Teacher Professional development/growth: an issue to address at the education center

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Abstract

This article, a part of the first chapter of the doctoral thesis titled Empowering professional development/growth of primary and high school teachers at the education center. This work has been performed considering the international trend of the last decade of teacher professional development/growth; in this direction, theoretical, conceptual and methodological contributions from research groups and researchers, stand out and help building sense horizons to understand development of teachers in the diversity and particular traits of education centers. Likewise, through a heuristic process, common concerns of researchers, emergencies and needs of teachers towards continuous learning, and its link with the educational or pedagogical practice are unveiled. The methodology followed in preparing this work mainly consisted of the bibliographic review of the field of study, analysis of reference works, abstraction and comparison of their main thesis. Likewise, files and charts were prepared, in order to identify categories.

Key words: Education center; Professional Growth; Teaching; Research; Teachers.

Introduction

This article corresponds to the first chapter of doctoral thesis titled Empowering professional growth of teachers of primary and high school at the education center within the doctorate of Sciences of Education, guided by Rude-Colombia State Universities Network. Findings presented below, allowed in 2010 and 2011 configuration of the research problem: ¿How empowering professional growth of *primary and high school teachers education, at the education center* allows to see the varied and multiple relationships which promote, or limit it? Which, in turn laid the necessary theoretic basis to advance in achieving the general goal, which consisted of empowering professional growth of *primary and high schoolteachers education, at the education center, and through it, evidence the various and multiple relationships which support, or limit it.*

Results explained in the article turned into the research preamble, and theoretic, conceptual and methodological input to develop the phases proposed in the study: (1) Description of teachers professional growth at the education center; (2) Reflection-action-reflection; (3) Recovering teacher experience along his professional exercise, in order to configure the concept of teacher professional growth. It is worth to mention that the research process was expanded through reading, analysis and relationship of doctoral thesis, which set the initial path to identify some of the problems suggested by addressing professional growth of teachers at the education center – second phase of study.

Methodology used for theoretic review mainly consisted of bibliographic review of the study field, analysis of reference work contents, and extraction of their main contributions. Therefore, selection of research materials was made under criterions of theme pertinence, and methodology. In this manner, advance was made on learning about bibliography for years.

In 2010, we used the stay at Sevilla University, Spain, to compare partial results from the work with Dr. Carlos Marcelo Garcia, by then, guiding the group of *Innovation, development, Evaluation and Advise on Eductation* (IDEA). Such encounter provided the possibilities to restate the research problem, and consider professional growth of teachers as a surging matter to be researched in Colombian education. The heuristic process continued through analysis of knowledge production by some representatives of world academic community (Aguerrondo, Avalos, Bolivar, Elliot, Fullan, Hargreaves, Imbernon, Novoa, Shulman, Vezub), who expanded the spectrum of teacher professional growth, and contributed to identify other researchers interested in this topic at international and Latin American scope.

In addition, the bibliographic approach to international and domestic research groups, interested in formation and professional development of teachers at

various education levels, resulted in recognition of productions, and, through them, identification of action lines, trends of teacher professional growth, progress achieved, and new proposals for beginner teacher, and on-duty teacher development.

In this direction, IDEA researches on processes of reorganization, change and education innovation, school improvement and professional growth. The group of *Teacher Formation Centered in the School* –FORCE, coordinated by Dr. Manuel Fernandez Cruz, and composed of researchers of the department of Didactics and School Organization of Education at Granada University, centers knowledge management on formation, teacher growth, curricular innovation, change and school improvement. In their researches they explain interest in formative education, teacher training, advise to learning organizations, permanent formation, and education leadership (Bolivar, Domingo and Fernandez, 1997). The team of Organization Development-EDO, led by Dr. Joaquin Gairin Sallan, department of Applied Pedagogy of Autonoma de Barcelona University, presents various lines of work, among them, organization and management of education institutions for change, innovation and improvement at the university, cultural change at Catalonian universities, formation and change in health care organizations, and evaluation for organization improvement of systems and institutions. (Gairin, 1997).

In the same line of teacher professional growth, the group of University Teacher Formation and Innovation-FODIP, led by Dr. Francisco Imbernon, and composed of Barcelona University researchers, centers its interest in university teacher training, education institutions organization and management, university student teaching-learning, education system policies and management, international cooperation for education development (Imbernon, 1998, 2007). In the Colombian case, the group Teachers and Contexts stands out, led by Dr. Carlos Valencia Calvo, and composed of teachers of the Department of Education Studies at Caldas University. This group has worked in some domestic and regional projects, which identify concern about studying teacher formation, and its work show a great interest in teacher formation at Higher Pedagogic Schools (Valencia, 2006; Taborda,, 2009).

Materials and methods

Within the research, the international apprenticeship at Sevilla University (Spain), provided access to periodical and newspaper library, and the library, to identify and select some primary and secondary sources, which in turn became as reference for new theoretic, conceptual and methodological research, at data bases of electronic journals and Luis Angel Arango Library (Bogota), and Libraries in Manizales city, Colombia). As a result, criterions for selection of doctoral thesis, books, book chapters and journal articles, were related topics and methodology, theoretic, conceptual and methodological contributions by internation-

al and domestic researchers, in basic and high school education, studies which methodological design included research action approach, studies performed from critical perspective, studies of in.situ professional development, and studies carried out in Colombia. The topic density required various instruments such as lists per authors and per topics, category matrixes and EndNote, which contributed in the organization, classification, grouping and analysis of categories.

Background treatment involved evaluation of teacher permanent training, education at centers, advise to centers, motivation factors in teacher permanent training, teacher professional growth from the perspective of change, formation planning and management, teaching-related teacher professional formation, social reconstruction, standard-based certification and learning system, teacher life cycle, and research-action, as a way of professional growth. In the same direction, diagnostics, report and state of the arts on this matter (Avalos, 2000, 2002; Calvo 2004; Fabara, 2004; Bezub, 2005; Messina 1999; Messina and Blanco 2000; Vaillant, 2002), present current status of teachers formation in Latin America.

Comparative studies, state of the arts, reports by world summits, forums, proposals made by recognized researchers allowed to identify trends, and challenges of teacher professional growth worldwide. In Latin American case, consolidation of researcher networks interested in this topic advances, in reflection and produces new theoretic and practical perspectives, which contribute to deploy professional development issue as a key item in teacher initial formation and continous. Therefore, it turns into a compulsory reflection in order to improve education quality in particular education contexts.

Results

In words of Fullan (1995), "teacher professional growth has a deficient story because of lacking theoretic basis and coherent approach [...], its is blurrily defiend and turns into something artificially separated from learning in real time" (p. 253), Imbernon 82002), continues its analysis and holds that "a possible approach to the concept of teacher professional development may be 'every systematic attempt' to improve labor practice, beliefs, and professional skills" (p.19).

In turn, Marcelo (2009), in his speech assumes complexity of the concept *teacher profession* and to seek a possible answer, he asks these questions, "'what is teacher profession? ¿is teaching a profession? ¿what is its specific job? (p.25). Questions, which, according to him, include a wide debate on "professions, their meaning and scope" (p. 25). It is worth to mention that it may be more complex to answer to the above questions, because their configuration includes a series of education, pedagogic, curricular and administrative factors. Although,

as Marcelo states, the concept of profession "results from a socio-cultural and ideolofical framework which influences a job practice, since professions are legitimated by the social context where they are performed" (2009:25)

Besides the above, there are other denominations to refer teacher professional development. In this case, they are identified in production around teacher professional development, which categories contribute its meaning and its deployment at the education center.   Therefore, continuous formation, permanent formation, in-service formation, human resources development, life learning, teacher training, updating, teacher formation, teacher perfecting, contribute to its comprehension.

Marcelo (2009, becomes reiterative on the concept of professional growth, because this is the one best adapting to the teacher conception as a professional of teaching. In reviewing his varied production (Marcelo 1995, 1996, 2009), it is possible to establish relationships among professional development, teaching and learning.   In initial reflections, the author accepts interest in learning, which he links to teaching quality, and later, he centers in teaching and its direct relationship to learning; he shows concern in incorporing new technology to teaching information and communication, as an alternative to meet society transformations, and culture in a globalized world.

In concordance with Marcelo, empowering professional growth of teachers at the education center causes direct effects on student teaching and learning. In this sense any political, social and educative effort aimed at promoting teacher professional growth should   positively impact teaching and deployment of the student life project. In spite of the fact that Marcelo's perspective identifies the need of promoting, at the education center, formation education actions which encourage professional growth, it is not possible to recognize teacher participation in preparation and implementation of formation plans surging from teacher needs, and likewise, directly benefit his professional development.

Teacher professional development should be visible, recognized, promoted, and should be recognized by all people within daily life of the education center, because it is an integral part of values of its members, and related to organization development of the education center. Therefore, its empowering should overcome personal/individual interest, by means of education or pedagogic practices. This perspective takes Marcelo's (2009) proposal, principles of institutionality, diversity, continuity, transparence, integration, research, rationality, opportunity, and contextualizing, because these are the ones that contribute, through teachers participation, in planning, valuation of formation actions leading to teacher professional development at the education center. Besides the author's proposal, it is considered that teacher professional development is presented as an integral issue, passing through formation background of each teacher.

Marcelo (2009) argues that "the concept of 'development' overcomes the traditional juxtaposition between the initial formation and perfecting of teachers" (p. 119). Likewise, it draws the attention in front of the concept, which assumes it through continuity and evolution because the teacher should be formed from the beginning of his preparation   until his jubilation. (Avalos, 2000, Marcelo, 2009), Romero, 2000). In concordance with Bolivar, (1999), "teacher formation is, then, a personal development process, regarding continuity of his previous events and experience, but not a rupture, that allows critical appropriation for new situations" (p.118).

Novoa (2009), asks himself ¿what is a good teacher?, to answer to this question, he suggests the concept of "disposition" which he adopts as a more liquid and less solid concept, to provide preference to the connection between personal dimensions and professional in teacher *identity* production. He states that teaching professionality should not cease to be built   within a teacher personality; and states five essential dispositions to define teachers, as follows: knowledge, professional culture, pedagogic tact, team work, social commitment. He also insists that "the teacher is the individual, and the individual is the teacher [...], it is impossible to separate personal dimensions from professional dimensions. That we teach what we are and that, what we are is found in what we teach" (p. 212). Various authors (Romero, 2000; Bolivar, 1999), Fullan and Hargreaves 1999; Novoa 2000), coincide and express the need of associating professional and personal development because life bibliographic background is seen through them.

Fullan, 2002), in his work *new meaning of change on education* refers to professional development in terms of "acquisition of learning habits that will be much more effective if repeated each day" (p.271).   In his ample experience on education field, and interested in professional development of primary and secondary education teachers, he presents through his various studies, readings of a great interest on the school and teachers. In addition, he addresses various problems which impact both organizations and individuals change. Fullan,   through his work introduces the reader into analysis of multiple researches related to teacher formation.

Although his speech is aimed at change, organization improvement, and personal development, his laugage reveals impotence to produce changes in education centers and teachers. In his text he claims that it is necessary to remake the profession, and for such purpose he states "it is necessary to reorganize teacher selection, status, compensations, and teacher initial formation plans, and their joining the profession" (p. 282). He also highlights importance of practice standards, as an alternative for teacher professional development. He mentions the experience of the work performed in the United States by the *National Board of Professional Teacher Standards*-NBPTS, which has created standards and evaluation procedures in 30 different disciplines, organized around five main proposals, among them: teachers are commited to their students and their learning;

teachers know the subject matter they teach, and know how to teach it; teachers are responsible for guiding and oversee learning of their students; teachers systematically reflect on their practice and learn by experience; teachers are a part of learning community (Fullan 2002:273).

In professional development, teacher age is an interesting factor in his formation process, as claimed by Aguerrondo and Braslavskly (2003), who highlight the difference between pre-professional age from professional age, although they state that both of them are professional, and their difference, is according to the type of speech they lay on.

In addition, in the case of Goodson and Hargreaves (1996), they teach various ways of teacher professionalism and present five ways:

- Classic professionalism: recognized and widely exercised by men. Professions are basically altruist, combine virtue with rationalism, technique, control and ethic code. Medicine and Law achieve an outstanding place, besides Architecture and Dentistry.

- Practical professionalism: the teacher is located here, and his relationship to the practice. Knowledge on teachers may be captured and communicated through images, metaphors and stories, which teachers use on daily basis to represent their work, themselves, and others. A very strong extension of practical professionalism is the notion of reflexive practice. The concept of reflexive trainee has been led and developed by Schon, as a way of describing and developing tools and own judgment in professions such as teaching. Teachers have overcome technical aspects through a more critical reflection on action, in which reflection in action, and reflection over action, allow to argue on social conditions and consequences from actions performed as a teacher.

- Extended professionalism: Referst to something new or extended, older or better than the old. Teachers derived their skills from experience-theory relationship. Teacher perspectives go beyond the class to accept a wide context of social education. Class events are perceived regarding other aspects of the school. Extended professionalism features: cooperation, trainin between pairs, tam work, fellowship, tutoring, professional development, contract relationships. It is result-oriented.

- Complex professionalism: proposes professions to be judged for complexity of tasks in their job, and characterizes teaching because of its high complexity degree.

Presentation made by Goodson and Hargreaves (1996), allows the teacher to identify, in the above mentioned five ways, power and limits in professional development in specific contexts. Each way contributes to professional and personal development.

Any profession, as Marcelo /(1995) reiterates, "should possess autonomy, authority, and resources to act on the basis of its own knowledge" (p.136). The above is adversely impacted by bureaucratic control at education centers, which limit participation and decision making by teachers in front of daily life of such education center. In this sense, the teacher feels controlled by various domestic, regional and institutional directions, which standardize teaching practice and affect their professional development. In front of this situation, it is worth to ask ¿What conditions should be produced at the education center for teachers to promote their professional development? In concordance with Giroux's (1997) statement:

> I personally have claimed that the fact of seeing teachers as intellectual individuals empowers us to begin to rethink and reorganize traditions and conditions, which so far have prevented teachers from assuming their power as academic, and active and reflexive professional (p.177)

Regarding this issue, Marcelo (1995), claims that teaching profession "from a bureaucratic perspective supposes to highlight the speech of supervision, evaluation and control of teachers by other instances or professional agencies" (p. 142). This is how, the teacher each time gets far away from an autonomous actuation, to get closer to heteronomous actuation of proletarization of teacher work conditions (Marcelo 1995; Contreras, 2001). In the same line, Elliot (2005) refers to this issue to reflect on theory – practice relationship and government impact on teacher practice "the teacher role runs the risk of deprofessionalize and reduce to the one of a supervised technical operator. His actions turn into specialized and hierarchized" (p. 9). In turn, Lopez (2008), acknowledges that professional development should be united to education reorganization and advance toward a researching attitude aimed at transforming critical practice to implement coherent change in life of centers and the individuals.

In other direction, teacher professional development should include times and spaces destined to recover and strengthen open ways of seeing the world (Aguerrondo, 2003). Regarding times, Fullan and Hargreaves (1999) claim that it is not possible to skip "periods when teachers are educated and join the profession" (p. 53). The period of time in which the teacher passes his plan of life, is an expression of experiences shown in contact with the other, opening attitude and constant reflection. According to Novoa (2009), " it is fundamental to reinforce the individual-teacher, and teacher-individual (p. 212).

The teacher reconfigures his plan of life in the time, and in the various contexts he has taken his education and pegagogic practice. As Schutz and Luckmann (2003) state "In daily life, acts compose a superior order plan system, for a specific scope of the world of life, for the day, year, for work and leisure" (p. 39). In this sense, professional development is deployed through many experiences and life plans. The above achieves particular meaning in the various formation periods of time. In the same order of ideas, factors for teacher professional

development include periods of time when teachers are educated and join the profession, values systems, and domining education trends, the stage of life and the career where the teacher is, his sense of realism, attitudes toward change, and sex (Fullan and Hargreaves,1999).

It may be considered that the teacher builds his professional development journey in common with others, and within the social and cultural context where he is located. At the education center, teachers configure actions and relationships, which are weaven along the time, and through a slow and steady process, because his life plans are at the bottom of such professional development. Therefore, teacher professional development should overcome standardizing, percentual, technical and instrumental look, and access more human ways, which enable the teacher to become an autonomous being, in the perspective of making decisions on problem solving related to education and/or pedagogic practice; this would be one of the opportunities for the teacher to advance in autonomy and professionalization.

Loucks-Horsley (cited by Marcelo, 1995:329), states five models for professional development based on: autonomy, observation and supervision, curricular and organizative development, training, and research. Hargreaves (1995), through an eclectic posture regarding teacher development, explains three theoretic perspectives, among them: symbolic interaction, critic-social theory, and theory of postmodernity. The first perspective helps to explain ¿Why teachers do what they do? Likewise, he argues that teaching is more than a group of technically learned skills, and is given by meaning where the teacher performs, within realist contexts and contingencies of work environments. The second perspective is felt in human interaction contexts and everything surrounding him; he asks to consider the site of power, control, equality, justice, race, bureaucracy; he states that teaching and teacher development, besides being an individual issue, is an institutional one. The third perspective leads to the various types of contexts and change that people have undergone along history.

Monereo (2010), presents the various modes of teacher formation. Pre-constructive, reconstructive, co-constructive. He refers to the various theoretic references in each mode, and expands on the co-constructive mode, where he locates teacher formation, and states: "It seems little arguable that traditional formative models for teacher formation, which in fact continue to be hegemonic, do not provide skills and competences required to face more common problems on education practice" (p. 150).

Teaching: essence in teacher professional development

Teaching is closely linked to the society, social activities and individuals. In this direction, it is worth to mention that teaching as a social activity is contextualized in the epoch, and is understood through political, cultural, ethic, aesthetic, economic and educative processes, (Langford, 1998; Elliot 1998, Contreras 2001).

Teacher growth is configured through teaching, and, parting from teaching, the teacher establishes a close relationship with practice and his professional development, and change. As Fullan and Hargreaves (1999) state, "for teachers change is not a project in roles, or an elegang flow chart. It is something that should occur in the complex and bussy world of his classroom" (p. 62).

There are diverse voices and theoretic postures in front of research on teaching, and its meaning in teacher professional development, and students. Therefore, Shulman's (1989) contributions allow to identify, analyze and relate the various research programs in studying teaching; leads to expand on versions, background and their consequences on teaching learning processes. The author explains disciplinary roots, political or educational ideologies, and the respective commitments to technical progress of the various programs. He contributes, through the state of the arts in research on teaching, teacher relationship to teaching and learning in the line of processes-product research, and in the world of research of classroom ecology, which is within various trends committed to vision of social studies.

In addition, Carr and Kemmis (1988); Carr (1998); Kemmis and McTaggart (1998), Stenhouse, (1987); Elliot, (2005), Gimeno, (1985); Wittrock, (1989), in order to identify, reflect, understand and address problems related to education practice, and contribute to teacher professional development, in their arguments talk about the possibility of articulating theory and practice through research. Speeches of the above mentioned researchers move from a technical and instrumental look to critical look; the later includes the vital plan, professionalism, historical conscience of individuals, education quality and practice improvement.

Carr and Kemmis (1988) argue " that teacher professional development requires teachers to adopt a researching attitude in front of their own education practice" (p. 220), and identify teaching as an "activity specifically professional" (p.25). In front of the profession, Carr and Kemmis (1988), claim that there are limits faced by teaching, and make a comparative exercise to other professions, in order to identify traits which feature them as professional occupations, and the state:

Methods and procedures used by members of a profession derive from a fund of investigations and theoretic knowledge; the second trait of the profession is subordination to clients' interest; the third one, being ready to always act in the client's interest […] (p.26).

These authors emphasize in that theory and research do not perform in teaching a role as outstanding as in other professional. Nothwitstanding, Carr (1998) relates teaching quality to improvement of teacher ability to take education values into practice. He also adds, that this improvement process "may just be a research process where teachers think about their activity as an educative one on rational and systematic basis" (p.17).

Otherwise, Stenhouse 1987), establishes research as the basis for teaching, and through research he unveils teacher-researcher figure and his relationship to theory and practice. He grants an outstanding role to the curriculum in this relationship. From the research he claims:

> Teachers are in charge of classrooms. From the experimental point of view, classrooms are ideal laboratories to prove educative theory. From the researcher point of view, whose interest in naturalist observation, the teacher is a potential observer in classrooms and at schools. From any angle we consider research, it will result hard to deny that the teacher is surrounded by aboundant opportunities to research (p.38).

Elliot (2005), sees teaching as a "dialectic process, where meaning and pertinence of structures are rebuilt in historically conditioned conscience of individuals when they try to give sense to their "vital situations" (p. 23). Gimeno (1985), refers to teaching as a technique and states "it has an unquestionable projection in the lack of a deep and organized knowledge on major problems related to teaching, and also the lack of an effective management on the same" (p. 14)

Research, a journey in professional development of the teacher

In situ educative research possess quite important value for teachers experiencing daily life of the classroom, at the education center, and dare, through a creative act, to describe and discover the other through the word. Teachers are the ones who identify and experience educative pedagogic problems related to teaching.   Teaching places the teacher on the scene, and leads him to the intersubjective meeting of construction of senses and meaning. In this manner, research has a face, and appears in teacher practice, and reflection made through itself. Teacher research should overcome their instrumental character, and advance toward new theoretic and practical comprehension. Although this ideal is against reality, and "it is placed in practice [...] the new action of teachers, which emphasizes control, productivity, and work local markets" (Lawn, 1998:132).

Advancing from a technical look to a more human one, supposes meeting teachers, to talk about concrete problems of daily life of the education center, as stated by Lawn (1988) when he presents his experience with primary education teachers, who participate in or within the school. At first, they appear with defined research projects on curricular contents, which they change upon a dialogue for various weeks because "they acquire better skills than education research, and because they see what might be more relevant regarding their concerns. I never impose the character of the research" (p. 136).

In Golby's words (1998) "Research is the most effective way and credible of counter-attack in front of prejudices" (p. 144). Marcelo, (1995) refers to "teacher image as a researcher, and relates it to research-action movement which is originated in Collier's works, who wedged the term, and later Kurth Lewin, who defined research action" (p. 368). Likewise Marcelo (1995) states that "from the

research action point of view, the teacher is conceived as an individual capable of reflecting on his own teaching activity, who may identify, and diagnose problems of his own practice" (p. 368).

Stenhouse (1987) dared to present a definition of the research, considered by him as a minimal. About it, he stated that it is the systematic and autocritical inquire. He bases the first on curiosity and a desire of understanding. He warns that it is a stable but not brief curiosity; systematic by being supported by a strategy; he also adds that "research may pass as an inquire at the degree in which [...] it is possible to state that it consciously results autocritical" (p. 37). He founds the second one on persistence of investigation strenghthened by critical principles.

The above allows to understand how teachers' voice in researching process is fundamental to reveal problems surged both at the education center and at the classroom. Therefore, research should be centered on teaching as a contextualized practice, it aims its attention toward concerns of professionals, includes their voice, and reflect commitment to teachers, managers, teacher trainers who participate in the study (Liston and Zeichner, 1993).

In turn, Elliot (2005), reiterates the importance of daily practice as constituting educative research, and expresses his posture in front of academic individuals in charge of educating on research. On this issue he claims:

> Academic individuals are transforming methodology of educative research based on the teacher, so that it allows them to manipulate and control teachers's thought, in order to reproduce suppsed fundamentals which have based a contemplative academic culture untied from daily practice (p. 27-28).

Elliot's look (2005), admits to understand his posture in front of eductive research within the context of a reflective practice (Schon 1992; Perrenud, 2001, 2004), which becomes the axle for teacher professional development. Elliot's experience as teacher educator, expands the horizon of possibilities of educative research in teaching learning processes. Therefore, addressing daily life issues, pedagogic concrete situations, autoanalys and reflection of teachers, indentification of problem areas, problems resolution from a cooperative perspective, reflection on center principles, sharing/discussion of reports on case-studies of practices, among other, enables the teacher to advance in construction of theory parting from reflective practice because it, according to Elliot (2005), "supposes reflexibity, autoconscience. But this conscience bears a vision on modes, according to which, institutional structures configure and limit action by the 'I' in the action" (p.55). Hence, the research should deal with the place where teachers are, and where they develop their job techniques (Lawn, 1998).

Teacher professional development at the education center

Imbernon (1998, 2001, 2002, 2006, 2007) reirates in the diversity of his productions, how work at education centers is an alternative manner to turn the teacher into a formation subject; contrary to what has been done in various local and global contexts, where the teacher is assumed as the formation object. The teacher receives contextualized information regarding problems surged at education centers. Then in research scope, surges the possibility of influencing professional development at the education center, because this is the scenary to create a formation subject who configures his practice by creating spaces for learning, innovation, participation, reflection on practices, communication and autonomy. Imbernon (2002) talks of the teacher as the subject of formation [...], formation subject would be when the teacher with his peers, at an education center, decide about the changing project and ask for assistance to form themselves (p.7).

This look establishes the importance of professional development at education centers, which means to realize, according to Imbernon (2006) "formation from inside" (p.100), because the education center is the nucleus of professional development, and the privileged place for planning and formation activities. Likewise, Escudero (2001) refers to teacher development at the education center, and states that "from education centers many peple have had the opportunity of reflecting in ideas and valuable education hopes, and restate some issues related to teacher formation and pedagogic renewal" (p. 22).

Segovia (2001) refers to education centers, "therefore education centers may not be equally treated as interpersonal, descontextualized entities and with no history of life" (p. 7). He assumes the center as "[...], a Basic Unit for Change" (p 8), and argues that centers are not those "black boxes" on which a certain experimentation -of advising- is applied and observe results. Centers possess cultural traits and easily alterable, but also, other ones are very rooted and capable of encouraging alliances or powerful resistance" (p. 121). In addition, Aguerrondo and Braslavsky (2003), refer to centers "where individuals reflect on how to learn and teach, centers where various actors may acquire and share various experiences for permanent improvement of their teaching proposals and use them as triggers of new challenges" (p. 55).

Education centers, named education schools and institutions, are scenaries and nucleus for teacher formation, learning places, where it is possible to reflect on practices and share various teaching experiences, with particular traits that identify them (Gairin, 1997; Imbernon, 1998; Portelo, 2001). Education centers also become a context for teachers and students action, community encounter points, public and intimate space where stories are shared, and multiple relationships are discovered, which make it possible or limit professional development, are configured by "physical, and vital spaces" (Charo and Jimenez, 2002).

Discussion of results

After a review of production by Marcelo, 1995, 1006, 2009; Marcelo and Vaillant, 2000; 2009; Murillo and Marcelo 1998; it was possible to identify, in results from research, concern for producing professional development at the education center; because this is the proper scenary for change. Nothwitstanding, in theoretic, conceptual and methodological contributions, teacher's voice is not heard to organize programs and plans for professional development. Although it is worth to mention, as explained above, such authors present a series of guiding principles for design, development and valuating effect of teacher professional development, both in individuals and the institutions.

The education center may be considered as the essential place in teacher development. There, the staff and teachers should understand their role as protagonists of change for personal improvement and institution improvement as well. They should be the reference for innovation and transformation of the community. In Escudero's (2001) words, it implies to conceive school centers as "teacher learning places, parting from the assumption that it is impossible to improve student learning, unless they develop the necessary ideas and skills to facilitate it" (p. 20). Escudero also argues that "relevant and sustained improvement of education must imply and affect various levels inside and out of education centers" (p.43). For professional development to be considered at the education center, it should be negotiated and linked to an intervention work, it should not be prescriptive, and a change model should be proposed (Lopez, 2008).

In order to understand teacher professional development at the education center daily life, the teacher's life should be addressed; the teacher is a product and a part of education transformations. Various and multiple readings on education, pedagogy, formation, curriculum, and evaluation are realized from teacher practice. His actions reveal traits of his plan of life, which have been configured into reality of the same. Various researchers coincide in the importance of considering the individual in teacher development, as well as his vital process, to advance in models and strategies for teacher development (Fullan and Hargreaves 1999; Hargreaves, 2005; Imbernon, 1998, 2007; Marcelo, 1995; Segovia, 2001; Langford,1998, and Novoa, 2009). Segovia 2001, warns that "since the teacher is defined as an individual, and with hermeneutic turn in comprehension of teaching profession, interest has changed from technical-reproductive perspectives toward other more human statements" (p. 112).

Nothwitstanding, strategies proposed and implemented for teacher development, they continue to fade the teacher's face, and by so doing, his great experience, because training courses, seminars and diplomat course, several times are reduced to teacher training on those issues, considered by advisors of education institutions, as the essential ones, but which are far away from motivations, projects, personal reality and teachers in general. The teacher is one more in

scheduled courses, and his duty is to overcome his deficiencies, because at these encounters, the teacher is not assumed from his potential, but from his deficiencies. The first one includes experiences, history/story, progress and perhaps innovation and improvement. Following Langford (1998) "people have story [...]. Story of any individual is the narration, as he remembers it, about what he has done, and as occurred in the past" (p.37). For Fullan and Hargreaves (1999) "recognizing the teacher intention and understand and value him as an individual, are vital elements supporting any strategy for personal growth, and school improvement" (p.62).

In the perspective of education change, the teacher configures his life plan as the school center promotes his personal growth. It may be considered as a double-way relationship, where the process is reciprocal. Therefore, it is necessary that education centers value, develop and support criterion and skills of all of its teachers in a common search for improvement. Teachers should re-examine purposes, gain control of their own purpose and professional orientation, proper fundamentals of development and professional learning, reflect on daily professional life, express their own beliefs and values, pay attention to analysis of class experience, and meet to talk about sense change, because change depends on what the teacher thinks and does. (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1999; Hargreaves 2005; Fontan, 1998; Fullan 2002a, 2002b; Rudduck, 1999; Castro and Garcia, 2000; Gather, 2004; Marsick, 1991; Gairin, 1997; Vezub, 2007), in the context of negotiation, autonomy, partricipation and intervention.

Conclusions

The foregoing analysis allowed to conclude that teacher professional development is a growing issue in teacher reflections, the international and national community, because of its educative, social, cultural, ethic, pedagogic and political implications on transformation of educative, pedagogic and organization practice. It was possible to understand in the heuristic process performed in the study, that there are interests in the various groups of research, international researchers, and some domestic ones, in advancing toward new comprehension of professional development, various education levels of education system.

Likewise, the addressed research showed a great variety of issues related to teacher growth, which agreed about the need of assuming teacher development as a challenge to impact change and improvement of the education center. In Colombia, although in the document *policies and Colombian System of Teacher Formation (2012)* teacher professional development is defined as "the various actions performed by the teacher in his formation process in pro of his professional performance, identity creation, and improvement of his professional competences" (MEN, 2012:88), teacher still ignore its meaning and impact on transforming practices of the education center.

As seen, professional development is an issue of multiple variables and components due to complexity of its meaning, and its effect on education and pedagogic practice performed by teachers; its conceptual scheme is configured through varied relationships involving the individual, biographic journey, experience, gender, age, permanent professional growth, teaching career, education level where the teacher performs, time, and formation contexts, autonomy, change, improvement, education policy, and social –cultural processes in which teachers are involved. The intention of the above is to stress that the researched topic, suggests many questions, because teacher professional development should not be seen in a linear manner, taking into account such varied relationships and comprehension involved in this matter. Therefore, teachers require administrative, labor, academic and human conditions to grow and evolve in their profession.

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