MEDIATION IN EDUCATIONAL VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS IN CONTINUING EDUCATION TEACHER: AN EXPERIENCE IN CURITIBA'S NETWORK

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to present part of the analysis and results of an action-training survey, conducted with teachers and trainers of the Municipal Curitiba Municipality of Education. Inserted into the Project Cri @ ness, partnership project of PUC-PR and Municipal Education - SME. The questioning of this research came from the following question: how the mediation in a discussion forum on a virtual learning environment could contribute to a continuing education early grades of elementary school teachers? The theoretical constructs about the mediation that supported the data analysis and underlie this research are mainly in Masseto (2009). The methodological referral followed the case study assumptions made by Yin (1984) and Stake (2000). Participants were 58 school teachers, two trainers, being collected and analyzed 162 messages posted in the forum and interviews with trainers. The results of this analysis reveal the need for continuing education related to mediation in AVA forum, trainers network, continued training carried out in the same environment, using the same technological tools and under the same intended assumptions by the school teachers.

Keywords : Pedagogical Mediation, Virtual Learning Environments, Continuing Teacher Training

1- Pedagogical Mediation in Virtual Learning Environments

Virtual Learning Environments (VLE) are being increasingly used in continuing education processes. However, to further explore the possibilities of a VLE in the process of continuing education for teachers, and know the possibilities offered by the internal synchronous and asynchronous tools of the environment, it is essential the mediation carried out by the tutor. Gutierrez and Prieto (1994), point out that the mediation is fundamental in the educational process in any type of education.

Considering an educational process that favors, according to Prado and Almeida (2007, p. 67), the "(re) construction of knowledge, the authorship, the production of knowledge in collaboration with peers and significant student learning, "this educational process needs to devise the mediation of rather peculiar way.

The pedagogical mediation is pointed to by Prado and Martins (2001) as an element essential for carrying out the educational process. In Masseto's (2009, p.144) understanding, the mediation is:

> [...]the trainer's attitude to integrate, interact, socialize, encourage, reflect, and assist with the willingness to be a bridge between the learner and their learning -. not a static bridge, but a "moving" bridge, which actively contributes to the learner reach your goals

Given this understanding, mediation that takes place is not knowledge, but rather the learning. Are the actions of the trainer in front of student learning that contributes to the achievement of educational goals. In other words, is the way to realize the approach of content that facilitates student learning.

Under the understanding of Masseto (2009, p.145), one goes beyond simply facilitating learning. Even before this process to take effect, several actions occur, such as:

> [...] gather information, list them, organize them, manipulate them, discuss them and discuss them with their colleagues, with the teacher and with others (interaprendizagem) until you come to produce knowledge that is meaningful to him, knowledge that is incorporated to their intellectual and experiential world, and that will help you understand their human and social reality, and even interfere with Mediation

Teaching is present in all these moments of student learning and each time it is performed in a way. That is, while pedagogical attitude of the trainer as

a **rolling bridge;** according to the author, in front of student learning, the mediation is manifested in many ways, adapting to their needs.

Thus, it is possible to think of features for the mediation. Masseto (. 2009, p 145-146) provides the following:

> [...] dialogue permanently according to what happens at the moment; exchange experiences; discuss doubts, questions or problems; introduce leading questions; guide on needs and technical knowledge or difficulty when the apprentice can not forward them alone; ensure the dynamics of the learning process; propose problem situations and challenges; initiate and encourage reflections; create exchange between learning and real society where we are, in many different ways; collaborate to establish connections between the acquired knowledge and new concepts; do point to other similar situations; put the student face to face with ethical, social, professional sometimes conflicting; collaborate to develop critical regarding the amount and validity of the data; cooperate so that the learner use and command of new technologies to their learning and not be controlled by them or by those who have programmed; collaborate so that they learn to communicate knowledge either through conventional means, whether through new technologies.

The presented features seem to provide elements or practices to be held during the mediation. The very technological tools available to the trainer in the virtual learning environment, namely, *chat,* e-mail,forum, among others, contribute and stimulate the realization of such practices or, rather, contribute to the transformation of the characteristics presented by Masseto (2009) in own activities of mediation in the educational process.

However, the development of activities that can and should be developed in the pedagogical mediation, based on the presented features depend on the understanding and role of the trainer.

The propositions of Losso (2009 p. 97) contribute to this discussion. The author discusses the mediation understand that "understanding mediation category and its nuances is essential both for theorizing about the teacher-tutor functions as for the interventions made by In that

him."sense,the trainer, to account for this scope, variety and dynamics of the pedagogical mediation process, need to develop some unique features of this function.

In this light, one can say that the relations established in the pedagogical mediation starting with the coordination of strategies to promote the process of teaching and learning. Such strategies not only underlie the

cognitive aspects, but are also present in personal relationships, social and cultural educational process.

So the trainer is the great differentiator of the educational process in the virtual learning environment, for it is "that questions in order to enhance the quality of interactions, which does not let the other feel lonely "(ALVES, 2007, p. 118). In this sense, the trainer to conduct the mediation, should be prepared to take on various tasks, which are summarized in a set of actions that guide and encourage teachers in the process of continuing education.

2- Routing Methodology

We chose to perform a case study because it is an empirical research and "[...] that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in its natural context, in situations where the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, using multiple sources of evidence "(Yin, 1984, p. 23). Evidence sources used are: interview with trainers[1] and 162 messages exchanged between teachers and school teachers in a discussion forum on virtual learning environment TELEDUC. This forum comes within the Cri @ tivity project (Curitiba, 2006), an action-training research project established through a partnership between the Pontifical Catholic University of Parana and Educational Technology Management of Municipal Curitiba Education.

In Yin (1984), also consider themselves the proposals Stake (2000, p. 436) on the case study. For this author, the case study as a research strategy is characterized precisely this interest in individual cases and not by research methods, which can be the most varied, both qualitative and quantitative.

In order to facilitate the encoding of messages, these They were arranged alphabetically by author. The code used was "Subject 001" (sequential order). Also it was removed from the messages the signature of the author of the message (when he placed it).

Then Atlas IT software, were coded all the participants and the amount of messages posted in each forum. Through this codification, it was possible to relate the quantity and quality of posted messages.

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[1] "trainer" in the Creativity Project context, is a professor at the network, allocated on Educational Technology Management of the Municipal Education of Curitiba, for the continuing education of the rulers of the school teachers.

2.1 Study Object delimitation

The investigative question that guided this research was how the trainer (established in the Project Cri@tividade-SME), should conduct the mediation through a virtual learning environment, So, to answer this question, there were interviews with six (6) trainers of SME and analyzed a discussion forum on virtual learning environment.

The choice of the forum considered the rules of "representation" and "relevance", considered by Bardin (1994, p. 97-98), sought to become a forum where happened greater participation of trainers. However, the distribution of tasks between the trainers makes each track a forum in progress, for the SME maintains several continuing education courses.

In the chosen forum was attended by fifty-eight (58) school teachers and two (2) trainers.

2.2   The trainers interview with

The interviews were conducted individually, in office hours EMS Technologies sector. The recording of the interviews was conducted standing up in possession of a script.

A transcript of the interviews was performed by hearing *software Windows Media Player* a Word *to*document.

Rifts transcripts, there was fresh hearing of the recordings, accompanied by text reading. This work was carried out to ensure a verbatim transcript. Then new hearing and reading were performed - this time to include in the text transcript ellipses indicating pauses in thought of the respondent or even the interviewer and the laughter and sighs. At the time of conceptual analysis, breaks the speeches, a laugh or sigh could emphasize a statement, demonstrate an irony, a concern, one neglect, among other actions.

2.3   Using a *software* data analysis

The Atlas-ti is a *software*, owner, for analysis of data that facilitates the management of various types of documents, namely transcription of interviews, reports, questionnaires, letters, images, audio, video, literary, journalistic texts,

virtual environments, as is the case this research, enabling the expansion of the analysis.

The treatment and analysis of data coming from a virtual environment, the context of this research, at first, could assume an automatic process, since the data are already digitized. However, Silva and Vosgerau (2007) point out that "there is a process of preparation and decision making that is necessary so that we can extract much information from the data collected.", As shown in items 4.3.4 and 4.4 .

3-   Discussion and Analysis ofData

3.1   Perceptionthat trainers possess its role as Trainer Forum

With the analysis of the interviews, it was found that several were the perceptions of trainers on its role in the discussion forum. This diversity of roles shows that engenders one role to another, or one is co-relates the other, we can still say that a function complements the other as shown in Figure 1.
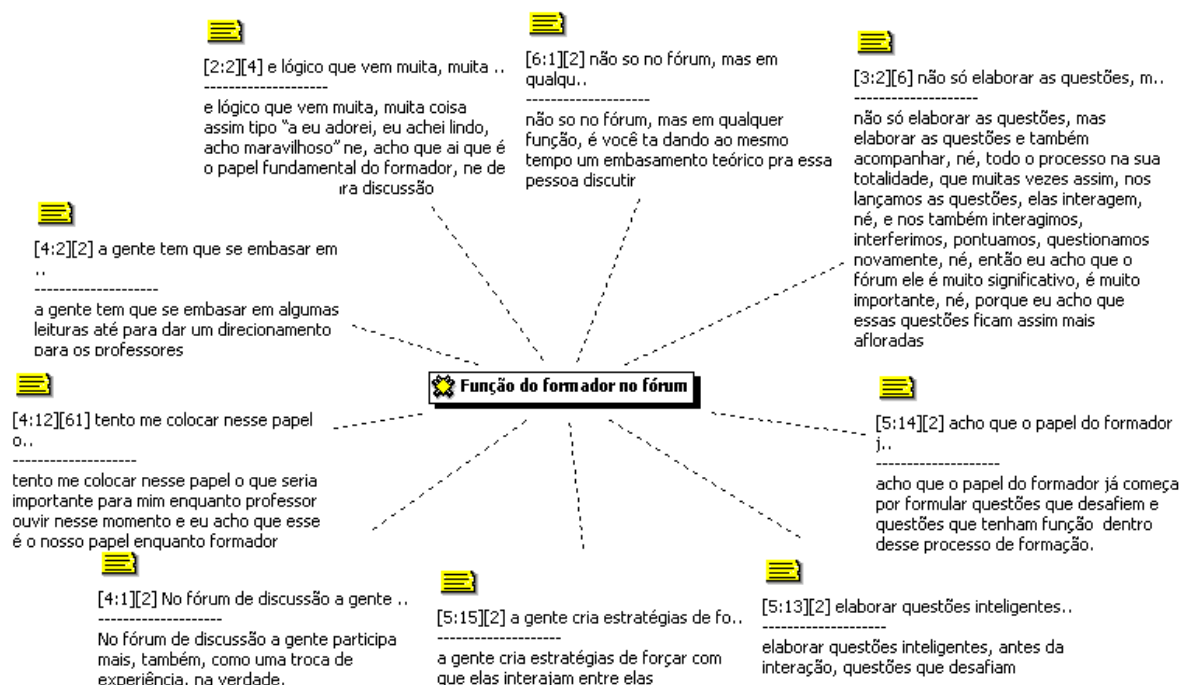

Figure 1 - Trainer's Role
forum.Source: Research data

Functions highlighted by trainers forum can be summarized as follows: (re) direct the discussion; provide theoretical basis; prepare questions for reflection and mediation-interaction. These functions run counter to the characteristics of pedagogical mediation appointed by Masseto (2009) and discussed in item 3.4. So taken up this author comparing the characteristics that he identified with the functions perceived by trainers to act on the forum, see Table 1.

Characteristics of Educational Mediation Masseto (2009, p.145-146)	functions, forum, Highlighted By Trainers Source: Collected data in Interview with the Trainer
share experiences,	provide theoretical basis (subject 06)
present guiding questions,	formulate intelligent questions, challenging (Subject 05)
	formulate intelligent questions, challenging (Subject 05)
propose problem situations and challenges;	put yourself in another's place and listening (subject 04)
initiate and encourage reflections;	exchange experiences with participants and facilitate such an exchange between them (subject 04)
do point to other similar situations;	have theoretical foundation to base the discussion (subject 04)
put the student face to face with issues ethical, social, professional sometimes conflicting,	interfere, freak, question (Subject 03)

Table 1 - Analogy between Masseto (2009, p 145-146.) and perception of forum Trainers.
Source: Research Data

With the Table 1 it can be seen that the characteristics pointed by Masseto (2009) to conceptualize the mediation, presented in column 1 of the table, find a corresponding action in column 2, so, functions forum highlighted by trainers in the interview. For example, Masseto (2009) points out that the exchange of experience is one of the pedagogical mediation features (presented in Table 4 in yellow). Also trainers believe that one of the former functions of the forum is to exchange experiences with participants, according to the report of the Subject 04 (so was also shown in column 2 of the table in yellow.).

Another element to be highlighted is the fact of the features provided by the orange and green, finding equivalence with a single sentence of Subject 05, so, "formulate intelligent questions, challenging" (subject 05), is an action that corresponds to two features of the pedagogical mediation highlighted by Masseto (2009), as follows: "provide guiding questions and propose problem situations and challenges discussion..

4 Analysis Results

In face of the data analyzed and discussed in this text, we can highlight some results.

For the trainers perform tasks identified in the analysis and Data presented here, it is necessary that the teacher is able to:

a) develop theoretical knowledge required for intervention,

b) develop sensitivity to put yourself in another's plan

c) place, the mediation that aims to develop (according to the objectives of the training process)

d) thinking the formation of the regent teacher as well as being their continuing education, as a self-training process.

In this sense, we see two distinct relationships, however, fundamental to a pedagogical mediation in a forum AVA, namely the relationship that the trainer establishes with the classroom teacher and the relationship that the teacher establishes with AVA:.

the face of these two moments and analysis of the data presented, we can infer some necessary actions to prepare the trainer so you can conduct a mediation in

In Relation to Professor Steward is required to prepare the trainer

a) to (re)direct an argument: it is necessary that the proposed formation of these trainers activities were held in which to experience the difficulties of maintaining the focus of discussion on the subject matter;

b) planning the mediation-interaction process: the trainer needs to plan its activities in AVA, especially in the forum. With outlined goals for more flexibility in pedagogical mediation, since the trainer will have a thought

structure organized to work with the adversities that may arise during the process of mediation.

      c)   exercise otherness: the previous willingness to understand each other and their needs is an attitude that demonstrates concern for the formation of the other.

Regarding the relationship with himself the trainer is necessary to cultivate:

      a)   the self-formation of their own continuing education for trainers can help to exercise your self-training;

      b)   the interest in formation of another, the teacher needs to be aware that changes in the educational practice of the teacher in continuing education depends on his performance as a trainer/teacher.

5 Conclusions

The analysis of the possibilities of mediation in virtual learning environment in the continuing education of primary school, general objective of this research was evidenced by messages exchanged between trainers and school teachers in the virtual learning environment forum, and the interviews with the trainers.

In general, the data analyzed in this study demonstrated a need for knowledge regarding the teaching exercised in the virtual learning environment forum. In this sense, we propose a training for teachers who work and / or act as trainers in continuing education projects to understand the mediation in virtual learning environment as well as on the aspects involving this mediation, namely , planning and teaching strategies that action.

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