

# International Journal of Human Sciences Research

## PROCESSES OF CONSTRUCTION OF STUDENT AUTONOMY IN THE CONTEXT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

---

*Andréia Borges Andrade*

Bachelor of Administration, Master of Education, Business Analyst ``Universidade Estadual de Feira de Santana`` (UEFS)  
Feira de Santana /BA- Brazil

*Marinalva Lopes Ribeiro*

Graduated in Languages and Pedagogy, Master and PhD in Education and Permanent Professor of the Post-graduation Program in Education at ``Universidade Estadual de Feira de Santana`` (UEFS)  
Feira de Santana Bahia

All content in this magazine is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution License. Attribution-Non-Commercial-Non-Derivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).



**Abstract:** The study, with a qualitative approach, adopts semi-structured interviews in the production of data and aims to understand from the representations of teachers of the Bachelor of Administration course at ``Universidade Estadual de Feira de Santana`` (UEFS), how the teaching practice of these subjects contributes to the formation of student autonomy. The results indicate that these professionals, for the most part, did not have, in their initial or postgraduate training, subjects related to university pedagogy, which would help them in teaching. We found that they demonstrated to be influenced by instrumental rationality, marked by the traditional paradigm. Therefore, continued teacher training is necessary, so that they can develop experiences in the classroom that contribute to student autonomy.

**Keywords:** student autonomy; Teaching practice; Social representations

## INTRODUCTION

The debate regarding the formation of student autonomy gains centrality in the contemporary educational context, mainly because subordinate subjects who, acting like automatons, receive orders to perform tasks are no longer accepted.

On the contrary, students are expected to be guided to understand the processes involved in learning and solving problems autonomously. In recent years, as a result of inclusion policies, public universities have welcomed students, who are part of minorities that have had their rights historically denied: ethnic, sexual, gender, social and cultural diversity. A finding of this fact is presented in the 2022 Activity Report of ``Universidade Estadual de Feira de Santana``, the researched institution. This report points out that in 2022.2, of the 9,335 active undergraduate students, 4,979 were quota holders. In the undergraduate Administration course, of the 442 active students, 225 were

quota students (Uefs, 2023).

Thus, education is faced with the challenge of reflecting on emancipatory training actions in opposition to hegemonic culture, seeking to ensure mobility and the formation of autonomy of the most different social groups. In educational practice, it is essential to envision a society that overcomes teaching characterized by ideological reproduction and acts as a mediator and humanizer, in order to overcome a society marked by injustice, inequalities, domination and exclusion of rights. It would be giving education the importance it must have in the formation of new generations so that they can demand a new social organization, a transformative and liberating education that guides students towards this, as an autonomous person can develop their own learning and problem-solving strategies. problems in the face of challenges experienced throughout life.

Student autonomy can be foreseen in the curriculum of university courses, as announced by Jung, Duarte and Silva (2020). According to these authors, the curriculum has multiple references that need to take into consideration, the characteristics of students, in order to give them a leading role in their educational development. Furthermore, such a curriculum needs to be based on dialogue and the formation of critical thinking.

Aside from the curriculum, students' autonomy can be foreseen in the Pedagogical Project itself, as occurs at the Faculty of Law of ``Universidade de Brasília`` which, from 2012 onwards, foresees the construction of a democratic legal education to the extent that it values subjectivity and the development of student autonomy in pedagogical processes (Costa; Frota, 2013).

Another aspect that deserves to be highlighted, according to Behrens and Junges (2018), at universities, many professors normally work in the job market in a specific

area related to their training and, in parallel, work as professors. However, it is common to identify gaps related to the pedagogical training of such teachers, considering that in their initial training, generally in a Bachelor's degree, they did not receive the necessary knowledge to contribute to the pedagogical training of students.

However, those who have a master's degree or doctorate stand out, for the most part, more for their research and publications than for their performance in the classroom. Such facts can directly impact the practice of these professionals in the classroom.

In this sense, this article presents the results of a research that aimed to understand, based on the representations of teachers of the Bachelor of Administration course at *Universidade Estadual de Feira de Santana* (UEFS), how the teaching practice of these subjects contributes to the formation of autonomy of students.

This work, in addition to the introduction, presents the following subsections: the methodological path followed, considerations on the Theory of Social Representations, the concept of autonomy, autonomy and its possibilities in higher education and, finally, the results and discussions.

## **THE METHODOLOGICAL PATH FOLLOWED**

From a methodological point of view, it is worth highlighting that the research carried out was qualitative in nature. Qualitative research addresses non-quantifiable questions, operationalizes meanings, motives, aspirations, beliefs, values and attitudes, observes and understands relationships, society, trying to perceive new possibilities for the problem investigated. In summary:

The qualitative method is suitable for studies of history, representations and beliefs, relationships, perceptions and opinions, that is, the products of interpretations that humans make during their lives, the way they construct their material artifacts and themselves, they feel and think (Minayo, 2008, p. 57).

To obtain the data, a semi-structured interview and the "metaphor induction" technique were used. Mazzotti (1998) states that a metaphor is a process in which the participating subject is invited to transform the object into something that presents itself as an image, enabling metaphors to be presented as social representation.

Six UEFS teachers were interviewed, three female and three males. The teachers were over 41 years old, with between 10 and 25 years of teaching experience. They all have degrees in Administration, five of them with a doctorate and only one professor with a master's degree.

Regarding the complexity of teaching practice and the importance of listening to teachers, Franco states that:

Entering into the intimacy of teaching practices, listening and listening to the protagonists of this process, I was increasingly surprised by the traps and contradictions that pedagogical practices involve [...] through recordings, reports or testimonies, teachers will, little by little, explaining issues and asking questions, they feel encouraged when they are together and are being heard/seen [...]. They realize that, in practice, stories and contexts are consolidated; policies and training; and the perception of this amalgam leads me to consider practices as a "reverberation space" of institutional and political conditions (Franco, 2023, p. 6).

The interviews were carried out in person, recorded and transcribed. Lasting between 10 and 33 minutes. The speeches were succinct and, in a way, made the exploratory activity on the part of the researcher difficult, offering

few elements for inference. Data analysis was carried out using Bardin's Content Analysis (2011). Thus, the clippings were grouped by themes to enable analysis and inference based on the interviewees' speeches.

From an ethical aspect, every precaution was taken in the research, protecting the identities of the collaborators, who were given fictitious names: José, Rocha, Maria, Luther, Maria Luiza, Nelson and it was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee.

## **CONSIDERATIONS ON THE THEORY OF SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS**

According to Moscovici (2013), society has two basic ways of communicating: one is common sense, which are social representations, and the other is scientific. With the first, all people have the competence to express knowledge, these are informal everyday conversations in which opinions are shared. The second represents knowledge that meets the protocols of the scientific community to be accepted (Moscovici, 2013).

The Theory of Social Representations (RS) aims to identify conceptions or understandings that a group or subject has regarding some concept or object. RS is not the original reproduction of an object or situation, they are the truths constructed daily by people, in the context of interpersonal relationships. In this sense, communication plays an important role in the exchange of information, after all, people want to say what others are saying, they are thoughts that give meaning to the shared reality, thus, it is possible to verify symbolic elements that guide the group's behavior, such as languages, images and values.

Nday-to-day life, the RS, "[...] they circulate, intersect and crystallize incessantly, through a speech, a gesture, an encounter in everyday life [...]" (Moscovici, 1978, p. 41). Therefore, they refer to concepts, propositions

and explanations arising from people's daily lives, and are equated with common sense knowledge (Moscovici, 1978). For Jodelet (2001, p. 22), one of Moscovici's main collaborators, defines Social Representations as: "social representations are a form of socially elaborated and shared knowledge, with a practical objective, and which contributes to the construction of a reality common to a social group". Thus, new knowledge can provoke reinforcement or rupture of social representations.

Jodelet (1990) attributes three functions to SR: cognitive, refers to the mental processes involved in the representation of something, as the subject or group means the new object represented to the mental repertoire by the anchoring process. The function of interpretation that encompasses the interpretation of the social world and the representation of this new knowledge guiding social behaviors, as the subject is affected by social interactions. And finally, the guidance function, which clarifies how the integration of social content takes place, which at the same time influences and is influenced by a certain reality.

In this perspective, the importance attributed here to the study of social representations to understand the formation of autonomy of the student of the Administration course is inserted, as it expands the possibilities of data analysis, as the TRS provides the opportunity to know, through the adopted teaching practices, opinions and beliefs in order to understand the reality of the subjects of our study.

## REFLECTING ON THE CONCEPT OF AUTONOMY

Etymologically, the word autonomy comes from the Greek *autonomy*, formed by the adjective *autos*, which means “the same”, “himself” and “by himself”, and *nomos*, which means “sharing”, “law of sharing”, “law” (Segre; Silva; Schramm, s/d). Thus, autonomy consists of the subject’s ability to govern themselves, to lead their life based on their own laws and values.

Philosophically, the origin of the term autonomy is associated with Kant to designate the independence of will in relation to something and the ability of the subject to decide according to their own laws or their reason (Abbagnano, 2007). In this sense, the purpose of autonomy is for the subject to think and act for themselves.

From research on theoretical concepts about autonomy, some aspects were identified that treat this term as intellectual and moral autonomy (Piaget); autonomy as a construction from a personal and professional perspective (Contreras); autonomy as awareness based on interactions (Morin); autonomy as personal competence (Zabala) and autonomy as liberation from social determinisms (Freire). We will now detail these positions and clarify our option.

For Piaget (1977), the development of autonomy occurs in an integrated and procedural way, and can be considered as self-government. However, this expression cannot be confused with the condition of the subject acting freely, in their own way. Autonomy develops from the relationships established with people and the context in which the subject is inserted. Piaget (1977) admits that autonomy is not something easy to develop, as it requires the chain of actions to overcome heteronomous relationships in favor of “[...] a power that can only be conquered from within and that is only exercised within of

cooperation” (Piaget, 1977, p. 321). To do so, the individual needs a balance between making decisions and complying with the norms and values of the group to which they belong. Thus, pedagogical practice must simultaneously promote attitudes of an intellectual and moral nature, so that such jointly developed attitudes are expressed through autonomous conduct in the moral and intellectual spheres, reflecting an autonomy that is revealed in these two spheres. However, intellectual autonomy can be recognized based on its external aspects and certain conditions of adaptation to the social world, for example, when the subject recognizes that he is not at the center of his relationships and accepts ideas that are different from his own.

For Contreras (2002), autonomy, whether from a professional or personal perspective, cannot be analyzed individually, as if it were an innate capacity, because, in fact, it is a construction:

Professional and personal autonomy are not developed or realized, nor are they defined by the ability to isolate, the ability to “manage oneself”, nor the ability to avoid influences or relationships. Autonomy develops in the context of relationships, not isolation (Contreras, 2002, p. 199).

To defend this position, when conceptualizing autonomy, Contreras (2002, p. 92) exemplifies some professional profiles that help us understand the concept of autonomy. For the technical specialist, autonomy is conceived as, “[...] unilateral authority of the specialist. Non-interference. Illusory autonomy: dependence on technical guidelines, insensitivity to dilemmas, inability to respond creatively to uncertainty”. The technical reflective professional conceives autonomy with a moral and individual focus. However, this professional considers different points of view, seeking “[...] balance between independence of judgment and social responsibility. Ability to critically resolve

problem situations for the practical realization of educational intentions” (Contreras, 2002, p. 192). For the critical intellectual, autonomy is understood as emancipation, that is, professional and social liberation from oppression. This professional, through critical awareness, seeks to overcome ideological distortions, understanding “[...] autonomy as a collective process (discursive configuration of a common will), aimed at transforming institutional and social conditions [...]” of the work environment (Contreras, 2002, p. 192). The individual who acts as a “critical professional” is premised on emancipation, freedom, autonomy, while respecting and dialoguing with the collective, unlike the “technical specialist”, who conceives of unilateral authority.

Morin (2002) also addresses the topic of autonomy in his writings, asserting that the concept of autonomy must be thought of in a systemic and interdependent way, which implies interactions that each subject has throughout life. The subject only becomes autonomous from established cultural and social relations, “[...] we depend on an education, a language, a culture, a society, we depend of course on a brain, itself the product of a genetic program, and we also depend on our genes” (Morin, 2006, p. 66). This reflection may appear to lack autonomy, but as the subject interacts, he or she develops the ability to evaluate circumstances, make choices and make decisions (Morin, 2006). Thus, an autonomous being is a subject who, based on established interactions, becomes aware of their reality in order to improve it.

For Zabala (1998; 2010), autonomy appears alongside the ideas of responsibility, critical capacity, cooperation and freedom, as a personal competence that can be developed so that individuals can act in different contexts. In relation to the term competence, from the educational perspective of Zabala (2010), it

is consistent with the understanding of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), for this author:

Each competency is the combination of practical skills, knowledge (including implicit knowledge), motivation, ethical values, attitudes, emotions and other social and behavioral components that can be mobilized together so that the action taken in a given situation can be effective (Zabala, 2010, p. 32 apud OECD – PROJETO DESECO, 2002)

This way, the term competence dialogues with contextualized actions, when applied to certain real situations. Therefore, teachers must keep it in mind in their educational proposals, in all didactic units, not only in relation to content, but involving procedures and attitudes, so that students take responsibility for their own learning and use it in personal and professional life.

Finally, from the discourse of freedom, we find in Freire (2016a, 2016b, 2016c) autonomy as one of the central elements, so that the formation of the subject’s autonomy is an experience of liberation. Thus, being autonomous is when the subject takes possession of reality and, based on knowledge, seeks to transform it. Through a process of awareness, autonomy means freeing oneself, especially from social determinisms. However, this freedom is achieved procedurally, through interactions and experiences.

No one is subject to anyone’s autonomy. On the other hand, no one matures suddenly at 25. We mature every day, or not. Autonomy, as the maturation of being for oneself, is a process, it is becoming. It does not occur on a scheduled date. It is in this sense that a pedagogy of autonomy must be centered on experiences that stimulate decision-making and responsibility, that is, on experiences that respect freedom (Freire, 2016a, p. 105).

In this work, the perspectives of the authors Freire, Morin and Zabala were assumed, as we consider that they are complementary approaches to the analysis of the data produced in the research that we present, considering that they are aligned with the perspective of the complexity of the Theory of Social Representations and the University education.

In view of the above, the relevant role of education in the formative process of the subject's autonomy stands out, including in Higher Education, it is clear that educational practice, as a social phenomenon, is also a technical act and a political act, dialectically related (Rios, 2006), that is, it does not act neutrally. Therefore, it is essential to train critical and autonomous professionals. Therefore, we will focus in more detail on explaining the relationship between higher education and the formation of autonomy.

## **AUTONOMY AND ITS POSSIBILITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

In this section, the need for education that promotes autonomy in higher education is highlighted. In the work of Morin (2000, 2002), Freire (2016a, 2016b, 2016c) and Zabala (1998, 2002, 2010) we find guiding elements for the construction of an emancipatory education, ethically committed to the humanization of subjects, aiming at the development of critical awareness for the formation of subjects capable of exercising their citizenship, in addition to valuing the horizontality of knowledge. This type of education proposal highlights the relevance of dialogue for the formation of autonomous subjects, aware of their reality.

Paul Freire (2016, 2016b, 2016c) discusses the need to build a new model of society, in which dialogue, ethics, freedom and emancipation permeate all spaces. By advocating dialogicity as an essential element

to humanize relationships, Freire believes that, based on the dialogical educational process, an awareness of the world and emancipatory education, fundamentally opposed to the banking education model, can be awakened in subjects. Emancipatory education has the role of developing the autonomy and criticality of students to enable them to act as historical subjects.

From this perspective, Morin (2002) argues that society must seek to overcome the fragmentation of knowledge, in order to reconcile scientific thinking and humanist thinking, dissociated by the traditional paradigm. Thus, the French scholar proposes a new education that enables the formation of citizens in times of uncertainty, taking into consideration, their multiple dimensions, including their autonomy and emancipation.

The perceptions of Morin (1998, 2000, 2002) and Freire (2016a, 2016b, 2016c) go against traditional education, which has as its assumptions the teacher as the holder of knowledge and the student as a passive agent who receives information from outside, which contributes to the formation of accommodated, uncritical, little participatory subjects, vulnerable to manipulation.

This education model reproduces inequalities, because when education does not promote dialogue, it hinders the appropriation and reconstruction of knowledge, compromising the subject's possibilities of becoming an autonomous citizen. Let's see what Freire proposes for the person to become a subject:

Education must be – in its content, in its programs and in its methods – adapted to the aim it pursues: allowing man to become a subject, to build himself as a person, to transform the world, to establish relationships with other men. of reciprocity, creating culture and history (Freire, 2016a, p. 39).

Freire's educational perspective aims for the subject to appropriate dialogue, knowledge and reflection based on their reality, so that they can overcome the condition that was imposed on them and denied them opportunities. In effect, Freire refers to the process of raising awareness for subjects to overcome the excluded condition that they have been historically subjected to. This way, by defending dialogical, problematizing and liberating education, Freire demonstrates his belief in social transformation and, above all, in the possibility of education inserting and encouraging the subject to be participatory in various spheres of life, which depends on their awareness.

Given the needs mentioned above, with regard to autonomy, Martín (s/d) highlights that the university has a dual function: the academic and professional preparation of students. In this dialogue between scientific knowledge and professional preparation, the university must promote intellectual training, taking into consideration, the specific competencies of the profession and the competencies of the personal field, among them, autonomy.

Therefore, the formation of autonomy is a cyclical and gradual process, because the more activities that stimulate autonomy are carried out, the more the individual will have conscious resources to continue generating knowledge autonomously and continue learning throughout life (Pozo; Mateos, 2009; Zabala, 2010).

In this sense, the university, as a privileged learning space, can contribute to the formation of the autonomous individual. Monereo and Pozo (s/d) argue that student autonomy must be the fundamental objective of teaching at the university with the aim of forming educated people, honest citizens, leaders, good researchers, autonomous subjects capable of making decisions, interpreting and operating the world through meanings and procedures learned at university.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Below we present some research findings, which will be discussed in light of theoretical references.

### SENSES OF AUTONOMY

In this excerpt, we insert part of the speeches of the interviewed subjects that concern the meanings attributed to the term autonomy and its production conditions.

Regarding the participants' responses regarding conceptions of autonomy, we identified two types, namely: autonomy as awareness and autonomy as a personal attribute. Below are excerpts that illustrate these findings.

Autonomy as conscience was identified in Maria Luíza's speech:

Autonomy is being aware of yourself and your place in the world, your reality, your relationship with others, with your study, your profession. It's being the author of your own story. And that the university can provide ways for the student to be prepared for this (Maria Luíza, interview).

This way, we can highlight the understanding of autonomy as the subject's awareness and their social role, a proposal that is harmonized with Freire's thought by corroborating that the formation of autonomy involves the awakening of consciousness and appropriation of reality in a liberating way (Freire, 2016). In Freire, based on the discourse of freedom, we find autonomy as one of its central elements. We note that the formation of the subject's autonomy derives from formative experiences that the subject experiences of liberation, independence and struggle for democracy.

The autonomous subject is one who can carry out academic tasks independently, without needing continued assistance from the teacher (Rocha, interview).



However, Professor Nelson considers it difficult to intervene in the classroom because, as he explains, the student is already conditioned:

It's a very difficult business for the teacher to intervene in the student's autonomy, considering that the student already comes from a life conditioned to a certain behavior that is difficult to change (Nelson, interview).

Another teacher interviewed ponders the complexity of forming student autonomy, as we can see in the following excerpt:

Autonomy has its complexity because the subject has other influences, so I don't know exactly if I contribute to developing autonomy (José, interview).

Maria understands autonomy as "*continuous learning, is the subject continuing to learn.*"

Through the speeches, it was possible to learn about teaching representations about autonomy. The relevance of this action is because representing goes beyond mere formulations of concepts about a given fact. The representation guides the behaviors of individuals in relation to the social object.

However, as we can infer, in some cases, the teachers participating in the research did not demonstrate awareness that their actions are influenced by their social representations and that their practice, as teachers, can effectively contribute to students remaining hostage to the society that dictates norms. and of teachers who are not aware of their role, when they state that: "*I don't know exactly if I contribute to the development of autonomy, as José tells us.*"

And Luther states that:

*"the student is not prepared to be autonomous. Who doesn't know how they are being led, taken? I return to the issue of autonomy, of possibility in reality, I see that students do not know that they can create"* (Luther, interview).

The teacher does not clearly announce the meaning he attributes to the term autonomy, but considers that students are not capable of being autonomous subjects. Considering that the formation of autonomy is a procedural, continuous and cumulative achievement, which is the "[...] maturation of being for oneself, it is a process, it is becoming [...]" (Freire, 2016b, p. 41), there is a possibility for teaching intervention, even if students have experiences without encouragement for such competence. Especially if we think about teaching complexity, this will imply the need to train capable subjects to answer the questions that life poses to them in all dimensions.

Evidently, if the student is not prepared, it is the teacher's role to provide activities in the classroom that encourage the development of dialogue between the students and themselves, collaboration between colleagues who have mastered certain points of the content with those who have not yet learned, in order to effectively contribute to the emancipation of subjects who have entered the university today, so that they can transform reality, if necessary.

Therefore, we agree with the representation of autonomy presented by professor Maria Luiza when stating that:

Autonomy is being aware of yourself and your place in the world, your reality, your relationship with others, with your study, your profession. It's being the author of your own story. And the university can provide ways for the student to be prepared for this (Maria Luiza, interview).

For the same teacher, autonomy is represented as a possibility to be developed. The professor does not exempt herself from this commitment when she states that the university "must provide the means" for this to happen. Furthermore, the teacher states, in her speech, that being autonomous is when the subject becomes aware of themselves through emancipatory interactive experiences.

Another notable aspect in the representation of the aforementioned teacher is that, although she associates the development of autonomy with professional training, in the case of the Administration student, the teacher manages to recognize the scope of the term beyond the functionalist perspective, in a way that represents autonomy as an individual and collective subjective faculty that strengthens the social forces of the subjects involved, enabling them to be agents of their own stories. The importance of this perspective can be highlighted because they are student workers on an evening course who need to problematize their own history.

As for professors Nelson and José, they both share similar representations. For Nelson, the term autonomy “is a very difficult thing for teachers to intervene in student autonomy, considering that they already come from a life conditioned to a certain behavior that is difficult to change” (Nelson, interview). For José, autonomy has its complexity because “the subject has other influences [...] I don’t know exactly if I contribute to the development of autonomy” (José, interview).

In fact, students live in different groups in which they share knowledge in their conversations. For example, they learn that the lower social class does not achieve a goal in life, that studying is complicated, that they will not succeed, that university is a place for intelligent people, among other social representations that circulate in our society. However, for Moscovici (2013) we live in a changing, dynamic society and therefore the individual can suffer the representations of their group, but there is also room for the construction of individualized representations, as the subject can also differentiate themselves from these constructed representations. At school, at church or in the family, to the extent that, in contact with the constantly changing reality, one listens to the media, reads the newspapers

and participates in other groups so that little by little it is possible to realize that, as a black person, a woman or another minority, can construct an identity different from the one that was imbued with the idea that women “are stupid” or that “black people when they don’t get dirty when they enter, they get dirty when they leave”, for example. This way, teachers need to believe in the possibility of contributing to changing the representations of working students and developing strategies in this sense, which is truly not simple.

According to Zabala (2010), there is a certain complexity to contribute to the formation of autonomy, considering that a discipline simply does not provide epistemological support to develop some abstract skills, such as autonomy, for example. Just one teaching unit is not enough. However, teachers can develop planned actions in a way that selects the contents based on the skills they wish to train, in addition to those techniques, so that, together, they can develop critical reflection, with a view to overcoming the simplifying vision, encouraging students to decide based on dialogue and reflection. After all, it is the role of education to encourage students to think for themselves, emancipate themselves and, through knowledge, transform themselves and their reality.

However, according to Zabala (2010), for the subject to be able to develop such skills, it is essential that they go through “[...] self-knowledge, the creation of self-concept and self-esteem [...]” (Zabala, 2010, p. 81), because these aspects are essential for each person to be able to maintain quality interpersonal relationships.

The representation of the term autonomy, for Rocha (2017), means that “the autonomous subject is one who can carry out academic tasks independently, without needing continued assistance from the teacher”. In this sense, there is a consensus among authors such as

Morin (1989, 2000, 2002), Freire (2016a, 2016b, 2016c, 2016d) and Pozo (2009) on the importance of interaction for the formation of autonomy, as this condition is not formed in isolation. In fact, the autonomous subject gradually gains his independence. Teaching for autonomy is a progressive transfer of control. Initially, the teacher mediates the instructions, followed by guidance activities and cooperative practices shared with the class, and then the student continues with their independent practice. In this last moment, the teacher can play a less interventionist role, assigning more responsibilities to students, supporting them in case of doubts (Pozo; Mateos, 2009).

Teacher Maria represents autonomy as “continuous learning, it is for the subject to continue learning”. According to Zabala (1998), the subject’s personal growth directly implies the formation of their autonomy. Aiming to learn to learn, students must take responsibility for participating in the stages of solving challenges, instead of limiting themselves to copying and reproducing the explanations given by the teacher. Initially, the teacher must be more collaborative, but, as the activity develops, the student must progressively assume responsibility, until they are able to apply the knowledge autonomously.

In view of teaching representations about the term autonomy, we return to the ideas of Moscovici (1978), when he states that representations transform reality and the way in which we think about how it is or must be. In the case of Administration course teachers, transforming the representation of the term autonomy can imply reflection and a resizing of teaching practice, in addition to influencing the epistemological choices that will support their action in the classroom.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The objective of the study was to understand, based on the social representations of teachers from the Bachelor of Administration course at a public university, how the teaching practice of these subjects contributes to the formation of student autonomy. Thus, the results of this research take a look at the representations of autonomy of Administration course teachers. Based on the results achieved and analyzed previously, we make some considerations.

Most teachers considered it difficult to modify students’ representations and make them recognize that they can be autonomous subjects and authors of their lives. It is inferred that such representations possibly had their origin in the training process of the teacher himself, who also has a bachelor’s degree in Administration. Thus, teachers, in the same way as students, present representations that appear to have been influenced by Administrative Theories, which underlie the Administration course and which, for the most part, are based on instrumental rationality and are marked by the traditional paradigm.

However, the organizational world today requires the administrator to act as a leader, be collaborative, responsible, make decisions, among other skills, in the personal, interpersonal, professional and social dimensions. In this sense, we noticed some divergence between what the complexity paradigm guides, what organizations demand and the representations of some teachers interviewed in this research.

Other teachers declare that autonomy corresponds to the subject being aware of themselves and their role in the relationships they establish, as well as their ability to act with responsibility, conscience, ethics and criticality. Such representations contemplate the assumptions of the complexity paradigm and Paulo Freire’s understanding of the autonomy of subjects.

Student autonomy was also represented as innate competence. If teachers represent autonomy this way, their action in the classroom would obviously be to not intervene, that is, they would not develop strategies aimed at forming attitudes towards group work, research, collaboration, dialogue, dramatization, intervention in reality, questioning and many others that aim to encourage group work and the formation of student autonomy.

Autonomy is represented as “learning to learn”, in such a way that the student must learn to seek their own knowledge, which is close to the conception of Pozo and Mateos (2009), for whom the teacher must progressively transfer the responsibility for learning to the student.

It was identified in the representations that there are teachers with practices consistent with the assumptions of the complexity paradigm, they value prior knowledge, training needs, subjectivities and recognize the diversity of students. Furthermore, in their practices, some teachers recognize the importance of both technical training knowledge specific to the profession, and of awakening to other skills, such as responsibility, acting critically, transforming reality, cooperation, freedom, among others.

It was found, from the results, that some teachers appear to be experiencing a paradigmatic transition. Furthermore, it was evident in the speeches of the researched subjects that their representations are in line with the principles of the traditional paradigm approaches at some times, but at others they carry out strategies that are close to the complexity paradigm approaches. Finally, they recognize that some strategies used do not satisfactorily address the diversity and profile of students, which is why they rehearse some active strategies, in which students are encouraged to build meaningful learning. However, for this transition to happen, it is

essential that university professors seek to learn from their peers, dialogue with colleagues about the diversification of teaching strategies used in the classroom that are working, so that students become, progressively more autonomous. In addition to these exchanges with peers, it is essential that teachers study theories about teaching-learning, in order to support their practices and innovate them.

It can be seen, in the teachers' representations, that the profile of the night shift student has changed, some arrive at classes disinterested in the course and learning, they present physical tiredness, lack of commitment and lack of interest in carrying out the activities, the which greatly complicates the work of teachers, who often suffer and feel powerless. In general, this representation is naturalized among teachers, however, it was not described in the narratives whether teachers take diagnostic measures to identify the elements causing such behaviors.

It is identified, in the teachers' narratives, that they have noticed how some of their practices have not been able to achieve the objective of enabling meaningful learning, this suggests that some of these teachers have reflected on their own practice. In this sense, the need for pedagogical training of such subjects is recognized so that their professional development can take place.

Another issue found in this investigative work refers to the lack of knowledge about the roles of teachers in educational practice. In such a way, their speeches show that some teachers want to exempt themselves from their responsibilities in the teaching and learning process.

Some teachers have technical knowledge, but demonstrate pedagogical difficulties in conducting the learning process. They understand that if they provide research sources and present challenges to students, that is enough. However, as we have presented

throughout the text, the theoretical approaches of the complexity paradigm demonstrate that the subject needs, in their training, to have access to conceptual, procedural and attitudinal components that influence the personal, professional, interpersonal and social dimensions; Furthermore, they also demonstrate that the teacher's role is to mediate the development of such knowledge.

With regard to the practices developed by Administration course teachers, we noticed that some have advanced, using strategies that favor the formation of student autonomy. However, others remain with traditional methods that do not contribute to the development of student autonomy. In order for the Administration course to contribute to the formation of student autonomy, it would be necessary to implement collective strategies, through which students and teachers could plan actions to develop this purpose.

## REFERENCES

ABBAGNANO, N. **Dicionário de filosofia**. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2007.

BARDIN, L. **Análise de conteúdo**. São Paulo: Edições 70, 2011.

BEHRENS, M. A. O paradigma da complexidade na formação e no desenvolvimento profissional de professores universitários. **Educação**, Porto Alegre, ano XXX, n. 3, p. 439-455, set./dez. 2007. Disponível em: <https://revistaseletronicas.pucrs.br/ojs/index.php/faced/article/view/2742>. Acesso em: 10 jul. 2017.

BEHRENS, M. A. JUNGES, K. S. **Formação pedagógica na docência universitária: o que pensam professores pesquisadores portugueses**. Rev. Diálogo Educ., Curitiba, v. 18, n. 56, p. 186-208, jan./mar. 2018

CONTRERAS, J. **A autonomia de professores**. São Paulo: Cortez, 2002.

COSTA, R. C de F. G; FROTA, J. O. F. **Autonomia discente e valorização de subjetividades no projeto pedagógico da Faculdade de Direito da universidade de Brasília**. 2013.

FRANCO, M. A. do R. S. A complexidade da prática docente e desafios epistemológicos à pesquisa educacional. **Revista Eletrônica Esquiseduca**, 16(40), 5-10, 2024. Disponível em: <https://periodicos.unisantos.br/pesquiseduca/article/view/1572>. Acesso em: 24 mai. 2024.

FREIRE, P. **A Educação na Cidade**. 5. ed. São Paulo: Cortez, 2001.

FREIRE, P. **Conscientização**. São Paulo: Cortez, 2016a.

FREIRE, P. **Educação e Mudança**. 36. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 2014.

FREIRE, P. **Pedagogia da Autonomia: Saberes Necessários à Prática Educativa**. 53. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 2016b.

FREIRE, P. **Pedagogia da Esperança: um reencontro com a Pedagogia do Oprimido**. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 2013.

FREIRE, P. **Pedagogia do oprimido**. 62. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 2016c.

Among the weaknesses of our research, we can point out the fact that we did not listen to the students of the Administration course, which would be essential for us to triangulate with the data produced from the interviews with the professors.

This research presents the following perspectives: the results presented here can help in the development of other studies related to the topic, contributing to bachelor's teachers reflecting on their practices and on the policies of continuing education for bachelor's teachers. Another perspective concerns the development of research that listens to university students, especially those on night courses, about their training needs, the results of which constitute discussion topics for teachers. Finally, a last perspective that we highlight refers to the fact that the results of this research must be considered in planning meetings of Administration course teachers, among others.

JODELET, D. **Representações sociais**: um domínio em expansão. In D. Jodelet (Ed.), *As representações sociais* (pp. 17-44). Rio de Janeiro: EDUERJ, 2001.

JODELET, D. **Représentation sociale: phénomène, concept et théorie**. In: MOSCOVICI, S. (dir.). *Psychologie Sociale*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1990 (2ª ed.).

JUNG, H. S.; DUARTE, J. L. M. SILVA, L. de Q. da. Desenvolvimento da Autonomia Discente: implicações no currículo. In: MINAYO, M. C. de S.; VICENTE, K. B. V. e SILVA, RENAN A. **Humanidades & Inovação**, v.7, n.8. Palmas: UNITINS, 2020. Disponível em: [file:///C:/Users/andre/Downloads/2126-Texto%20do%20artigo-10051-1-10-20200522%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/andre/Downloads/2126-Texto%20do%20artigo-10051-1-10-20200522%20(1).pdf). Acesso em: 20 mai. 2024.

MARTÍN, E. **Conclusões**: um currículo para desenvolver a autonomia Del estudiante. In:

MONEREO, C.; POZO, J.I. **La universidad ante la nueva cultura educativa: enseñar y aprender para la autonomía**. Universidade Autônoma de Barcelona. Editorial Síntesis. s/d.

MAZZOTTI, T. B. **Núcleo figurativo, themata ou metáforas?** *Psicologia da Educação*, São Paulo, v. 14/15, n.14-15, p. 105-114, 2002. Disponível em: <https://revistas.pucsp.br/index.php/psicoeduca/issue/view/1755>>. Acesso em: 20 jul. 2017.

MINAYO, M. C. de S. **O desafio do conhecimento**: pesquisa qualitativa em saúde. 11 ed. São Paulo: Hucitec, 2008.

MONEREO, C.; POZO, J.I. **La universidad ante la nueva cultura educativa: enseñar y aprender para la autonomía**. Universidade Autônoma de Barcelona. Editorial Síntesis. s/d.

MORIN, E. **Ciência com consciência**. Tradução de Maria D. Alexandre; Maria Alice Sampaio Dória. 6. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil, 2002.

MORIN, E. **Introdução ao pensamento complexo**. Porto Alegre: Sulina, 2006.

MORIN, E. **Os sete saberes necessários à educação do futuro**. São Paulo: Cortez, 2000.

MORIN, E.; LE MOIGNE, J. **A Inteligência da Complexidade**. São Paulo: Petrópolis, 2000.

MOSCOVICI, S. **A Invenção da Sociedade: Psicologia e Sociologia**. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2013.

MOSCOVICI, S. **A Representação social da psicanálise**. Tradução dirigida por Jean Laplace. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar Editora, 1978.

MOSCOVICI, S. **Representações sociais: investigações em psicologia social**. Tradução Pedrinho A. Guareschi. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2005.

PIAGET, J. **A tomada de consciência**. São Paulo: Melhoramentos, 1977.

POZO, J. I. MATEOS. Aprender e Aprender: hacia una gestión autónoma y metacognitiva Del aprendizaje. In: POZO, J. I.; Echeverría, M. Del Puy Pérez. **Psicología del aprendizaje universitario: La formación en competencias**. Madri: Ediciones Morata, 2009.

POZO, J. I. **Aprendizes e Mestres**: a nova cultura da aprendizagem. Tradução Ernani Rosa. Porto Alegre: Artmed, 2002.

RIOS, T. A. **Ética e Competência**. Coleção Questões da Nossa Época. 16. ed. São Paulo: Cortez, 2006.

SEGRE, M.; SILVA, F. L.; SCHRAMM, F. **O contexto histórico, semântico e filosófico do princípio da autonomia**. *Bioética*, v. 6, n. 1, p. 15-23, 1998. Disponível em: [http://revistabioetica.cfm.org.br/index.php/revista\\_bioetica/article/view/321](http://revistabioetica.cfm.org.br/index.php/revista_bioetica/article/view/321)>. Acesso em: 3 abr. 2017.

UNIVERSIDADE ESTADUAL DE FEIRA DE SANTANA, **Relatório de Atividades 2022**. Universidade Estadual de Feira de Santana, Assessoria Técnica e de Desenvolvimento Organizacional: UEFS, 2023. Disponível em: [http://www.asplan.uefs.br/arquivos/File/RELATORIO\\_DE\\_ATIVIDADES/Relatorio\\_atividades\\_2022.pd](http://www.asplan.uefs.br/arquivos/File/RELATORIO_DE_ATIVIDADES/Relatorio_atividades_2022.pd). Acesso em: 20 mai. 2024.

ZABALA, A. **A prática educativa**: como ensinar. Porto Alegre: Artes Médicas, 1998.

ZABALA, A. **Enfoque globalizador e pensamento complexo**: uma proposta para o currículo escolar. Porto Alegre: Artmed, 2002.

ZABALA, A.; ARNAU, L. **Como aprender e ensinar competências**. Tradução de Carlos Henrique Lucas Lima. Porto Alegre: Artmed, 2010.