



THE OBLIGATORY AND NON-OBLIGATORY CURRICULAR INTERNSHIP AS A FIELD OF KNOWLEDGE IN THE INITIAL TRAINING OF TEACHERS: the perception of the students of the Pedagogy Course at Centro Universitário do Espírito Santo – UNESC

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to analyze the development of compulsory and non-compulsory curricular internship practices and their contributions to initial teacher training at Centro Universitário do Espírito Santo - UNESC, through the perception of Pedagogy students. The research was carried out by means of documentary analysis of the materials produced/used to carry out the actions of the compulsory and non-compulsory curricular internship practices. The materials produced/used by the students were structured forms that they handed in at the end of each term. In the case of compulsory curricular internships, the final internship reports were analyzed, while the documentation for non-compulsory internships was analyzed through the quarterly internship reports, which are submitted on the Higher Education Institution's own forms. The perception of students on the Pedagogy course at Centro Universitário do Espírito Santo (UNESC) about the contribution of compulsory and non-compulsory internships in initial teacher training was mapped using a questionnaire structured in the Google Forms tool. After surveying and organizing all the material available at the Centro Universitário do Espírito Santo - UNESC and applying the structured questionnaire using the Google Forms tool, the analyses were produced based on the thematic categories structured during the documentary analysis and the questionnaire, with regard to the internship as an approach to practical reality and theoretical activity in the exercise of teaching. After categorizing as described above, the information collected was organized into spreadsheets and graphs, objectively displaying all the aspects highlighted above. It is important to note that all the categorizations made were based on analyses that prioritized the research objectives and the epistemological paradigms of the research.

Keywords: Initial teacher training; internship; school; university.



1 INTRODUCTION

In the curricular structures of the initial training courses of the most varied undergraduate courses in the areas of biological and health sciences, human and social sciences and exact sciences, compulsory and non-compulsory curricular internships aim to offer students contact with the field of future professional activity, by bringing them closer to the reality existing in the field of activity and the theories developed in the curricular subjects.

In the initial training of teachers in the Pedagogy course, the focus of this research, the development of the compulsory curricular internship is a requirement in the course curriculum and must include experiences in all areas of the teacher's work, as determined by CNE/CP Resolution No. 2, of December 20, 2019, which defines the national curricular guidelines for the initial training of teachers for basic education and establishes the common national basis for the initial training of basic education teachers. As described in item VIII of article 7 of the Resolution, the focus must be on practice:

[...] through internships that focus on lesson planning, management and evaluation, under the mentorship of experienced teachers or coordinators from the internship field school, in accordance with the Course Pedagogical Project (PPC) (UNESC, 2019).

The development of actions inherent to the non-compulsory internship for Pedagogy students are regulated in Law No. 11.788, of September 25, 2008, which provides for the internship of students and defines the structure of the offer of non-compulsory internship by the granting institutions, as well as the obligations of Higher Education Institutions. Article 1 of this legislation states that the internship is an educational act that must be supervised and developed in the workplace, as it aims to prepare future professionals. With specific regard to the non-compulsory internship, the same law establishes, in §2 of art. 2, that this type of internship can be developed as an optional activity, added to the regular and compulsory workload.

According to Pimenta and Lima (2012, p. 33) "the internship has always been recognized as a practical part of professional training courses, as opposed to theory", especially by students who say that in the internship field they experience experiences for which the curricular subjects have not been able to prepare them. This narrative points to some questions that need to be problematized: are the

subjects offered in teacher training courses disconnected from practice? Can the experiences lived in the internship field subsidize the theoretical discussions of the basic subjects of teacher training courses?

According to Pimenta and Lima (2012), training curricula should not be groups of isolated subjects with no connection to practice. It is necessary for these disciplines to overcome fragmentation and enter into a dialog with the real field of activity, since the teaching function is situated in a certain historical space and time that requires a professional capable of seeing the collective and social character of their profession. It is therefore necessary to consider reality as the starting point for realigning curricular practices in order to provide students with the conditions and knowledge necessary for their professional performance.

According to Nóvoa (1999), teacher training needs to stop being excessively theoretical in order to enable reflection on practice, because “knowing how to do” needs to be aligned with the observation of theories in the real context of the classroom, because it is the exercise of reflecting on practice that will enable the re-signification of knowledge and its application in a coherent and dialogical way with the reality experienced, since learning the profession also takes place in its exercise, bringing the practical knowledge of school teachers and higher education institutions closer together, so the articulation of knowledge of a different nature inevitably takes place.

Initial training, according to Nóvoa (2009), should take place during the course of the profession, as many of the lessons inherent in teaching only take place in everyday school practice. There is no way to develop certain skills through theory alone, since teaching requires making decisions, solving unpredictable problems in everyday practice, in short, articulating knowledge and skills to achieve the proposed objectives. Therefore, the qualified implementation of compulsory and non-compulsory curricular internships is essential for the articulation of theoretical and practical knowledge by undergraduate students.

According to Calderano, Pereira and Marques (2010), the development of methodologies that expand the possibility of contact with professional practice and, above all, of discussing it during the initial training period,

[...] it can be said that the engine that animates and gives life to the internship - both in pedagogy and in other degrees - is the search for a

continuous relationship - possible and necessary - between theoretical studies and daily practical action (Calderano; Pereira; Marques, 2010, p. 251).

Therefore, we propose an analysis of the practices that involve the development of actions linked to compulsory and non-compulsory curricular internships and their contribution to the initial training of Pedagogy students. The analysis will be guided by the following questions: does the school offer spaces for collective reflection and research into practices during the development of the internship modalities researched? What are the effective possibilities for the teacher to research and reflect on the relationship between theory and practice in the activities inherent in the internship modalities?

2 STRUCTURING THE COMPULSORY AND NON-COMPULSORY CURRICULAR INTERNSHIP AS A FORMATIVE PRACTICE: A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

Even though teaching is a primary occupation, it was historically seen as something secondary of little importance or status compared to other professions. According to Tardif and Lessard (2008), teaching was seen as a preparation for “real life”, training workers’ children for the job market, escaping the educational purpose, appropriating social values, which made the practice of teaching unproductive and of little relevance.

However, this vision of work no longer corresponds to our current society.

Far from being economically marginal groups, peripheral or secondary professions in relation to the economy of material production, school workers today constitute one of the main parts of the economy of advanced modern societies, both because of their number and their function. In these societies, education represents, along with health systems, the main budgetary burden of national states. Therefore, one cannot understand anything about current socio-economic transformations without directly considering these phenomena (Tardif; Lessard, 2008, p.22).

Teaching is a specific job that must be carried out by professionals who have long and specialized training, and it is necessary to have permission to carry out this professional activity and, even though it is a job that requires planning, it is subordinated by higher authorities, both school and governmental.

However, this mandate is general and valid for all members of the profession who, despite the particularities of their situation and training, are led to pursue common, general objectives. With union and employer rules, their work is excessively and strictly linked to a network of collective obligations and demands of a varied nature (legal, social, economic, etc.), which gives it a particular physiognomy (Tardif; Lessard, 2008, p. 42).

Based on these perspectives, teacher training is an extremely relevant process for human and social development, and teachers need to be well prepared to provide better results and achieve their goals in the development of teaching and learning processes, hence the need to seek methodologies that enhance teacher training, as mentioned by André (2016):

Teachers play a fundamental role in working with children and young people who attend school. Teachers are relationship professionals, mediators of culture, symbolic analysts who solve problems in the face of uncertain realities [...] (André, 2016, p.18).

For Pimenta and Lima (2012), the internship has always been seen as the practical part of training courses, implementing the theoretical knowledge acquired. The exercise of professions comes from the practice of technical work, although there is theoretical knowledge, which is indispensable, it is necessary to develop specific skills to develop your own work, especially in teaching.

The internship is a component of the curriculum that is not a subject, but an activity. A didactic program such as the one outlined here needs to make use of this activity insofar as it enables students to get to know how the teaching process takes place [...]. In the same way, the internship can serve the other disciplines and, in this sense, be an articulating activity of the course. Furthermore, like all subjects, it is a theoretical activity (of knowledge and the establishment of goals) in teacher training. An activity that instrumentalizes educational praxis (theoretical and practical activity), the transformation of existing reality (Pimenta, 1995, p.63).

Thus, there is a need to train reflective teachers, i.e. those who do not have ready-made answers, but seek knowledge through reflection, analysis and problematization of their practice and experience (Pimenta; Lima, 2012).

We therefore understand the importance of developing didactics, as this is a fundamental area in teacher training, thus concretizing practice. Unlike theoretical

knowledge, it constitutes a method, an instrument for the teacher's transformative praxis during their lessons (Pimenta, 1995).

However, like any profession, teaching is no different. Every process of human formation requires time, dedication and continuous construction, and it is necessary to go through all the stages and, according to André (2016), the internship is one of them. It is important to consider that initial teacher training is the moment when teaching professionalism begins.

School and university need to work together, promoting a field of experience and professional learning, forming another space for the construction of practical knowledge, since:

The training of pedagogy students is the responsibility of the university. However, she won't be able to do enough training work on her own. Of course, the creation of laws and/or paid scholarships helps to build more efficient partnerships. The qualification of these actions will depend mainly on the training project to be shared by the two institutional spaces. We believe that the construction of didactic sequences, when experienced by undergraduate students in collaborative work, creates the conditions for them to learn how to observe, record and analyze classroom phenomena. They can also propose, act on and rethink actions that take place there. In short, students incorporate important elements in the construction of both practical and theoretical knowledge (André, 2016, p.78).

The collaborative work between the two institutions, school and university, should be highlighted when discussing initial teacher training. The relationship between these two environments is fundamental, as practice and theory establish a connection throughout the studies.

3 COMPULSORY AND NON-COMPULSORY INTERNSHIPS: LEGAL STANDARDS

Law No. 11.788, of September 25, 2008, establishes the legal parameters for student internships. Legislation establishes all rights and duties, as well as guidance on the proper internship relationships. The law defines an internship as:

Art. 1^{The} Internship is a supervised school educational act, developed in the work environment, which aims to prepare for the productive work of students who are attending regular education in institutions of higher education, professional education, high school, special

education and the final years of elementary school, in the professional modality of youth and adult education (Brazil, 2008).

As an integral part of initial training, various measures have been drawn up to encourage internships. In its Municipal Education Plan 2015 - 2025, the Colatina City Council, in its strategy number 15.7, which deals with supporting education professionals in their respective areas of knowledge, establishes:

15.7) support teaching practices and internships in secondary and higher education training courses for education professionals, with a view to systematically linking academic training with the demands of basic education (PMC, 2015).

According to André (2016), public policies for teacher training are fundamental. The initiatives of the country's governing bodies, as well as the formulation and oversight of educational policies, must seek to qualify teacher training, closing the gap between university and school and helping to introduce teachers to the profession.

We can highlight the internship in its two forms below:

Art. 2^a The internship may be compulsory or non-compulsory, as determined by the curricular guidelines of the stage, modality and area of teaching and the pedagogical project of the course. § 1^o The compulsory internship is the one defined as such in the course project, whose workload is a requirement for approval and obtaining a diploma. § 2^o The Non-mandatory internship is that developed as an optional activity, added to the regular and mandatory workload (Brazil, 2008).

The city of Colatina, in its Municipal Education Plan 2015 - 2025, in its strategy number 15.6, aims to increase the participation of undergraduate students in collaborative work, defines:

15.6) to support curricular reform of undergraduate courses and encourage pedagogical renewal, in order to ensure a focus on student learning, dividing the workload into general training, training in the area of knowledge and specific didactics and incorporating modern information and communication technologies, in conjunction with the common national basis of basic education curricula, as dealt with in strategies 2.1, 2.2, 3.2 and 3.3 of the PNE; (PMC, 2015).

In addition to these measures, there are other actions aimed at strengthening the field of experience in initial teacher training, such as the Institutional Program for

Teaching Initiation Scholarships (Pibid).

The program offers teaching initiation grants to students on classroom courses who dedicate themselves to an internship in public schools and who, when they graduate, commit themselves to teaching in the public sector. The aim is to anticipate the link between future teachers and public school classrooms. With this initiative, Pibid links higher education (through undergraduate programs), schools and state and municipal systems [...] Among Pibid's proposals is to encourage teaching careers in the areas of basic education with the greatest shortage of teachers with specific training: science and mathematics for the fifth to eighth grades of elementary school and physics, chemistry, biology and mathematics for secondary school (MINISTÉRIO DA EDUCAÇÃO, 2018).

However, it is necessary to analyze the functionality of internships in the context of initial teacher training, as well as the perception of Pedagogy students in relation to the theoretical and practical environment of their internships.

4 MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research analyzed the development of compulsory and non-compulsory curricular internship practices and their contributions to initial teacher training at Centro Universitário do Espírito Santo - UNESC, through the perception of Pedagogy students. The aim of the research was to explore, through documentary analysis, the materials produced/used to carry out the actions in the development of compulsory and non-compulsory curricular internship practices, and through a structured questionnaire, to explore the perception of the students of the Pedagogy course at Centro Universitário do Espírito Santo - UNESC, about the contribution of compulsory and non-compulsory curricular internships in the initial training of teachers.

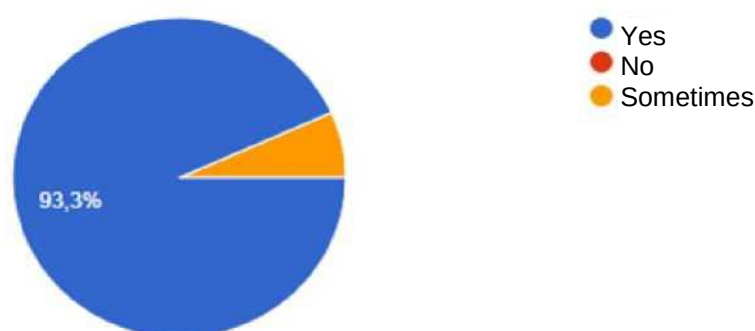
After surveying and organizing all the material available at the Centro Universitário do Espírito Santo (UNESC) and applying the structured questionnaire using the Google Forms tool, analyses were produced based on the thematic categories structured during the documentary analysis and the questionnaire, with regard to the internship as an approach to practical reality and theoretical activity in the exercise of teaching. After categorizing as described above, the information collected was organized into spreadsheets and graphs, objectively displaying all the

aspects highlighted above. It is important to note that all the categorizations made will be analyzed according to the research objectives and the epistemological paradigms of the research. **(CEP Consubstantiated Opinion - No. 5.427.114) - Status: Approved).**

5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

When they took part in the questionnaire, the students of the Pedagogy course at Centro Universitário do Espírito Santo - UNESC, expressed their perceptions of the practices they experienced in the compulsory and non-compulsory internships, and were asked about their satisfaction and the effectiveness of the activities for their initial training.

Regarding the contribution of the non-mandatory internship to critical reflection on their future teaching practice as well as their personal goals, 93.7% of the students responded positively. We can therefore affirm the importance of the internship activity in developing ideas, points of view and exchanges of experiences, giving students the opportunity to build reflective thinking, taking into account the entire environment in which they are inserted.

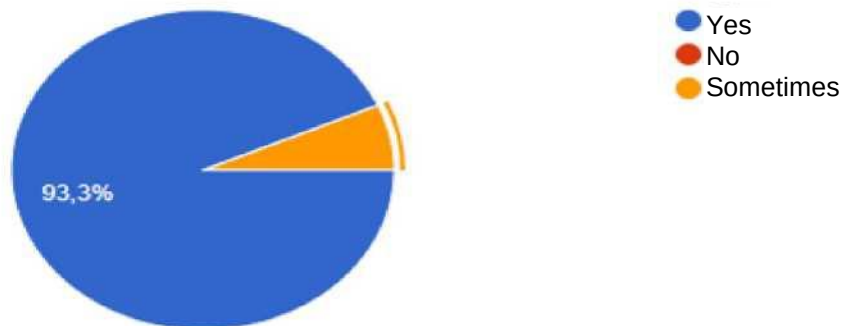


Graph 1 - Reflection on internship practice

Source: The authors

When asked if the UNESC Pedagogy students were able to understand the purpose of the work carried out during the internship, as well as the results of the activities developed by them, 93.3% of them answered yes. The results obtained indicate that the subjects taken contribute to the initial training of teachers, enabling them to recognize the perspectives and purposes of their work:

In order to act in these situations, observation, analysis, comparison and differentiation skills must be developed, everything that can help to understand what is happening in the work environment and to find strategies for dealing with the challenges that arise daily in professional practice (André, 2016, p.24).



Graph 2 - Students' perceptions during the internship

Source: The authors

When asked if the experience in the school environment provides the opportunity to reflect on necessary points that can contribute to improvements in their training, 100% of the participants agreed in the affirmative. In this way, we can see that the training process has contributed to the students' critical reflection on their practice, as well as observing the positive and negative points that need to be improved, in order to successfully carry out their training process and achieve good performance.

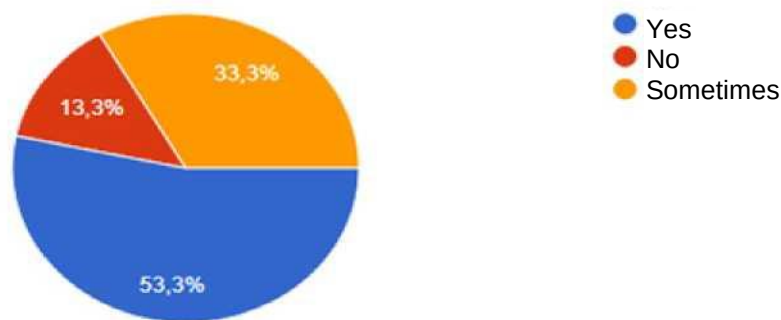


Graph 3 - Experiences in the school environment

Source: The authors

The relationship between university and school is a fundamental factor in professional development, and these two spaces are environments where theory and practice meet. The quality of the internships will depend primarily on the relationship between the two. In the answers obtained from the questionnaire, 53.3% of the

participants believe that the university and the school work together in a partnership, another 33.3% answered “Sometimes” and 13.3% answered “No”.

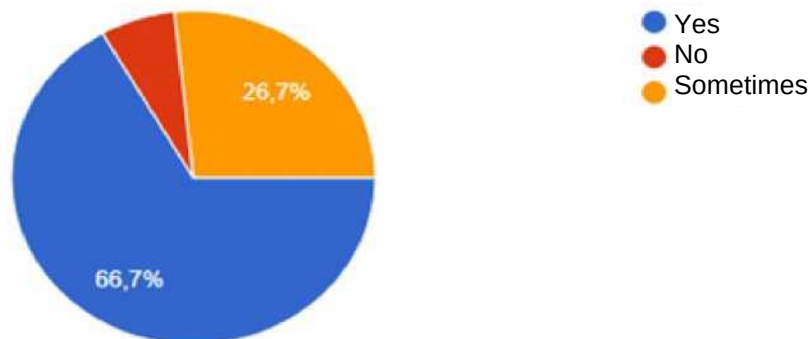


Graph 4 - Partnership between university and school

Source: The authors

With regard to the students' perception of whether they felt prepared to work in teaching in the future and achieve results in their students' learning, a total of 66.7% of the participants answered that they felt prepared to face the challenges of the classroom, another 13.3% considered themselves partially prepared and 20% were not confident of their preparation.

Therefore, the internship period is an opportunity to exchange knowledge and acquire experiences, with the support of the teacher in charge of the classroom in which the intern is working, who plays a fundamental role in contributing to the student's initial teacher training within the University-School cooperation system.



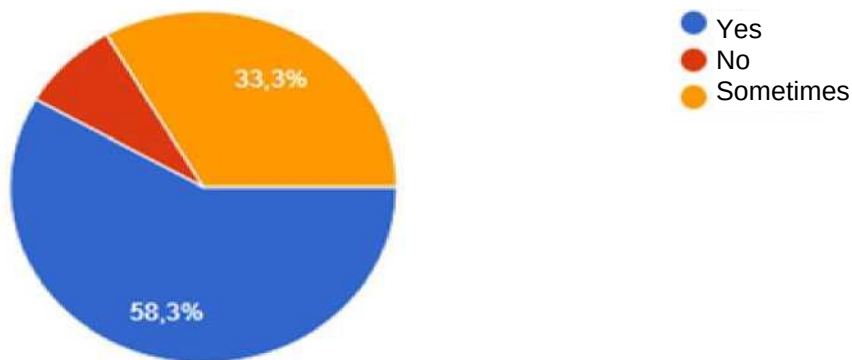
Graph 5 - Cooperation between teachers

Source: The authors

In view of this, when faced with future challenges at the start of a teaching career, there is a need to seek support from experienced professionals in order to encourage teachers to start practicing.

Many teachers say they benefited from the support of an experienced colleague, a kind of informal mentor, at the start of their career or when they were given a new role. This collaboration seems to have been extremely valuable for these teachers. Sometimes novices go to an experienced teacher to ask for tips on planning, teaching and working. In some cases, experienced teachers need to help young people fill in the gaps in their university education. Young teachers often talk about moral support or support in a general sense, which sounds like a form of encouragement. Experienced teachers, on the other hand, seem to appreciate this kind of collaboration. It should be noted that teachers also seem to collaborate more easily when they are novices, perhaps because they need an exchange to ensure and help them master the demands of the profession, or because they are more available and dynamic than older teachers (Tardif; Lessard, 2008, p.185).

As we saw earlier, the school is a practical environment, providing the trainee with the opportunity to experience the reality of the workplace and the challenges encountered there. In this way, the partnership between school staff and trainees must be a collaborative relationship, in which the school, through its experience, contributes to the initial training of the trainee it is accompanying.

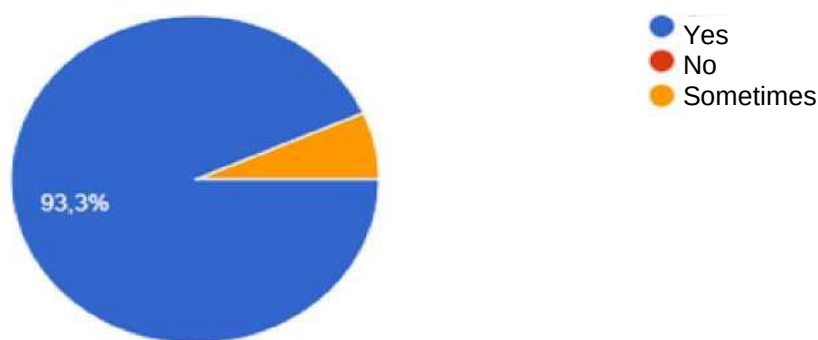


Graph 6 - Collaboration of the school

Source: The authors

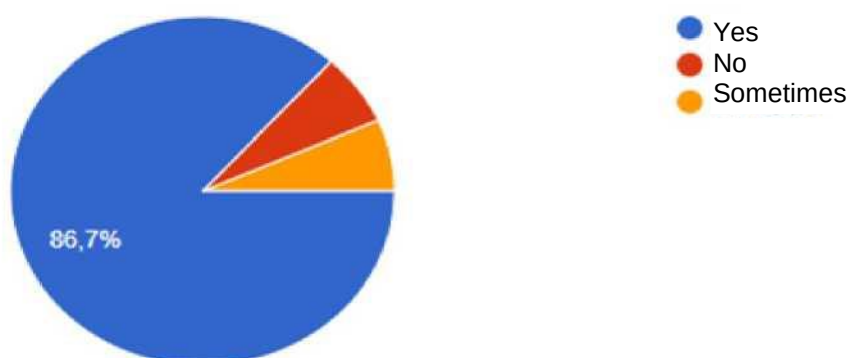
Around 58.3% of the students reported that the schools were willing to help them gain experience in the initial stage of their training, during the compulsory curricular internship at the end of the pedagogy course.

At the same time, the participants were also convinced that the non-compulsory internship allowed them to understand the dynamics and workings of the institution, providing them with knowledge that they will need in their professional practice.



Graph 7 - Students' perception of the dynamics and functioning of the knowledge acquired
Source: The authors

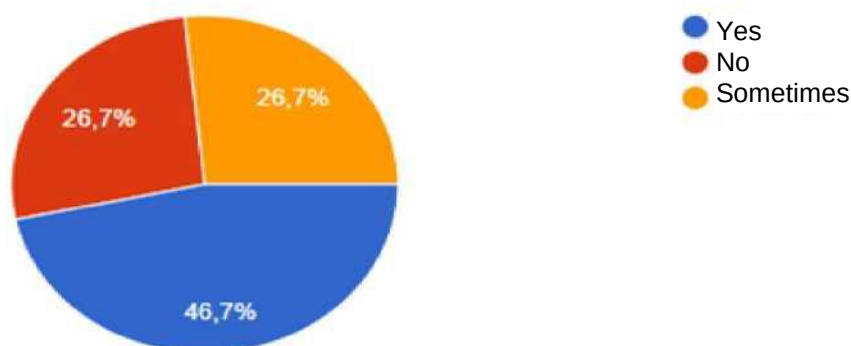
The students were asked how the content applied at university linked up with the practical knowledge they experienced during their internships, and the results were satisfactory. The UNESC Pedagogy students showed confidence in being able to establish a relationship between theory and practice.



Graph 8 - Relationship between theory and practice
Source: The authors

According to André (2016), there needs to be an articulation between the experiences lived in schools and the syllabus of initial training courses, as well as the importance of school supervisors knowing the theoretical and methodological foundations taught in undergraduate courses.

Regarding the choice to study Pedagogy, the results show that 46.7% of the students said that, at some point during the non-mandatory internship, they had doubts about their choice in teaching practice, another 26.7% reported that they sometimes felt uncertain about their choice, and a further 26.7% said that they had no doubts about their choice in teaching practice during the internship.

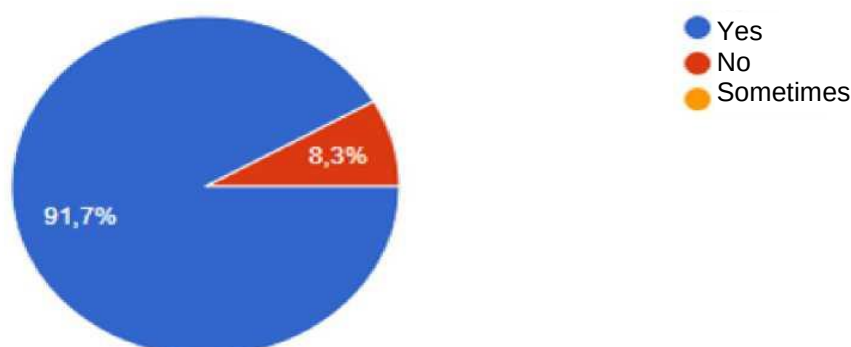


Graph 9 - Doubts about choosing teaching

Source: The authors

The systematization of teaching work can be seen as a difficulty by Pedagogy students. Teaching is not an easy job; it involves a series of skills and responsibilities in the work process. In addition to the job of teaching, there is a responsibility for the human formation of your students.

Whether they like it or not, teachers are caught up in a spider's web of codified work requirements: they are unionized, employees of a public institution, agents of instruction, implementers of programs, evaluators of students according to the organization's standards, etc. His work is planned, programmed, controlled: on such and such a day, at such and such a time, he must work with such and such a group of students, to teach such and such a subject for such and such a time. Their position in the school organization is determined by the rules that govern the organization of school work. However, despite this formal veil of conditions that surrounds them, teachers work personally with other people, with children and young people with whom they need to establish human relationships. They therefore have to constantly go beyond the codified roles that define their task and status, and reinvent their relationship with their students day after day. At the same time, they need to be able to justify themselves to the official regulations that govern their work and to other players, especially parents, the school board and public opinion. (Tardif; Lessard, 2008, p.282).



Graph 10 - Motivation of the compulsory internship for studies

Source: The authors

The graph above shows that the responses of the students who did a

compulsory internship on the UNESC Pedagogy course say that it motivated them to study better, making the syllabus of the subjects more meaningful. As part of the training criteria for degree courses, the compulsory internship requires students to dedicate their time and studies to the school environment as a formative activity.

According to Pimenta and Lima (2012), during internships, future teachers are introduced to understanding the complexity of established institutional practices, as well as the actions practiced by their professionals. Therefore, it should be noted that:

This can only be achieved if the internship is a concern, an axis of all the subjects in the course, and not just those wrongly called “practical”. According to our understanding, all disciplines are both “theoretical” and “practical”. In a teacher training course, all the subjects, the foundations and the didactics, must contribute to its purpose, which is to train teachers based on analysis, criticism and proposing new ways of doing education. All disciplines need to offer knowledge and methods for this process (Pimenta; Lima, 2012, p.44).

During both paid and compulsory internships, students develop an awareness of the skills that help them to carry out systematized work and produce better. The internship as a field of research for initial teacher training induces students to search for new knowledge in relation to existing explanations, as well as the reality they perceive during their activities, imposes in a certain way an investigative and analytical stance and, above all, the construction of a thinking professional. According to Pimenta and Lima (2012), the objective of internships goes beyond bringing theory and practice closer together, and also becomes a way of reflecting on reality.

6 CONCLUSION

This research has provided an analysis of the functionality and collaboration of internships in initial teacher training during higher education, by tracing the history of internship activities in teacher training as a field of knowledge and teacher improvement. The students of Centro Universitário do Espírito Santo - UNESC, participated voluntarily in the questionnaire, and their views on the themes presented were essential for analyzing the students' perception of their participation in internships and their contributions to the professional development of teachers.

Compulsory and non-compulsory internships in the pedagogy course have in

common the aim of bringing students closer to the reality of the teachers' working environment, the school. We can see the importance of coherence between the university and the school in this learning process for Pedagogy students, bearing in mind that the content and subjects applied in the course need to dialogue with the experiences of the school and classroom, and be able to serve as support for the challenges to be encountered by the future teacher in relation to teaching their students.

Although the partnership between university and school is essential, other aspects also have a direct impact on the internship experience, as students need to develop critical, reflective and analytical thinking about the situations at hand, as this exercise contributes to building and consolidating knowledge during their training.

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