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Teaching Work and Capes Assessment: estrangement and naturalization

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ABSTRACT – Teaching Work and Capes Assessment: estrangement and naturalization. This article analyses the working conditions of teachers based on the relations established with the assessment policies of the Coordination of Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), in particular, expressed in the National Postgraduate Plan (PNPG 2011-2020). The research had the participation of teachers of two Postgraduate Programs in Education (PPGE) of public universities in Minas Gerais and the data collection took place through semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis. As a result, we verified that despite the discontent, contradictions and estrangement in the PPGE teaching practice, the resistance capacity is cooled and the teachers begin to conceive the way of work, the conditions of production and evaluation naturally.

Keywords: Teaching Work Conditions. Assessment. CAPES. Postgraduate Programs in Education.

RESUMO – Trabalho Docente e Avaliação da Capes: estranhamento e naturalização. Neste artigo, analisam-se as condições de trabalho docente a partir das relações definidas com as políticas de avaliação da Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (CAPES), em especial, expressas no Plano Nacional de Pós-Graduação (PNPG 2011-2020). A pesquisa contou com a participação de docentes de dois PPG em Educação (PPGE) de universidades públicas mineiras, e a coleta de dados ocorreu por meio de entrevistas semiestruturadas e de análise documental. Como resultados, verificou-se que, apesar de descontentamentos, contradições e estranhamentos na prática docente em PPGE, a capacidade de resistência é arrefecida e os docentes passam a conceber com naturalidade o modo de trabalho e as condições de produção e avaliação.

Palavras-chave: Condições de Trabalho Docente. Avaliação. CAPES. Programas de Pós-Graduação em Educação.

Introduction

In this study we address teacher work in *stricto sensu* post-graduate programs, more specifically its work conditions, based on the relationships established with the assessment policies of CAPES, in special those expressed in PNPG (2011-2020) (Brasil, 2010).

Ferenc and Ferreira (2012) revealed, among other aspects, that the condition that regulate university teacher work, especially from the 1990's, period of deep transformations in Brazilian public university (Chauí, 2001; Maués, 2008 and others), brought as consequences elements of intensification, precariousness and relaxation of work. In that sense, it is evinced a daily routine of an intense and complex work, exposed to criteria of efficiency and efficacy adjusted to the market's interests, as well as the potentialization of productiveness of teacher work, upon who the demands have increased.

Concerning teacher work in *strict sensu* post-graduate courses, the studies emphasized the problematic of teacher training, CAPES' assessment policies, the internationalization of post-graduate programs, the training of Education researchers, the students' production and profile and the guiding process. However, in that period (2006-2013), few researches had problematized the influences of the current assessment model of CAPES about the production conditions of teachers in Education post-graduation, in their perspective.

It is worth noting that the works related to the thematic in question appear in higher volume in the year 2011, what coincides with the period of divulgation of PNPG (2011-2020) elaborated by CAPES. We believe that the increase of studies aimed at the work conditions in post-graduate might be related to the idea of increase of productiveness and of accentuated regulation in the new plan.

The literature review conducted by Ferreira (2015) allows for verifying, in the literature consulted, the emphasis to the political and historical dimension of *stricto sensu* post-graduation, encompassing broad and varied aspects of teacher work and that education level, as well and knowledge production. In that sense, are still open broader questions about the relationship between assessment policy and knowledge production in Education post-graduation. We record, also, the cooling of the critical discussions in relation to the inductive policy of CAPES, as if the programs and respective researchers followed a logic of accommodation or of consensus (Bianchetti, 2006).

It is worth noting that after the implementation, from 1996/1997, of *CAPES Assessment Model*, it is observed in the literature and impressive increase in the number of works (Kuenzer; Moraes, 2005; Horta; Moraes, 2005; Bianchetti; Machado, 2007; 2009 and others) that reflect and analyze this new assessment model. Moreover, this gave rise to a more active critical reaction, notably, from the teaching professionals and researchers from some areas of Human and Social Sciences. However, the literature review and the analysis of researchers of Education

area still demonstrate the need for the production of studies that reflect upon the current situation of post-graduation.

In this sense, aiming to aggregate knowledge to the study whose object is *stricto sensu* post-graduation and to comprehend the production conditions of teacher work, we present data from a research conducted in two post-graduation programs in Education of two federal universities of the State of Minas Gerais, Brazil. For the selection of the PPGE's and of the participants, we set up the following criteria: i) the CAPES concept of programs between 4 and 7; and ii) the research participant's bond as an effective teacher of PPGE and his experience of at least two CAPES assessment processes. Following those criteria, we chose two PPGE, one of concept 7 (PPGE #1) and the other with concept 4 (PPGE #2), at the time, both offering academic master's and doctor's courses in Education.

PPGE #1, created four decades ago, belongs to an exponent university in the national and state scenarios and counts on an effective teacher staff high ranked by CAPES and active in graduation and post-graduation courses. PPGE #2 is the younger program, whose master's course was created in 1999, and the doctorate's course a decade later.

For the data collection, a semi-structured interview was the main source, being that the documentary analysis, in especial, of PNPGE (2011-2020) used for complimentary information. The interviews were conducted with three teachers, being two bond to PPGE #1 and one to PPGE #2. Those participants selection was because they fit to the criteria set up and for being those, among the researches contacted, that were willing to participate on the research. It is worth noting that, in "[...] the qualitative research the preoccupation of the researcher is not with the numeric representativeness of the group studied, but with the deepening of the comprehension of a social group, an organization, an institution, a trajectory etc" (Goldenberg, 2004, p. 14)¹. Those participants, along with the documentary analysis, brought contributions for the reflection on the work conditions from the relationships established with CAPES assessment policies.

The qualitative approach study was based on Grounded Theory (GT) (Charmaz, 2009). According to that writer, GT is a method for conducting "[...] qualitative research that focuses on creating conceptual frameworks or theories through building inductive analysis from the data. Hence, the analytic categories are directly 'grounded' in the data" (Charmaz, 2009, p. 252).

In GT it is worked the concept of theoretical sampling that allows for the researcher to seek data in certain contexts or by means of the testimony of people that claim to have knowledge about the reality to be study. The logic of theoretical sampling consists in identifying, in the selection, cases, subjects and/or contexts that meet some important criteria previously defined by the researcher (Petrini; Pozzebon, 2009). Charmaz (2009, p. 249) stresses that, by the use of "[...] theoretical sampling, the researcher seeks people, events, or information to illuminate and define the boundaries and relevance of the categories".

The data analytic process in GT consist in conceptualizing it and is understood as a qualitative coding process. According to Charmaz (2009, p. 69), “[...] coding means categorizing segments of data with a sort name that simultaneously summarizes and accounts for each piece of data”.

We have worked under the perspective of line to line coding of each interview, that, according to Charmaz (2009, p. 77), “[...] can be an enormously useful tool by means of which ideas will occur to you that had escaped your attention when reading data for a general thematic analysis”. Thus, as we sought to make sense of the data, stablishing relationships between them, we identified three main categories: *Work Conditions*, *Knowledge Production* and *Career*. The focus of that study is the analysis of teaching work conditions on stricto sensu post-graduation. However, before the exploration of that theme, we will make a brief discussion on CAPES and PNPG’s assessment, in order to achieve a better contextualization of the theme in debate.

CAPES’s Assessment and the Post-Graduation National Plans: elements within a context

The Assessment System of *stricto sensu* Post-graduation was implemented by CAPES, yet embryonically, in 1976, and has been used for monitoring of PPG in Brazil and for assessing its quality. For such, CAPES has sought, since then, to put in practice the guidelines of PNPG for each period. The PNPG’s deliberate upon the policies that will be implemented in the scenario of National Assessment System of Post-Graduation (SNPG) and, consequently, for the assessment process of stricto sensu post-graduation. In this sense, Hostins (2006, p. 155-156) stresses that the policies and the plans evince:

The effort for diversification and expansion of the supply, the relaxation of models, the institutionalization of a continuous assessment process, the increment of internationalization, the complicity with marketing, network, the seek for excellence profiles, finally, the sharing with the paradigm that defines the knowledge economy.

It is worth noting that the first stricto sensu PPG’s in Brazil were institutionalized in 1965, from the Report n. 977 of National Education Council. This report gives prominence to the relevance of post-graduation as a space both for a “[...] teaching training” as “[...] the training a highly qualified expert” (Brasil, 2005, p. 164). Thus, post-graduation in Brazil was institutionalized for the purpose of “[...] training a competent teacher body for serving with quality to the expansion of higher education and prepare the way for de consequent development of scientific research” (Kuenzer; Moraes, 2005, p. 1342).

For Saviani (2002), the 1970’s were considered the decade of post-graduation, in the sense of the system’s institutionalization, organization and expansion. It was also in that period, in 1976, that CAPES begun its system of monitoring and assessment of Brazilian post-graduation

and sought to put in practice the guidelines of I PNPG (1975-1979) (Brasil, 1975). In that moment, the main goal of I PNPG to be achieved by the Ministry of Education, with the aid of other government organs through financial incentives to research, was the training of researchers, teachers and staff to attend, specially, to the demand of a higher education in increasing expansion.

In the 1980's, there was the phase of consolidation of post-graduation programs already created, along with the decreasing of implementation of new courses (Saviani, 2002). In that period, the II PNPG (1982-1985) was created. That Plan, despite keeping the same objectives of the first, emphasized the quality of teaching in graduation and post-graduation, reinforcing and prioritizing the institutionalization and enhancement of CAPES's assessment, its assessment systematic by means of consultant committees – peer-assessment –, carried out for the first time in 1978, even though, as indicated, it existed embryonically since 1976 (Brasil, 1982).

The III PNPG (1986-1989), bound to the III National Development Plan (III PND), the first of Brazilian New Republic, was permeated by atmospheres of fights for the (re)democratization of the country, of the movement *Diretas Já* (Direct [Elections] Now) to the constituent process. This III PNPG was elaborated with the aim to give continuity to the II PNPG, addressing the worry with the programs' quality. The research gained relevance in post-graduation with that plan and was understood as a goal for the achievement of national autonomy. For that, the goal of the III PNPG was the development of research by the university, in order to integrate the post-graduation to the Science and Technology System (Brasil, 1986).

Thus, we can observe the worry with the realization of scientific and technological production, seen as levers for the social, economic and cultural development of the country. The III Plan also stressed the need for providing organizational and material conditions in the universities for the conduction of researches, even though not all of them in fact enjoy those conditions (Franco, 1997).

In 1996 was elaborated the IV PNPG, that Siqueira (2006, p. 1080) stresses that it was also perched by the State Reform. Defending a “[...] management vision, characteristic of the private business world and moved by the increasing of profit, proposed a reduction of public expenses in social areas, kept by the State, as part of the warranties of the fundamental public rights”.

It is worth noting that this State Reform implied consequences for post-graduation, such as the reduction of teacher body, as highlight the precarious retirements in virtue of the fear of loss of rights (full retirement, age and contribution time); the lack of repossession of teacher body (retirements, deaths or abandonment of employment); the lack of resources for basic maintenance (water supply, electricity, phone line, among others); and wage freeze, or readjusts by means of gratifications according to productivity criteria, stimulating, thus, the academic competition (Siqueira, 2006).

The IV PNPG, despite passing through several preliminary writings, did not concretized effectively, causing a gap between the III PNPG (1986-1989) and the V PNPG (2005-2010) (Brasil, 2004). According to Balbachevsky (2005), one of the reasons for the non-implementation of IV was due budgets restrictions.

The preliminary version of IV plan, however, circulated in the scope of CAPES board of directors and among the members of the Coordinator Committee. Thus, though this IV PNPG did not concretized effectively, the several recommendations presented in the drafts elaborated were implemented by CAPES, with highlight to “[...] the system expansion, diversification of the post-graduation model, changes in the assessment process and international insertion of post-graduation” (Brasil, 2004, p. 18).

In 2004, CAPES designated a Committee responsible for the elaboration of V PNPG (2005-2010). This Plan incorporated and reinforced the idea that the educational system is a strategic element in the process of socioeconomic and cultural development of the country. Thus, is up to the post-graduation the task of training competent professionals for working in the different sectors of society and in conditions for cooperate, based in the training acquired, for the modernization process of the country (Brasil, 2004).

The V Plan had as one of its main goal the expansion of the post-graduation system, providing the expressive increase in the number of post-graduate students trained for the qualification of the Brazilian Higher Education System (ES), of the Science and Technology System (C&T) and of the business sector. The expansion of PG system, according to the V PNPG, should still occur in four strands: capacitation of teacher for ES, qualification of Fundamental Education teachers, specialization of professional for the work market – both public and private – and training of technical staff and researchers public and private enterprises (Brasil, 2004).

It is in force actually the V PNPG 2011-2020) (Brasil, 2010). This plan counts on a longer period and it was elaborated in parallel with PNE, which ended up being approved for the period of 2014-2014 (Brasil, 2014).

The VI PNPG emphaticizes objectives somehow present in the previous plans. It is structure in five pillars:

- 1 – The expansion of the National Post-Graduation System (SNPG), the primacy for quality, the rupture of endogeny and the attention to the reduction of asymmetry;
- 2 – The creation of a new national research agenda and its association with post-graduation;
- 3 – *Enhancement of assessment and its expansion for other segments of STI system;*
- 4 – Multi and interdisciplinarity, main characteristics of post-graduation and important research themes.
- 5 – The support to fundamental education and to other teaching levels and modalities, especially High School (Brasil, 2010, p. 15, our emphasis).

The third pillar and focal point of this analysis refers to the “[...] *enhancement of assessment* and its expansion for other segments of the STI system” (Brasil, 2010, p. 15, our emphasis). Still about the assessment process carried out by CAPES, the VI PNPG (2011-2020) highlights that:

Three axis characterize the assessment: 1 – it is done by peers, coming from different knowledge areas and recognized by their intellectual reputation; 2 – it has a meritocratic nature, leading to the classification of and in the disciplinary fields; 3 – *it associates acknowledgment and fostering, defining policies and establishing criteria for the fostering of programs* (Brasil, 2010, p. 125, our emphasis).

We can observe that the assessment results are measured almost exclusively by means of scientific production, i.e., by the number of publications of a post-graduation program. Thus, the resources are directly bond to the programs assessment process, in which the higher the score, the higher the chances to get financial resources (Balbachevsky, 2005; Wassen; Pereira; Balzan, 2015).

It is worth noting that, in this sense, it seems to have an inversion of values, that is, in general the idea that we have is that the investment must go to those in poorer conditions, whether it is of physical infrastructure, or of qualified staff, for the improvement of quality. However, in the case of investment of CAPES resources, as well of other fostering agencies, the contrary occurs. The higher the score, and by consequence, the *quality*, the higher the changes for getting resources. Such fact affects directly the teacher work and their production conditions in the PPG, which, in the attempt of achieving the best results in the assessments, need to meet the demands put in the assessment criteria, independently of their work conditions (physical infrastructure, financial resources, availability of time for research, participation in events etc.).

Teaching work conditions and CAPES Assessment: estrangement and naturalization

From the interviews, we ranked the *work condition* category concerning the teaching work process and the specific relationships that regulate this process in a given context. That category encompass the characteristics of time, space, demand and remuneration that involve work, the way of organization and the means for realization of that work. We observe that the conditions in which the teachers exert their activities are derived from the way of work organization nowadays. From that category, we created two subcategories: *work intensification* and *organization of teaching work*.

In relation to the condition of academic production in the PPGEs, that is, work conditions, Witter (1996) and Salmi (2009) stresses that in the academic environment there are intern variables – academic resources and physical infrastructure for research – and external variables that impact in the organization and production of knowledge – financial

resources for the participation in events, equipment acquisition, conduction of research and the relationship with fostering agencies, among others. Those variables need to be taken into consideration when one analyzes the conditions of study and work in a post-graduation program.

Still talking about condition for academic production/work, Franco (1997) stresses that there are two orders of propositions that help to comprehend them, the first one being related to *know-how-to-do*, with the supposition that qualification and academic production are correlated. In other words, the academic production is understood as a teaching competence initially granted by qualification – doctor's degree.

According to Saviani (2002), the consolidation of the researcher's training occurs during the development of doctorate, being the doctor's degree understood as the construction of intellectual autonomy – theoretical and practical mastery for conducting the research. Based on that author, we consider that the doctor's degree is the certification that the teacher had access to a qualified training and that, therefore, has the first proposition, the *know how to do*. Thus, we can understand that the teachers interviewed have the *know how to do* and are qualified for the teaching work in post-graduation programs.

The second proposition, according to Franco (1997), refers to the *time to do*, that is related to the availability of hours to research and teaching activities; needed physical infrastructure, as computer resources, labs, library and financial resources for updating and maintaining the permanent infrastructure and consumables, enabling the data collect (sometimes, in places far from the university), promoting interchange with other researchers (going to congresses and academic events), among others. Thus, qualified human resources, financial resources and physical infrastructure are basic conditions for teaching work.

The subcategory *work intensification* refers to the excessive increase of work and production demand, that is, to the stretching of work time for beyond the prescribed working day, exceeding from the professional scope to the personal life, as a process of indissociation and tendency for identifying the time with family with the time for university practice.

The daily work is intense, very intense, both in relation to the volume of activities, as in relation to its complexity. There are several demands by which we are 'constantly' charged. Besides that, there is the pressure for accomplishing the products in exiguous time, and there I see that questions of productivity [...]. Time is not enough and demands dedication that exceeds – by large – the working day for which I was hired. Thus, time is a problem! We lost certain tranquility in production, a more quiet posture, intellectual, for a pressure for production that ends up being improper in the way it is put [...] having to guide students in masters' and doctorate's courses, having numberless students in graduation, for it is important that we are insert in graduation, give classes, guide monographies, participate in events, congresses, submit projects, publish with Qualis, all that concomitantly. (Teacher #1 – five years of work in PPGE #1).

Time is not enough. The assessment, in a certain way imposed to the programs a harder routine, all related to the idea of productivity, of quick production. The pressure for smaller terms has already been signalized by CAPES, for example, with the reduction of the period of masters' and doctorate's courses, I'm not saying that the time is not enough, but that we lost in training quality. That we lost! What we have done to produce is to concentrate in a few productions, producing collectively from discussion in our research groups. My research field is very potent in this (Teacher #2 – seven years of work in PPGE #2).

Those testimonies allows us to observe that the critic, in those specific case, lies on the question of time, on the lack of it or its limitation, due to so many and different demands. It draws the attention the fact that in both testimonies appears the term *productivity*. Borsoi (2012), emphasizes that the induction for productivity parameters and the great quantity of activities considered as intellectual investment required from the teachers – expressed in classes, researches, scientific report, articles -, besides the demands of bureaucratic character – work meeting, inclusively, in lunch time, the time spend with reading and answering e-mails-, exceeds the specific limits of regimental teaching working day. Situation like these that, sometimes, can cause negative effects, whether on the quality of academic production, or on the teachers' life quality. Moreover, the consequence of those excesses manifest itself in “[...] a lifestyle that do not respect the limits between work time and non-work time” (Borsoi, 2012, p. 83), as we can observe in the following testimony:

We have lived that, all the time here in post-graduation, charges, charges, and the one who does not accept this, does not stay. Several colleagues and I feel that our work commitments related to working day, exceeding the limits of personal live, at home, in the weekends, we also work [...] and sincerely it is common now to take work home, it is a way to handle it. I find it strange when I don't take work home, but rarely I don't take and I keep thinking that I'm forgetting something, and when I look, I really forgot [laughter] [...] We have now a very strong cultural, we put this way, of charge (Teacher #1).

In this speech, the teacher employs the term *charge* when she positions in relation to the conditions of academic activities in post-graduation. As a teacher, she claims to do more than she should in her work demand, what characterizes an intensification process of her daily routine. Duarte (2010) resumes studies on the intensification of teaching work and describes, from discussions, the intensification phenomenon as a form of deterioration of rights and privileges of Education workers. Those losses are marked by a scenario of work excess, decreasing of the teacher's rest time, and chronical and persistent time overload, reducing the possibilities for updating, long term planning and collective work, what culminates in the increase of physical and emotional fatigue, and in isolation in relation to the teacher colleagues, compromising, inclusively, the quality of Education.

By means of those subtle strategies, the intensification involves the very teaching working day, in which are delegated to the new teach-

er new functions and responsibilities, in order to meet the demands of the system and of the community, without time, and sometimes, conditions enough to do so. Mentioning the assessment devices of teaching work, Duarte (2010, p. 1) affirms that “[...] in order to ensure the effective productive usage of work time, we have used especially direct surveillance and bureaucratic control of teachers”.

However, one of the teacher interviewed affirm not perceiving characteristics of relaxation, precariousness and intensification in the work process, and acknowledging speaking for himself, classifies his work conditions as relatively good. This teacher analysis his work circumstances by means of comparisons with universities from other regions of the country and even with foreigner realities:

[...] we have good work conditions [...] Thus, that thesis of precariousness, it may even be true, depending on the university, depending of the region of the country, but in a general way, I think that the work conditions of a Brazilian university teacher, and here I’m talking about mainly of the federal universities’ teachers, I think that those work conditions are relatively good [...], of course he works a lot. Look, I have been this year to Hungary, I was in an event there in Budapest, and I found a colleague of mine [...] He has been there for 10 years now, give lessons in the university. He earns 500 euros a month² [...] if we convert it is 1500 reais a month [...] with those 500 euros he cannot survive, he has a second work as researcher in a research institute there he earns 300 euros a month. Thus, his wage is 800 euros a month, in two jobs, and he has not exclusive dedication on the university, he does not have one to apply for resources for research, for participation in events etc. Only to give you an example, of how there exists teachers worldwide worse conditions than ours [...] I think there are colleagues, obviously, that are in other moments of their careers and thus, obviously, the conditions can be different, but in my current state, my conditions are good (Teacher #8 – eight years of work in PPGE #1).

The singularity that denotes the positioning of that teacher in face of his work conditions can be understood by means of his own analysis, in which he takes as a background the comparison with foreigner realities. However, when we are talking about Brazil, taking into consideration that its post-graduation system is still recent, that is, with a little more than 50 years, is it possible to soften the critic upon it and especially, upon the charges demanded by the current assessment model of post-graduation, regulated, coordinated and implemented by CAPES? Is it possible to assess all the knowledge areas with homogenous standards?

The subcategory called teaching activities denotes the way in which the interviewed teachers organize themselves in order to meet the work demands on post-graduation. We highlight that for those teacher the way of work and organization is not different from graduation to post-graduation. In their testimonies, they reiterate and see themselves as teachers with exclusive dedication to a university and work on graduation and post-graduation levels that by itself reserve different specificities and demands that lead for a way of organizing the activities. About

the organization of her attributions, Teacher #2 stresses again that the problematic lies on the excessive demand and not on the activity itself.

Many of my activities do not dissociate from each other. But in post-graduation, for example, with the increase of workload and the guiding process for academic studies and for articles takes most of my time, not to mention the participation in committees, report writing [...] are things that in a certain way make our work harder, not because the activity, but for the excessive demand. Sincerely, I would like to be able to dedicate myself more to teaching; I understand that in our area, teaching is the most relevant of all activities, for it is there where I feed on my researches, my actions. Teaching, whether it is on graduation or in post-graduation, is my direct connection with the daily work of teaching action, with the people who are in training and is my training process also because it gives me clues, instigate me, mobilizes me to want to know more, provides me with possibilities for new researchers [...]. Everything I research came from my daily work as teacher and besides that, it is by means of teaching that I also give life to my research group, that I find my fellows of scientific initiation (Teacher #2 – seven years of work in PPGE #2).

In counterpart, given his singular positioning, Teacher #3 reports he succeed in maintaining his activities in balance. Among the demands for teaching, research, extension and management, the teacher affirms that the latter is the least overweighing, and he makes an interesting analysis, contextualizing the stages of university teacher career:

[...] I think that is part of our lives, I also still find time to publish, to present my works, thus, I do not see anything wrong in it. I think that it is part of career of any teacher, if one wants to be university teacher; one has to be able to handle those demands. I can handle it, I don't think any of these activities takes more time than the other, none of them messes with the other, I also think that one helps the other, they are very likely to be articulated, thus, sincerely, I think that is part of our work, we are really working very hard, but I hardly work on the weekends, for example, I don't need to work on the weekends. I dedicate them to my family (Teacher #3 – eight years of work in PPGE #1).

The data allows us to observe the different tendencies of teaching work, for upon it lie very specific characteristics, as the differences coming from the academic-professional experience, among the demands to be meet in each program and its work conditions, among other. Still in their testimonies, the teachers have revealed that, among other aspects, the acknowledge of a reconfigured public university, with new commitments, more in tune in relation to the market's interests and therefore, of a new *stricto sensu* post-graduation with other exigencies, conditions, objectives, normalizations and regulations.

In this context, we highlight the speech of one teacher that, when questioned about her positioning in front the characteristics and transformations of the university, of post-graduation and its relationships with teaching work, especially with the work developed in PPGE, reveal comprehensions that the university teacher function has passed and still passes through constant reconfiguration processes in all spheres, not being possible to differentiate them in aspects that only relate, for example, to graduation or post-graduation. She recognizes the trans-

formation through which the public university has passed in the last decades, and by reflecting upon her daily work in post-graduation, stresses CAPES's assessment process.

We have passed through several changes and many of them very significant and I think that specially after 1996 LDB, with the expansion of Higher Education [...] I wasn't in post-graduation at that time, but we had in the final years of the 1990's, I think the stronger change – we can put this way – was the way of monitoring and assessment of post-graduation in general. Almost everything changed, but I think that, specially, what affected more in the question of teaching work of the form of assessment, that begun to be more directly connected to financial resources. The question of CAPES, of the control, the charges [...]. The so-called age of productivity has caused serious distortions in our work, not only in the teaching work, but in all areas of post-graduation, in the students, the staff, our colleagues, we all have been affected (Teacher #2 – seven years of work in PPGE #2).

In the perspective of Bianchetti (2011), the historical rescue is one way of comprehend how the university, and more specifically, the *stricto sensu* post-graduation have become targets of capitalist interest. The dynamic of constant reorganization of public university in face of the circumstances and demands of society have accelerated a lot from the 1990's.

Therefore, public university has assumed a prominent place in the changes and reforms instituted in favor of the globalization of capital, in special the new demands for science, technology and innovation production and for the professionalization qualification, now demanded by the new economy (Silva Junior *et al.*, 2012). The positioning of public university allows us to emphasize two points: the role of research, with highlight to post-graduation level, privileged *locus* of scientific, technological and innovation production; and the outstanding characteristics of commodification of the knowledge produced in that teaching level. Silva Junior and other (2012), analyzing PNPG (2011-2020), defend that under that perspective the university have become a continuity line of the State, functioning as a production tool directed to the globalized financial capital. According to those authors:

The analysis of the current PNPG lead us to the potential hypothesis that university autonomy is nothing more than an epiphany. All the assessment, classification and guiding system of Brazilian post-graduation induct to a spinning of university autonomy, completely compromising the knowledge production and the training of our researchers '[...] with the increasing of aggregate value of our products and the competitive conquer of new markets in the globalized world' (Brasil, 2010, p. 37). That plan seems to strengthen and concretize a policy that for almost two decades have been consolidated in the attempt of changing the university culture, in its objectives, in the training of researchers and that, despite being received with resistance, have been widely accepted by the generation of new doctors that little by little begin be put in

charge of the research activities and emptying the place of critic (Silva Junior et al., 2012, p. 53).

In that sense, the transformations perceived by the teacher in relation to the university and, consequently, to the work process represent a movement of internal and external forces that have acted upon public university. The diverse historical, economic, social and academic transformations in construction and (des)construction of scientific-university field imply different aspects, among which we can stress the dynamics expressed by the work in *stricto sensu* post-graduation.

It is important to consider also the differences between the very scientific-university fields, that occupy distinct positions in the scientific game, considering it to be spaces equipped with different baggage of scientific authority, intellectual and cultural capital and, therefore, with different levels of importance, influence and scientific-social interconnection. Such fact justifies the existence of varied opinions and actions related to the organization and work conditions in post-graduation. Thus, the scientific-university field, when perceived as a restructured field, expresses processes of reproduction and transformation, of adjusts and resistances, as well as it can represent the search for overcoming conflicting situations, by means of the fight for university autonomy, in a special way.

About the teachers' perceptions related to CAPES assessment process, we can observe their divergence concerning the adequacy of a few criteria used for assessment in Education area. It is worth mentioning that, accord to data related to 2018, the assessment contemplates 49 areas "[...] with the same systematic and set of basic requirements established by the Higher Education Technical-Scientific Council (CTC-ES)" (Brasil, 2018, online). Among the requirements are program's proposal; teaching body; student body, thesis and dissertations; intellectual production; and social insertion.

It is consensual among the three teachers interviewed the comprehension that the assessment process is important for the maintenance and enhancement of Brazilian post-graduation system, especially in terms of quality and infrastructure for research activities. The teachers stress that the criteria used by CTC-ES for assessing the Education programs are not adequate for the area. The justification reiterated by the teachers is based on the particularities of the research in educational area, considering that, mostly, they involve social and educational processes experienced by different subjects (students, educators, family, diverse social agents) overlapped in the most varied socio-educational contexts. It is in that sense that many assessment criteria, in its majority of a quantitative base, are interpreted as inadequate for the assessment of the work process of the activities developed by the teacher of the Education post-graduation programs. We quote next, for example, the critic made by Teacher #2 when she reports her work conditions:

This is a theme that should worry all of us a lot; we that work at the human sciences, at the social sciences, in education, for those areas are the most

affected by excess. Our study work began to be measured by the meter of productivity. For example, when we are going to *do* research we submit to fostering agencies to get resources. There we are questioned about the productivity of our researches. The other day I filled a FAPEMIG form that questioned me about the social impact of my research, the options included patents and products produced. I did not have anything to answer there. At the end I had to justify that, my research had had impact, but the impact is social, the impact is on the students' learning, on the training of the teachers that participated on it. There is not space for this in the assessment, but this is important for us. It is a point, but I think we had losses and gains with the productivity policies. We are very much pressed to publish papers. We are. However, it is also fundamental for it makes the findings to circulate and be known. It is a necessary evil (Teacher #2 – seven years working at PPGE #2).

According to Sguissardi (2010), in Brasil the consent for parameters grounded in qualitative criteria of academic production occurs in a more intensified way from the years 1996 and 1997, by the occasion of the implementation of the current assessment model undertaken by CAPES. As that author stressed, the critics take this model as a procedure that takes into consideration much more how much a teacher/researcher produces and publishes than the quality of benefit that the research work conducted by him can bring to science, to the academic community and for the society in general. Thus, the emphasis is set upon the productivity, not on the interest, and in the public and social quality of the product.

The question of the need for scientific production disseminate in QUALIS A journals also has been criticized not for the exigence, but for the value attributed to those publications, in detriment of the qualification of other vehicles as important as, considering the commitment with the socialization of knowledge. In relation to the quality of the products, the CAPES assessment takes as a base QUALIS that measures quality and stratifies the production by means of quality analysis of the divulgation vehicles – scientific journals, books and event annals.

Concerning the critics about the emphasis put on scientific production, Yamamoto and others (2012, p. 730) stress “[...] they range from work overload and intensification and their sub-products in terms of the teachers' health and welfare to the questioning of a possible abandonment of teachers' training”. That emphasis in the quantitative indicators or *academic produtivism*, as it is usually refer to by authors as Sguissard and Silva Junior (2009), Bianchetti and Machado (2009), and Sguissardi (2010), among other, has been reason for debate among scholars and drawn distinct opinions.

Gatti (1999) emphasizes that the assessment process focused on the attained and quantifiable products, taking into consideration not only the process, but also, especially, the usage they make of it to accredit, de-accredit and distribute resources and scholarships to the programs, turns the assessment into a power strategy. That author also stresses that assessment should be conceived and interpreted as a tool for re-orientation and not for punishment. She still adds that it is need to

distinguish from research support policy to the policy of people training in advanced levels, making use of the conscience that by assessing the masters' and doctors' programs:

[...] one is assessing an educational process, of training, and not the product of the activity of professional scientists [...]. It is different to assess a training process of people, teachers, philosophers, artists, technologists or scientists, and assess the curriculum of a researcher or a team of researchers for the purpose of granting resources for specific programs [...] if the assessment is defined as diagnostic, it should be avoided the punishing character and be reinforced its pedagogical role, of detecting critical points and send proposals to be worked on (Gatti, 1999, p. 34).

In the chapter entitled *Thirteen 'thesis' on post-graduation in Brasil in Philosophy, Social Sciences and Education* (Ghiraldelli Junior, 2006) it is discussed the question of regulation of post-graduation programs. We highlight here this author's critic to the assessment process at that teaching level:

In Brazil, the assessment organs are, in certain cases, also research-fostering organs. It complicates everything, for the assessment does not look like a measuring – as the American or European ranking –, but as an instance of resource distribution, as an instance with economic powers which grants rewards or punishes after the measuring. It is hard to believe that this measuring can be right in that situation. We would need to end it quickly. We have to understand what assessment is measuring and what assessment is intimidation. Moreover, we have to understand that the resource distribution needs to come from the generosity of an attempt of Welfare State, and not of an attempt of sharing a small cake for hungry people (Ghiraldelli Junior, 2006, p. 307).

Thus, it seems interesting to highlight Horta and Moraes (2005, p. 98) when they say that “[...] what was at stake, [...] was not the assessment, but the dispute for space in the excellence area, where fostering and prestige are concentrated”. It is self-evident the acknowledgement by the teachers of the need to review the usage of assessment and the criteria used for evaluate the post-graduation programs, especially in Education area. It is worth noting that the assessment of the activities developed in the scope of stricto sensu post-graduation is a process conducted by the very peers, that is, teacher assessing teachers. The peer assessment is a procedure recognized by the scientific community. It is a practice constitute by the analysis of scientific merits of the academic activity, by means of reports elaborated by independent scholars that work at the same knowledge area or in correlated areas (Balbachevsky, 2005).

About peer assessment, it is important to stress the reference to estrangement of oneself the subjects pass through when they are engaged

in the assessment of the post-graduation programs. In this sense, Silva and Silva Junior (2010, p. 225) affirm that the “[...] assessment is oriented by guidelines and models produced by and executed by CAPES, but they are made effective and reproduced even by the teacher that claim not agreeing with them, but that, in the condition of coordination, they follow those guidelines”. Also, in that line of thought, Bianchetti (2011), stresses a few confirmations on the critics to the forms of organization and working of CAPES:

A second observation has to do to the fact that a whole generation of teachers that got title and have worked in the period that the worry was about teacher training (till the early 1996) has already retired or is in the process of; their time is marked by unconcern to time of entitlement, options channeled to training – whether to master or to doctorate course, or to the training of those teachers in the condition of tutors. That is, there are not in the programs anymore people trained in other environment and that did not meet the draconian demands that began to be imposed upon the post-graduation programs in order that they maintain themselves in good position in the ranking, nor those that, hardly could meet those demands. Thus, one of the forces of resistance to the impositions has ceased. If it were not enough, the new doctors that we see gradually being accredited to the programs are inserted predominantly, with the mentality of one who got the master or doctorate degree in that new environment, in which are naturalized the culture of hurry, of productivity, of ‘events tourism’ (Salles, 2010) and a long list of byproducts potentially challenging to the quality of training provided by the programs.

Thus, the terms *estrangement*, *naturalization* and *naturalized contraction* have been used in several studies and researches (Bianchetti; Machado, 2009; Silva; Silva Júnior, 2010; Bianchetti, 2011; Silva Júnior *et al.* 2012). The related terms appear in the discussion on teaching work in post-graduation, mainly in the approach of academic productivism and related to the line of thought that heads to the discontent with the assessment model that has been used for the assessment of post-graduation programs and their productions.

In this sense, even though they manifest for the maintenance of the assessment of *stricto sensu* post-graduation programs, considering its relevance for the success of CAPES system, for our country and for the continuity of development of studies and researches, the teacher show displeasures and embarrassments related to the work conditions in an environment of charges, to the indissociation, or the tendency of identification of family time with the one of university practice, as well as the induction to academic productivism. However, even though they manifest so many inconsistencies related to that assessment process they are submitted to, because of their insertion as teachers in post-graduation programs, they make effort to meet the demands imposed individual or collectively, that is, upon them and the programs they are

bond to. Such behavior has been interpreted as conceptions of naturalization and estrangement of those professionals in face of they work and production conditions.

Final Considerations

In this brief discussion whose aim was the analysis of teaching work condition in the PPGE of two Federal Universities of the State of Minas Gerais, Brazil, and their relationships with CAPES' assessment policies, especially, demonstrated in the PNPG (2011-2020), it is self-evident that the implementation of Brazilian post-graduation is very much recent, just over 50 years ago, and has taken place in a complex political context, in which its expansion and relevance to the country's political and economic conjuncture were increasingly highlighted. We observe still that this expansion was always associated to the idea of quality and excellence, especially with the implementation of CAPES assessment and its improvement expressed in the PNPG's. However, the worry with quality, somehow, was always coupled to quantitative criteria and results, by means of products, publishing in QUALIS A journals.

The analysis of teaching work conditions in the PPGE has revealed several aspects that involve the development of teacher work: research, teaching, extension, management, tutoring, participation in events and bureaucratic works, among others. The exiguity of time to be able to handle this broad range of demands that have been imposed in terms of quantity and intensity is one of the main and recurrent critics made university teachers in relation to their work conditions.

CAPES's assessment process is a correlated theme to the discussion on the teaching work conditions in that education level, post-graduation. Under that perspective, emerge praises and critics to the assessment model. The positive aspects involve the acknowledgement of the legitimacy and need of an assessment process, especially by the training and political dimension of that teaching category. The negative factors occur in function of a few assessment criteria, especially on scientific production, and due to the exiguous terms for the fulfillment of the program's activities.

Ultimately, the interview with three teachers, even though we do not have the objective to generalize their conceptions for all post-graduation, they allowed us to observe, in virtue of the divergence between testimonies, that the judgment on an assessment process is also a subjective act of the teacher. It is outstanding that, despite there exists discontents, contradictions and estrangements in the teaching practice in Education *stricto sensu* post-graduation, the resistance force is doused and there are teachers that begin to conceive with naturalness their form of work, production and assessment.

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Notes

- 1 All the quotes in Portuguese were freely translation for this study.
- 2 We decided not to reveal the university real name, thus, preserving the identity of the interviewed teachers.

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