Das representações sociais às representações profissionais: aportes para pensar a profissionalização docente

From social representations to professional representations: contributions to thinking about teacher professionalization

De las representaciones sociales a las representaciones profesionales: aportes para pensar la profesionalización docente

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RESUMO

A profissionalização docente constitui um processo complexo, atravessado por dimensões históricas, culturais e relacionais que atribuem sentidos coletivos à prática educativa e influenciam a construção da identidade profissional. Diante dessa complexidade, este artigo tem como objetivo refletir sobre o trabalho docente em uma perspectiva psicossocial, fundamentando-se na Teoria das Representações Sociais e em seus desdobramentos nas noções de representações profissionais e socioprofissionais. O estudo analisa como essas representações configuram modos de ser e agir na profissão, ao mesmo tempo em que revelam tensões, contradições e disputas de reconhecimento presentes no campo educacional, por meio de uma abordagem teórico-conceitual. Os resultados evidenciam a relevância dessa perspectiva para interpretar os desafios contemporâneos da docência, especialmente em contextos marcados pela precarização, intensificação e mercantilização do

trabalho docente. Conclui-se que a perspectiva psicossocial das representações profissionais e socioprofissionais oferece aportes significativos para compreender a formação, a valorização e o desenvolvimento profissional docente, podendo contribuir para ampliar o debate sobre políticas e práticas formativas.

Palavras-chave: Profissionalização docente; Representações profissionais; Representações socioprofissionais.

ABSTRACT

Teacher professionalization constitutes a complex process, shaped by historical, cultural, and relational dimensions that assign collective meanings to educational practice and influence the construction of professional identity. In light of this complexity, this article aims to reflect on teaching work from a psychosocial perspective, grounded in the Theory of Social Representations and its developments in the notions of professional and socio-professional representations. Through a theoretical-conceptual approach, the study analyzes how these representations shape ways of being and acting within the profession, while also revealing tensions, contradictions, and struggles for recognition present in the educational field. The findings highlight the relevance of this perspective for interpreting the contemporary challenges of teaching, especially in contexts marked by the precarization, intensification, and commodification of educational work. It is concluded that the psychosocial perspective of professional and socio-professional representations offers significant contributions to understanding teacher education, professional recognition, and development, potentially enriching the debate on formative policies and practices.

Keywords: Teacher professionalization; Professional representations; Socio Professional representations.

RESUMEN

La profesionalización docente constituye un proceso complejo, atravesado por dimensiones históricas, culturales y relacionales que otorgan sentidos colectivos a la práctica educativa e influyen en la construcción de la identidad profesional. Ante dicha complejidad, este artículo tiene como objetivo reflexionar sobre el trabajo docente desde una perspectiva psicosocial, fundamentándose en la Teoría de las Representaciones Sociales y en sus desarrollos en torno a las nociones de representaciones profesionales y socioprofesionales. El estudio analiza cómo estas representaciones configuran modos de ser y de actuar en la profesión, al tiempo que revelan tensiones, contradicciones y disputas por reconocimiento presentes en el campo educativo, mediante un enfoque teórico-conceptual. Los resultados evidencian la relevancia de esta perspectiva para interpretar los desafíos contemporáneos de la docencia, especialmente en contextos marcados por la precarización, intensificación

y mercantilización del trabajo docente. Se concluye que la perspectiva psicosocial de las representaciones profesionales y socioprofesionales ofrece aportes significativos para comprender la formación, la valorización y el desarrollo profesional docente, pudiendo contribuir a ampliar el debate sobre políticas y prácticas formativas.

Palabras clave: Profesionalización docente; Representaciones profesionales; Representaciones socioprofesionales.

Introduction

Since the 2000s, the teaching profession has emerged as a central theme in educational debates, reflecting the complexity of discussions about pedagogical practice and its insertion into social, cultural, political, and economic dynamics. This field has been analyzed from various perspectives, with particular emphasis on reflections involving the social representations of the teaching profession, its definitions, and the intrinsic challenges of its exercise (Menin, Shimizu, Lima, 2009; Oliveira, 2010, 2018; Gatti, 2012, 2017; Tardif, 2013; Hypolito, 2015, 2020; Castaman, Vieira, Oliveira, 2016; Nóvoa, 2017, 2019; Netto, 2021; Mesquita, 2022; Pereira, Villas Bôas, 2023; Villas Bôas, Teixeira, Favoretto, 2024).

The process of teacher professionalization, especially in the contemporary context, requires the mobilization of theoretical and methodological frameworks that allow for an in-depth understanding of the profession and its implications for educational practices. In this regard, the present article seeks to discuss the teaching profession from the psychosocial perspective of social representations, drawing on the professional and socio-professional approaches as heuristic instruments. Considering that understanding the social representations that constitute teaching is a fundamental and challenging task for education researchers, the text proposes a reflection on the process of teacher professionalization, grounded in the Theory of Social Representations and its developments in the notions of professional and socio-professional representations.

Understanding teacher professionalization through this lens allows us to shed light on the symbolic, historical, and relational factors that permeate the construction of teaching identity and professional practice.

The proposed analysis recognizes that the teaching profession is not limited to the technical domain of instruction and is deeply embedded in historical, cultural, and social contexts that directly influence the construction of its representations. Thus, we initially advocate the need for a psychosocial perspective on the field of education, situating the Theory of Social Representations in order to subsequently present its contributions to understanding the process of teacher professionalization in contemporary times through the categories of professional and socio-professional representations.

The construction of a psychosocial perspective on the teaching profession

Before we move on to the specific contributions of the Theory of Social Representations to understanding the teaching profession, it is important to highlight that the discussion developed here is grounded in a psychosocial perspective (Abdalla; Villas Bôas, 2018), which recognizes the triad self–other–object/world as constitutive of representational processes. In this sense, when representing, the individual considers not only their personal background but also their way of thinking about the object within their relational group, since they are not immersed in a social vacuum.

Reflecting on the educational field in Brazil, Abdalla and Villas Bôas (2018), in dialogue with the conceptions of Serge Moscovici and Pierre Bourdieu, propose an analysis of the various structural problems of education and their representations, anchored in a psychosocial perspective. Although they have different theoretical frameworks, both authors agree that the symbolic dimension and the mechanisms of stability and change influence the construction of the social world (Lima, Villas Bôas, Abdalla, 2022). The authors state that:

> Bourdieu (1997a, p. 28) discusses the possibilities of understanding and explaining social reality, considered as social space and the space of symbolic power, but "without ignoring the conflicts that may underlie the transformations of these two spaces and of their relations"; Moscovici (1984/1991), in turn, is interested in analyzing both the process by which ideas are transmitted and communicated across generations and the fact that they transform the way people think and act as they become an integral part of their lives (Abdalla; Villas Bôas, 2018, p. 16–17).[1]

Based on these assumptions, the authors argue for the need to consider the construction of representation by the subject—in both its individual and social dimensions—as the result of their relationship with the object and with others. The subject, therefore, is at the center of a triangular relationship, being constituted by and simultaneously constitutive of these interactions. Such an approach makes it possible to overcome the dualistic perspective of classical psychology, which understood the interpretation of facts as the exclusive product of the subject–object relationship.

This psychosocial perspective also makes it possible to articulate the relational aspect of the triad individual subject/social subject/object with intersectional elements such as gender, race, and social class, which permeate studies in the field of social psychology. In the educational context, Alves-Mazzotti (1994, p. 60), revisiting Moscovici's (1990) conception, states that "for educational research to have a greater

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[1] Original: "*Bourdieu (1997a, p. 28) discute as possibilidades de se compreender e explicar a realidade social, considerada enquanto espaço social e do poder simbólico, mas "sem ignorar os conflitos que podem estar na base das transformações desses dois espaços e de suas relações", Moscovici (1984/1991) interessa-se em analisar tanto o processo pelo qual as ideias são transmitidas e comunicadas geracionalmente como pelo fato de elas transformarem o modo de pensar e de agir das pessoas ao se tornarem parte integrante de suas vidas*" (Abdalla; Villas Bôas, 2018, p. 16-17).

impact on educational practice, it needs to adopt 'a psychosocial perspective', on the one hand, filling the social subject with an inner world and, on the other, restoring the individual subject to the social world". In this sense, the "psychosocial perspective" emerges as an analytical key for understanding why certain cultural matrices of interpretation are so deeply rooted socially (Villas Bôas, 2008).

Other authors have also contributed to defining and applying the psychosocial perspective to the understanding of reality, such as Apostolidis et al. (2020), who analyze its use in the field of health. For them, this perspective represents a holistic approach in which the individual is understood in relation to the object/phenomenon in the context of interactions with others and with the social groups to which they belong. In this regard:

> It constitutes a comprehensive approach to situating individuals in a world of objects that are conceived and appropriated in relation to others (relational and intergroup dynamics), at the core of processes of social inscription and participation. This perspective […] directs the researcher's gaze and methodological choices according to the psychosocial texture of the phenomenon-object, positioned from the standpoint of social inscription and participation (p. 3).[2]

Inspired by Apostolidis et al.'s (2020) proposal for the fields of health and illness, we developed a diagram to illustrate the theoretical positions of the researchers analyzed regarding teacher professionalization, from a psychosocial perspective on the process.

Figure 1 – The psychosocial perspective and teacher professionalization
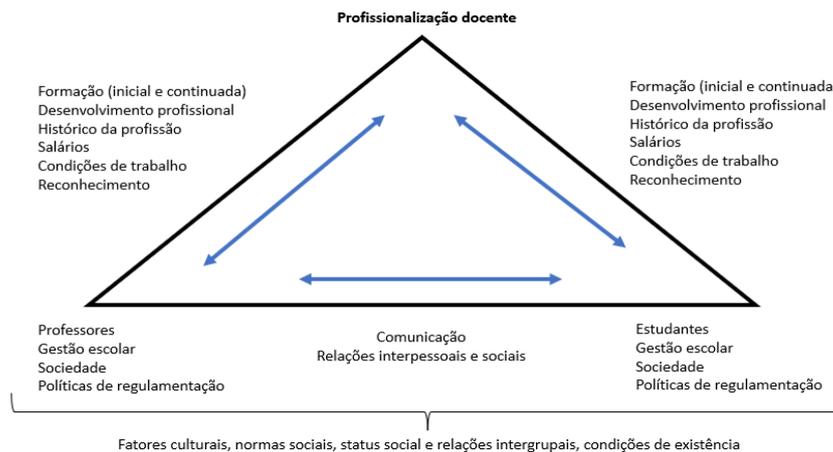
Source: The authors (2023), inspired by Apostolidis *et al.*, 2020

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[2] Original: *"Ele constitui uma abordagem abrangente para situar indivíduos em um mundo de objetos que são pensados e apropriados em relação aos outros (dinâmicas de relacionamento e intergrupais), no centro dos processos de inscrição e de participação sociais. Essa perspectiva […] direciona o olhar do pesquisador e suas escolhas metodológicas de acordo com a textura psicossocial do fenômeno-objeto, posicionado do ponto de vista da inscrição e participação social"* (p. 3).

From this perspective, teacher professionalization is conceived as an object of study constituted by a network of relational phenomena. This approach makes it possible to locate educational actors and their representations of themselves, of others, and of the situation, enabling inferences about the social functions attributed to each element that composes this process (initial and continuing education, professional development, history of the profession, working conditions, salaries, recognition), contextualizing them within their historical and cultural frameworks.

In this sense, it is pertinent to revisit Tardif's study (2013) which, in investigating the influence of historical-cultural processes on the contemporary configuration of teaching, identifies three major moments in the trajectory of teacher professionalization. The first refers to the "age of vocation", predominant between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in which teaching was conceived as an almost religious mission, marked by selflessness and a moral commitment to the education of the other. In this period, the material conditions of work were relegated to a secondary place and governed by rigid hierarchies, such as the supremacy of men over women, of religious over lay people, and of colleges over schools.

The second moment, called the "age of the trade", emerges in the nineteenth century with the separation between State and Church and the creation of the first public and secular school systems. Teaching begins to be regulated by the State, and the first contractual and salary regulations appear. In this context, the requirement of specific training and the recognition of a certain pedagogical autonomy represent an advance in relation to the previous stage.

In contemporary times, the "age of the profession" begins (from the twentieth century onwards), in which, under the effects of globalization and the strengthening of state controls, teaching is officially recognized as a profession. This recognition is accompanied by elements characteristic of this process, such as the requirement of continuous training, the existence of professional corporations, the adoption of an ethics oriented towards serving the public, and professional autonomy and responsibility (Martineau, 1999).

These historical milestones outline different ways of conceiving teaching work and make it possible to understand the tensions and contradictions that permeate the current status of the profession. Although formally recognized as a profession, contemporary teaching still faces challenges related to its social recognition, precarious working conditions, and the valuing of teachers' knowledge, indicating the persistence of elements inherited from previous periods.

Thus, the analysis of the teaching profession, anchored in a historical-critical and psychosocial perspective, is essential for formulating educational policies and pedagogical practices that take into account the complexity and specificity of teaching work in contemporary times, without ignoring the historical foundations that support it.

This is because, given the complexity involved in the process of teacher professionalization, understanding it through a psychosocial perspective makes it possible to recognize the multiple dimensions—historical, symbolic, and relational—that permeate the construction of teachers' professional identity. In this context, the Theory of Social Representations offers a powerful theoretical and methodological

framework for analyzing how the meanings attributed to teaching are produced, shared, and transformed in the everyday life of educational practices. It is through this theory that it becomes possible to understand how socially constructed representations influence the way teachers perceive themselves, others, and the profession itself, revealing the symbolic webs that sustain both continuity and change in the educational field. In what follows, we explore these contributions in greater detail.

Social Representations Theory: contributions to the discussion on teacher professionalization

The construction of common-sense knowledge has been widely discussed in the fields of social psychology and sociology by a group of scholars (for example, the various works of Henri Tajfel, Willem Doise, Serge Moscovici, Émile Durkheim, among others) who have sought to understand the cognitive processes underlying the apprehension of consensual reality, mediated by social relations that guide collective behaviors.

The term "social representations", applied to the context of everyday knowledge construction, was originally coined by Serge Moscovici in the 1960s, with the aim of describing the movement of accommodation of an object of knowledge within the sphere of collective communication. In this context, Social Representations Theory was initially proposed by this author in his doctoral thesis entitled *La psychanalyse, son image et son public*, from 1961. This work was turned into a book in 1976, partially translated into Portuguese in 1978 under the title *A representação social da psicanálise*, and published in full in 2012 as *A psicanálise, sua imagem e seu público*. The theory has as its central axis the role of the individual in the relationships established with the object and with the social context, attributing to this individual, simultaneously, the dimensions of individual, collective, and active subject in the process of knowledge production. Moscovici (1978, p. 26) defines social representations as "a particular form of knowledge whose function is the elaboration of behaviors and communication between individuals".

The theory proposed by Moscovici also incorporates contributions from classical social psychology by arguing that thought is converted into action through mediation between concept—an intellectual psychic instance—and perception—a sensory instance. Social representations thus constitute a third, hybrid instance, "which makes it possible to move from the sensori-motor sphere to the cognitive sphere, at a distance, to an awareness of its dimensions, forms, etc." (Moscovici, 1978, pp. 56–57).

In constructing this postulate, Moscovici draws closer to Émile Durkheim's concept of collective representations, coined to designate and explain the formation of "collective consciousness" as a system of beliefs and feelings characteristic of the emancipatory movement of social thought (Villas Bôas; Villas Bôas Filho, 2013). Both share an interest in understanding the social construction of knowledge. However, "Moscovici (2003) makes it clear that by opting for social representations, he sought to break with the associations that the term collective had inherited from the past, as well as with the sociological and psychological interpretations that determined its nature in

the classical approach." (Villas Bôas; Villas Bôas Filho, 2013, p. 72).

For Villas Bôas and Villas Bôas Filho (2013), Moscovici approaches Durkheim in the sense that there is a form of knowledge that emerges from the interaction between object, individual, and group, rooted in the social. However, he differs regarding the type of participation attributed to each of these elements in the act of representing. For Durkheim, the individual draws on socially shared consciousness to construct their individual conception. Their existence is exclusively linked to the social milieu and cannot be connected to psychic phenomena. Moscovici departs from this perspective when he points out that his epistemological construct rests on the triad individual subject/social subject/object; that is, the individual subject participates actively in the process of knowledge production through the construction of bonds with the object and the consensual universe.

In this regard, as Villas Bôas and Villas Bôas Filho (2013) continue, Moscovici incorporates Lévy-Bruhl's contributions on the evolution of thought and the construction of knowledge in so-called primitive and modern societies. For Lévy-Bruhl, there is no hierarchy between different types of knowledge—scientific and traditional—but rather a coexistence at both the social and the individual levels. Moscovici (2001, p. 51) comments: "Lévy-Bruhl does not accuse so-called primitives of having incoherent thought; rather, their conceptions do not fit into a scientific worldview." This perspective paves the way for a broader conception of representations, overcoming dichotomies between reason and emotion, concept and sensation:

> If these analyses deserve special attention, it is not only because of their impact or the problems they raise, which are far from exhausted. What matters is that they are no longer tied to preconceived ideas about the general distinction between concept and sensation or image, nor to dubious considerations about a single intelligence and particular intelligences. They begin to recover the intellectual and affective structures of representations in general. (Moscovici, 2001, p. 51).[3]

Social Representations Theory thus seeks to understand the process through which reified knowledge is integrated into everyday reality, stripped of judgments or distortions and linked to a system of values, notions, and practices that guide social interactions. In this sense, Moscovici (1978, pp. 26–27) states that social representations "have a constitutive function with respect to reality, the only reality that we know from experience and in which most people move."

From this perspective, knowledge is constructed in the intertwining between the individual subject and the social subject. Socially shared knowledge provides the elements with which individuals apprehend the social world and, at the same time,

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[3] Original: "*Se essas análises merecem uma atenção especial, não é apenas devido à sua repercussão, aos problemas que suscitam e que estão longe de se esgotar. O que é pertinente é o fato de elas não se prenderem mais às idéias pre-concebidas sobre a distinção geral entre conceito e sensação ou imagem, nem às considerações duvidosas sobre a inteligência única e as inteligências particulares. Começam a resgatar as estruturas intelectuais e afetivas das representações em geral*" (Moscovici, 2001, p.51).

construct their own reality. This knowledge becomes tangible and experienceable for the subjects who share it. As Moscovici states:

> Social representations are almost tangible entities. They circulate, intersect, and crystallize incessantly through words, gestures, and encounters in our everyday universe. Most social relations established, objects produced or consumed, and communications exchanged are impregnated with them. We know that social representations correspond, on the one hand, to the symbolic substance that enters into their elaboration and, on the other hand, to the practice that produces this substance, just as science or myths correspond to scientific or mythical practice. (Moscovici, 1978, p. 41).[4]

The individual subject, therefore, is not capable of constructing representations in isolation. This competence emerges in social relations, in which the object plays a dual role: it is simultaneously mediator and product of interaction. Social representations are thus configured as dynamic and active processes, shaped by their relational nature and constituting responses to the subjects' need to make sense of and act upon the new objects that continuously emerge in the social field.

In this process, representation highlights the new object, assigns meaning to it, and incorporates it into the subject's universe—a process that Moscovici (2007) calls anchoring. Faced with the unknown, individuals resort to their symbolic repertoire and associate the new object with familiar categories, seeking to make it intelligible. Anchoring is defined as "a process that transforms something strange and disturbing, that intrigues us, into our particular system of categories" (Moscovici, 2007, p. 61). Trindade, Santos, and Almeida (2011, p. 110) add that this process occurs through the insertion of the object into an already existing system of social values and meanings, by means of certain interpretive adjustments.

This movement culminates in objectification, the process by which what was previously abstract and unfamiliar becomes concrete and familiar, transforming concepts into images and incorporating them into everyday reality. For Moscovici (2007, p. 71), "to objectify is to discover the iconic quality of an idea or a being that is imprecise; it is to reproduce a concept in an image." Objectification involves simplifying and displacing concepts from their original context to more accessible categories, aligned with the imagetic experiences of the subject or group. In this sense, the "figurative nucleus"—defined as "a complex of images that visibly reproduce a complex of ideas" (Moscovici, 2007, p. 72)—becomes central in the representational process.

Thus, the processes of anchoring and objectification highlight the profound interdependence between the individual subject and the social subject in the

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[4] Original: *"As representações sociais são entidades quase tangíveis. Elas circulam, cruzam-se e se cristalizam incessantemente através de uma fala, um gesto, um encontro, em nosso universo cotidiano. A maioria das relações sociais estabelecidas, os objetos produzidos ou consumidos, as comunicações trocadas, delas estão impregnadas. Sabemos que as representações sociais correspondem, por um lado, à substância simbólica que entra na elaboração, e, por outro, à prática que produz a dita substância, tal como a ciência ou os mitos correspondem a uma prática científica ou mítica"* (Moscovici, 1978, p. 41).

construction of meanings, within a flow of production and circulation of knowledge that shapes both collective and individual reality.

Through these two processes that form social representations (anchoring and objectification), one can understand the close intersection between individual and social subject in the construction of meaning: through anchoring, the subject perceives the object as socially represented, and through objectification, the individual accesses their repertoire, which in turn is formed and constantly updated through social relations.

Given this understanding that social representations constitute forms of knowledge that are socially elaborated and shared, guiding practices, behaviors, and meanings attributed to objects in everyday life, it becomes pertinent to extend this approach to the analysis of specific contexts of social action, such as the professional sphere. In this sense, the concept of social representations unfolds into more situated categories, such as professional and socio-professional representations, which emerge from the collective and historical experiences of subjects in their workplaces and configure particular ways of perceiving, attributing meaning, and acting in work practices. These developments make it possible to understand how certain professions construct images of themselves, of others, and of the activities they perform, influencing identities, power relations, and technical decisions in professional practice.

## The specificity of socio-professional and professional representations

The concept of professional representation originates from professional psychology, having been introduced by Michel Bataille in the 1970s. According to Pedro (2012, p. 67), it refers to "a particular way of knowing professional reality shared by a group of individuals", thus being a type of representation whose object and place are specific, known, and located in a professional environment.

This characteristic constitutes the main distinction from social representations, which refer to broader contexts and are elaborated for the understanding of initially unknown objects. Professional representations, in turn, are centered on a defined, mastered, and shared object by all members of a group who perform the same activity, use a common technical language, share specific knowledge, professional objectives, a proper system of thought, and singular methods of action—that is, a distinctive "know-how" (Pedro, 2012).

Pedro (2012) proposes analyzing the teaching profession through a triangulation between professional representations, teaching practices, and professional identities, considering the network of communicational interactions established in the work environment. Professional representations can thus be understood as a specific form of knowledge about professional reality, shared by members of a collective with common language, knowledge, objectives, and ways of acting. In this sense, they fit within the scope of social representations, sharing their functions, but are distinguished by focusing on objects with specific professional value in the work context. Socio-professional representations, in this process, constitute an intermediate transitional stage toward the construction of professional representations.

Piaser and Ratinaud (2010) suggest that socio-professional and professional representations coexist, being permeable to each other, depending on two variables: the degree of professionalism of the subjects (related to time of practice) and the technicality of the mobilized objects (their absolute or incidental presence in professional practices).

Figure 2 – Coexistence of the two orders of representation
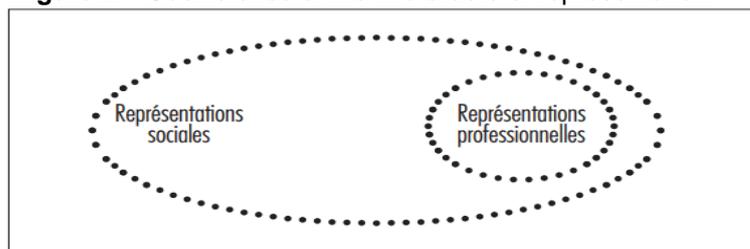
Source: Piaser e Ratinaud (2010, p. 11).

This logic implies that neither the expression nor the understanding of professional representations can be dissociated from the social and institutional frameworks in which they develop. Socio-professional representations would then be transient constructions elaborated by subjects in the process of training, mobilized based on projections about future professional practice, still without concrete experience in that field (Espíndola; Maia, 2021). Thus, these representations are not exclusively social, as they already contain forming professional elements, nor strictly professional, since they still lack practical experience—the key aspect that characterizes them (Piaser; Ratinaud, 2010), placing them in a tension between expectation and reality.

Fraysse (1998, p. 133, translator's version from French via Portuguese) situates socio-professional representations as "the process by which actors mobilize representations of their future profession, a mobilization that conditions their investment in training":

> Socio-professional representations are then defined specifically in a professional training context as an organized set of information composed of schemata that express theoretical and action knowledge, thus constituting a double commitment regarding a professional ideal. They are situated in a dynamic process of social interactions that precede professional action and express the reconstructions that the subject makes from known elements during training. Thus, they are, for us, both social representations and professional representations. (Fraysse, 1998, p. 137)

In a study with engineering students, Fraysse identified, through longitudinal analysis, how the institutional environment, curricula, and training experiences shape representations of the future profession. Two representational types were identified: the "scientific" one, associated with curiosity and reflection, and the "non-scientific" one, oriented toward the job market. The evolution of representations over time revealed significant changes, especially in courses with greater influence from

curricular and departmental structures, evidencing the interference of the environment in the construction of representations.

Another relevant contribution to this discussion was presented by Netto (2021), in a study that aimed to understand how elementary school teachers and future teachers represent informatics at this stage of education. The research was conducted based on the theoretical framework of social representations, incorporating the notions of professional and socio-professional representations. The results revealed indications of a professionalization process: while student teachers—aspirants to teaching—represented informatics from socially shared elements, practicing teachers conceived it in a more praxis-oriented way, through pedagogical and organizational references. Furthermore, the study evidenced that "the results allow for a better understanding of the social and professional issues that, in the eyes of the actors of the educational community, informatics and information and communication technologies in the school environment hide" (Netto, 2021, p. 10).

These analyses indicate that the construction of professionalism goes beyond technical and theoretical training, also involving interpersonal relations and the social context of the profession. Professional representations are therefore manifestations of the collective thought of a group, regulated by its history, culture, and practices, and function as analytical devices of the professionalization process. As Wittorski (2022) argues, this process is configured as professional development resulting from the co-production between the actor and the situation, with experience as the key element, constructed in interaction with the other and the work environment.

Final considerations

This article sought to analyze the process of teacher professionalization from a psychosocial perspective, grounded in Social Representations Theory and its developments in the notions of professional and socio-professional representations. Understanding teacher professionalization through this lens allows us to shed light on the symbolic, historical, and relational factors that permeate the construction of teaching identity and professional practice.

Social Representations Theory offers a powerful theoretical-methodological apparatus for analyzing how the meanings attributed to teaching are produced and transformed in the everyday life of educational practices. In this scenario, professional and socio-professional representations make it possible to situate subjects' thinking in relation to practice, problematizing how expectations, values, and training experiences contribute to the construction of being a teacher.

The socio-professional perspective, in particular, highlights that teaching identity and professionalism are not isolated products of an individual subject, but emerge from a collective, dynamic, and historically situated process. This is a construction regulated by psychosocial factors (such as motivations, status, aspirations) and by the social and institutional structures in which professional practice is embedded.

The movements of professionalization, as discussed by Tardif (2013) and indicated by Bordignon (2021) and Reis and Souza (2024), still face tensions and setbacks in the face of the precarization of working conditions and the commodification of education, which weaken the social recognition of teaching as a profession. In this sense, it becomes essential to recognize representations as interpretive pathways capable of problematizing contradictions, demands, and possibilities for strengthening the teaching career.

By valuing the psychosocial perspective, this work contributes to the debate on the meanings attributed to the profession, its challenges and potentialities, pointing to the need for training policies and practices that acknowledge the complexity of teaching work. Thus, understanding teachers' representations—whether in training or in practice—is a fundamental step toward devising more effective strategies for professional recognition and development.

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