

## Teacher education in Pará's Amazonia: a relationship with Rural Education

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**ABSTRACT.** The purpose of this article is to problematize the historical process associated with basic teacher training for Rural Education in the Amazonia with the state of Pará. It also aims produce reflections regarding the challenges of such formative processes in the sight of the homogenous model of training provided by the Brazilian government by means of educational policies and the demands from the local and regional realities in Pará's Amazonia. The study was conducted by means of bibliographical and documental review and interviews. Conclusion is that the role played by the university is urgent and necessary towards rural teacher education as well as to reflect on the emergency nature of the policies intended for in-service teacher training.

**Keywords:** in-service training, basic education, multi-graded class.

## **A formação de professores na Amazônia paraense: uma relação com a Educação do Campo**

**RESUMO.** Este artigo tem como objetivo problematizar o processo histórico de formação de professores para a Educação do Campo no Brasil e suas reverberações na Amazônia paraense, assim como produzir reflexões sobre os desafios destes processos formativos, tendo em vista o modelo homogêneo de formação ofertado pelo Estado brasileiro, por meio das políticas educacionais e as demandas das realidades locais e regionais na Amazônia paraense. O estudo foi realizado por meio de pesquisa bibliográfica, documental e entrevistas. Conclui-se que é urgente e necessário o papel da universidade, frente à formação de educadores do campo, bem como refletir sobre o caráter emergencial das políticas destinadas à formação de professores em serviço.

**Palavras-chave:** formação em serviço, educação básica, classe multisseriada.

## La formación de docentes en la Región Amazónica de Pará: una relación con la Educación Rural

**RESUMEN.** Este artículo tiene como objetivo discutir el proceso histórico de formación de docentes para la Educación Rural en Brasil, y sus repercusiones en la Región Amazónica de Pará. Se busca producir reflexiones sobre los desafíos de estos procesos, considerando el modelo homogéneo de formación ofrecido por el Estado brasileño, a través de políticas educativas, y las demandas de las realidades locales y regionales en la Región Amazónica de Pará. El estudio se realizó mediante investigación bibliográfica, documental y entrevistas. Se concluye que es urgente y necesario el protagonismo de la universidad, de cara a la formación de educadores rurales, así como reflexionar sobre el carácter de emergencia de las políticas dirigidas a la formación de docentes en servicio.

**Palabras clave:** formación en servicio, educación básica, clase multigrado.

## Introduction

Teacher education, throughout the historical process, was designed according to the economic policies and pedagogical conceptions in force, which, in synthesis, were determined by hegemonic groups and ensured by a set of laws, decrees and opinions that historically generated different forms of organization of education, without causing significant structural advances.

These issues are not different nowadays and are constituted in the singular in contradictory ways, considering that social relations in the Amazon region of Pará are multiple, complex in many aspects, whether territorial, population or cultural. Regarding the territorial aspect, we defend the term "Pará's Amazonia" because it is part of a representation process of regionalization geographically defined by the Amazon Region. (Souza, 2010, p. 206).

Reputed as one of the richest territories in Brazil for the amount of natural resources with approximately 5 million square kilometers, representing 59% of the country's total area, and for the richness in biodiversity formed by dryland forests, flooded forests, floodplains, rivers, oceans, swamp lands, open countryside and cerrados, it has the most extensive hydrographic network on the planet. In this

broad scenario, the Amazon region of Pará stands out, with a significant part of the municipalities located in riverside areas, where the rivers are the only traffic route for the different communities, such as the municipalities that are part of the Marajó Integration Region<sup>i</sup>, where the access to these municipalities, leaving Belém, is made through the fluvial waterway, in large circulation ships.

The municipalities are linked by rivers; and part of the population uses handcrafted vessels, such as canoes, tail shape<sup>ii</sup>, and others, as a means of transportation. In this unique scenario, the educational process of Rural Education is organized, which presents itself in different formats, be it in the water areas, or in the countryside and forests.

In this sense, this article seeks to problematize the teacher training process through the National Plan/Program for Basic Education Teacher Training (PARFOR) for Rural Education in the Municipality of Breves - PA. In order to understand the process of teacher training and its reverberations in the context of rural schools in the municipality. As well as to produce reflections about the challenges for the formation of teachers for Rural Education, considering the homogeneous model of formation offered by the Brazilian State, through the

educational policies and demands of the local and regional realities in the Para Amazon.

In this research, we used bibliographic and documental sources and conducted interviews with students from the Pedagogy Course offered through (PARFOR), because we consider it relevant to answer the problem question formulated within the research.

For Severino (2007, p. 122), the bibliographical research "... is carried out from the available record, resulting from previous research, in printed documents, such as books, articles, theses, etc.". It allows the researcher to contact everything that has been written about his research subject.

The use of sources in historiography is fundamental to the construction of knowledge. For Karnal and Tatsch (2012, p. 10): "The document category defines an important part of the historian's field of action and the breadth of his search. Thus, the definition of the "documents" that will be used as the object of analysis is a fundamental aspect to circumscribe the scope of the research.

The documental sources that were used as object of analysis in this article were: documents produced by the Federal University of Pará (UFPA) - PARFOR and the Curricular Project of the Pedagogy

Course of the University Campus, located in the city of Breves<sup>iii</sup>, besides national legislations that deal with teacher training and Rural Education.

The interviews were previously scheduled and recorded with the consent of the interviewees, according to a script prepared beforehand on the theme "teacher education in the Para Amazon".

The article is organized as follows: this Introduction; in the second section, an analysis of the literature will be undertaken, focusing on the systematic organization of education and teacher training in the discourses for Rural Education in Brazil, as well as the evolution of the corresponding thought, in the norms, after the Landless Workers' Movement (MST), starting in the 1990s. The third section presents PARFOR, implemented by UFPA, and the possible contributions to teacher training for rural education, followed by the final considerations.

### **Teacher training in the Countryside in Brazil**

In the economic model in force, social relations produce schooling processes that contribute to the sharpening of class inequalities, highlighting, for example, the official policy of the Brazilian government in the early twentieth

century, through the foundation of agricultural patronages, directed, according to Oliveira (2003, p. 1), "... to the training of workers from conceptions based on scientific knowledge and inscribed among the means of intervention on the poor sectors of society, competing for social and cultural modernization".

The studies by Marinho (2016) and Boeira (2011) highlight that the creation of agricultural patronages in Brazil was an initiative of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply (MAPA), whose purpose "... was to receive orphaned and underprivileged children aged 10 to 16 years old; aimed at the poor population, with the goal of preparing workers for rural activities" (Marinho, 2016, p. 109). Its highest incidence occurred in the North and Northeast regions.

The agricultural patronages were "... one of the most important actions of the Republican government in the area of social policies for children and youth until the institution of the Juvenile Code of 1927" (Boeira, 2011, p. 4); they were focused on learning about farming, breeding, and handling machinery. For Boeira (2011, p. 7), "... the Agricultural Patronage had the purpose of educating and correcting some of the student's faults, instructing him for civility and for work". They also provided assistance to children

living on the streets whose relatives were unable to support them or had lost control of their families and should be taken to these establishments.

With this exclusionary character, the attempts to establish education in rural areas began to have repercussions again after 1930, with the economic, political and social changes implemented in the Brazilian context through a movement called "pedagogical ruralism". As Bezerra Neto explains (2003, p. 11), "ruralism" is the "... term coined to define a proposal of rural worker education that had as its basic foundation the idea of fixing the man in the countryside through pedagogy".

Among the numerous ideological conceptions embraced by the advocates of pedagogical ruralism in the search for a solution for education, the proposition of the creation of the Normal School stands out, whose goal was to train teachers for rural areas, advocating a perspective of "... new management practices in the agricultural world, allied and/or mobilized by the economic transformations of the time ..." (Werle, 2012, p. 38).

The debate of the ruralists was configured, in practice, by the perspective that only the training of teachers and the task of keeping workers in rural areas would be enough to solve the social problems of rural populations; at no time

were discussed in the projects the material conditions for the permanence of workers in rural areas through the relations of possession and ownership of land or even the living conditions that workers led (Bezerra Neto, 2016).

In that context, the pedagogical ideology of the New School stood out, aligned to the national discourse that "...provoked the debates around rural education as a factor of progress and hygienization that acted in rural schools" (Araújo, 2011, p. 242). According to Araújo's (2011) study, the state of Ceará stands out with the enabling of the first creation of Rural Normal Schools, thus preserving the ideology of trying to keep the rural man attached to the land. As a principle, in the course of these schools:

Professional education in the rural normal school should be guided by the ideal of peasant life. Education for life and in the very dynamics of social life had to fulfill its instrumental and moral function. The school, a small social cell, was, at the same time, the miniature of a democratic society and the holder of the hope of future progress. It was up to the ruralist teacher to guide the new generations of a world that needed to adjust to the demands of a new socioeconomic reality. It was in the teachers' hands the task of imprinting the mark of a new man, a citizen aware of the value of his class and of his importance as a collaborator element (Araújo, 2011, p. 252).

The logic given to the training of rural teachers translated the hegemonic character of the dominant elites, in the perspective of finding solutions to the social problems caused by the rural exodus, as well as placing education and human training as the main elements responsible for the picture of social inequalities.

The ambiguity that has historically crossed the Brazilian education offered in rural areas shows the contradictions effected by the process of de-schooling, which by denying the subjects the socialization of the elaborated knowledge, has been converted into a welfarist education with the purpose of mitigating the effects of exclusion and social inequality.

The "developmentalist" period of the 1950s was marked by the idea of Brazilian industrial progress and the overvaluation of urban culture, to the detriment of the rural world. In this context, the recommendations for rural teacher training followed the indications of the National Institute of Pedagogical Studies (INEP), advised by the Report constructed by Professor Robert King Hall of Columbia University (USA), hired by the Minister of Education of the time. It highlighted in the Document that:

Student teachers should come exclusively from rural areas - including small towns in predominantly rural regions. b) Selection should be by competitive examination, systematically refusing appointments based on political requests. c) Courses should be divided into two distinct levels: 1) courses in technical subjects and methodology, designed to give the teacher a specific technique useful in the school, and 2) broad and general courses, designed to give the teacher a new consciousness and vision of the school's role in the local community, in the country's economy and on the national stage. (Hall, 1950, p. 121).

The recommendations for the training of rural teachers established a minimum training, with a curriculum that dispensed with areas of knowledge that were related to philosophical, historical, sociological foundations, justifying the absence of these contents, by the inability of "... interpretation and the practical application of these disciplines, in the daily life of the school, seems to me to be far above the capacity of the teacher-students" (Hall, 1950, p. 121), as placed in the mentioned Document.

This inertia continued even with the approval of the first Law of Directives and Bases of Education (LDB), Law no. 4.024/1961, with the existence of a single article that dealt with Rural Education, in Title XIII, entitled "General and Transitory Provisions", in which it was determined, in art. 105: "The public authorities shall

institute and support services and entities which maintain schools or educational centers in rural areas, capable of favoring the adaptation of man to the environment and the stimulation of vocations and professional activities" (Law No. 4.024, 1961).

The political and economic changes that took place in Brazil after 1964, with the intervention of the military in the government, provoked new changes in the organizational format of education. The first of these was the disregard of LDB n° 4.024/1961 and the approval of Law n° 5.692/1971, which fixed education in 1st and 2nd grades. This change transformed the rural normal courses into a teaching course, and presented two articles dealing specifically with Rural Education:

In Chapter I, "Primary and Secondary Education", Art. 11, §2, it was determined that in the Rural Zone the establishment could organize the teaching periods, with a prescription of vacations at planting and harvesting seasons, according to a plan approved by the competent teaching authority.

Chapter VI, "Funding" ... In Article 49, it was determined that the companies and rural landowners who are unable to keep education for their employees and their children on their land are required, without prejudice to the provisions of Article 47, to facilitate their attendance at the nearest school or to encourage the establishment and operation of free schools on their properties. (Law No. 5.692, 1971).



The measure approved in the referred Law created expectations that there was concern from the legislator with the process of reorganizing education in rural areas, and announced, in art. 4, changes in the curricula of primary and secondary education "... adopting the common core, obligatory nationwide, and a diversified part to meet, according to concrete needs and possibilities, local peculiarities" (Law no. 5.692, 1971).

The measures approved by Law no. 5.692/1971 did not change the reality of education for rural areas, and the flexibility for the organization of Rural Education foreseen in art. 11 followed the agrarian economic logic, since these were pointed out in this Law as one of the funding sources for Rural Education. According to Bezerra Neto and Santos (2016, p. 159), "... although Brazil is a country with agrarian origins, the education of rural workers has never been a priority", as well as teacher training, because it was developed based on the economic political agenda and pedagogical conceptions that presented education and human formation within a logic of backwardness and precariousness.

It is noteworthy that throughout the 20th century the training of teachers to work in the countryside prioritized the training of professionals focused on

agrarian issues anchored in the process of alienation and miseducation of the subjects, delegating to the school institution the role of avoiding the migration process of the rural population to urban centers. However, Bezerra Neto and Santos (2016, p. 159) explain that:

With the modernization of agriculture based on a concentration of land by a minority, with production aimed at exportation, it disqualified the production of small producers, provoked a rural-city migration, which became increasing due to the precarious conditions in which small producers and rural workers found themselves.

These transformations, related to the deep structural changes, provoked the great expulsion of the rural man to the cities in search of better living conditions, as well as the social movement against the military regime (1964-1985) and the productive chains that intensified the exploitation process of the working class. The resumption of legality and the democratization process of the Brazilian society, in 1985, demanded the elaboration and approval of the new Constitution Federative Republic of Brazil of 1988 (CRFB/1988), assuring, in article 205, that:

Education, a right of all and duty of the State and of the family, will be promoted and encouraged with the collaboration of society, aiming at the full development of the person, his preparation for the exercise of

citizenship, and his qualification for work. (Constituição da República Federativa do Brasil de 1988, 1988).

The approval of the CRFB/1988 rekindled new expectations for changes in the supply of education, presupposing the guarantee of public and free education for all subjects, whether from the city or the countryside. However, it is verified, from the literature already produced, that the approval of the new legislation (Law of Directives and Bases for National Education - LDB) nº 9.394/1996 did not present great advances for Rural Education, except for art. 28, which determined the possibility of adapting the curriculum, methodology, flexibility, and school organization with the adaptation of the school calendar.

However, it is worth noting that, parallel to the normative movements, there were the grassroots organizations, which, given the historical-political context, were propitious for the social movements to gain strength and achieve visibility in the project of society of diverse natures.

Because of this accumulation resulting from the struggles, the MST<sup>iv</sup> defended a new form of organization of schools for the countryside in the 1st National Meeting of the Educators of Agrarian Reform (ENERA), in July 1997, held in Brasília (DF).

A new perspective of education emerged at that Meeting, which contested the paradigm of Rural Education and teacher training, bringing in its core the need to overcome the dichotomy historically constituted about knowledge, presenting an expansion of the concept of Rural Education to Countryside Education. In this sense, teacher training assumes the logic defended by the principles of the MST, whose commitment was to enable the critical training of students in the face of the conditions of expropriation of rights and the process of struggles for the democratization of the land.

A new national meeting that marked the struggle for rural education was the First National Conference for a Basic Education for the Countryside, held in Luziânia (GO) in 1998, which involved institutions and social movements such as the National Confederation of Bishops of Brazil (CNBB), MST, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the University of Brasília (UnB) (Arroyo & Fernandes, 1999).

The debates promoted on Rural Education by the social movements were fundamental for the approval of the Operational Guidelines for Basic Education in Rural Schools (CNE/CEB nº

1, 2002), a document that demarcated the identity of the Rural School in Article 13, Subsection I - namely, "studies regarding the diversity and the effective protagonism of children, youngsters, and adults of the countryside in the construction of the social quality of individual and collective life, of the region, of the country, and of the world" (Resolution CNE/CEB nº 1, 2002).

Later, other documents were formatted and presented as one of the official concerns for Rural Education, among them: the CEB/CNE Opinion no. 01/2006, which recommends the "Adoption of the Alternation Pedagogy in Rural Schools"; Decree no. 6040/2007, which established the "National Sustainable Policy for Traditional Peoples and Communities". Resolution CNE/CEB nº 02/2008 established, in art. 1, that

Rural Education comprises Basic Education in its stages of Kindergarten, Elementary School, High School, and Technical Professional Education integrated with High School and is intended to meet the rural populations in their various forms of production of life - family farmers, extractivism, artisanal fishermen, river dwellers, settlers and Agrarian Reform camps, quilombola, *caiçaras*, indigenous peoples, and others. (Resolution CNE/CEB nº 2, 2008, p. 1).

Regarding the training of teachers to attend to Rural Education, it was

determined, in art. 7, paragraph §2, that "... the admission and the initial and continued training of teachers and of the teaching staff that support the Rural Education...". (Resolution CNE/CEB nº 2, 2008, p. 3). In the set of laws and guidelines approved for education, be it for the countryside or for the city, the centrality of teacher training is verified as one of the main factors responsible for the failure of public education in Brazil, whether due to lack of schooling or its inadequacy.

### **The repercussions on teacher training: Rural Education in the Pará Amazon**

Historically, teacher training projects for Rural Education, whether in the set of actions by the State or in the theoretical debate, have always prevailed the dominant vision over the dominated, according to the interests of capital, corroborating the process of sustaining the exploitation and exclusion of rural populations. In the Amazon region of Pará, the reality was no different from the rest of the country.

As far as education is concerned, it has reached the 21st century with a deep crisis in public school attendance; and the State has not managed to make a quality basic education feasible through the public policies it has applied or applies in the region (Loureiro & Araújo, 2010). In

relation to the training of teachers for Rural Education, the experiences that were being made possible until the end of the 1990s were modeled on urban-centric curricula, in the specific case of the rural area, and were marked by the precariousness of the teaching work, low qualification and salaries lower than in the urban area.

The approval of the LDB (9.394/1996) is considered a first step towards higher education for teachers, by providing, in Article 62, "... the training of teachers to work in basic education at a higher level, in degree courses, full degree, in universities and higher education institutes" (Law 9.394, 1996).

Although in that context the LDB established in art. 87, § 4º of LDB nº 9.394/ 1996, that "Until the end of the Decade of Education only teachers with higher education qualifications or trained through on-the-job training will be admitted", it is noteworthy that in the Amazonian state of Pará, the inadequacy of teacher training was disclosed by the National Institute for Educational Studies and Research (INEP, 2009).

The data showed that of the 70.7 thousand teachers in Pará, 39.7 thousand (56.14%) had inadequate training. In the South, Southeast and Center-West, the average rate of those who teach without a university degree was 20%, out of a total of 1.213 million teachers (INEP, 2009). This situation had been detected since 2008, with the beginning of the construction of the *Ten Year Plan for Teacher Education in the State of Pará* and the presentation of the priority to offer undergraduate degrees, considering the peculiarities of the subjects to be trained (Pará State Department of Education, 2009a).

According to the Plan, data were collected from the 20 Regional Education Units (URE) that comprise the 143 municipalities, distributed as follows (Chart 1)<sup>v</sup>:

Chart 1 - Demand for initial training.

URE	Without Grad.	URE	Without Grad.
1ª Bragança	1.634	11ª URE Santa Izabel do Pará	2.095
2ª URE Cametá	1.536	12ª URE Itaituba	1.691
3ª URE Abaetetuba	3.712	13ª URE Breves	997
4ª URE Marabá	4.430	14ª URE Capanema	1.013
5ª URE Santarém	3.145	15ª URE Conceição do Araguaia	953
6ª URE Monte	1.665	16ª URE Tucuruí	712

Alegre			
7ª URE Óbidos	2.928	17ª URE Capitão Poço	712
8ª URE Castanhal	2.475	18ª URE Mãe do Rio	796
9ª URE Maracanã	776	19ª URE Belém	4342
10ª URE Altamira	2.570	20ª URE Região das Ilhas	616
Overall Total - 39,101			

Source: Prepared by the authors based on Pará State Education Secretariat (2009b).

The document shows that there were 39,101 teachers without higher education, "20,430 teachers with a degree, but not in the subject in which they worked; 3,313 teachers with higher education, but no degree" (Pará State Department of Education, 2009b, p. 30). In this document, the initial graduation was foreseen as the first degree and the use of studies for the second degree and pedagogical training for teachers with higher education who were not qualified to teach (Pará State Department of Education, 2009b).

This Plan was articulated with the National Policy for the Training of Professional Teachers of Basic Education (PARFOR), regulated by Decree No. 6755/2009, "with the purpose of organizing, in collaboration between the Union, the States, the Federal District and the Municipalities, the initial and continuing training of teaching professionals for the public networks of basic education" (Decree No. 6755, 2009, p. 1). The Decree presented, in Article 4, that the objectives of the Policy would be met "through the creation of Permanent State Forums to Support Teacher

Education, in collaboration between the Union, the States, the Federal District and the Municipalities, and through specific actions and programs of the Ministry of Education" (Decree No. 6755, 2009, p. 1).

After the publication of the Decree and its norms, Ordinance No. 09/2009 was issued, establishing the National Plan for Training of Basic Education Teachers under the Ministry of Education, managed by the CAPES (Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel-CAPES) in the promotion of programs.

After the launching of the national PARFOR, the Pará State Secretary of Education (SEDUC/PA) signed the Adhesion Term to the Technical Cooperation Agreement and started the PARFOR implementation process, with the creation of the Pará State Permanent Forum of Support to Teacher Education (FORPROF-PA) in November 2009 (Cunha, Silva & Brito, 2017, p. 274).

The feasibility for the management of PARFOR in the states and municipalities rescued the possibility of professionals to access Higher Education,

within a collaboration scheme of the federated entities; however, the challenges for the implementation of this policy, as shown in the research conducted within the UFPA, expose the advances for teacher education in the Pará Amazon, as well as the limits of this training.

The year 2010 marked the offer of classes by different public universities in Pará. In that context, UFPA began the implementation of PARFOR (2009 to 2019), assuming the commitment to the Federal Government's Policy for Training and Valuing Teachers to qualify teachers in a collaborative regime, covering a total of 66 municipalities in the region (UFPA, 2019).

The offer of courses in the municipalities followed the single calendar established in the Permanent State Forum of Support for Teacher Training in Pará (FORPROF-PA) in 2012, in order to overcome the difficulties in meeting the 200 school days in the municipal schools. According to the document, the first stage occurs in the months of January and February, with 50 teaching days of 8 hours a day. The second intensive stage occurs during the months of July and mid-August, with 42 school days of 8 hours a day. Two intermediate stages also take place during six days each semester, in May and October.

This calendar represented an effort by the Higher Education Institutions (IES), together with the representative FORPROF-PA, that is, to dialogue with the municipalities involved in teacher training, so that the school calendar would not be compromised, and the total number of courses offered during the months referring to teachers' vacations or recess would be fulfilled.

It is considered, in general terms, that the process of teacher training via PARFOR/UFPA has achieved a significant advance for changing the picture of lay teachers in the Pará Amazon. Between 2009 and 2019, the data record a total of 14.009 entrants, with a total of 421 classes implemented, 21 degrees, 66 cities poles, 8.665 students completing, 2.298 active students, 362 classes completed, 3,056 enrollment terminations, 59 active classes and 30 active poles (PARFOR/UFPA, 2009-2019)<sup>vi</sup>.

The feasibility for the management of PARFOR in states and municipalities rescued the possibility of professionals to access Higher Education, within a collaboration scheme of the federated entities; however, the challenges for the implementation of this policy, as well as the noncompliance by the entities involved, have become challenges

experienced by teachers in the courses offered by UFPA in the different centers.

Regarding the advances, it is understood, based on Brzezinski (2017, p. 16), that "... the emergency courses of PARFOR came to correct, in part, a deviation of function in the career of teaching professionals who joined the education systems without higher education". The author argues that "... the first degree came, albeit partially, to rescue a historical debt of training policies not assumed by the State" (Brzezinski, 2017, p. 17).

In fact, PARFOR has contributed to the professional qualification and valorization of the teaching career, considering the number of teachers in the Amazon region of Pará who have received their training, either as a first degree or second degree, in the area where they work in the classroom. However, the studies already conducted show that this training in the poles of performance presents difficulties that need to be overcome.

The study by Bastos (2017) about PARFOR at the University Campus of Tocantins/Cametá-UFPA highlights that the student-teachers received charges from the students' families for not being present at the beginning of the school year, registering cases in which it was not "... informed by the Education Departments or

school principals as to the necessary absence of this professional to effectuate their studies ..." (Bastos, 2017, p. 74).

In the same line of thought, the study by Freires (2017) on the in-service teacher training of the PARFOR/UFPA Pedagogy Course in the municipality of Belém highlights that:

... in-service training is more interesting for our governments, because it has a lower cost and the teacher in training does not have to leave the classroom.

...  
The research suggests that although the program publicizes the quality of training, it weakens the formative process: reduced time, lightening, reduction of expenses (Freires, 2017, p. 128).

The issues presented by Brzezinski (2017), Bastos (2017) and Freires (2017) are recurrent in the poles where the in-service teacher training process occurs; the data from the interviews conducted with the teachers of the Pedagogy/PARFOR course at the Breves/Marajó Campus demonstrate the following issues:

Thirty-six student-teachers interviewed, all were contract teachers. Six teachers had 17 to 31 years' service time; 30 teachers had 5 to 12 years' service time; The in-service training of teachers took place during the vacation period, July and early August, and, January and February, some of them traveled an average of 8 to 20 hours by motor boat to get to the Breves Campus;

The teachers have never received a scholarship, or any kind of allowance from their home towns, and remain on average 60 days away from their families;

Most of the interviewed teachers were not entitled to receive their salaries during the vacation period, because they were dismissed during the month of July;

All the teachers were dismissed in the month of December; they were left waiting for the possibility of being hired the following year, in mid-March, when they returned to their municipalities;

Some of these teachers, in order not to lose their contract at the beginning of the school year, or to come to study in the in-between stages, paid the substitute teacher out of their own pocket.

guarantee the assignment at the beginning of the year, the teachers, submersed in precarious work shifts, in hard-to-access areas in the countryside, are hired and mistreated every period, thus confirming the contradictory dimension of the municipalities' policy towards teacher training and work.

It is worth mentioning that the GEPERUAZ Group Report<sup>vii</sup> (2014) on the working conditions of most of the teachers in the Pará Amazon already denounced the significant number of contract teachers, as shown in Table 3:

Without decent salaries, and still having to pay for the substitute teacher to

Table 3 - Teachers in rural areas in Pará State.

Integration Area	No. of temporary professors
Integration Region of Carajás	787
Araguaia Integration Region	657
Lower Amazon Integration Region	2.422
Lower Tocantins Integration Region	1.739
Tucuruí Lake Integration Region	956
Marajó Integration Region	2.692
Caetés River Integration Region	1.490
Capim River Integration Region	1.487
Guamá River Integration Region	1.233
Tapajós River Integration Region	781
Xingu Integration Region	1.073
Metropolitan Region	274
Total	15.591

Source: Study and Research Group on Rural Education in the Amazon of the Institute of Education Sciences (Geperuaz) UFPA, 2018.

According to the data presented in this table, the set of 12 regions had a total of 15,591 teachers<sup>viii</sup> in their municipalities working through temporary contracts. The temporary work regime contributes to the

process of devaluing teacher workers, as well as accentuating the precariousness of working conditions, as shown in the study by Hage (2014, p. 1174):



In the first instance, we highlight the precariousness of the school buildings, the long distances that students and teachers have to travel to get to school and the inadequate transportation conditions, the overload of the teacher's work through the multiple functions performed and the job instability, the lack of follow-up from the municipal education departments, the permanence of child labor, the vulnerability of the school and of the teachers to the interference of the local power, the advance of the nucleation policy linked to school transportation and the closing of schools, the curriculum and the pedagogical materials little identified with the reality of the countryside.

This reality is part of the daily experience of teachers who work in Rural Education in the region, specifically in the municipality of Breves. The other reality, demonstrated in the interview, was the space for teacher training, which took place outside the scope of the Breves Campus, due to the lack of rooms to accommodate all the classes during the period, since the Campus works in an intensive and extensive regime. The PARFOR courses, including Pedagogy, worked in schools in the cities, without basic structure, such as internet access, library, computer lab, and becoming problematic at the end of every course period, and because it was the beginning of the school year, the classes were displaced and had to move to other places to finish the classes.

According to the Pedagogical Project of the Pedagogy Course (UFPA, 2011, p.13) "The Course of Full Degree in Pedagogy ... will be developed in the face-to-face modality (university time) in 80% of the total workload of the Course and in the distance modality (educational work-time) in 20%"; however, in practice, all the subjects were worked in the period of six days, during morning and afternoon, accounting for 8 hours a day. In practice, however, all the courses were worked on during six days in the mornings and afternoons, for a total of eight hours a day. 13 courses with a workload of 75 hours and 33 courses with a workload of 60 hours, reduced to 48 hours a week, were found.

The data draw attention to two issues: the first refers to the total workload and the number of hours taught in subjects considered to be the theoretical and methodological basis of the course. The second issue is that the most reduced subjects are of great relevance for teacher training, as they are directed to the curriculum of the initial years of elementary school, such as: Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of Mathematics; Portuguese Language; Geography and Science; Inclusive Education; and other subjects, such as:

Educational Planning, Sociology, Philosophy.

Of the 36 teachers interviewed, 22 work directly in multigrade classes. When questioned if the training received was articulated with the classroom practice of multigrade classes, some mismatches were observed in the speeches, such as: "you need to be flexible"; "the course opened a range of possibilities, but everything is missing in the rural school"; "there is no physical structure"; "practice is different from theory"; "I keep dividing the picture into four parts"; "it did not emphasize the multigrade classes: theoretical and practical foundations".

The divergent arguments pointed out by the teachers indicate one of the complicating factors of the formative process of the teachers/students of the Pedagogy Course/PARFOR/UFPA, being configured, in practice, with the policies of light training that do not seek in itself the improvement of the educational practice of the teachers. Even with in-service training being instituted in the Federal Network. "This whole process has been configured as a precarious process of certification and/or graduation and not teacher qualification and training to improve the conditions of professional practice" (Freitas, 2002, p. 148); and this higher

level training may not contribute to the improvement of the quality of education.

The vast majority of teachers in Basic Education are stationed in rural schools, which according to the Municipal Education Plan (Law nº 2.388/2015) there were in the municipality of Breves 540 teachers working in the countryside, and presented 40.5% with only a high school degree. Of the 36 teachers interviewed, from one of the classes of the Pedagogy/PARFOR/UFPA course, 22 worked in the rural schools in multigrade classes.

Faced with this reality, the Pedagogical Project of the Pedagogy Course has only one subject that deals with Rural Education. The general question that is asked here is how the articulation of the training with the education offered in the local or regional reality is made. In the speech of teachers who work directly in multigrade classes, we can see that:

The course has theories, but there was no relation to the practices in multigrade classes (teacher trainees)  
The course does not focus on multigrade classes, but gives us some basis to apply in the classroom;  
The Pedagogy course opened our horizons, but in relation to the work in multigrade classes, it was lacking. (Professor Cursistas);  
I think that some of the teacher educators were not involved with rural education, leaving the theoretical and practical training very vague. (Teacher Trainees).

There were several courses, including internships, but there was one course that did a general overview of rural education, and others worked on one or two texts. (Professor Cursistas); I was always very anxious, because I expected to learn how to work with multigrade classes, but I still don't know. It may even be different now, because I have readings, but in practice, inside with children of different ages together, I still get lost, and work dividing the board into several grades (Prof. Cursistas) (verbal information)<sup>ix</sup>.

It is understood that only one subject with minimum workload does not allow theoretical basis for articulation proposed by the menu, that is, to propose the use of pedagogical means and techniques directed to the local population. The curricular matrix of the Pedagogy/PARFOR course disregards the organization format of rural schools, and generates some difficulties for the trainee teachers to relate the training to the reality of Rural Education with work in multigrade classes. The lack of specific discussion of theoretical and methodological knowledge creates complications in the pedagogical process, because teachers end up using improvisation that can reduce the effective teaching and learning processes.

It is verified that only in the municipality of Breves, between the years 2011 and 2018, the largest number of elementary schools in the municipality was offered in the countryside, ranging from

233 to 265 schools, while in the urban area the number was 29 to 30 schools (National Institute of Educational Studies and Research [Inep], 2018); however, the training of in-service teachers working directly in these spaces is still based on a curriculum that does not contemplate the different realities. In practice, we agree with Caetano (2013, p. 81): "... despite this achievement, it is notorious that universities themselves have difficulties in training professionals to work with multigrade classes ...".

The quality of teacher education can only be transformed when the thinking about the quality of education is not considered as a quantitative product that needs to be compared to the indexes or diagnoses presented, when the logic set for the formulation of initial training policies is not linked to the lightness, and subordinated to the world of work and needs to be achieved by the logic of cost and benefit.

It is not about attributing to the university any salvationist role, much less blaming teachers for the results of the Basic Education indexes, but recognizing that in order to guarantee a consistent education it is necessary to invest in training. Another fundamental aspect is that, regardless of the level or modality of education, it is fundamental that

universities offer degree courses with theoretical and methodological references that consider the totality in which it is inserted.

It is necessary to recognize that the process of raising the esteem of teachers in the process of training, as well as to recognize that teacher training as a human creation, will only have legitimacy if this training fulfills the purpose for which it was created. According to Munarim (2008, p. 24):

It is necessary to institute in the structure of Brazilian higher education institutions and in high schools, processes for the initial formation of Rural Educators ... Such training should be based on universal principles already established in the field of educational sciences, and should take into account that the countryside is made up of specificities that cannot be ignored in educational processes; more than this, these specificities will only be present if the teacher has had adequate training.

This author, when presenting the working conditions of the teacher in multigrade classes, demonstrates the need to rethink the differentiated training to work in rural schools; and equally presents the precariousness of the working conditions in which this teacher is inserted.

Notoriously, the reality of Para's Rural Education reached the 21st century with the same similarities exposed by Bezerra Neto's (2016, p. 82) study of Rural

Education in the second half of the century: "... the schools were mere deposits of children of all ages; the teachers with low salaries and qualifications... were subjected to extremely precarious living, housing, and working conditions".

The educational policies need to consider that it is not enough to offer higher education courses, that is, it is necessary to excel in the quality of this initial and continued training for the development of the integral formation of Rural Education. Likewise, the teacher-training model needs to be rethought by the educational institutions, aiming, for example, to adapt them to the diagnoses made about the different training courses offered.

### **Final considerations**

We recognize, in this scenario, the contribution of UFPA to the training of 3,196 educators in the state through PARFOR. However, recognizing this does not mean that one cannot question the perspectives for confronting the training of teachers for rural education in the Amazon. The first consideration to be made is the understanding that it is not possible to think of a quality education without considering the objective conditions for the accomplishment of the pedagogical work, such as salaries, teaching career for

teacher's valorization, structural work conditions, adequate number of students per room, pedagogical resources, collective work of all the subjects that make up the school management and, fundamentally, the reorganization of time inside the schools located in the countryside.

Having made these initial considerations, we defend as a theoretical reference for teacher education the Critical-Historical pedagogy based on historical-dialectical materialism, based on philosophical, historical, economic, and social-political aspects (Saviani, 2013, p. 160). We assume that rethinking teacher education will involve the understanding that the apprehension of the concrete world is linked to the appropriation of knowledge in its most elaborate forms and that this apprehension enables the overcoming by incorporation of the limits produced by hegemonic theories reproduced in education, which, in turn, limit the subjects to the partial analysis of the educational reality.

In all historical contexts of teacher education, up to the educational policies of today, the State has sought to link the condition of the teacher to knowledge, not as an instrument of contestation, but, above all, as a form of ideological control through the programs and curricula intended for the schooling processes.

If we understand education as an act of production of humanity, initial teacher education needs to appropriate this information in a critical way, in order to oppose all ideological forms of subordination of the capitalist society. One of the forms of resistance is, for example, to incorporate to the formation programs, the neoliberal curriculums, not for mere reproduction, but as a reconstruction of forms of overcoming, starting with the reformulation of the courses for the formation of teachers of knowledge of different languages, literatures, sets of laws, which allow the building of theoretical and practical subsidies for the transformation of the school into a space of constant struggle that can guarantee to the subjects the instrumentalization of the struggle for the right to a quality rural education.

The repressed demand of untrained teachers caused historically by the neglect of rural education throughout history cannot be solved only by the requirement of presenting quantitative data of closed goals before agreements with funding agencies of Brazilian public policies, as it was recently presented by the national teacher training policy in force, a new recomposition of the model, through the Open Distance University, to meet the training of teachers from North to South of

the country, leaving out the budget to meet the face-to-face PARFOR in the region.

In this sense, we conclude that it is urgent and necessary the role of the University facing the formation of Rural Educators, as well as to reflect about the emergency character of the policies destined to the formation of teachers in service, because when placed as a political strategy to solve the problems of Basic Education, it reinforces the illusion that the certification of the teacher with Higher Education will produce positive impacts in education, without considering the regional asymmetries and the conditions of access, permanence and the quality of this formation, and, primarily, disregards the historical struggle for a Rural Education that assures the social rights that were denied to them.

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<sup>i</sup> The Marajó Integration Region (RI) is composed of 16 municipalities (Afuá, Anajás, Bagre, Breves, Cachoeira do Arari, Chaves, Currálinho, Gurupá, Melgaço, Muaná, Ponta de Pedras, Portel, Salvaterra, Santa Cruz do Arari, São Sebastião da Boa Vista, Soure)" (Government of the State of Pará, 2015, p. 1, emphasis in original).

<sup>ii</sup> "Small propulsion engine which, attached to the rear of small boats or ships, is driven manually, with the help of a stick that determines the directions" (Online Dictionary of Portuguese Language, 2019).

<sup>iii</sup> Created by Resolution No. 200, in October 1851, the Municipality of Breves is located in the Mesoregion of Marajó<sup>7</sup>, microregion of Furos de Breves<sup>8</sup>, in the State of Pará. Its headquarters is located on the left bank of the Parauaú River, 240 km away as the crow flies from the State Capital, the City of Belém (Law No. 2388, 2015, p. 32).

<sup>iv</sup> The MST "...is the result of an agrarian question that is structural and historical in Brazil. It was born from the articulation of the struggles for land, which were resumed from the end of the 1970s, especially in the Center-South region of the country and, little by little, expanded throughout Brazil ... Today the MST is organized in 22 states, and follows with the same objectives defined in this Meeting of 84 ..." (Caldart, 2001, p. 1).

<sup>v</sup> This data was collected from the URES located in municipalities in the states of Pará, and was not differentiated between teachers from urban and rural areas.

<sup>vi</sup> PARFOR in number. Accessed at: <https://www.aedi.ufpa.br/parfor/index.php/2013-10-03-15-09-36/parfor-em-numeros>.

vii Educampo Portal. Accessed at: <http://educampoparaense.com.br/noticia.php?id=47>. Group of Study and Research in Rural Education in the Amazon of the Institute of Education Sciences/UFPA.

viii There is no concrete study that shows this percentage.

ix Interview conducted at the PARFOR Teacher Training Pole School in November 2018 on the 5th, 6th, 7th.

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