culture that includes different modes of collaboration and that refers to a joint vision of improving practices and learning can find in learning communities (FLORES, 2012) or in professional teaching communities (LIMA, 2012) educational possibilities for analyzing the professional experiences gained through study, exchange and shared knowledge resulting from reflective and critical questions.

This paper analyzes the modes of collaboration that constitute these communities, their relations with the school culture and with the process of insertion of teachers. In order to clarify the concept of collaboration based on its interactive dimension, the text is organized in three parts. The first part deals with the concepts of collaboration, collaborative culture and collaborative groups and their relationship with the professional development of the teacher. In the second part, the characteristics and criteria of teacher learning communities and their relationship with professional entry are addressed. Finally, the last session analyzes a collaborative learning experience within the scope of teacher research and the university-school relationship.

## **2. Body**

### **Contexts and collaborative culture**

Studies that address the concept of collaboration gained strength here in Brazil in the mid-1990s when educators were challenged by new circumstances in the classroom, either by the entry of a contingent of students hitherto excluded by the system and which brought them closer socio-cultural diversity, whether by advancing technology that has created new forms of relationships through social media. The education of teachers, marked and recognized until then by technical and instrumental rationality, is inadequate for a time

characterized by new, changing and unpredictable situations and which demanded thinking about education based on “work contexts, on specific situations of teaching practice, on the knowledge that is being built based on the critical reflection on experiences and the professional conflicts that take place in the workplace. ” (PASSOS; ANDRÉ, 2016, p.12). To deal with these context situations, it is not enough for the teacher to be the owner and broadcaster of specialized knowledge to be communicated to students, but to be recognized as “... one of the main partners of collective knowledge, who is responsible for organizing and helping to develop it, and as a facilitator of learning situations that allow students to participate in this construction. ” (MORGADO, 2005, p. 69)

This partnership, which is mediated not by a formal organization, but by the relationships that are established, highlights teaching as an interactive and relational activity. The individual constitution, their learning and thought processes are mediated by relationships with themselves and others (VYGOTSKY, 1998) and through communication and language. Thus, dialogue, affective and cognitive exchanges express the interactive character of teaching and are important building blocks of teachers’ learning. If teachers also learn through dialogue, by seeing and listening to what others – students and colleagues – do or say and enriching their thinking and knowledge for decision-making, it is necessary to question whether school contexts have been facilitators of situations that promote collective and collaborative work.

School cultures or collaborative cultures, as they are called by Fullan & Hargreaves (2001), can strongly benefit discussions of teachers’ practices, which are often fraught with tensions and uncertainties given the complex reality of schools today. The concept of culture defined by Trice and Beyer (1993, p. 2) as “*collective phenomena that incorporate people’s responses to the uncertainties and chaos that are inevitable in human experience*” reinforces the analysis of collaborative cultures from the point of view of interactions and interdependence, which encompass stronger collective thinking and work as well as professional commitments. In this sense, Lima emphasizes that not only values, beliefs, conceptions should be considered in teachers’ cultures, but also behaviors and practices:

“... *doing and acting* is culturally as important as *feeling or thinking* and that teachers’ cultures should also be seen as *consistent and relatively regular modes of action and patterns of interaction* that teachers internalize, produce and reproduce during (and in results of) their work experiences.” (LIMA, 2002, p. 20)

Thus, schools that seek to organize themselves from a collaborative perspective should consider two aspects of the educational process that are mutually involved: the intellectual debate that opens up to diversity and the non-consensus and the affective environment of trust, which allows the openness to experiment, even with uncertainties, new ways of dealing with school situations and without fear of risk. Reflection in the culture of collaboration is not only a requirement, but a condition for both aspects, intellectual and affective, to be the basis for any process of change that is to be carried out (PEREZ-GÓMES, 2001).

Schools are spaces where situations of uncertainty and risk are present very often because decisions are made at all times by teachers, some individually and based on intuition, others collectively and resulting from discussions and reflections. But no decision is made in a vacuum, as described by Munthe (2007), it is influenced by the teacher's situation, experience, learning history and culture, and also the institution's culture could be added. The studies of this Norwegian researcher have shown that in the work of teachers, uncertainty is not necessarily negative, it can present itself as a precondition for teacher learning. If the risks and results of a decision are shared, they contribute to the awareness of them and put the teacher in a strengthened position to question, make new attempts and innovate.

Decisions such as trying out a new methodology, organizing the classroom in a different way, adopting varied assessment procedures, among others, involve risks and possibilities of gains and losses. When individual decisions are taken in isolation, are not discussed and supported or confronted by the eyes of colleagues, they may have positive results, but, in general, the uncertainties to make them are greater and can bring insecurities. The results of the research by Rosenholtz (1989) described by Thurler (2001) showed that in schools that are very defensive in relation to the change and professional development of teachers, isolation and uncertainty go hand in hand and do little to favor their learning.

Isolation, which often presents itself as a way of hiding the uncertainties of pedagogical action, can be minimized by creating a culture of collective participation that supports the teacher in sharing these uncertainties and decisions, distancing them from isolation and promoting advances in their work. Collaborative groups of teachers with managers and other school professionals are shown as important devices for this support, provided they are organized based on voluntary participation, sharing objectives and responsibilities for making key decisions. This means that in them, teachers have the opportunity to enhance their ability to reflect on what they do in the classroom. Teaching practice is, then, the axis that leads to reflection and the more the group is guided by respect for the other, the more points of view can be discussed and clarified in the direction of generating new teachings by the teacher and collective commitments with the students' learning.

Collaboration between professionals in context of groups is not justified by itself, it becomes a means to an end. Clarifying that collaborative work is not merely a meeting between people with collective tasks, Roldão (2007) points out that its potential is given in the strategic plan and its operationalization in the technical plan. The collaborative work as a promoter of learning and professional development of teachers should be structured, according to the researcher:

[...] essentially as a process of articulated work and thought together, which allows to achieve the intended results better, based on the enrichment brought by the dynamic interaction of several specific knowledges and several collaborative cognitive processes". (ROLDÃO, 2007, p. 27)

In such approach, the dimension of time needs to be considered together with two others that characterize collaborative groups and have

already been commented herein, the personal and professional bond. When teachers work together and professional issues are at the heart of debates and concerns, they need considerable time to recognize their knowledge, the knowledge of their colleagues, and, especially, time to learn how to make their practices public and act from their collective analysis. The group's longevity is shown, then, as an important element in the teacher's opening process to tell their actions and practices, as well as to learn to approach the literature that helps to understand it and thus create new links with the knowledge. Thus, in order to experience a formative process based on an effective and successful collaboration, the longer time of this group experience can favor the shared dialogue as a counterpoint to the shared work (MIZUKAMI, 2003) since knowledge can be generated progressively from the understanding and negotiation of meanings of personal and professional experiences.

Collaboration understood in the context of collaborative groups as a way of ensuring the learning and professional development of teachers, as well as that of students, can represent a fundamental support device for all teachers, but it is decisive for the novice teacher, who can, with the help of the group, experience an intensified professional socialization process, not only due to the knowledge of the context in which they will work, but also due to the learning of teaching activities, crucial in this initial period of the profession. The definition and redefinition of the identity of teachers at the beginning of their careers are also influenced by collaborative groups with formative characteristics, which again brings to discussion the role of school culture in the ways of conceiving and prioritizing the organization of more consistent educational spaces that are shown as professional learning communities.

Several researches (GAMA and FIORENTINI, 2009; MONTALVÃO, 2008; LOSANO, 2018) have shown that the professional constitution process is enhanced when the novice teacher participates in collaborative groups and has interlocutors with whom he shares his first professional experiences, doubts, yearnings.

LOSANO (2018) reports on the reflexive movement experienced by the novice teacher when participating in collaborative groups and which brings together past, present and future:

They are able to reflect on their first experiences as teachers who are living in the present, sharing doubts and dilemmas and problematizing their own practices and the practices established in schools. At the same time, they are able to recover and reframe part of the experiences lived in the past, particularly during their initial education. Finally, participation in the group allows novice teachers to project themselves into the future, imagining the type of teaching practices that they would like to develop in their classroom, feeling accompanied and supported in order to try to reach them. (LOSANO, 2018, p. 460)

### **Learning communities at school: a support for professional insertion?**

The question above arises from the discussions in the literature about what characterizes a professional learning community. Ferreira and Flores



(2012, p. 201), highlighting the various terms used in the literature and in texts of educational legislation such as communities of professional learning or teaching learning, communities of practice, investigative communities, professional teaching communities, among others, warn that, regardless of the qualificative used, they may turn into commonplaces or slogans, if the meanings, contexts and practices are not problematized or subjected to questioning. They also warn of the risk of giving the term "...a natural goodness" and that it can often hide an instrumental perspective.

Cochran Smith's studies are focused on the education of teachers and their learning in investigative communities. In an interview with Fiorentini and Crecci (2016), she mentions that the different names given to teacher communities say very little about the way they operate and emphasizes that what matters is what happens within them, especially the questions that the participants ask and try to answer. The researcher recognizes that teaching learning communities, due to their intellectual and organizational configuration, support the professional growth of teachers because they create opportunities for them to study, think, talk about their work and their contexts.

However, discourses on the concept of professional communities reveal weaknesses that are signaled by Lima (2012, p. 174) when indicating that "... they apply indiscriminately to a very diverse set of phenomena". For him, the literature addresses what communities should be and/or the importance of adopting them and very little about what they are, in practice". With this concern and arguing that the clarity of criteria and the clarification of concepts distinguish communities that organize themselves through professional dialogue and advancement of knowledge, the researcher points out that understanding these criteria is the starting point of a community of teachers.

The explanation of the criteria highlights situations that favor the professional insertion of the novice teacher who lives a period of adaptation and acquisition of knowledge to know how to teach. The qualification *together* repeated in all criteria draws attention, indicating its collective and collaborative perspective.

The first one is *being together*, which presupposes the participation in frequent meetings of the group of school professionals and with forms of communication that do not privilege questions or situations of one or two colleagues. This participation goes beyond being together, it is the result of the construction of an intense and comprehensive interaction that involves understanding the common problems and together seeking to know the explanations of different areas of study that help to understand the specific issues of teaching.

The second criterion, *doing together*, is highlighted in the case of the teacher who is starting in the profession because it is in the community of peers that they can get help from experienced colleagues to develop joint practices. Anxiety periods often mark the initial years of teaching, as beginners are often placed to work in difficult situations without any guidance (MARCELO, 1999). The accompaniment and support are decisive for the formation of the beginner and for their permanence in the career and, when organized in a more systematic way, with stipulated duration and structured in an institutional way (Wong, 2004), an induction process is settled during this entry phase. In it,

beginners and experts can experience together a process of learning to teach mobilized by concrete actions developed in a shared way. *Doing together* covers

“... development of joint practices such as the design and production of teaching materials; the definition of action plans; the joint production of strategic documents; the exchange of materials; conducting regular assessments of the work performed, etc.” (LIMA, 2012, p. 180).

Two other criteria pointed out by the author will be treated together given their relationships - *being together* and *feeling together*. These criteria characterize the community of teachers in what is vital for those who are starting their careers: the feeling of belonging and the constitution of professional identity. Feeling part of a whole with which to identify and share and expand the collaborative culture experienced and produced by the group and with a focus on learning – of teachers and students – leads to the construction of autonomy, here understood in the Freirean perspective of decision making with freedom of action (be for yourself) and ethical responsibility (being for the other).

As pointed out before, the question of time is also indicated as a criterion for Lima (2012) and explained how to *endure together*. He emphasizes that the duration and continuity of the community, even with the entry and exit of teachers, consolidates a collective identity.

It is in the dialogue with these criteria that the author presents situations that highlight what a professional community is not. *A self-appointed community*, that is, it is not enough for a group of teachers to come together and consider that a community has been formed; *a community declared officially or administratively*, that is, recording the term in official documents and, it may be added, in curricular documents, do not guarantee its existence with the objectives already presented herein and, finally, *a community of affections*, when teachers form a community that relies almost exclusively on personal issues and has little focus on professionals.

It is important to note that the demarcation of criteria for understanding what is and what is not a community of teachers cannot be seen in a strict and mechanical way. The community dimension of teaching activity (Vaillant, 2019) needs to be guaranteed because it constitutes the central aspect of these communities in any of its forms: professional learning community, research community or community of teaching practice. But the guarantee of this dimension depends on the institutional conditions and on the involvement, autonomy and leadership of the management team in its role as promoter of the professional development of teachers. School principals, pedagogical or educational coordinators are important actors in the development of actions aimed at collaborative professional learning in the daily life of schools.

These actions act as professional development strategies for novice teachers by focusing on training activities in the workplace, group study, research activities and analysis of pedagogical practices, co-observation of classes and sharing with colleagues, studies as essential. class cases, among others. They are collaborative practices that take place inside the school and, according to Calvo (2014, p.128), are effective because

[...] it has to do with what teachers and managers do when they work together to develop effective learning practices, they analyze what really happens in class, paying attention to the elements that constitute good practices and aiming at student learning

### **Collaborative learning in the context of university-school interactions: focus on teacher research**

In university-school interactions, collaborative learning can be highlighted in the scope of teacher research, considering that, when researching, the teacher is more able to understand their practice, to seek ways to overcome their difficulties and to assume their own craft with more autonomy. When this teacher's research involves a collaborating teacher, collaborative work enhances reflection, the questioning of beliefs and values, the questioning of choices, in short, a series of actions that promote the development and learning of teaching.

In this way, collaborative practices are constituted in this path in which participants socialize knowledge, opinions and experiences, negotiate meanings, decide and act based on consensus, not always without conflicts. And when the researcher teacher and the collaborating teacher work in the same school or network, the partner's relationships can be even more conflicting, because, in the research situation, they do not necessarily have the same role. Thus, the negotiations work as tools for the education of both who, when rethinking the roles of the teacher, students, learning material, are transformed. (CRISTÓVÃO, 2009).

The example mentioned here of a collaborative work formed between a researcher teacher and a collaborating teacher, occurred within the scope of a Professional Master's Program in Education (MPE), in a research that aimed to investigate the process of collaborative construction of didactic sequence in mother language teaching, on the 1st grade of elementary school, in a municipal school.

In the context analyzed, the didactic sequence, as proposed by Dolz, Noverraz and Schneuwly (2004), does not refer to a set of ready-made activities, nor previously elaborated by the teacher, but to a sequence of interconnected activities that are built step by step, based on continuous and non-linear study, analysis and production procedures. This process involves the mobilization of knowledge about the teaching object (the idiom/language in use, the textual genres); teaching objectives appropriate to students' abilities; didactic resources; diagnostic and formative evaluation; the principles of curricular progression; classroom management; among others.

It is, therefore, a very complex process that constitutes a teacher education strategy, as already pointed out in works (ANDRADE; APARÍCIO, 2016) that analyze contributions of the collaborative construction of didactic sequences in contexts of initiation to teaching, involving the professor and the graduate student at the university and the school teacher.

In the context analyzed, the experienced teacher (Joana) formed a partnership with a colleague (Beatriz), a novice teacher, from the same school. Until the beginning of the research, they had already exchanged literacy experiences and practices, but they had never worked in the collaborative



production of activities, nor with the didactic sequence as proposed in the research. In addition, they were not in the habit of recording their practices to discuss them, individually or collectively.

The didactic sequence was developed in the classroom of teacher Beatriz, always with the presence of teacher Joana who accompanied all classes making the audio and video recordings of the teacher-student and student-student interactions. The entire process of collaborative construction of the didactic sequence occurred throughout the 2018 school year, with periodic meetings between the teachers, for study, discussion, planning and development of activities in the classroom.

The initial process of constituting collaborative work among teachers has already given evidence that this practice provides situations that lead to reflection, which is unlikely to lead to a solitary work, as in the excerpt transcribed below, in which Beatriz shares her longings in relation to work with the didactic sequence, something new for her, by considering her routine work practices with textual genres as reference.

**Beatriz:** *But we will work on the letter for many classes, won't the children get tired? Because I usually work with different genres in each class, and in the third quarter we have already started the rewriting of tales and fables.*

**Joana:** *But there is a difference between working with genres and working with texts, right?*

**Beatriz:** *What do you mean? I did not understand.*

**Joana:** *When we only work on the text, that is, rewriting is just an exercise, we look only at the structure and the writing system, but working with genre, we look at other elements and therefore we have to think about developing the best production conditions for the child wants to write, we need to create meaningful conditions, having a target reader to become real, with a goal and fulfill the purpose.*

**Beatriz:** *Ah, as in writing the letter to the author, because he will receive this letter.*

**Joana:** *Yes, so the child will perceive themselves as a language producer, as they experienced a real communication situation and we will be able to better assess the students' learning process.*

In this interaction, it is possible to observe some beliefs of the novice teacher Beatriz about working with different genres in the classroom, a recurring orientation in the official materials for language teaching. Everything indicates that Beatriz's concern is the "fixation" of structures and forms of organization of the texts through rewriting, another very common practice in the early years. We do not intend to criticize this position of the teacher here, but to highlight the importance of the shared construction of knowledge, which allows the exchange between teachers, advances in the process of reflecting on the practice and, consequently, the improvement of teaching and professional development itself. It is worth remembering that for the teacher to develop their practice, they also

depend on the knowledge of the content to be worked from teaching investigations.

Also, in the dialogue above it is worth mentioning that there is no guarantee that teacher Joana also does not have a concern similar to that of Beatriz, as both are concerned with teaching. However, she demonstrates adherence to the theoretical references of her research, which is a mark of the difference between the roles assumed by each one in the study development. It is interesting to observe how this mark disappears throughout the collaborative process in the construction of the didactic sequence, as the novice teacher becomes more confident and secure, demonstrating autonomy and authorship in her practices. The following episode portrays the moment when the novice teacher makes the "presentation of the situation", it is the first stage of the didactic sequence in the classroom, when the teacher builds with the students a representation of the communication situation in which they will participate, in this case, the production of a "letter to the author".

Beatriz handed each student the paradidactic book *Tutuli em: que barulho é esse, papa?* (Tutuli in: what is that noise, daddy?). Together, they shared the reading, emphasizing that the book has an author. The teacher also recalled that Tutuli's father is the author Marcelo Loro. And, at the end of the reading, the discussion started:

**Teacher Beatriz:** *when I read this book, I had a lot of questions in my head and I think it's cool to ask these questions to the author. Tell me how we can talk and communicate with the author?*

**Student 1:** *a note.*

**Student 2:** *sending a letter.*

**Teacher Beatriz:** *cool, that's a good idea, has anyone ever seen a letter?*

**Students:** *yes.*

**Teacher Beatriz:** *where did you see a letter?*

**Student 3:** *post office.*

**Teacher Beatriz:** *have you ever been to the post office?*

**Student 4:** *yes, it is closed with something written inside; you need to put the name; you need to put the date and something written to know, I already wrote a letter.*

**Student 5:** *I also wrote one.*

**Teacher Beatriz:** *and we could write a letter to the author, he would like to know that we are reading his story, but what can we write in that letter?*

**Student 1:** *we can say like this: Hi, Marcelo Loro.*

**Teacher Beatriz:** *and what questions could be asked?*

**Student 6:** *we read your book and we loved it.*

**Student 7:** *how to get the fear out of our head?*

**Student 8:** *your story was really cool.*

**Student 9:** *when are you going to release the next books?*

**Teacher Beatriz:** *who has more ideas to ask? (The students raise their arms with great enthusiasm).*

This is a very important moment in the development of the didactic sequence, as it is when the novice teacher puts into practice what was designed together with the experienced teacher. As can be seen in the episode, the teacher manages to establish interaction and cooperation with students, giving them the opportunity to think about the communicative situation that they will establish with the author of the book they have read. What is usually not done when the didactic sequence is ready.

In the case of teacher Beatriz, the actions she develops in the classroom were designed and executed in collaboration. This "being together", according to Lima (2012), involves understanding common problems and looking for possibilities that help to understand specific teaching issues. Therefore, what happens takes on the characteristics of a common learning space, that is, a learning community.

The following excerpt brings a dialogue between teachers Joana and Beatriz.

**Joana:** *The students participated a lot in the presentation of the situation. Did you see that it was not necessary to anticipate and present that they would write a letter? The way you were conducting led students to suggest writing a letter. What did you think of this process?*

**Beatriz:** *I was amazed ... I wasn't so sure it was going to happen. Now I realized in practice how to involve students and allow them to speak, and not deliver the finished proposal, as we always do.*

The excerpt above explains how a shared action causes certain knowledge that teachers build as "truths", little by little, to be rethought. In this regard, we emphasize what Roldão (2007) claims about collaborative work as a strategy that expands the cognitive processes of those involved in the process of constituting shared actions.

Another striking step in the collaborative work took place in elaborating the modules, that is, activities developed from the difficulties that teachers identified when analyzing students' productions. The following dialogue illustrates a situation in which teacher Beatriz suggests an activity and justifies its relevance.

**Joana:** *I’m thinking that now you feel more secure and confident with our work...*

**Beatriz:** *In my opinion, they already did the first production of the letter and I already have an idea about what they know... I think it’s nice to present them another letter, but without the commitment to write.*

**Joana:** *Shall we read different letters?*

**Beatriz:** *Or we present a book letter, an interesting letter, and from that letter, as they already know what a note is, go on discussing the characteristics of the letter with them.*

**Joana:** *It is a very good idea, so we expand the students’ knowledge repertoire.*

**Beatriz:** *For the children to notice the differences with this comparison, look for information and for everyone to see.*

**Joana:** *Yes, so all students will have the opportunity to know and experience what writing a letter is like.*

**Beatriz:** *As we already have the students’ previous knowledge, in the round of conversation we can expand and discuss, because by offering the letter we will offer better conditions for them to develop the next ones.*

**Joana:** *Correct, we will improve the sources of information search. You know that book *O carteiro* (The postman) arrived, it has the writing of an interesting letter, we can use it.*

**Beatriz:** *That’s true, this book also has the writing of a note; we can show and make this comparison.*

It is important to highlight, in the analysis of the experienced teacher, when noting that, during the meetings with the novice teacher, at this stage, she observed that the colleague felt more secure and confident, perceiving herself as an actor and author in the collaborative process, assuming her role in planning the modules, adapting them to the knowledge of their students.

In fact, it is a challenge to think collaboratively about the actions to be performed in the classroom. Even when educators develop well-structured ideas about teaching practice, putting them into action is challenging. Students’ reactions, their doubts, how they are interpreting what was proposed, often presupposes an action that was not planned. Therefore, when the teacher takes an investigative stance, he has more elements to understand the complexity of teaching.

It is also worth highlighting the reflection of this work in the practices of students in the classroom. In the excerpt below, students work collaboratively with dedication, at the beginning of writing the letter to the author, in the “final production” stage, that is, after the activities of the didactic sequence modules.

**Male student:** *What are we going to write?*

**Female student:** *The city name and today's date.*

**Male student:** *What day is today?*

**Female student:** *November 13.*

**Male student:** *Ber, ber.*

**Female student:** *It is B E R.*

**Female student:** *Now skip a line and write: "Hello, Marcelo Loro".*

**Male student:** *Mar-ce-lo Lo-ro (they help each other).*

**Female student:** *Skip another line.*

**Male student:** *And now?*

**Female student:** *Let's say "thank you very much".*

**Male student:** *But I wanted him to write more books.*

**Female student:** *Then write: "Can you write more books for us?" and "thank you very much" (the student readily accepts the student's idea and start writing).*

**Male student:** *But "obrigada" (feminine agreement of "thanks" in Portuguese) is because you are a girl, I will write thanks "obrigado" (masculine agreement of "thanks" in Portuguese) below for making you do this book.*

**Female student:** *Ok (they help each other in writing).*

**Female student:** *Skip the line and say goodbye, write "bye".*

**Male student:** *How do I write "bye"?*

**Student:** *The teacher wrote on the board BYE to help (female student's name): it's B-Y-E.*

**Male student:** *And now our name; I sign mine and you sign yours.*

**Female student:** *Ok.*

As we can see, students respect each other's ideas and negotiate, based on what they have learned, how to present the initial elements of the letter. The concept of education implicit in the construction of didactic sequences is the same that is present in the context of the classroom, that is, the activity



designed by the partner teachers, when performed, assumes that it is shared in an investigative perspective.

Finally, it is worth highlighting the account of teacher Beatriz at the end of the didactic sequence. It was a long, non-invasive, respectful process in which both teachers, in a collaborative perspective, formed a learning community, developed professionally. An experienced teacher and a novice teacher experienced teaching and learning processes together. There is evidence of them doing together, in the sense proposed by LIMA (2012).

**Joana:** *As we finished this process of developing the didactic sequence, I would like you to report what you felt, what you found interesting and what you noticed during your classes with the use of the didactic sequence device.*

**Beatriz:** *I will tell you what I felt. It is very comfortable for someone to receive a finished project. It is very comfortable! You get the project ready every year, that's it, you already have the activities ready, but the classroom you receive is not the same. Children think differently, they come with their heads a thousand light years in front of you and, if you let them, they'll wrap you up. Another thing that I found significant is that at first we get scared, but then we start to get excited, because I started to see that interest is showing up and I noticed the children's development. They really get out of always being just receivers, and with the didactic sequence they start talking, start to question: "How do I write this? How do I do that? Teacher, I wanted to write that word...". Sometimes a totally different word. They want to put themselves inside the text they are doing. Then I realized that small details, like a ruler, can empower children. My speech to my students after this project has changed a lot: I tell them to come to the blackboard, who is going to write, I am also thinking more about my instructions. Now I give them more freedom to try to carry out the activities and then we go to the blackboard to correct; and so, I choose especially those children who have difficulties in that situation; thus, I manage to mediate. Students will gain more confidence, security and not be afraid to write and speak out. With the didactic sequence, I had the feeling that I am able to make them really fall in love with reading and writing. It is different. I realized the desire to write from the context in which the child is interested. Also, one thing that I found interesting is that I noticed progress in the issue of orality, since we, teachers, have the habit of thinking that the student has to be silent in the classroom, but if the student does not speak, how will he write? If he doesn't put his ideas out, how will he write? If he does not interact and expose the idea, how will he start to argue, to speak out? The student needs to speak. With this project, students felt challenged to resolve a situation and to think about how I choose the words I want to put in the text. I learned that we have to provide moments of discussion and dialogue. Once we allowed everyone to speak at the time of class, everyone started to understand that they have the right to speak, and I realized that now, when I put the class to work in pairs and*

*groups, they started to question and speak out more. This is good for life.*

With the final testimony, it can be concluded that: both the experienced teacher and the novice teacher, when developing practices to be performed in the classroom, faced teaching problems; the collaborative work provided by the construction of the didactic sequence was developed from a knowledge that came from the observed and understood practice; the learning community, based on collaborative work involving the experienced teacher and the novice teacher, provided conditions for systematic, reflective and investigative thinking; the novice teacher gradually realizes that they are a lifelong learner, in a shared and professional perspective.

Thus, the learning community, constituted in collaborative work, within the scope of teacher research, tends to expand later, at school, for the group of teachers, allowing, as Imbernón (2009) argues, that all educators are involved in the process of improving pedagogical practice so that students' learning objectives are achieved.

### **Final Considerations**

The purpose of this paper was motivated by two factors that mobilized its construction: the participation of the authors in an interinstitutional research that deals with the subject reported herein and the observation of the restricted production of the theme of collaboration and collaborative research related to the beginning of the teaching profession. Of the 161 Brazilian papers found in the Scielo Base and 54 BDTD works, including theses and dissertations, only 1 work in each database refer to collaborative work or collaborative research connected to the beginning of the teaching profession and none to the process of professional induction in that early career period.

This review, although limited to two electronic libraries, raised questions regarding the concern of schools and education networks with the entry of new teachers or the way they have been organizing themselves to welcome and accompany these beginners.

In the paper, we sought to argue that the various forms of intentional collective work and with a focus on the learning of teachers and students demand a review of the conditions of schools and the role of managers in promoting and sustaining practices based on collaboration, reflection and support to professional learning. This institutional support is decisive for the beginning teacher who is still learning to teach and needs to assimilate and adapt to an already established teaching culture. The responsibilities you assume are the same as the experienced teacher and schools expect you to face and solve problems in the same way as the teacher. Tensions and insecurities can be reduced when participating in collaborative spaces that have a training objective aimed at the acquisition and exchange of professional knowledge and the development of skills to work in the profession.

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### Contribution of each author

Author 1: discussion of theoretical concepts, contribution to the design and analysis, data interpretation.

Author 2: contribution to the design and analysis, data interpretation.

Author 3: contribution to the design and analysis, discussion of results.

Author 4: contribution to the design and analysis, final review.

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