Pedagogical knowledge in the training of teachers: analysis of a textbook

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ABSTRACT
The objective of this article is to verify the pedagogical knowledge present in the training of teachers by analyzing Pedagogy and Teaching Practice (2012), a textbook by Maria Amélia R.S. Franco that makes up part of the Formation of Teaching series, published by Cortez. Textbooks are both products and producers of knowledge and school practices (Bufrem; Schmidt; Garcia, 2006), as well as constructors of personal and professional identities. This qualitative survey was based on document analysis and content analysis (Bardin, 2011) to reveal the knowledge addressed in the textbook. To guide the analysis, the following themes and methodological references were found: pedagogy, didactics, educational practices, pedagogical practices, teaching practices, pedagogical subjectivity and dialogicity, and action research as methodological references. The results show that the book contains knowledge that can contribute to the training of teachers and provides a method of research that is pedagogically grounded for the use of teachers in school group practices.

Keywords: pedagogical didactic knowledge, didactic manuals, teacher training.

1 INTRODUCTION
The intention of this study is to explore the role of textbooks in the training of teachers and in their practice through a discussion of pedagogical manuals and readings for teachers. Its specific objective is to analyze the pedagogical-didactic knowledge in Pedagogy and Teaching Practice, written by Maria Amélia

R.S. Franco, part of the Formation of Teaching series published by Cortez (2012). This series is part of a teacher education collection created to assist licensed and practicing teachers, and offering “[...] reference books for scientific, technical and pedagogical preparation” (Pimenta, 2012, p. 11).

The rationale for the research is the existence of gaps in the research analyzing pedagogical-didactic knowledge in textbooks for the training of teachers, as pointed out by Hegeto (2014). In this
work, the researcher analyzed nine textbooks of general didactics with the objective of verifying the characteristics of textbooks that have influenced the trajectory of general didactics since the 1980s. This period of time is related to the political and social context of Brazil after the military dictatorship. From the 1980s, in a scenario of open politics, national education meetings multiplied and debates arose about the role of education and didactics in building a more just society (HEGETO, 2014).

Hegeto (2014) analyzed books from the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s. For this reason, continuing with his studies, we opted for the analysis of books published from the decade of 2010. We chose to analyze Pedagogy and Teaching Practice in Franco's book (2012) after a survey that identified 30 titles in the didactic-pedagogical area. For the literature review, we consider research on manuals, published since 2000, with the purpose of broadening the understanding of the trends of such research in Brazil. Another rationale is to contribute to the area of pedagogy and research in manuals and reading materials for teachers.

1.1 TEXTBOOKS AIMED AT TRAINING TEACHERS

In this study, the term “pedagogical-didactics textbooks” refers to books and readings aimed at the initial and continuing training of teachers in the area of general didactics, rather than to books and readings in specific didactics. It is understood that pedagogical textbooks have the function of providing the necessary knowledge for the training of teachers, establishing by what forms understanding should be transmitted and assimilated and contributing to teachers’ conception of identity (Silva, 2003).

The textbooks may also constitute ways of doing and of constructing education, producing professional and personal identities, and referencing and standardizing pedagogical practices (Bufrem; Schmidt; Garcia, 2006). They aim to explain school practices and legitimize teaching practices (Silva, 2003), at the same time trying to reconcile current practices with pedagogical innovations (Valdemarin, 2006). Textbooks also contain elements (concepts of didactics, teaching, learning and theoretical references) that permit an understanding of the pedagogical trends of teacher training courses in Brazil.

During the preparation of this kind of book, the authors adopt ideologies and preconceptions depending on their cultural context. According to Silva (2003), the authors select “essentials” from other sources; that is, they are inspired by ideas from other textbooks and books. The selection of these “essentials” for teaching practice implies what is “ideal” for the profession, which, in turn, confirms the authority to teach that which is considered important (Silva, 2003).
2 METHODOLOGY

Document analysis and analysis of content are the basis of the qualitative research. In the document analysis, the documents are consistent sources of information and content, made up of a rich source of data and new interpretations (Lüdke; André 2013).

For selecting the textbook to be analyzed, two kinds of documents were first considered: (1) books intended for training teachers, published in 2010–18; (2) academic publications, periodical articles, dissertations for masters degree and theses for doctoral degrees, published between 2000 and 2018.

The survey of academic papers and periodical articles derived from searching the following databases: Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations in the UFPR Library System; collection of the Brazilian Thesaurus of Education (Brased); Theses and Dissertations Catalogue from CAPES; and Google Scholar. Key-words and descriptors were used in the research: manuals for teaching to teach, pedagogical manuals, didactic manuals, manuals for teachers, teaching manuals, teaching to teach, textbooks for teachers and teacher training manuals. Initially, the survey sought publications from 2010 to 2018, but because of the lack of results, the search was extended by a decade.

Fifteen academic papers were found, among them periodical articles, dissertations from masters degrees and theses from doctoral degrees. Three of these corresponded to what Choppin (2004) categorized as research that uses the textbook as a historic document and analyzes its content, with distinct ends in view, such as: investigating the history of a theme or subject, analyzing the path of a subject, and studying the history of different teaching modalities.

On the other hand, the survey of didactic manuals consisted of searching for books in the digital collection of virtual bookstores and in academic libraries. Only the books produced by Brazilian researchers and aiming at the reflection and orientation of teachers’ work, were considered. Thirty books/manuals were chosen which address general didactics, that is, which do not deal with specific themes, such as the use of technology or the application of a specific teaching method for a subject.

According to analysis of the summaries of these 30 books, it was verified that the books address the orientations and reflections on pedagogical practice and instructors in a broad sense. The books are characterized by the discussion of general didactic themes. These themes point to the potential of Content Analysis, because this type of analysis allows to understand the intentions of the textual messages produced by the authors of books (documents) (BARDIN, 2011).

Of these thirty books, Pedagogy and Teaching Practice was selected, written by author Maria Amélia R.S. Franco, and published in 2012. The selection was justified because of the number of editions of the book between the years 2012 and 2018, and the number of copies sold, which was 3,787. This number of sales indicates the circulation of this book among teachers and students in training courses. According to the publisher, Cortez, almost 550 copies were sold each year.
The book was subjected to document analysis in order to reveal the pedagogical-didactic content and methodological references. The procedures proposed by Bardin (2011) were used for the analysis: pre-analysis, exploration of the material, and interpretation/inference/treatment of the results.

In the pre-analysis, a general reading of the material is carried out, with the intention of recognizing general characteristics of the material to be analyzed (Bardin, 2011). Next follows the delimited corpus of analysis, that is, “[...] the group of the documents taken into account to be submitted to the analytical procedures” (Bardin, 2011, p. 126). The delimited corpus corresponded to passages in Pedagogy and Teaching Practice which make the concepts, proposals and teaching concepts explicit for justifying the observations and practices in the initial and continuing training of teachers. The data was categorized in themes and methodological references and is presented in the following section.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF THE DATA

The analysis of the book revealed seven themes and a methodological reference proposed by the author, as presented in the following table. This pedagogical-didactic knowledge will be discussed in the following sections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Pedagogical-didactic knowledge present in Pedagogy and Teaching Practice (Franco, 2012)</th>
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<td>Pedagogy</td>
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<td>Didactic</td>
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<td>Educational practices</td>
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<td>Pedagogical subjectivity</td>
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<td>Dialogicity</td>
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<td>Action research</td>
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4 THE THEMES PRESENT IN THE PEDAGOGY AND TEACHING PRACTICE MANUAL

The themes will be presented in four subsections: i) pedagogy, ii) didactics, iii) educational, pedagogical and teaching practices, iv) pedagogical subjectivity and dialogicity. Sub-sections iii and iv are made up of more than one theme because they have conceptional relationships between them.

Pedagogy

The first theme is pedagogy, which the book considers to be a social practice whose objective is to organize, comprehend and transform educational practices.
What is pedagogy, after all? Before being considered a science, it is established as a social practice for organizing education in a determined time and space, reflecting its adequate means and purposes, always seeking to comprehend and transform the educational practices, in a way that attains its established objectives (Franco, 2012, p. 48, our emphasis).

In the beginning of the book, pedagogy is also recognized as a science that justifies and dialogues with teaching practices, as is pointed out in this passage: “I speak of pedagogy as a science, in the sense of its historical construction, of theories and pedagogical practices” (Franco, 2012, p. 30, our emphasis). These two perspectives of pedagogy (as a social practice and science) show up various times in the textbook, revealing an important theme for the development of the author’s ideas.

Didactics

The author constructs the idea that didactics is related to the teaching plan, through pedagogical practices and the students’ learning of knowledge, as is highlighted at the beginning of chapter 3:

In this chapter, I would like to discuss the issue of pedagogical practices, having as the background of the observations, the central issue of didactics. What would it be? Actually, such an issue is still related to the great question and proposal of Comenius: how to teach anything to anyone? We do not forget that the logic of the didactics is the production of learning (among the students) by previously planned teaching processes (Franco, 2012, p. 149, our emphasis).

Educational, pedagogical and teaching practice

In chapter 3, entitled “Pedagogical practices in multiple educational networks”, the author reveals the theoretical basis of the construction of her ideas. It differentiates educational practices, pedagogical practices and teaching practices. At first, these practices may seem synonymous, however there are approximations and distances between them.

Educational practices are presented as practices that reinforce educational processes.

Pedagogical practices, similarly, reinforce pedagogical processes. They contain five characteristics: i) they relate to the school culture and influence the social culture; ii) they involve collective actions, negotiated or imposed; iii) they contain intentionality, explicit or not; iv) they are an indicator of the particularities that qualify the educational processes of a society; v) they permeate teaching practices.

Teaching practices are the actions of the teachers. When these practices are not in line with the pedagogical sphere, they lose reflexivity, reinforcing the idea that teaching practices are not mere reproductions. This implies that these practices do not need a lot of investment to be materialized. Teaching practices need to be connected to pedagogical practices in order to acquire meaning and explicit intentionality.
**Pedagogical subjectivity and dialogicity**

The book also explores pedagogical subjectivity. This theme is related to pedagogical thinking and it is the way that “[...] the history, theory and pedagogical practices are interpreted by their protagonists” (Franco, 2012, p. 142). The author clarifies that pedagogical subjectivity was the instrument she used to understand the meaning of pedagogy for teaching practices.

Through this theme, it was possible to interpret and correlate the theories and pedagogical practices, as the textbook proposes. To substantiate the pedagogical practice, classic thinkers were used as theoretical references, like Sócrates, Comenius, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and Dewey, as well as contemporary thinkers, such as Saviani, Libâneo, Pimenta, Bernard Charlot and Philippe Meirieu.

The author proposes dialogicity as a theme that deserves to be featured and explains that this “[...] principle will be resumed by many pedagogues, but especially by Paulo Freire” (Franco, 2012, p. 46). Throughout the book, this Brazilian thinker has historically attached to other educators and pedagogues. Franco (2012) privileges Paulo Freire because he is a historical landmark of Brazilian critical pedagogical theories.

**Methodological references for teaching practice: action research**

As a methodological reference for teaching practice, the book proposes action research. The author believes that only action research is capable of investigating teaching practices and points out the limitation of scientific research in collecting consistent and significant data together with the teachers. Franco emphasizes action research as an investigative and practical activity that can help teachers to break loose from cauterized practices and help researchers to collect more relevant data, as is seen in the following passage:

> I consider that action research could be an instrument to make the work of researchers more potential, permitting them to produce more articulate knowledge for teaching practice, at the same time offering teachers the opportunity to become researchers of their own practice (Franco, 2012, p. 212, our emphasis).

The author stresses that the action research is an alternate methodology and pedagogical practice, whose objective is to produce educational knowledge and the formation of “critical and reflective research subjects” (Franco, 2012, p. 203).

To be effective, action research needs to comply with three prior conditions. First, the research methodology contains a specificity to transform the practicing subjects (the teachers) into a continuous, collective, shared, and prolonged process, not consisting of a mere collection of data from research in the field or the application of the alternate methodology in the class (Franco, 2012).
The second condition is the differentiated production of understanding and knowledge. For Franco (2012), the main researcher and the practicing subjects appropriately differentiate themselves from reality, in function of the roles they acquire during the action research process.

The last condition talks about the timing of the action research, that is, the simultaneity between the scientific research and the practice of teaching. Both happen at the same time, although at distinct levels and speeds, as well as with different implications for the perspective of the teachers and the main researcher (Franco, 2012).

The action research is structured into five pedagogical processes: dynamic construction of the group; resignifications of reflective spirals; redirection and evaluation of the practices; production of knowledge and socialization of understanding; and awareness of the new comprehensive dynamics. The dynamic construction of the group refers to the insertion of the main researcher in school. It seeks to mobilize professional cooperation and group planning for action, denominated as a group work contract.

The reflective spirals speak about the continuous observation concerning the practice, with the intention of the training of a critical-reflective teacher who is able to resignify its perceptions about the reality that surrounds it. Part of the reflective spirals lies in the evaluation of the practices. The evaluation should be referenced in the contextualized reflectivity grounded in the ethics and policies of the social environment. The moment of teaching practices transformation is designated by Franco as new comprehensive dynamics (Franco, 2012).

The action research aims at group action, reflexivity, planning and actions that transform society. According to the author, it is necessary “to make the teacher capable of better comprehending his practice and in this way being able to transform it […], in a movement that dominates […] teacher researcher” (Franco, 2012, p. 183). In this sense, the action research is proposed as a research methodology and instrument inherent to the teaching practice, acting as mediator between pedagogical and teaching practices.

5 CONCLUSION

The purpose of the Formation of Teachers series is to have an effect on educational reality through the teaching and learning process, teaching being a specific field of professional intervention in social practice, which should be recognized and enriched.

Analysis of the textbook Pedagogy and Teaching Practice allowed the identification of the pedagogical-didactic content that makes up the book. Seven themes were analyzed, as part of the results: pedagogy, didactics, teaching practice, educational practices, pedagogical practices, pedagogical subjectivity and dialogicity. In addition to these themes, it was possible to describe the action research as a methodological direction. The author, Maria Amélia R.S. Franco, seeks to justify this pedagogical-
didactic knowledge with theoretical references, interconnecting them throughout the book to construct her thesis that pedagogy as a science can support teaching practice. This theoretical basis characterizes the book as a pedagogical textbook that proposes to be a reference for teaching practice. Another factor that contributes to this conclusion is action research, presented in the book as an instrument capable of connecting pedagogy and teaching practice. Action research is also addressed as a methodology of research and pedagogical practice with the power to transform the understanding and professional context of teachers.

These results allow us to conclude that Pedagogy and Teaching Practice contains pedagogical didactics that can contribute to the training of teachers, due to a rich theoretical basis and a research methodology associated with teachers’ actions. It is necessary to continue studying the knowledge included in textbooks developed for teachers which can guide teachers in a formative process.
REFERENCES


