

Cultural Psychology of Education 1

Giuseppina Marsico
Virgínia Dazzani
Marilena Ristum
Ana Cecília de Souza Bastos *Editors*

Educational Contexts and Borders through a Cultural Lens

Looking Inside, Viewing Outside

 Springer

Cultural Psychology of Education

Volume 1

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Editors

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Editors

Giuseppina Marsico
Department of Human, Philosophic
and Education Sciences (DISUFF)
University of Salerno
Salerno
Italy

Virginia Dazzani
Federal University of Bahia
Salvador, Bahia
Brazil

Marilena Ristum
Federal University of Bahia
Salvador, Bahia
Brazil

Ana Cecília de Souza Bastos
Federal University of Bahia
Salvador, Bahia
Brazil

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Preface from the Series Editor

Educational Contexts from a Cultural Psychology Perspective

This book inaugurates the new Springer books series on *Cultural Psychology of Education*. As the firstborn, this text has to accomplish the difficult task of tracing the coordinates for our intellectual journey, outlining the theoretical basis and the methodological approach within which a vivid debate in the field of educational psychology in contemporary society will be promoted. The aim of the series is to provide fertile ground that will give both direction and magnitude to educational research from a cultural psychology perspective, breaking through the classical vision of educational psychology as an applied field focused basically on the teaching-learning processes. Education, instead, deals with the object in development, paying attention not to “what the person is at a specific age” (being), but “what the child is becoming”—moving towards another state (Marsico 2013a).

This book is, in a certain sense, a programmatic volume focusing on some aspects of this complex phenomenon of *becoming human* within societies, which is labeled as *education*. Specifically, it emphasizes the importance of liminal spaces—borders—in the contexts of education and includes international contributions that systematically sample the views from outside to inside, inside to outside, and from within the border zones.

As humans, we live in a multi-bounded world that we ourselves constantly create, regulate, and cross in order to modulate our relationships with the environment and with others (Valsiner 1999; Marsico et al. 2013b). Here, the role of education—with its liminal and always future-oriented nature—undoubtedly occupies a leading position because it constantly works on the border of the “beyond area” (Boesch 1991).

Education is the outer border of human development, but it is the only border that is never crossed once for all. It is a borderland of indeterminacy; it is our unreachable horizon that moves with us. At each step, we move forward to a new, higher level of education, and the horizon is moving as well.

The idea beyond this conceptualization of the educational processes is the notion of *being on the move* within culturally organized life contexts (school, family, church, etc) in specific spatio-temporal coordinates. Striving for the uncertainty is an unavoidable characteristic of the human sociocultural locomotion, which implies crossing the borders between different social settings within the insurmountable limit of irreversible time.

The borders condition makes evident the relevance of the “space in between” (Marsico 2011), which is a very challenging issue in education. Think, for instance, of some “in between” aspects of education, such as the daily (or periodic) migrations from school to home, from school to other school (music or dancing school), or from school to gym/playground. What discourses and practices saturate this interstitial zone and/or cross from one side to the other? How are certain kinds of human activities, educational processes, and social dynamics made possible because of this betweenness?

The crossing borders phenomena, which entails a migration from one place to another while living the liminal condition, is an educational process in itself, but it is difficult to recognize as a relevant part of the individual educational enterprise. This volume is an attempt to fill this gap by looking inside, outside, and in between the educational contexts.

The book is also the pathway of synthesis of many kilometers spent travelling and several places visited in the world (from the Brazilian favelas to the upper-level Indian school, from the poor slum to the middle-class American educational contexts etc.), which have contributed to deep questioning of the classic ways to consider the role played by the context in human development and education. Very often, the concept of context has been used as an “umbrella” notion, losing any reference to concreteness and specificity of the social conditions where persons grow up.

These travels have changed my look on development and education—certainly, no one came home after visiting Novos Alagados (one of the wider favelas on palefittes located in the suburbs of Salvador da Bahia, Brazil) without questioning the abstract notion of context as it is still used in the current psychological debate. Growing up and learning in a poor area and in a middle-class urban environment are not exactly the same. Thus, it is important to consider the impact of poverty in providing the condition for the educational activities (Bastos and Rabinovich 2010). Consequently, development and education should no longer be studied abstractly, but rather in their interplay with the specific characteristics of the social setting. The scientific question therefore becomes how to analyze contexts and their interconnectedness (Marsico 2012).

This book brings the focus to the borders in the educational process. It is the result of a thorough analysis of the educational contexts provided by a group of international scholars who keep believing that education is the means for *becoming human*.

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Salerno, Italy
April 2015

Giuseppina Marsico

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Editors and Contributors

About the Editors

Giuseppina Marsico is Assistant Professor of Development and Education Psychology in the Department of Human, Philosophic, and Education Sciences (DISUFF) at the University of Salerno (Italy) and Adjunct Professor in the Ph.D. program in psychology, Federal University of Bahia, Salvador, Brazil. She has 15 years of experience as a researcher, with a proven international research network. Her research track includes studies on developmental risk at school, youth deviance, school-family communication, boundaries, and contexts. She is member of the editorial board of several international academic journals, such as *Culture & Psychology* (Sage) and *Integrative Psychological & Behavioral Science* (Springer). She also edited the book *Crossing Boundaries. Intercontextual dynamics between Family and School* (Information Age Publishing). Email: pina.marsico@gmail.com

Virgínia Dazzani is Professor of Graduate Programmes in Psychology and Education at the Federal University of Bahia. She has extensive experience in the area of school psychology, acting on the following themes: knowledge and learning about family-school-community, family and academic performance, and school guidance complaints. Her research expertise lies in the interface between psychology, cultural development, and education. Her research interests center on the study of development in cultural context, including analysis of developmental transitions, considering the family and school contexts as cultural development (practices related to family participation in school life, the creation of children); and the analysis of the demands of learning difficulties and understanding of the phenomenon of school failure. The analysis of this material is geared towards the identification of semiotic processes present in the cultural construction of family-school-community. Email: dazzani@ufba.br

Marilena Ristum is a professor at the Institute of Psychology, Federal University of Bahia, Brazil. For more than a decade, she has been studying the relationship between violence and school, focusing on the school's action in dealing with

domestic violence, bullying, symbolic violence, and others forms of violence that occur in social interactions, such as urban violence and sexual violence against children. Working from a historical and cultural perspective, her main focus is the construction of the meaning of violence by the social actors interacting in those contexts. Email: ristum.ufba@gmail.com

Ana Cecília de Souza Bastos is a psychologist with a Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of Brasilia. As a retired professor of Federal University of Bahia, she collaborates there with the graduate programs in psychology and in public health. She is currently a professor in the graduate program in Family and Contemporary Society at the Catholic University of Salvador. Her main research interests are autobiographical memory and narratives, cultural orientation of developmental contexts and trajectories, family lives, and poverty. Email: anaceciliabastos@gmail.com

Contributors

Joanna Apps is a senior lecturer in the Research Centre for Children, Families and Communities at Canterbury Christ Church University in the UK. Her main research interest is in communications and relationships between schools and early years settings and parents. She is an editor of the Parents in Education Research Network (PERN <http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/Research/Centres/CFC/PERN/Home.aspx>). She has also written on how early years settings can work with parents to support the early home learning environment and how well-being may be assessed at a family level. She has conducted a wide range of evaluations of children and family services and interventions. Email: joanna.apps@canterbury.ac.uk

Delma Barros Filho is a Ph.D. student in developmental psychology at the Federal University of Bahia, Brazil. She received her MA from the Federal University of Bahia (2012) and her Degree in Psychology from the Federal University of Bahia (2009). Her research interests are child development, infant cognition, educational psychology, qualitative research methods, theoretical psychology, and cultural psychology. Email: delmab@gmail.com

Ana Clara Bastos has a degree in psychology from the Federal University of Bahia, Brazil. Her postgraduate studies include family therapy and bereavement. Her main research interests are concentrated in social networks, health psychology, grief, and palliative care. Currently, she works in a general hospital as a psychologist and has started her doctorate degree in developmental psychology at Federal University of Bahia. Email: anaclarasbastos@gmail.com

Vania Bustamante is a psychologist with a Ph.D. in Public Healthcare. She is a lecturer at the Institute of Psychology and researcher at the Research Group and Technical Cooperation in Gender and Health (MUSA) of the Institute of Collective

Health, Federal University of Bahia. Her main teaching and research activities are focused on the theme of child care, particularly the promotion of mental health and child development. Email: vaniabus@yahoo.com

Antônio Marcos Chaves is a graduate of psychology from the Universidade Federal de Londrina (1976), with an MA in Development Planning from the Universidade Federal do Pará (1986) and a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology and Human Development from the Universidade de São Paulo (1998). He is an associate professor and the supervisor of the master's and doctoral programs in psychology at the Universidade Federal da Bahia. He completed postdoctoral studies in 2008 at the Center for the Study of Migration and Intercultural Relations (CEMRI) on health, culture and development, the Open University of Lisbon, under Prof. Dr. Maria Natália Ramos. He has experience in teaching and research in psychology and social psychology, with a research interest in the following subjects: psychology and culture, social representations, childhood, meanings of childhood, child labor, and poor childhood. He is currently Director of the Institute of Psychology at the Universidade Federal da Bahia. Email: amchaves@ufba.br

Cristina Coppola is a research fellow in the Department of Mathematics, University of Salerno, Italy. Her main research interests include future teachers' attitudes and emotions toward mathematics; the study of different aspects regarding the relationship between mathematical logic and language, with particular attention to the development of logical tools in primary school children, the semiotic coordination with secondary school children in mathematical learning processes, and undergraduate students' reasoning in logical tasks; and the use of e-learning in mathematics education. Email: cristina.coppola@gmail.com

Harry Daniels is Professor of Education at the University of Oxford, UK. He has directed research more than 40 projects funded by Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), various central and local government sources, the Lottery, the Nuffield Foundation, and the European Union. His current research projects are concerned with children who go missing from school and the implications of new school design for children's experience of schooling. He has also completed two major studies of professional learning in and for multiagency working: "Learning in and for interagency working: Multiagency work in Northern Ireland" and "Learning in and for Interagency Working" as research co-director and principal investigator. He is also Adjunct Professor, Centre for Learning Research, Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia; Research Professor, Centre for Human Activity Theory, Kansai University, Osaka, Japan; and Research Professor in Cultural Historical Psychology, Moscow State University of Psychology and Education. He has an extensive publication list, including a series of internationally acclaimed books concerned with sociocultural psychology. Email: harry.daniels@education.ox.ac.uk

Elsa de Mattos is a graduate in psychology from the Federal University of Bahia (1990), with an MA (2008) and Ph.D. (2013) in psychology from the University Federal da Bahia. In 2000–2001, she participated in an academic program at Harvard

University (USA). She is a professor of psychology at Faculdade Independente do Nordeste (Bahia, Brazil) and participates in the Research Group in Cultural Contexts (UFBA), with emphasis on the social development of children and adolescents in the urban context. She has participated in the Working Group Dialogical Psychology at Associação Nacional de Pesquisa e Pós-Graduação em Psicologia (ANPEPP) since 2012. She served as project coordinator at the Clemente Mariani Foundation (1994–1999) and at the nongovernmental organization CIPO–Interactive Communication (2001–2008). She recently published the article “Semiotic Mediation through Inhibitor Signs: Creating a Cycle of Rigid Meanings” in the *Journal of Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Sciences*, and contributed to the book *Catalyzing Minds: Beyond Models of Causality* (Springer, 2013) with a coauthored chapter “Exploring the Role of Catalyzing Agents in the Transition to Adulthood: A Longitudinal Case Study.” Her main areas of interest are child and adolescent development, youth transitions, family transitions, conflict mediation, narrative therapy, couples and family therapy, parental coordination, and child/adolescent psychotherapy. Email: e.mattos2@gmail.com

Gabriela Di Gesú is Assistant Professor at University Programme for Foreign Language Teaching, Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento, of Buenos Aires, Argentina. She is responsible for teaching the Virtual Programme for Foreign Language and the advanced course in English for Specific Purposes. Her research interest is an interdisciplinary approach to study foreign language development, revisiting the converging theoretical frameworks coming from applied linguistics, educational psychology, sociology, anthropology, and cultural psychology. She is also interested in virtual environments mediation in the language learning processes. Email: mgdg26@gmail.com

José Eduardo Ferreira Santos has a degree in Pedagogue (UCSAL—Universidade Católica do Salvador), Master in Psychology (UFBA—Universidade Federal da Bahia), Doctor in Public Health (UFBA), and a Post-doctorate in Contemporary Culture (PACC-UFRJ—Programa Avançado de Cultura Contemporânea-Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro). He is a researcher and professor at the Institute of Psychology at the Federal University of Bahia in the National Post-Doctorate Program (PNPD-CAPES—Programa Nacional de Pós Doutorado-Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior) and is curator of the Acervo da Laje. Email: ferreirasantosenator@gmail.com

Ingrid Lilian Fuhr Raad holds a Ph.D. in education, a Master’s degree in education and a Bachelor’s degree in pedagogy, all from the University of Brasília (Brazil). She is currently a professor at Centro Universitário de Brasília. Her research activities involve the following themes: human development, daily activities and thinking, scientific knowledge and school knowledge, atypical psychological development, and mental disabilities. Email: ingridlfra@gmail.com

Ramon Cerqueira Gomes is a Ph.D. student in developmental psychology (UFBA), with a master's degree in developmental psychology (UFBA-2014). He works at the Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Bahia, Brazil. He has experience in the field of school psychology, working with young people in vocational training. He is interested in studies of cultural psychology, educational self, youth, family, and culture. Email: ramon_catu@hotmail.com

Raquel Souza Lobo Guzzo has a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of São Paulo and is a professor in the psychology graduate program at Pontifical Catholic University of Campinas. She leads a research group on Psychosocial Interventions and Assessment–Prevention, Community and Liberation, as well as an educational and school psychology workgroup of the National Association of Research and Psychology Graduate Programs. She is a researcher for the National Council of Research and Scientific Development. Email: rguzzo@mpc.com.br

Lia Lordelo graduated in psychology from the Federal University of Bahia (2004), has a master's degree in Teaching, Philosophy and History of Sciences from the Federal University of Bahia/State University from Feira de Santana (2007), and a doctoral degree in social psychology (2011), also from Federal University of Bahia. She has teaching experience in epistemology and developmental psychology, focusing on cultural-historical theory. She is currently a professor at the Federal University of Recôncavo da Bahia. Email: lialordelo@gmail.com

Emiliana Mangone is an assistant professor of sociology of cultural and communication processes in the Department of Human, Philosophical, and Educational Sciences at the University of Salerno, Italy. Her main investigative interests are in the field of cultural and institutional systems, with particular attention to the social representations of relationships and knowledge as key elements to the human act and in local development. Since 2010, she has been associated with the Institute for Research on Population and Social Policies (Rome, Italy). She recently published the following publications: *Persona, conoscenza, società* (2012), “La memoria de los lugares de origen de los emigrantes italianos en America Latina,” in *Cultura Latinoamericana* (2013), and “Civil Society in the Italian Reformed Healthcare System: A Role or Responsibility,” with E.M. Pace in *IRPPS Working Papers* (2014). Email: emanogre@unisa.it

Claisy Maria Marinho-Araujo is a professor and researcher at the Institute of Psychology and the graduate program in Processes of Human Development and Health at the University of Brasilia. She is a psychologist with a master's degree and Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Brasilia, and postdoctoral studies at the University of Minho, Portugal. She is a researcher and consultant in the interface areas of psychology and education, with emphasis on the following topics: school psychology, developmental psychology, training, development and skills assessment, educational assessment, training of psychologists and teachers, development processes and learning, and higher education. Email: claisy@unb.br

Marina Massimi is a graduate in psychology from the University of Padua, Italy (1979), with an MA in Psychology (Experimental Psychology), University of São Paulo (1985) and Ph.D. in Psychology (Experimental Psychology), University of São Paulo (1989). She is a full professor at the University of São Paulo and a researcher in the following areas: history of psychology, history of psychological knowledge, and history of Jesuit psychology. She is also the president of the Brazilian Society for the History of Psychology, member of the Ambrosiana Academy (Milan), and co-editor of the journal *Memorandum: Memory and History in Psychology*. Email: mmassimi3@yahoo.com

Cecilia McCallum is a lecturer in anthropology at the Federal University of Bahia, where she is a member both of the postgraduate program in anthropology and of the postgraduate program at the Institute of Collective Health. In 2014, she became Honorary Fellow at the School of Social Sciences, University of Manchester, UK, during a one-year postdoctoral sabbatical. She has published extensively about gender and sociality among indigenous peoples in Brazil and on race, class, and gender in Bahia. She also works in the field of anthropology of reproduction. Email: cecilia.mccallum@uol.com.br

Monica Mollo is a coordinator at the Counseling Center, University of Salerno. She has a Ph.D. in Research and Methodology of Educational Research from the University of Salerno (Italy) and graduated in educational sciences. Her main research interests are: self and identity, construction of professional identity in university and school teachers, explicitation interview, professional practices, construction of logic/mathematical thinking in children, social representations, and cultural psychology. Email: mmollo@unisa.it

Demóstenes Neves da Silva is a professor of Psychology of Family and Family and Society at North East Brazil's College (Faculdade Adventista da Bahia–Cachoeira; Bahia, Brazil). His main interest is in family–school relationships and the psychology of education. Email: demostenesneves@gmail.com

Yoriko Omi-Okamoto is an associate professor in the Department of Early Childhood Education and Care, Shohoku College, Japan. Her research interests focus on the transition to parenthood and the communication development in asymmetric relationships, including Parental Proxy Talk for nonverbal infants and interpretation of fetal movements. She and her co-researchers have been working on a longitudinal study of about forty families, who participated from the mothers' pregnancy periods to children's preschool age. She also has been working on action research on child-rearing support activity in a day-care center. She received a grant for scientific research from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science in 2000, 2002, 2004, 2005, and 2011. She was a Visiting Scholar at Clark University, USA (Dr. Jaan Valsiner) from 2009 to 2011. Email: yoriko@shohoku.ac.jp

Maria Claudia Lopes de Oliveira is a full professor of Developmental Psychology at the Institute of Psychology of the University of Brasília, Brazil. Her main research interest is the cultural construction of adolescence and youth. Many of her projects focus

on peers' relationships in urban contexts and other sociocultural settings such as schools, juvenile peer groups, gender relationships, and violence, according to a cultural-semiotic and dialogical perspective. She was coeditor of *Diversity and Peace Culture in Schools: Contributions of Sociocultural Approaches/Diversidade e cultura da paz na escola: contribuições da perspectiva sociocultural* (2012), and collaborated as co-author on the following books: *Cultural Dynamics on Women's Lives* (2011), *Cultural Psychology of Human Values* (2012), and *Human Development: Contributions to Psychology and Education/Desenvolvimento humano: Contribuições para a psicologia e a educação* (2014). Email: mcslloliveira@gmail.com

Yasuhiro Omi is a professor of psychology at the Graduate School of Education, University of Yamanashi, Japan. He was a visiting fellow at Australian School of Environmental Studies, Griffith University, Australia for one year from April 2002. He was also visiting scholar at Frances L. Hiatt School of Psychology, Clark University, USA for 2.5 years from March 2009. His research is concerned with methodology of psychology and ethnographic studies in our everyday lives. He has also become interested in the cultural settings at schools since living in the USA with his family. Email: omiyasjp@gmail.com

Tiziana Pacelli is a research fellow at the Department of Mathematics, University of Salerno, Italy. Her main research interests are: analysis of emotions, beliefs, and attitudes towards mathematics in future primary teachers; the exploration of the relationship between language and the development of logical tools in students at different school levels, in particular through cooperative and linguistic-manipulative activities with primary school children, through activities about semiotic coordination with secondary school children, and through logical tasks with undergraduate students; and analysis of the use of e-learning in mathematics education. Email: tpacelli@unisa.it

Roberto Ribeiro da Silva holds a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry from the University of São Paulo (1976), a Master's Degree in Organic Chemistry from Indiana University, USA (1968) and a bachelor's degree in Chemistry (BS) from the Federal University of Minas Gerais (1965). He is currently a senior lecturer volunteer at the Chemistry Institute of the University of Brasilia (Brazil) and a research advisor for the Graduate Program in Science Teaching in the same University. His areas of research interest are teacher training and continuing education, formation of scientific concepts, and the role of laboratory experiments in science education. Email: bobsilva@unb.br

Patricia Carla Silva do Vale Zucoloto is a postdoctoral fellow in the postgraduate program in Family in Contemporary Society at the Catholic University of Salvador. She has a degree in psychology from the University of São Paulo (1997), a Master's in School Psychology and Human Development from the University of São Paulo (2003), and a Ph.D. in Psychology from the Graduate Program in Psychology at the Federal University of Bahia (2010). She has experience in the areas of educational

and school psychology, psychology of human development, and family studies, mainly in the following areas: academic success and failure, difficulties in the learning process, medicalization of school failure, family and relationships, psychology of human development, history of psychology, and the phenomenological method applied to psychology. Email: patriciavz@ig.com.br

Olivia Maria Costa Silveira has a Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Studies from the University Federal University of Bahia and an MS in Education (UFBA) with research undertaken in the area of youth public policies. She is a specialist in clinical psychoanalytic theory and also graduated in psychology from UFBA. She is a researcher with extensive experience in the coordination and development projects focused on educational and social inclusion of young people, operating in the evaluation of educational systems and programs and public policies in education/social work. Email: oliviasilveira@ig.com.br

Luca Tateo is a nonconventional Marie Curie Intra-European Fellow at the Centre for Cultural Psychology, Department of Communication & Psychology, Aalborg University (Denmark). He has been a research fellow at the University of Salerno and University of Sassari (Italy). His research interests include imagination, counter-hegemonic cultural psychology, social psychology of education, history and epistemology of psychological science, and revisiting the work of scholars such as Vico, Cattaneo, Wundt, and Lewin to reflect upon the future trends of psychological research. Email: luca@hum.aau.dk

Vera Lúcia Trevisan de Souza has a Ph.D. in Education–Educational Psychology from Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo. She is a professor in the psychology graduate program at Pontifical Catholic University of Campinas. She leads a research group on the Subject Constitution Processes in Educational Practices. She is a member of the Educational and School Psychology Work Group of the National Association of Research and Psychology Graduate Programs—ANPEPP. She is a researcher with the National Council of Research and Scientific Development. Email: vera.trevisan@uol.com.br

Elizabeth Tunes holds a Ph.D. and a master's degree in psychology, both from the University of São Paulo, and a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Brasília. She is currently a research associate at the University of Brasília and a professor at Centro Universitário de Brasília (Brazil). Her research activity focuses mainly on the following topics: scientific knowledge and school knowledge, teacher–student relations, learning and development, atypical psychological development and mental disabilities, schooling processes, and the social significance of school. Email: bethtunes@gmail.com

Angela Uchoa Branco is a professor at the Institute of Psychology, University of Brasília, where she founded, together with Dr. Valsiner and Dr. Maciel, the Laboratory of Microgenesis in Social Interactions (LABMIS) in 1995. She was a visiting scholar at Duke University and the University of North Carolina, USA, and she was the Brazilian coordinator of an academic interchange Universidade de

Brasília/Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (2008–2009). She has carried out research projects concerning early child education and development, and the role of communication and metacommunication processes in different aspects of human development. From a cultural semiotic constructivist approach, her research team investigates the microgenesis and ontogenesis of human values, moral development, and social interactive patterns among children, adolescents, and adults. She edited with Dr. Jaan Valsiner the books *Communication and Metacommunication in Human Development* (Info Age Publishing, 2004), and *Cultural Psychology of Human Values* (Info Age Publishing, 2012). Together with Maria Claudia Lopes de Oliveira, she edited *Diversidade e cultura da paz na escola (Diversity and peace culture within schools; Mediação, Porto Alegre-Brazil, 2012)*. Email: ambranco@terra.com.br

Felicity Wikeley was a professor of education at Canterbury Christ Church University in the UK, where she led the parenting strand in the Research Centre for Children, Families and Communities, until she recently retired. Her main investigative interest is parenting and other educational relationships, particularly within and without educational institutions. She was also Director of Research in the Department of Education at the University of Bath, where she co-directed a Joseph Rowntree Foundation project into education and poverty looking at children's learning outside school and their educational relationships with adults other than teachers. She is coauthor of *Parents and their Children's Schools* (1994), *Teacher Appraisal Observed* (1996) and *Whose Learning?* (2004), about the power of personal tutoring in schools, as well as numerous journal articles and research reports. Email: felicity.wikeley@canterbury.ac.uk

Introduction

Becoming Human Inside, Outside, and Between Contexts and Borders: A Cultural Lens on Education

Virgínia Dazzani, Giuseppina Marsico, Marilena Ristum
and Ana Cecilia de Sousa Bastos

*No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the
continent, a part of the main....*

John Donne, *Meditation XVII*

Context, Borders, and the *Bildungsroman*

The great novelists have a special power—usually beyond that of scientists—to construct a comprehensive picture of human experience, its values, dramas, uncertainties, and hope. There exists a literary genre known as *Bildungsroman*, or “novel of education,” where the process of biological, moral, aesthetic, social, psychological, and political development of the main character is narrated, from childhood into maturity. In general, this process is marked by tensions, ruptures, and episodes occurring in various spheres of the immediate experience of the first character in the family environment, and extending to the school, peers, associations, social class, political party, nation, and so forth.

The history of literature is full of beautiful pieces in this genre. A great example is Goethe’s novel *Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship* (1917), which narrates the

V. Dazzani (✉) · M. Ristum

Institute of Psychology, Federal University of Bahia, Salvador, Brazil
e-mail: dazzani@superig.com.br; dazzani@ufba.br

M. Ristum

e-mail: ristum.ufba@gmail.com

G. Marsico

Department of Human, Philosophic and Education Sciences (DISUFF),
University of Salerno, Salerno, Italy
e-mail: pina.marsico@gmail.com

A.C. de Sousa Bastos

Federal University of Bahia and Catholic University of Salvador, Salvador, Brazil
e-mail: anaceciliabastos@gmail.com

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adventures related to the spiritual, psychological, and moral development of the young Wilhelm Meister. Coming from a religious upper-middle-class family, Meister rebels against his background, travels around his country, getting in touch with new social circles and ways of life, reinvents his worldview, and relates to other equally interesting and intriguing characters.

The present book approaches education in a sense very close to the idea that guides the narrative in the *Bildungsroman*. At first, we conceive education—be it restricted to teaching practices in the classroom or beyond this context—as a complex and not indeterminate process through which individuals become human, so to say, able to develop and use symbolic language in relationship to other human beings, and who, once mastering language, use it to make meanings about themselves, things, objects, persons, and events in the immediate or distant context. This process is complex because it requires that the person deal with an intricate network of cultural realities, tradition, and institutions. But this is also an indeterminate process, as the result is not a ready and finished personality, printed within the mind; instead, a process of transformation is underway, because these powers, skills, capabilities, and meanings are not present at the beginning—they develop over a pathway that only comes to an end when the person no longer exists.

In fact, we can consider that this dynamic aspect is twofold: on the one hand, the person is not only an individual, but a dynamic self that is permanently in the process of changing through his or her interactions with other people and with the cultural context. On the other hand, places, institutions, and situations are not abstract entities, but composed by the presence of and relationships with these people; and they are rather buildings of language than of bricks, which are created and continuously used by the person.

Maybe because of these particular features, education is a subject that has attracted increasing attention from researchers in the field of cultural psychology. In fact, cultural psychology deals with what in psychological parlance is meant for higher mental states: the creation and negotiation of meanings, the construction of the self and reality, the acquisition of symbolic skills, etc. Cultural psychology assumes that our mental life can only be understood if we are living, sharing, and communicating our experiences with others within a specific language and symbolic tradition. Jerome Bruner, for example, is among those who believe that education is a topic especially relevant to cultural psychology. In fact, he claims that education is “the right ‘testing’ frame for building ideas in cultural psychology” (1996, p. xi), since we are a kind of being whose initial orientation is to learn and teach.

Bruner (1996) stated that, from the point of view of cultural psychology, we must face certain principles peculiar to education. Among the many aspects, we can highlight the following:

- Education is the interactive process (involving several individuals in a sub-community of interaction—school or family, for example) of construction of the concept of self in individuals; this self, however, must be conceived as an agent who creates his or her own intentions

- Education provides skills, ways of thinking, feeling, talking, remembering, and imagining, and is never socially, politically, or economically neutral (i.e. education is necessarily situated)
- The way of thinking, feeling, and imagining fostered by education helps individuals, especially children, to create a version of the world, a narrative, where these individuals posit themselves as participants (actors) and see a place for themselves (*a personal world*)
- Education develops the talent for intersubjectivity, the human ability to understand the other's mind and experience a common world

Two central concepts define the reunion of chapters that appear in this book: *context* and *borders*. Strictly speaking, the aim of this book is to provide a sense of context to facilitate rethinking the relationship between actors, practices, and borders in the field of educational practices, from the perspective of cultural psychology (Valsiner 2014). The main idea is to elaborate a reflection from theory to practice and then, considering a field of practices, to re-examine the ongoing conceptual construction, giving voice to the meanings produced by educational actors, teachers, parents, and students, in their immersions in social actions (Dazzani and Marsico 2013; Marsico et al. 2013).

The concept of context is not new in the psychological field.¹ Just consider the lengthy discussion about the contrast between nature and culture, between learning and development. The notion of context was very present in the early days of modern psychology, but it was gradually abandoned in face of the prevalence of functionalist explanations. However, especially under the influence of cultural psychology, beyond “individualistic” approaches, we have witnessed the resurgence of the interest in the relationship between sociocultural contexts and developmental trajectories.

The attention that cultural psychology has paid to the dynamic relationships that exist between people and their varied life contexts implies taking into account a broader unit of analysis—as well as in general psychology and in educational psychology, specifically. This trend inspires us to examine educational practices beyond actions of teaching and learning in school: instead, we need to look at the educational processes, considering the intricate circuit of educational contexts—overcoming borders and fences that constrain the activity of learning and teaching, to include formal and informal contexts, the different sectors of everyday life; in short, the various forms of life in culture.

In this sense, the concept of context is a key point in psychology—and more precisely in cultural psychology, which examines how the human experience is culturally organized through mediation semiotic and symbolic action, through the

¹Outside the strict framework of theories in psychology, there is an intense philosophical debate on the notion of context. Context was, originally, as a theme in philosophy of language; the pragmatic principle according to which the content of our intentional states are context-sensitive went on to influence the agenda of issues in epistemology and philosophy of mind. On this point, see Preyer and Peter (2005) and Stalnaker (2014).

accumulation and exchange of subjectively shared representations over the spaces of life (Valsiner 2007, 2012, 2014). The historical, social, and cultural conditions in which men and women live and are educated are inseparable. Thus, in order to understand human psychological functioning, we need to keep our attention focused on the individual-in-context as our unit of analysis (Marsico 2011).

This notion of context, however, does not imply that there is an element that *defines* or *determines* the education of the person. As in *Bildungsroman*, we assume that human beings create their trajectories, intertwining their past, their influences, their inheritances, their dramas, current challenges, and future development. Human beings act and create strategies of action within specific contexts; besides this, they generalize the experience from and beyond the context.

Following this line of reasoning, we assume here that the typically human experience creates signs that work as a kind of regulator for our trajectories, setting limits and promoting opportunities to think and act in and on the world. This permanent process of mediation, construction, and adjustment of meanings corresponds to an incessant psychological movement scattered throughout the tissue of human existence, in domains as diverse as close family relationships, symbolic and material exchanges, science, art, and war—and also, of course, within the field of the educational institution, mainly because the school occupies a very special place in our symbolic economy. The school seeks to organize the experience, the knowledge of the world, and situate the subject on the horizon of the social world. In a way, it embodies the discourse that aims to offer the limits and the possibilities of giving meaning to human experience—school frames the world with certain contours.

Another concept that acts as a leitmotif to this book is the notion of “borders” (Marsico et al. 2013). The texts collected in this book share the assumption that education is identified by the trajectory of the subject as he or she moves along various contexts (home, street, school, and work). These various spheres have supposedly accurate institutional contours, because home, street, and school can be precisely distinguished one from another. The way the person transits (physically and symbolically) from one context to another, in the complex web of social spaces, is the ultimate feature to distinguish between contexts. This action of displacing and transiting from home to school and from school, from one context to another, implies a series of performances and psychological activities involving the spatial as both subjective and symbolic aspects. Permanent displacement and transit are based on the constant otherness between the person-as-is and the person-as-could-be (Simão and Valsiner 2007) along the school trajectory in search of becoming educated.

The study of migrations and the way people transit from one context to another is not an easy task for psychologists and researchers in general, especially if we consider that the elements of space-time, the subjective and objective dimensions, cannot be analyzed separately from the process of signification. To explore this question implies assuming a very uncomfortable position at the border of the social context, looking both inside and outside while studying also what happens “in between” (Marsico et al. 2013).

From Theoretical Perspective to Situated Experience

This book resulted from a rich collaboration between researchers of different nationalities and reflects the significant influence of the cultural psychology of education, in its contemporary version—not only in the content of their research but, mainly, in their style of addressing a theme. This book represents an attempt to reflect on the educational practices contextualized in and disseminated through other living spaces, cultures, or microcultures. So, while some chapters strive to formulate more general categories, others deal with the concrete cultural, situated reality, looking at countries as diverse as the United Kingdom, Japan, Argentina, Brazil, and Italy. We expect this reflection to produce a refreshing outlook on educational contexts.

The book is organized into three parts, which dialogue actively. The first part, “Contexts, Borders and Education: Theoretical Coordinates,” is composed of five chapters. The first chapter, “Boundaries within and between contexts”, written by Harry Daniels and inspired by the work of Basil Bernstein and Lev Vygotsky, assumes that the way social relations within institutions are regulated has cognitive and affective consequences for those who live within them. According to the author, the current state of the art in the social sciences might fail to generate analyses and descriptions of institutional formations that predict consequences for individuals. He proposes, alternatively, an approach that attempts to establish connections between the principles of regulating institutions, discursive practices and the formation of consciousness, all part of the domain of educational institutions.

The idea of an autopoietic development of the individual in relation to the school institution is proposed by Luca Tateo, in his chapter titled “Continuity and discontinuity of the educational context: early leavers’ in-between life stories.” Tateo’s discussion is based on six case studies of young Italians who are not enrolled in school and work. He analyzes the belief systems, representations, values, and psychosocial dynamics that cause these young men to build a sense of failure and drop out of school.

Keeping some continuity with the previous point, Emilian Mangone’s chapter, (“Beyond the macro-realization opposition: the multidimensionality of the educational processes”) argues that the study of the dynamics linked to the relationship *education-society* cannot be resolved by simplistic analysis: the multidimensionality and multicontextuality of the conduct of everyday life requires us to consider the educational process, overcoming, therefore, the opposition between the micro and the macro levels of analysis.

We should consider that the performance of school psychology in the various educational contexts—in which the processes of learning and teaching take place—acquires crucial importance in promoting qualitative leaps and fundamental changes in human psychological activity. Formal education is a fertile context for the development of children, youth, and adults. This is the issue explored by Claisy Marinho-Araújo in her chapter, “Dialogues between Psychology and Education”. She claims that the process of education in the context of the schools is an ideal

condition for competence-based work, taking into account both the students' development and the continuous education of the professionals involved in the process—be they teachers, psychologists, educators or others. The visibility of a competence as an intrinsic dimension of the process of human development depends on the possibility of learning to identify, mobilize, and use resources to act and interact meaningfully.

In the fifth chapter, “The Dynamics of Self-Other Relations in Educational Contexts”, Angela Branco and Maria Claudia Oliveira argue that, in societies where schooling is a compulsory development experience, educational institutions are important contexts for the ontogeny of human values and the construction of specific practices of self-other transactions. School contexts are of crucial importance both to transmit and transform the dominant social values. Everything that happens in school contexts is closely related to cultural practices and values also prevalent in contexts such as family and other social groups.

This book represents a renewed effort to discuss educational contexts in a perspective that involves the concept of culture. This effort cannot fail to face narratives circumscribed to a specific space, because that is where the concrete experience takes place. From this point forward, the focus will be the vicinity and distances between different cultural experiences, considering the case of Brazil. For this reason, the second part of the book is entitled “Educational Contexts Through a Cultural Lens: A Case Study: Brazil.” The chapters by Marina Massimi, Patricia Zucoloto, Antônio Marcos Chaves, Raquel Guzzo, Vera Lúcia Trevisan de Souza, and Elsa de Mattos & Antônio Marcos Chaves address relevant topics to understand the Brazilian educational experience.

Massimi's chapter (“Conceptions of education and its influence on the Brazilian educational system”) is a historical and critical reinterpretation of the concept of education in the Brazilian sociocultural universe, taking into account its multi-ethnic and multicultural diversity. In their turn, still from a historical perspective, Zucoloto and Chaves (“Evidence of medicalization in medical discourse from the inaugural theses about school hygiene in Brazil during the First Republic”) try to build an understanding of the historical development of social practices aimed at children, particularly those practices related to school health, leading to the so-called medicalization of problems in the process of schooling.

Guzzo and Souza's chapter (“School and child development: the real and the ideal on Brazilian educational context”) offers a reflection that aims to critically discuss what has been public education in Brazil and the consequences of this process for the lives of thousands of children and adolescents who go through it and walk away, without understanding the meaning and the role of school in their lives.

Finally, closing this second part of the book, Elsa de Mattos and Antônio Marcos Chaves investigate, in their chapter (“Becoming Professionals”), how youths of poor social classes go through the process of building an alternative future. Based on the conceptual analytical frames of cultural psychology and the dialogical self theory, the authors explore and discuss the changes that occur during a critical period of development: that in which young people begin to participate in the world of work to seriously tackle the sense of what will become of the future.

The third part of this book, “Experiencing the Educational Contexts: Insiderness, Outsiderness, Betweenness,” deals precisely with the challenge of analyzing processes occurring on the borders, whose implications need to be considered, connected to realities that we call here “insiderness,” “outsiderness,” and “betweenness.” Given the particular nature of this part, it is introduced by a special “Editorial Intermezzo,” which also presents the chapters there included.

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Part I
Contexts, Borders and Education:
Theoretical Coordinates

Boundaries Within and Between Contexts

Harry Daniels

Introduction

The point of departure of this chapter is the understanding that the way in which the social relations of institutions are regulated has cognitive and affective consequences for those who live and work inside them. The current state of the art in the social sciences struggles to provide a theoretical connection between specific forms, or modalities, of institutional regulation and consciousness. Attempts to do so tend not to be capable of generating analyses and descriptions of institutional formations that are predictive of consequences for individuals. At the same time, social policy tends not engage with the personal consequences of different forms of institutional regulation. This chapter discusses an approach to making the connection between the principles of regulation in institutions, discursive practices, and the shaping of consciousness. This approach is based on the work of the British sociologist Basil Bernstein and the Russian social theorist Lev Vygotsky.

Vygotsky and Bernstein

From the sociological point of view, Bernstein outlined the challenge of forging a connection between the principles of regulation in institutions, discursive practices, and the shaping of consciousness as follows:

The substantive issue of ... [this] theory is to explicate the process whereby a given distribution of power and principles of control are translated into specialised principles of communication differentially, and often unequally, distributed to social groups/classes. And how such a differential/unequal distribution of forms of communication, initially (but not

H. Daniels (✉)

Department of Education, University of Oxford, 15 Norham Gardens, Oxford OX2 6PY, UK
e-mail: harry.daniels@education.ox.ac.uk

necessarily terminally) shapes the formation of consciousness of members of these groups/classes in such a way as to relay both opposition and change. (Bernstein 1996a, b: 93)

The following assertion from Vygotsky recasts the issue in more psychological vein but with same underlying intent and commitment:

Any function in the child's cultural [ie higher] development appears twice, or on two planes. First it appears on the social plane, and then on the psychological plane. First it appears between people as an inter-psychological category, and then within the child as an intra-psychological category. This is equally true with regard to voluntary attention, logical memory, the formation of concepts, and the development of volition. ... it goes without saying that internalization transforms the process itself and changes its structure and functions. Social relations or relations among people genetically underlie all higher functions and their relationships. (Vygotsky 1981: 163)

Taken together, the Vygotskian and Bernsteinian social theory have the potential to make a significant contribution to the development of a theory of the social formation of mind in specific pedagogic modalities. Following Bernstein, pedagogy may be thought of a sustained process whereby somebody acquires new forms or develops existing forms of conduct, knowledge, practice and criteria, from somebody or something deemed to be an appropriate provider and evaluator (Bernstein 2000). Defined in this way, the general practitioner, the policymaker, the therapist, the broadcaster, and the journalist are all involved in a form of pedagogic practice.

A sociological focus on the rules that shape the social formation of discursive practice may be brought to bear on those aspects of psychology which argue that cultural artefacts, such as pedagogic discourse, both explicitly and implicitly, mediate human thought and action. Sociocultural theorists argue that individual agency has been significantly under acknowledged in Bernstein's sociology of pedagogy (e.g. Werstch 1998a). Vygotsky's work provides a compatible account that places emphasis on individual agency through its attention to the notion of mediation. Sociologists complain that post-Vygotskian psychology is particularly weak in addressing relationships between local, interactional contexts of 'activity' and 'mediation', where meaning is produced and wider structures of the division of labor and institutional organization act to specify social positions and their differentiated orientation to 'activities and 'cultural artefacts' (e.g. Fitz 2007).

Many sociologists have sought to theorize relationships between forms of social relations in institutional settings and forms of talk. Sociocultural psychologists, working in the post-Vygotskian tradition, have done much to understand the relationship between thinking and speech in a range of social settings with relatively little analysis and description of the institutional arrangements that are in place in those settings.

We can never 'speak from nowhere', given that we can speak (or more broadly, act) only by invoking mediational means that are available in the 'cultural tool kit' provided by the sociocultural setting in which we operate ...this does not mean that we are mechanically determined by, or are mere puppets of, the mediational means we employ, but it does mean that constraints of some kind always exist. (Wertsch et al. 1995, p. 25)

Vygotsky provided a rich and tantalizing set of suggestions that have been taken up and transformed by social theorists as they attempt to construct accounts of the formation of mind that to varying degrees acknowledge social, cultural, and historical influences. There is also no doubt that Vygotsky straddled a number of disciplinary boundaries. Davydov (1995: 15) went as far to suggest that was involved in ‘a creative reworking of the theory of behaviorism, gestalt psychology, functional and descriptive psychology, genetic psychology, the French school of sociology, and Freudianism’.

Mediation

Recent developments in post-Vygotskian theory have witnessed considerable advances in the understanding of the ways in which human action shapes and is shaped by the contexts in which it takes place. They have given rise to a significant amount of empirical research within and across a wide range of fields in which social science methodologies and methods are applied in the development of research-based knowledge in policymaking and practice in academic, commercial and industrial settings. Vygotsky’s is not a legacy of determinism and denial of agency, as in some versions of structuralist sociology; rather, he provided a theoretical framework that rests on the concept of mediation by artefact. The argument is that artefacts are formed and shaped through cultural historical processes and, in turn, these shape those who use them to act on the world. These developments have explored different aspects of Vygotsky’s legacy at different moments. As Puzyrei (2007) noted, Vygotsky’s work constitutes a dynamic resource for modern-day researchers who will explore different facets of the texts we have available in line with their own interests and to some extent the prevailing zeitgeist. These wider social influences are seen to have mediated the development and uptake of the theory itself:

Vygotsky’s cultural-historical theory (like any great theory) resembles a city. A city with broad new avenues and ancient, narrow backstreets known only to longtime residents, with noisy, crowded plazas and quiet, deserted squares, with large, modern edifices and decrepit little buildings. The individual areas of that city may not be situated on a single level: while some rise above the ground, others are submerged below it and cannot be seen at all. In essence, it is as though there were a second city that has intimate and complex associations with the ground-level city but completely invisible to many. And the sun rises above it all and the stars come out over it at night. Sometimes dust storms and hurricanes rage, or the rain beats down long and hard and “the sky is overcast.” Life is a constant feeling of effervescence. Holidays and the humdrum follow one another. The city changes, grows, and is rebuilt. Whole neighborhoods are demolished. The center is sometimes over here, sometimes over there. And so it goes. (Puzyrei 2007, pp. 85–86)

Smardon (2010) took this line of argument somewhat further in suggesting that the Vygotskian way of seeing the world has been and continues to be marginalized in some academic settings:

Vygotskian project has been largely overlooked outside of the field of educational psychology, where Stetsenko argues it is still marginalized in comparison to other, more dominant theoretical models. Furthermore, Marxist psychology has never been a part of American sociology, a discipline that has instead focused on macrosociological Marxist models.—Thus, the Vygotskian project exists at the marginal nexus of both psychology and sociology. (Smardon 2010, p. 70)

The reasons for formation of this marginal position may be that in attempting to resolve the disconnection between disciplinary imaginations, it manages to offend both. Whatever the reasons, it is clear that many disciplines contributed to the formation of Vygotsky's ideas. For example, Van der Veer (1996) argued that Humboldt (with reference to linguistic mediation) and Marx (with reference to tool-use and social and cultural progress) influenced Vygotsky's concept of culture. Van der Veer suggested that the limitations in this aspect of Vygotsky's work are with respect to non-linguistically mediated aspects of culture and the difficulty in explaining innovation by individuals. Vygotsky's writing on the way in which psychological tools and signs act in the mediation of social factors does not engage with a theoretical account of the appropriation and/or production of psychological tools within specific forms of activity within or across institutions. Just as the development of Vygotsky's work fails to provide an adequate account of social praxis, so much sociological theory is unable to provide descriptions of micro-level processes, except by projecting macro-level concepts on to the micro level unmediated by intervening concepts through which the micro can be both uniquely described and related to the macro level.

Power and Control in Institutions

Amongst sociologists of cultural transmission, Bernstein (2000) provided a sociology of this social experience that is compatible with, but absent from, Vygotskian psychology. His theoretical contribution was directed towards the question as to how institutional relations of power and control translate into principles of communication, and how these differentially regulate forms of consciousness. It was through Luria's attempts to disseminate his former colleague's work that Bernstein first became acquainted with Vygotsky's writing:

I first came across Vygotsky in the late 1950s through a translation by Luria of a section of *Thought and Speech* published in *Psychiatry* 2 1939. It is difficult to convey the sense of excitement, of thrill, of revelation this paper aroused: literally a new universe opened. (Bernstein 1993, p. xxiii)

This paper, along with a seminal series of lectures given by Luria at the Tavistock Institute in London, sparked an intense interest in the Russian cultural historical tradition and went on to exert a profound influence on postwar developments in English in education, the introduction of education for young people with severe and profound learning difficulties and theories practices designed to facilitate development, and learning in socially disadvantaged groups in the United

Kingdom. In November 1964, Bernstein wrote a letter to Vygotsky's widow outlining her late husband's influence on his developing thesis:

As you may know, many of us working in the area of speech (from the perspective of psychology as well as from the perspective of sociology) think that we owe a debt to the Russian school, especially to works based on Vygotsky's tradition. I should say that in many respects, many of us are still trying to comprehend what he said. (Bernstein Bernstein 1964b, p. 1)

It was Vygotsky's (1978) nondualist cultural historical conception of mind claims that 'intermental' (social) experience shapes 'intramental' (psychological) development that continued to influence his thinking. This was understood as a mediated process in which culturally produced artefacts (such as forms of talk, representations in the form of ideas and beliefs, signs, and symbols) shape and are shaped by human engagement with the world (e.g. Vygotsky 1987; Daniels 2008).

Language here is a system of meanings, a relay for the social, a primary condition for the formation of consciousness and the levels and variety of its function. Relation to (the social) precedes relations within (the individual). This insight was of course, Mead's, much earlier than Vygotsky but his insight produced a very different model. The I/Me dualism of the Meadian self is a dualism endemic to European thought, perhaps even to christianity, with its distinction between inner/outer, individual/society. The relaying, mediating role of language is shared with Durkheim. (Bernstein 1993, p. xiv)

However, as Atkinson (1985) noted, despite his acquaintance with the various philosophical and anthropological authors on language and symbolism including Cassirer and Whorf and Vygotsky and Luria, Bernstein's approach epitomizes an essentially macrosociological point of view:

It is undoubtedly true that in Bernstein's general approach there is little or no concern for the perspectives, strategy and actions of individual social actors in actual social settings. (Atkinson 1985, p. 32)

Durkheim influenced both Vygotsky and Bernstein. On the one hand, Durkheim's notion of collective representation allowed for the social interpretation of human cognition; on the other hand, it failed to resolve the issue as to how the collective representation is interpreted by the individual. This is the domain so appropriately filled by the later writings of Vygotsky. The fact that Bernstein has used Mead and Vygotsky in the formulation of his model allows for the exploration of interpersonal relations at the face-to-face level in the classroom. Many of the symbolic interactionist and Vygotskian insights can be subsumed into his model, which affords the wider social dimension a central place in a general thesis.

Speech and Social Situation

Although Vygotsky discussed the general importance of language and schooling for psychological functioning, he failed to provide a framework to analyze and describe the real social systems in which these activities occur and reflect. Vygotsky never

indicated the social basis for this new use of words. The social analysis is thus reduced to a semiotic analysis that overlooks the real world of social praxis (Ratner 1997):

The feature that can be viewed as the proximal cause of the maturation of concepts, *is a specific way of using the word*, specifically the functional application of the sign as a means of forming concepts.
(Vygotsky 1987, p. 131)

Whilst it is quite possible to interpret ‘a specific way of using the word’ to be an exhortation to analyze the activities in which the word is used and meaning negotiated, this was not elaborated by Vygotsky himself. The analysis of the structure and function of semiotic psychological tools in specific activity contexts is not explored. The challenge is to address the demands created by this absence. Bernstein recognized the need for such an endeavor in his early writing:

Different social structures may generate different speech systems or linguistic codes. The latter entail for the individual specific principles of choice which regulate the selections he makes from the totality of options represented by a given language. The principles of choice originally elicit, progressively strengthen, and finally stabilize the planning procedures an individual uses in the preparation of his speech and guide his orientation to the speech of others.
(Bernstein 1964a, p. 56)

Bernstein outlined a model for understanding the construction of pedagogic discourse. In this context, pedagogic discourse is a source of psychological tools or cultural artefacts:

The basic idea was to view this (pedagogic) discourse as arising out of the action of a group of specialised agents operating in specialised setting in terms of the interests, often competing interests of this setting.
(Bernstein 1996a, b, p. 116)

In Engeström’s (1996) work within activity theory, which to some considerable extent has a Vygotskian root, the production of the outcome of activity is discussed, but not the production and structure of cultural artefacts such as discourse. The production of discourse is not analyzed in terms of the context of its production, which is the rules, community, and division of labor that regulate the activity in which subjects are positioned. It is therefore important that the discourse is seen within the culture and structures of schooling where differences in pedagogic practices, in the structuring of interactions and relationships, and the generation of different criteria of competence will shape the ways in which children are perceived and actions are argued and justified.

The application of Vygotsky by many social scientists (e.g. linguists, psychologists, sociologists) has been limited to relatively small-scale interactional contexts, often within schooling or some form of educational setting. The descriptions and the form of analysis are in some sense specific to these contexts. Sociologists have drawn on ethnomethodology or symbolic interactionism (see Makitalo and Saljo 2002 for a discussion). Here, the focus is on the creation and negotiation of social order by participants in clearly defined and categorized settings. Data collection tends to focus on what is said. As Bernstein (1993) noted, extra-contextual

structures of power and their discursive regulation are necessarily excluded from the analysis.

He also noted the limitations of symbolic interactionism which, from his point of view, are as follows:

[Symbolic interactionism] focuses upon meanings, their negotiation, the construction of identities and their careers as these emerge out of face to face encounters in well bounded contexts. Here there is opportunity for showing relations to external constraints and possibilities in which interactions are embedded but not necessarily determined. Yet there still remains the crucial conceptual issue of explicating this interrelation. This is not solved by a set of boxes which only index the very processes to be described. Symbolic interaction provides sensitive and insightful descriptions of interactions within the pedagogic format. The description it gives necessarily stems from its own selective focus. It tends to take for granted, that it does not include in its description, how the discourse itself is constituted and recontextualized. The theory focuses upon interactional formats rather than the way the **specialization of knowledge is constructed**. From the point of view of Vygotsky the “**tool**” is not subject to analysis, although the articulation of the zone of proximal development may well be. This absence of focus is common to both linguistic and psychology. (Bernstein 1993, p. xix)

Bernstein and Recontextualization: Instructional and Regulative Discourse

In his work on schooling, Bernstein (2000) argued that pedagogic discourse is constructed by a recontextualizing principle that selectively appropriates, relocates, refocuses, and relates other discourses to constitute its own order. He argued that in order to understand pedagogic discourse as a social and historical construction, attention must be directed to the regulation of its structure, the social relations of its production, and the various modes of its recontextualizing as a practice. For Bernstein, symbolic ‘tools’ are never neutral; intrinsic to their construction are social classifications, stratifications, distributions, and modes of recontextualizing.

The language that Bernstein (2000) has developed allows researchers to take measures of institutional modality. That is to describe and position the discursive, organizational, and interactional practice of the institution. His model is one that is designed to relate macro-institutional forms to micro-interactional levels and the underlying rules of communicative competence. He focuses upon two levels: a structural level and an interactional level. The structural level is analyzed in terms of the social division of labor it creates (e.g. the degree of specialization, and thus strength of boundary between professional groupings) and the interactional with the form of social relation it creates (e.g. the degree of control that a manager may exert over a team member’s work plan). The social division is analyzed in terms of the strength of the boundary of its divisions—that is, with respect to the degree of specialization (e.g. how strong is the boundary between professions such as teaching and social work or one school curriculum subject and another). Thus, the key concept at the structural level is the concept of boundary, and structures are distinguished in terms of their relationships between categories. The interactional

level emerges as the regulation of the transmission/acquisition relationship between teacher and taught (or the manager and the managed); that is, the interactional level comes to refer to the pedagogic context and the social relations of the workplace or classroom or its equivalent.

Power is spoken of in terms of classification, which is manifested in category relations that themselves generate recognition rules. Possession allows the acquirer to recognize the difference that is marked by a category, as would be the case of rules that allow a professional to be recognized as belonging to particular professional group. This is not simply a matter of finding out which service someone belongs to; it also refers to the ways forms of talk and other actions may be seen as belonging to a particular professional category or grouping. When there is strong insulation between categories (i.e. subject, teachers), with each category sharply distinguished, explicitly bounded, and having its own distinctive specialization, then classification is said to be strong. When there is weak insulation, then the categories are less specialized and their distinctiveness is reduced; this classification is said to be weak.

Bernstein (1996a, b) refined the discussion of his distinction between instructional and regulative discourse. The former refers to the transmission of skills and their relation to each other, and the latter refers to the principles of social order, relation, and identity. Whereas the principles and distinctive features of instructional discourse and its practice are relatively clear (the what and how of the specific skills/competences to be acquired and their relation to each other), the principles and distinctive features of the transmission of the regulative are less clear as this discourse is transmitted through various media and may indeed be characterized as a diffuse transmission. Regulative discourse communicates the school's (or any institution's) public moral practice, values, beliefs, attitudes, principles of conduct, character, and manner. It also transmits features of the school's local history, local tradition, and community relations. Pedagogic discourse is modelled as one discourse created by the embedding of instructional and regulative discourse. This model of pedagogic discourse provides a response to one of the many theoretical demands that have remained unfulfilled in the post-Vygotskian framework. The rejection of the cognitive/affective dualism that Vygotsky announced was not followed by a model within which a unitary conception of thinking and feeling could be discussed and implemented within empirical research.

Examining Pedagogic Modalities

Different institutional modalities may be described in terms of the relationship between the relations of power and control, which gives rise to distinctive discursive artefacts. For example, with respect to schooling, where the theory of instruction gives rise to a strong classification and strong framing of the pedagogic practice, it is expected that there will be a separation of discourses (school subjects) and an emphasis upon acquisition of specialized skills; the teacher will be dominant

in the formulation of intended learning and the pupils are constrained by the teacher's practice. The relatively strong control on the pupils' learning itself acts as a means of maintaining order in the context in which the learning takes place. This form of instructional discourse contains regulative functions. With strong classification and framing, the social relations between teachers and pupils will be more asymmetrical—that is, more clearly hierarchical. In this instance, the regulative discourse and its practice is more explicit and distinguishable from the instructional discourse. Where the theory of instruction gives rise to a weak classification and weak framing of the practice, children will be encouraged to be active in the classroom, to undertake enquiries, and perhaps to work in groups at their own pace. Here, the relations between teacher and pupils will have the appearance of being more symmetrical. In these circumstances, it is difficult to separate instructional discourse from regulative discourse as these are mutually embedded. The formulation of pedagogic discourse as an embedded discourse comprised of instructional and regulative components allows for the analysis of the production of such embedded discourses in activities structured through specifiable relations of power and control within institutions.

Bernstein provided an account of cultural transmission that is avowedly sociological in its conception. In turn, the psychological account that has developed in the wake of Vygotsky's writing offers a model of aspects of the social formation of mind that is underdeveloped in Bernstein's work. The sociocultural account of the social, cultural, and historical context is insufficient for the task that Vygotsky set himself in his attempt to formulate a general social theory of the formation of mind. Bernstein's account of social positioning within the discursive practice that arises in institutional settings, taken together with his analysis of the ways in which principles of power and control translate into principles of communication, allows us to investigate how principles of communication differentially regulate forms of consciousness.

Bernstein's work provides the basis for a language of description that may be applied at the level of principles of power and control, which may then be translated into principles of communication. Different social structures give rise to different modalities of language, which have specialized mediational properties. They have arisen and been shaped by, the social, cultural and historical circumstances in which interpersonal exchanges arise; they in turn shape the thoughts, feelings, identities, and aspirations for action of those engaged in interpersonal exchange in those contexts. Hence, the relations of power and control, which regulate social interchange, give rise to specialized principles of communication. These mediate social relations. I intend to develop an account of the production of psychological tools or artefacts, such as discourse, that will allow for exploration of formative effects of the institutional context of production at the psychological level. This will also involve a consideration of the possibilities afforded to different social actors as they take up positions and are positioned in social products such as discourse. This discussion of production thus opens up the possibility of analyzing the possible positions that an individual may take up in a field of social practice:

To understand his views on what underlies the social subjects' participation in discourse is to understand the true meaning of speaking each act of speaking is a social event, behind which lies the history of the individual and so the history of the community of which the individual is a member. (Hasan 2001, p. 6)

Mediation: Explicit, Implicit, or Invisible

Discourse may mediate human action in different ways. There is visible (Bernstein 2000) or explicit (Wertsch 2007) mediation in which the deliberate incorporation of signs into human action is seen as a means of reorganizing that action. This contrasts with invisible or implicit mediation, which involves signs, especially natural language, whose primary function is IN communications, which are part of a pre-existing, independent stream of communicative action that becomes integrated with other forms of goal-directed behavior (Wertsch 2007). Invisible semiotic mediation occurs in discourse embedded in everyday ordinary activities of a social subject's life.

As Hasan (2001) argued, Bernstein further nuanced this claim:

Bernstein referred to ... the 'invisible' component of communication (see Bernstein 1990a, b: 17, Fig. 3.1 and discussion). The code theory relates this component to the subject's social positioning. If we grant that 'ideology is constituted through and in such positioning' (Bernstein 1990a, b: 13), then we grant that subjects' stance to their universe is being invoked: different orders of relevance inhere in different experiences of positioning and being positioned. This is where the nature of what one wants to say, not its absolute specifics, may be traced. Of course, linguists are right that speakers can say what they want to say, but an important question is: what is the range of meanings they freely and voluntarily mean, and why do they prioritize those meanings when the possibilities of making meanings from the point of view of the system of language are infinite? Why do they want to say what they do say? The regularities in discourse have roots that run much deeper than linguistics has cared to fathom. (Hasan 2001, p. 8)

This argument is all the more strengthened through its reference to a theoretical account that provides greater descriptive and analytical purchase on the principles of regulation of the social figured world, the possibilities for social position, and the voice of participants.

These challenges of studying implicit or invisible mediation have been approached from a variety of theoretical perspectives. Holland et al (1998) studied the development of identities and agency specific to historically situated, socially enacted, culturally constructed worlds in a way that may contribute to the development of an understanding of the way in which the development of social capital is situated. This approach to a theory of identity in practice is grounded in the notion of a figured world in which positions are taken up constructed and resisted. The Bakhtinian concept of the 'space of authoring' is deployed to capture an understanding of the mutual shaping of figured worlds and identities in social practice. They refer to Bourdieu (1977) in their attempt to show how social position becomes

disposition. They argue for the development of social position into a positional identity into disposition and the formation of what Bourdieu referred to as ‘habitus’. Bernstein was critical of habitus, arguing that the internal structure of a particular habitus, the mode of its specific acquisition, which gives it its specificity, is not described. For him, habitus is known by its output not its input. (Bernstein 2000).

Wertsch (1998a, b) turned to Bakhtin’s theory of speech genres rather than habitus. A similar conceptual problem emerges with this body of work. While Bakhtin’s views concerning speech genres are ‘rhetorically attractive and impressive, the approach lacks ... both a developed conceptual syntax and an adequate language of description. Terms and units at both these levels in Bakhtin’s writings require clarification; further, the principles that underlie the calibration of the elements of context with the generic shape of the text are underdeveloped, as is the general schema for the description of contexts for interaction’ (Hasan 2005). Bernstein acknowledged the importance of Foucault’s analysis of power, knowledge, and discourse as he attempted to theorize the discursive positioning of the subject. He complained that it lacks a theory of transmission, its agencies, and its social base.

Social Positioning

Hasan brought Bernstein’s concept of social positioning to the fore in her discussion of social identity. Bernstein (1990a, b, p. 13) used this concept to refer to the establishment of a specific relation to other subjects and to the creation of specific relationships within subjects. As Hasan (2005) noted, social positioning through meanings are inseparable from power relations. Bernstein provided an elaboration of his early general argument:

More specifically, class-regulated codes position subjects with respect to dominant and dominated forms of communication and to the relationships between them. Ideology is constituted through and in such positioning. From this perspective, ideology inheres in and regulates modes of relation. Ideology is not so much a content as a mode of relation for the realizing of content. Social, cultural, political and economic relations are intrinsic to pedagogic discourse. (Bernstein 1990a, b, pp. 13–14)

Here, the linkage is forged between social positioning and psychological attributes. This is the process through which Bernstein talked of the shaping of the possibilities for consciousness. The dialectical relation between discourse and subject makes it possible to think of pedagogic discourse as a semiotic means that regulates or traces the generation of subjects’ positions in discourse. We can understand the potency of pedagogic discourse in selectively producing subjects and their identities in a temporal and spatial dimension (Diaz 2001, pp. 106–108). As Hasan (2005) argued, within the Bernsteinian thesis there exists an ineluctable relation between one’s social positioning, one’s mental dispositions, and one’s relation to the distribution of labor in society. Here, the emphasis on discourse is

theorized ‘not only in terms of the shaping of cognitive functions but also, as it were invisibly, in its influence on dispositions, identities, and practices’ (Bernstein 1990b, p. 33).

Within Engeström’s approach to cultural historical activity theory (CHAT), the subject is often discussed in terms of individuals, groups, or perspectives/views. I would argue that the way in which subjects are positioned with respect to one another within an activity carries with it implications for engagement with tools and objects. It may also carry implications for the ways rules, community, and the division of labor regulate the actions of individuals and groups.

Holland et al. (1998) studied the development of identities and agency specific to historically situated, socially enacted, culturally constructed worlds. They draw on Bakhtin (1978, 1986) and Vygotsky to develop a theory of identity as constantly forming and person as a composite of many, often contradictory, self-understandings and identities that are distributed across the material and social environment and are rarely durable. They draw on Leont’ev regarding the development of the concept of socially organized and reproduced *figured worlds* that shape and are shaped by participants and in which social position establishes possibilities for engagement:

[Figured worlds] distribute ‘us’ not only by relating actors to landscapes of action (as personae) and spreading our senses of self across many different fields of activity, but also by giving the landscape human voice and tone—Cultural worlds are populated by familiar social types and even identifiable persons, not simply differentiated by some abstract division of labour. The identities we gain within figured worlds are thus specifically historical developments, grown through *continued participation in the positions defined by the social organization of those world’s activity* (Holland et al. 1998, p. 41, emphasis added)

This approach to a theory of identity in practice is grounded in the notion of a figured world in which positions are taken up constructed and resisted. The Bakhtinian concept of the ‘space of authoring’ is deployed to capture an understanding of the mutual shaping of figured worlds *and* identities in social practice. Holland et al. (1998) referred to Bourdieu (1977) in their attempt to show how social position becomes disposition. They argued for the development of social position into a positional identity into disposition and the formation of what Bourdieu referred to as ‘habitus.’ It is here that I feel that this argument could be strengthened through reference to a theoretical account that provides greater descriptive and analytical purchase on the principles of regulation of the social figured world, the possibilities for social position, and the voice of participants.

The Regulation of Social Position

Engeström (1999a, b), who has tended to concentrate on the structural aspects of CHAT, offered the suggestion that the division of labor in an activity creates different positions for the participants and that the participants carry their own diverse histories with them into the activity. This echoes the earlier assertion from Leont’ev:

Activity is the minimal meaningful context for understanding individual actions.... In all its varied forms, the activity of the human individual is a system set within a system of social relations.... The activity of individual people thus *depends on their social position*, the conditions that fall to their lot, and an accumulation of idiosyncratic, individual factors. Human activity is not a relation between a person and a society that confronts him...in a society a person does not simply find external conditions to which he must adapt his activity, but, rather, these very social conditions bear within themselves the motives and goals of his activity, its means and modes. (Leont'ev 1978, p. 10, emphasis added).

In activity, the possibilities for the use of artefacts depend on the social position occupied by an individual. Sociologists and sociolinguists have produced empirical verification of this suggestion (e.g., Bernstein 2000; Hasan 2001; Hasan and Cloran 1990). My suggestion is that the notion of 'subject' within activity theory requires expansion and clarification. In many studies, the term *subject perspective* is used, which arguably infers subject position but does little to illuminate the formative processes that gave rise to this perspective.

Holland et al. also argued that multiple identities are developed within figured worlds and that these are "historical developments, grown through continued participation in the positions defined by the social organization of those world's activity" (Holland et al. 1998, p. 41). This body of work represents a significant development in our understanding of the concept of the 'subject' in activity theory. As Roth (2007) noted:

Goals and actions are free-floating, generally intelligible, cultural-historically contingent possibilities. Because concrete embodied actions articulate between society and the self, a person's identity does not constitute a singularity but is itself inherently intelligible within the cultural unit. It is because of what they see each other doing that two (or more) persons come to 'recognize themselves as mutually recognizing one another' Publicly visible actions serve as the ground of recognizing in the other another self that recognizes in me its corresponding other. It is this linkage between self and other through patterned embodied actions that have led some to theorize identity in terms of agency and culture in which a person participates (Roth 2007, p. 144)

For my point of view, there remains a need to develop the notion of 'figured world' in such a way that we can theorize, analyze, and describe the processes by which that world is 'figured.' Bernstein's (1990)a: 13 concept of social positioning seems to concur with the analysis outlined by Holland et al (1998). He related social positioning to the formation of mental dispositions in terms of the identity's relation to the distribution of labor in society. It is through the deployment of his concepts of voice and message that Bernstein forges the link between division of labor, social position, and discourse and opens up the possibilities for a language of description that will serve both empirical and analytical purposes. The distinction between what can be recognized as belonging to a voice and a particular message is formulated in terms of distinction between relations of power and relations of control. Bernstein (1990)b adapted the concept of voice from his reading of *The Material Word* by Silverman and Torode (1980):

From this perspective classificatory (boundary) relations establish 'voice'. 'Voice' is regarded somewhat like a cultural larynx which sets the limits on what can be legitimately

put together (communicated). Framing (control) relations regulate the acquisition of this voice and create the 'message (what is made manifest, what can be realized). (Bernstein 1996a, b, p. 260.)

In his last book, he continued:

Voice refers to the limits on what could be realized if the identity was to be recognized as legitimate. The classificatory (boundary) relation established the voice. In this way power relations, through the classificatory relation, regulated voice. However voice, although a necessary condition for establishing what could and could not be said and its context, could not determine what was said and the form of its contextual realization; the message. The message was a function of framing (control). The stronger the framing the smaller the space accorded for potential variation in the message. (Bernstein 2000: 204)

Thus, social categories constitute voices and control over practices constitutes message. Identity becomes the outcome of the voice–message relationship. Production and reproduction have their social basis in categories and practices: that categories are constituted by the social division of labor and that practices are constituted by social relations within production/reproduction; that categories constitute 'voices' and that practices constitute their 'messages'; message is dependent upon 'voice,' and the subject is a dialectical relation between 'voice' and message (Bernstein 1996a, b, p. 27).

Hasan (2001), p. 8 suggested that Bernstein's analysis of how subjects are positioned, as well as how they position themselves in relation to the social context of their discourse, offers an explanation of discursive practice in terms of the relations of power and control that regulate speaking subjects. However, the theoretical move that Bernstein makes in relating positioning to the distribution of power and principles of control opens up the possibility of grounding the analysis of social positioning and mental dispositions in relation to the distribution of labor in an activity. A systematic approach to the analysis and description of the formation of categories through the maintenance and shifting of boundaries and principles of control as exercised within categories would bring a powerful tool to the undoubted strengths of activity theory. This would then allow the analysis to move from one level to another in the same terms rather than treat division of labor and discourse as analytically independent items. Bernstein (1996a, b) argued that positioning is in a systematic relationship to the distribution of power and principles of control. I suggest that this approach to understanding the notion of social positioning as the underlying, invisible component that 'figures' (as in Holland 1998) practices of communication and gives rise to the shaping of identity provides an important potential development from the current status of third-generation activity theory.

Such a development requires a theoretical account of social relations and positioning. The theoretical move that Bernstein makes in relating positioning to the distribution of power and principles of control opens up the possibility of grounding the analysis of social positioning and mental dispositions in relation to the distribution of labor in an activity. Through the notions of 'voice' and 'message,' he brings the division of labor and principles of control (rules) into relation with social

position in practice. The implication is that ‘subject’ in an activity theory-driven depiction should be represented by a space of possibility (voice) in which a particular position (message) is taken up. Thus, the subject would be represented by a socially structured zone of possibility rather than a singular point. This representation would signify a move to attempt to theorize the subject as emerging in a world that was ‘figured’ by relations of power and control.

Conclusion: The Advantages of Synthesis

The language that Bernstein has developed allows researchers to take measures of school modality—to describe and position the discursive, organizational, and interactional practice of the institution. Bernstein also noted the need for the extension of this work in his discussion of the importance of Vygotsky’s work for research in education:

His theoretical perspective also makes demands for a new methodology, for the development of languages of description which will facilitate a *multi-level* understanding of pedagogic discourse, the varieties of its practice and contexts of its realization and production. (Bernstein 1993, p. xxiii)

This approach to modelling the structural relations of power and control in institutional settings, taken together with a theory of cultural–historical artefacts that invisibly or implicitly mediate the relations of participants in practices, forms a powerful alliance. It carries with it the possibility of rethinking notions of agency and reconceptualizing subject position in terms of the relations between possibilities afforded within the division of labor and the rules that constrain possibility and direct and deflect the attention of participants.

It accounts for the ways in which the practices of a community, such as school and the family, are structured by their institutional context and that social structures impact on the interactions between the participants and the cultural tools.

Thus, it is not just a matter of the structuring of interactions between the participants and other cultural tools; rather, it is that the institutional structures themselves are cultural products that serve as mediators in their own right. In this sense, they are the ‘message’—that is, a fundamental factor of education. As Hasan (2001) argued, when we talk, we enter the flow of communication in a stream of both history and the future. When we talk in institutions, history enters the flow of communication through the invisible or implicit mediation of the institutional structures. There is therefore a need to analyze and codify the mediational structures as they deflect and direct attention of participants and as they are shaped through interactions that they also shape.

In this sense, combining the intellectual legacies of Bernstein and Vygotsky permits the development of cultural historical analysis of the invisible or implicit mediational properties of institutional structures, which themselves are transformed through the actions of those whose interactions are influenced by them. This move

would serve to both expand the gaze of post-Vygotskian theory and bring sociologies of cultural transmission into a framework in which institutional structures are analyzed as historical products, which themselves are subject to dynamic transformation and change as people act within and on them.

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Continuity and Discontinuity of the Educational Context: Early Leavers' in-Between Life Stories

Luca Tateo

Introduction

This is a report from the no-man's land. The study focuses on a specific condition of some late adolescents, who have left compulsory education in Italy at age 16 and are not yet in the job market. This particular limbo condition of young people not in education, employment, or training (NEET; Bynner and Parsons 2002) implies a discontinuity in the process of development usually guided by culture. Six young people's narratives are presented and discussed in order to stress the relationship between expectations and disappointment, continuity, and discontinuity, as well as individuals and context in the difficult process of identity construction. The study was carried out in the Italian province of Sassari, an area in the north of Sardinia, an Italian region characterized by several years of economic slump due to de-industrialization, poor agriculture, and little development of a tertiary economy, mainly based on seasonal tourism activities. Interviews occurred within a larger study of the Observatory on Education, Training, and Jobs at the University of Sassari in 2010.

The participants are young people between 18 and 19 years, who left compulsory education at age 16 and are not yet integrated in the job market. They account for a different temporal and evolutionary dimension, reconstructing but also forgetting the passages of a trajectory between two different points of their identity construction. These young people share the experience of a nonnormative psychosocial transition, with different levels of drama, and they must cope with the need to reconstruct their own life space.

Their narratives show that this task implies "leaving beliefs, redefining the, transforming the way of understanding the others, acquiring new skills, modifying the styles of conduct, discovering original solutions to problems of different complexity arising in the new situation" (Sarchielli 1998, p. 21). Such an endeavor

L. Tateo (✉)

Niels Bohr Centre for Cultural Psychology, Aalborg University, Aalborg, Denmark
e-mail: luca@hum.aau.dk

takes place in a critical phase of development, representing a transition, a limbo, in which our participants express a condition of marginality and moratorium (Lewin 1947; Marcia 1966), with the need to overcome the present state of ambiguity and insecurity as soon as possible.

When experiencing the separation and de-socialization that occur after dropping out of school, implying the unlearning of the familiar way of thinking and solving problems, young people must overcome the difficulty and the inertia in reconstructing new ways of thinking, new relationships, and negotiating new expectations and reference points. During the end of adolescence, our young participants, who are living a crisis that preludes the process of entering adult life, should be supported in their active exploration of the self and the world (Erikson 1968). In the narratives gathered, this preparatory phase is somehow unfinished and not supported by any socialization agency but the family. This phenomenon will be interpreted through the idea of continuity and discontinuity in the educational process, drawing from the lived background of the young boys and girls that must cope with early school-leaving. Through its function in the construction of the self, the educational system guides the development of the individual trajectory, helping the individual to elaborate the relationship between the sense of self and potential development pathways, the system of expectations and social constraints, and the symbolic resources to cope with one's points of strength and weakness (Iannaccone et al. 2012; Rogoff 2003). This is also the field of the dialectics between continuity and discontinuity, promotion of social mobility, and reproduction of the social inequalities taking place in educational contexts (Boudon 1974; Marsico and Iannaccone 2012; Schizzerotto 2002).

Guided Development: Autopoiesis, Anastylis, and Deviance

The analysis of the NEET narratives can be framed within a more general reflection about the role of culture in guiding individual development. Human beings developed a specific form of autopoietic organization, with several layers of structural organization, from biological to psychological and cultural (Arnoldi 2006; Ford and Lerner 1992; Maturana and Varela 1998; Rogoff 2003; Valsiner 1998). The interaction with the environment and other systems affects the actualization of developmental potential at all layers, which change the life span through an interdependence of structural levels. Different developmental theories in psychology (e.g., Piaget, Baldwin, Erickson) have stressed this dialectic between different layers of structure and functions in development (Arnoldi 2006; Verhofstadt-Denève 2000).

Autopoietic systems have the capability of guiding their own development process as far as the change in structure is determined by both the functional organization and the structural features at a given time. However, humans are the

Fig. 1 An example of value-guided development, the young gymnast Ella Yastrebova. Source <http://ellayastrebova.forumfree.it/>



only living organisms that also developed the capability of building institutions that are specifically delegated to guide development, such as education and religion. This is the evolutionary solution to ensure continuity of cultural communities (Tateo and Iannaccone 2011). The institutions delegated to an individual's development act through setting specific protected environments that guide the person's expression of potentialities, by offering a set of constraints and affordances that are value-driven. In other words, the characteristic feature of human development is to be value-guided, at all levels of the structure.

The girl in Fig. 1, the young gymnast Ella Yastrebova, is experiencing changes in bodily and psychological layers by participating in a calisthenics educational activity. The culture establishes the kind of acceptable outcomes on the basis of the value-set developmental objectives. These kinds of values can be either aesthetical, ethical, religious, or technical, but their common feature is that they must be instantiated in a given institution to be put into practice and interrelate with the self-regulated development. The ethical dilemma faced by educational institutions is the tension between guiding and following development.

Educational institutions have the specific purpose of instantiating the system of values of a given cultural community by creating an environment that sets the acceptable range of developmental pathways, including the age steps and the transition processes, that the individual can follow to become a legitimated member of the community (Rogoff 2003). Establishing this appropriate range also implies co-creating the boundaries of deviance. The school thus behaves like a near-equilibrium open system, in which the system organization and functioning define at the same time the range of acceptable structural indeterminacy and the boundaries of the system itself with respect to the environment (Sawada and Caley 1985). For instance, the school is able to manage a given process of innovation by swinging like a pendulum around a point of equilibrium. This is also the way school sets the condition for the management of students' deviant behavior:

Certain sorts of deviant behavior are highly valuable, others are not. The former is usually called creative and is supported (in normal times) as long as it remains within bounds; the latter is called destructive. If we assume that the highest educational priority is placed on creativity, then special environments within which to pursue creativity must be constructed (recognized as open systems); otherwise the stabilizing forces of "normal" schooling will "normalize" (destroy) emerging creativity. (Sawada and Caley 1985, p. 17)

This near-equilibrium organization also defines the boundaries with respect to the families or the other social stakeholders, as well as between what is schooling, working, or leisure. Nevertheless, it is extremely relevant to point out that the open system can recognize only "according to its own structure" (Arnoldi 2006, p. 117). Setting the boundaries determines what is "schooling" and what is "not schooling", but does not necessarily define "not schooling" as something else, such as "job." Thus, when a student drops out the realm of schooling, he or she does not enter automatically into the new realm of the job market; rather, this person passes through the "no man's land" of what is "not schooling" or what is "not a job."

The student's self under construction is taking part in guided activities and being confronted with a set of different definitions produced by adults (teachers, parents, etc.), which provide a range of value-guided potential development trajectories (Iannaccone et al. 2012). The student must negotiate between different definitions of the self as it is, will be, should be, or should not be. Students are thus required to keep this self-construction process within acceptable boundaries, such as by fulfilling performance standards or age steps. The general values underlying this process are continuity and consistency with respect to the cultural community. It has often been claimed that contemporary societies are characterized by a dramatic change with respect to these values. Life trajectories are today less stable and more fragmented, increasing the level of uncertainty and the need for adaptation to rapid changes. Nevertheless, even if some elements of system structure are changed, such as the length, complexity, and linearity of transitions, the organization of the school-job transition is still based upon the values of continuity and consistency (Bradley and Devadason 2008). The question is thus what happens when this trajectory is definitely broken for some years at a critical point of adolescence, as in the case of the early school-leavers interviewed?

“Anastylosis” is an architectural technique that aims at rebuilding, from as much of the original materials that are left after usually thousands of years of abuse, fallen into ruined architectural monuments, by placing scattered components back into their original positions. The situation of suspended transition of these young people can be compared to a long period of neglect. With respect to guided development, these persons are outside the institutions delegated to guide both development and normative transitions. Often, they can lean only on their families. One cannot speak of interrupted development because the individuals went on with the construction of their identities; however, in this case, the process is taking place outside the educational and training institutions, and this is not without consequences.

The identity definitions, life plans, and work choices of the students, as well as the meaning attributed to their own successes and failures, are constructed through social interactions (Iannaccone et al. 2012; Schizzerotto 2002). The outcomes of students’ educational trajectories result from a complex interaction between students themselves, teachers, institution, families, and counselors. Everyone is bearer of a system of beliefs, values, justifications, and representations about the meaning of schooling, being in the job market, the life goals worth pursuing, and the positive or negative outcomes of such a search (Marsico and Iannaccone 2012). The actors are involved in a constant process of negotiation and friction, which sets the ground for building a life project, whether is successful or not in respect to personal goals (Fig. 2).

Such a system dynamic becomes evident when it takes place in boundary interactions, such as school–family meetings, orientation interviews, and teacher/counselor training—formal or informal situations in which the different systems

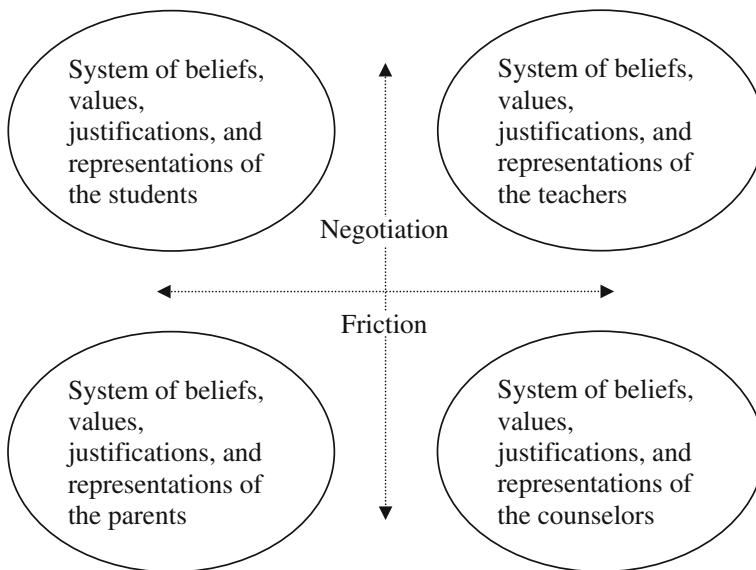


Fig. 2 Negotiation and friction between different systems

enter directly and are forced to negotiate and confront on a very meaningful outcome: a young person's future (Coulon 2005; Iannaccone et al. 2012; Marsico and Iannaccone 2012). In this situation, for instance, teachers are more likely to use students' deficit model, explaining failure and school-leaving in terms of the incapability of fitting into the educational system (Thomas 2006). Students, as reported in the interviews, are more likely to provide complex accounts that combine dispositional dimensions with the school's ineffectiveness to retain them and contextual dimensions, such as the difficult link between school and the job market.

Autopoietic systems are subject to irreversible change, in the sense that once they reach a far-from-equilibrium state, a turbulence that requires a change in the structure, they cannot simply restore the previous situation (Sawada and Caley 1985). The individual reaches a so-called bifurcation point—a moment of choice that will actualize a new trajectory among the available options set by social constraints. In other words, it develops. In this sense, human beings are not just autopoietic systems but also “auto-actualizers”—that is, they “extend themselves into an actualization of the unknown by choosing one path of pursuit over another, thus opening more domains of Being through Becoming at each bifurcation (decision) point” (Sawada and Caley 1985, p. 18).

However, the metaphor of the bifurcation point is questioned by early leavers' trajectories, as dropping out of school does not imply becoming something else. This event puts the person into an area beyond the bifurcation that defines what the young person is not, or no longer is, without defining what the person will be. It thus triggers a sort of anastylisis of the self, challenging the young person to reconstruct a structure of the self by reassembling the scattered pieces of the neglected identity. The narratives of the young people interviewed two or three years after compulsory school-leaving show how this process can take a long time to be achieved, especially because it happens in the no-man's land between the border of the education and job environments, with a lack of social guidance.

Six Case Studies

The participants in these case studies were selected from a larger survey carried out by the Observatory on Education, Training, and Jobs. The survey analyzed longitudinal data about students' careers and school/job transitions among the early school-leavers' population in the province of Sassari. According to some relevant theoretical dimensions stressed by the survey, a set micro-context was selected (e.g. towns and schools with specific socio-demographic features). Drawing from the schools' lists, six students who dropped out in the first two years of secondary school were recruited for a in-depth narrative interview that focused on the retrospective account and self-assessment of the educational experience, the turning points, the systems of values and beliefs, the meaning attributed to the school

failure, the social and family background, and the current situation (Coulon 2005; Demazière and Dubar 1997; Glaser and Strauss 1967).

The general dimensions emerging from the interviews are that the outcome of educational trajectories are interpreted by aspects related both to context (family background, income, mobility, etc.) and to the individual (the subjective value of education, expectations, interests, previous experiences, etc.). The different mix of these elements characterizes the more or less happy individual trajectories. The six stories include both boys and girls (names are fictitious) who experienced different modalities and outcomes from a troubled relationship with the school. Table 1 presents an overview of the participants' profiles and their family background.

The interviews took place some years after school-leaving. Therefore, there was some room for the elaboration of the identity and the experience lived during the phase of moratorium between school-leaving and the job situation to come. Also, the school-leaving did not occur only in situations of extreme distress. The young interviewees come from middle-low income and educational levels, and not particularly large families. Participants themselves defined their own families as relatively "ordinary". This remark triggers some questions about the determination of psycho-social risk factors with respect to early school-leaving. This phenomenon does not characterize only multi-problematic micro-contexts, but it takes place also under conditions of relative family stability. Although the relationship between social inequalities and school failure is widely documented (Boudon 1974; Schizzerotto 2002), the fact that early school-leaving and a long moratorium between education and employment, in some social contexts, affects young people coming from a wide range of family backgrounds is worthy of attention.

The six cases present the different ways in which young people account for their experience of school leaving, without any generalizations. Nevertheless, by jointly reading their narratives, it is possible to identify some common themes that represent a starting point for further reflection.

Gianna: A Silent Leaving

Gianna is almost 18 and lives in the small seaside town of Alghero. She left the commercial school when she was 17, seemingly without a specific reason. She always attended schools near her home. She never failed classes and claims that she willingly choose her secondary school because she loves math. Nevertheless, she decided to leave just two months before the end of the school year because she was afraid of failing her grade. She lives in a middle-class family that is not well-off but does not show any economic problems, even if Gianna does not love to talk about her "private sphere". Her interview gives an image of a united and ordinary family who never questioned her choices.

Gianna seems to have poor expectations about school, while she believes that a job is the most important thing. In her own words, the school "is just for personal education, is not worth for job"—to find a job, you need above all a

Table 1 Profile of participants

	Gianna	Lucia	Tito	Emiliano	Giorgio	Marco
Age	18	19	19	18	19	18
Family (besides the participant)	Parents + elder brother	Parents + 2 elder brothers	Parents + elder sister	Parents + elder brother	Parents + 2 elder brothers and 1 elder sister	Separated mother + young brother
Father' s/mother' s job(s)	Plumber/housewife	Land surveyor/housewife	Mason/housewife, occasional work	Electrotechnician/housewife	Retired/chambermaid	Unknown/Housewife
Age of school leaving	17	16	16	16	17	17
Last school	Technical vocational school	Commerce school	Scientific high school	Geometer school	Technical vocational school	Technical vocational school

recommendation. Gianna has several micro-experiences of “crappy jobs” for short periods, always under the table jobs, and she was never able to improve her skills or economic conditions. She has been a clerk and bartender; at the time of the interview, she was in the midst of an unsuccessful job search. Gianna brings her curriculum around to bars, restaurants, and night clubs, where, she says, “They tell you we will call you back, but nobody does.” Gianna does not believe she will find a job this way—“in Alghero, there are no opportunities”—so she uses her own social network, which helped her to find a job in the past.

This young woman seems to view the world of employment as two conflicting dimensions. On one hand, there is the dull aspect of a job as a necessary instrument of survival, which does not require great expectations because there is nothing between being a clerk or a waitress; education or improving the curriculum is useless because it is only necessary to have “the right connections”. On the other hand, there is the realm of aspirations that are doomed to be thwarted at their very origin. Gianna says she would like to be a hair stylist but it is very difficult—nobody will hire you if you are not skillful and she is not competent because nobody is patient with teaching her. She wanted to attend a beautician course, but it was too expensive. Her discourse has a very negative view of institutions, such as schools, job centers, etc. that are worth nothing: she does not look for them and they do not look for her in return.

Gianna’s trajectory could be labeled as a “silent leaving”—a young girl living in an apparently ordinary context, who does not report any particular episode of school failure. At the same time, she seems to have passed through the educational system in a quite aseptic way, without bearing in mind any meaningful memory. Gianna did not build the meaning of her school experience, its usefulness with respect to a life plan; in return, the educational system did not seem to be able to motivate or involve her. The school seems unable to provide her with psychological resources to cope with endeavors, but also unable to interpret her silent distress.

Lucia: School “Nomadism” and Life Trajectory

Lucia is 19 and lives in a very small village, which is built around a main square with a bar and a church. Her school trajectory has been quite confused, attending three different secondary schools and finally landing in a vocational training course. Nevertheless, Lucia shows initiative and tenacity; she actually had to wait some time for available places in the schools she wanted to attend. She passed from the technical school to the touristic school; after one year of the vocational training course, she enrolled in a commerce school. Despite the commitment to pursuing her choices, Lucia has never been able to stay in the same school for more than a year.

The other relevant element in her story is the role of her family in building her adult identity and her life trajectory. Other young participants in the interviews came with a parent, who usually remained a silent, even awkward, guest. In this case, Lucia came with the mother and the interview turned into a “trialogue”.

Rather than answering the interviewer's questions, Lucia and her mother, showing a great mutual understanding, jointly reconstructed the story of the family over recent years. Their account shows that the construction of Lucia's choices is strictly related to the family context. In her own words: "you get your points of reference from the people around you so in this case your parents, your family".

Although her parents seem to set Lucia free to make her own educational choices, such choices are built over time through several family practices—everyday and work routines of the family members, the need to manage family mobility, having to attend schools in other towns, etc. Also in this second interview, a scattered trajectory of school leaving and restarting took place on the background of a family context described as ordinary and stable.

Lucia seems neither to have lived moments of particular conflict with the school context nor to have been a particularly brilliant or troubled student. Indeed, she said: "Yes, I wasn't bad at school... the behavior but... I wasn't bad". She does not come from a troubled family with particular risk.

Lucia attributes a great importance to the problem of moving from her living place for every kind of activity, such as school or sport, which makes her dependent on her parents: "I couldn't even tell my parents... because they didn't want but... my father woke up at a given hour my mother if she wants to go working she is awkward because of my care that she must come to pick up me no... it was not... I think it was not worth [it]."

Lucia had short regular job experiences as a waitress, bartender, and chambermaid, which she considers useful but hardly compatible with school. Her account seems to draw a kind of "nomadism" in the school trajectory. Actually, she carries out in a fragmented and aleatory way a sort of school-training-job alternation. At the time of the interview she was back to school and she has been successfully achieving a diploma. In her case, the representation of school as an instrument for qualification leads her to choose professional schools: "I always liked tourism school let's say that... I chose tourism school to achieve another qualification... to have something more... in the curriculum... no matter how if you go to the tourism school you find a job... they send you to work already from the school... it is something more."

Tito: In Search of Identity

Tito is 19 and lives in a small village near Sassari. He left the second year of the "Liceo" specializing in scientific studies at 16, after repeating the first year twice. Then, he started to work in first-aid and ambulance transport for local voluntary organizations. He worked for three different organizations, sometimes getting out of ambiguous and barley legal situations that he did not tolerate but tried to report. At the same time, for Tito the volunteer experience is a place of commitment and personal growth. He carries out this activity with more motivation than school, even if he gains neither money nor qualifications.

Tito spoke of the enriching experience of working on the ambulance, in which he found personal satisfaction and maturation: “I liked to go out with friends. At the very beginning... when I served on the ambulance... I couldn’t wait to leave the service to go out with friends then some evenings it happened that... after the service... it happened that I missed the last bus... and I had to wait for something to bring me home by car... and with that excuse we went out until late... then they used to bring me home and I equally had fun then... keeping the adults company... that is you work with adults... you go out with adults... you do a job that... somehow makes you mature... because it makes you understand many things.”

Tito lives in a troubled area, but the experience as a volunteer represented a factor of protection from the psycho-social risk: “Yes... maybe at the beginning... before knowing the world of voluntary service... I used to enjoy going out... ... doing craps... trying to smoke something... scattering you know... before knowing voluntary service.... Then I came back here... then I hardly got out of that because I was almost convinced, eh! We went down here [*points to his left, out the window, to the vegetation surrounding the school building*].... We got some strange drugs.... From that moment on I walked away... I never looked for them again.”

The school experience was very disappointing: “I left because for me... as a repeating student... you’re wasting time... go home... save your parents’ money.... I was not actually inclined for studying.... I was always unlucky with teachers I met.”

During his middle school years, Tito accumulated low marks in the main school subjects of language, math, history, because of the quality of teaching, he reported. Despite these evident deficiencies, shared with all his schoolmates, Tito is placed in the Liceo specializing in scientific studies. Immediately, his knowledge gap becomes an insuperable barrier.

Tito received some support at school: “However, someone tried to recover us... even if teachers couldn’t care less, eh! But a teacher of Latin took care of filling my gaps.... She helped me in math.... She used to bring me... during the religion lessons, she canceled me from that course.... She told me then... ‘Cancel by yourself or I will do and we go to the library trying to recover what you couldn’t get through before’.... So she helped me.... We were two students... one from the middle school... and they supervised us in math [which] wasn’t her subject.... However, she helped us to understand how to do that... the procedure to do that.”

Finally, Tito decided to leave because he did not feel able to attend the school. He believes that is not worth studying without outcome and impacting his family’s budget. He didn’t share the decision making with his parents, who were informed only at the end: “I told them for me going on is wasting time... money... too many expenses.”

After that, Tito tried some low-paying jobs, along with his father, some training courses, and he failed to join the army. Tito’s actual interest is different: “to attend English courses... learning a foreign language and going abroad with job qualifications... because out there staff receives a salary... voluntary service does not exist.... First aid rescuers [are] not a volunteer but a professional.” Indeed, Tito started to look abroad for job opportunities as a rescuer, contacting organizations in

Europe and the United States. Very soon, he discovered that he needs the very qualification he did not achieve, because the first aid voluntary organizations he worked for were not willing or able to provide it.

Listening to Tito's account, a striking contrast emerges between two different images of the self. On one hand, there is a mature, motivated, and active adolescent, trying to build his own potential pathway, exploring and making choices, and deciding to be a rescuer. He clearly defines the constraints and affordances of his context, recognizing the reference of an adult network supporting him in the passage to maturity. On the other hand, there is the image of the self related to the school experience (Iannaccone et al. 2012), a person who is not able to achieve some goals, weak with respect to school activities, attributing failure to intra-individual factors: "I used to study [but] compared to others... let's say I use to talk in a different way.... I was quite hopeless [but] teachers accepted me as I am.... They understood how I am... what I had clear in mind [and] what I was talking about.... They gave me high grades... one two three times.... [But] it wasn't enough to have a good assessment at the end of the year.... Because you [may] get a high mark there [but] a low mark at the other subject... and you go, 'Tito, nothing can change... Here we go again!' [It] is always the same... and you don't know how to get out of it."

Tito's trajectory can be labeled as being "in search of an identity." The contexts of informal learning, such as the voluntary services, can be more useful and meaningful than the formal educational context. This narrative represents a fundamental challenge for every educational context—recognizing, valorizing, and keeping alive the skills, expectations, and motivations that manifest themselves mainly under a non-institutionalized form, thus requiring personalized answers.

Emiliano: Losing Aspirations at 18

The fourth case is Emiliano, an 18-year-old who spent his life in the historical center of Alghero. Emiliano's family includes his father, an electrical technician, his mother, a housewife, and an elder brother who is an artisan. Only his father finished school and went to the university for one year; the other members of the family just finished middle school. Emiliano describes the economic situation of his family as not dramatic but worsening.

After finishing middle school, Emiliano enrolled at the technical secondary school, which he left once and for all after only two months. The choice of the secondary school seemed to be made without conviction, but rather with the awareness of making a disastrous decision and having totally different interests: "Yes, at the beginning I chose [the school] not because I liked it... Let's say [it was] because I didn't want to study.... After that, I didn't like that school.... Indeed, I should have chose another school.... I should have gone to the tourism school."

Since leaving the school, Emiliano has been working for two years as a pizza chef. Also in this case, he does not report any particular motivation: “If you are a pizza chef, [it] is a job.... But staying at school doing nothing... you don’t learn anything.” He registered at the employment center but always found a job through his friends. Later, he left the job to become a paperhanger and occasionally a masonry laborer. He had only under the table jobs, without social security or insurance. Tito is working now and then, while seeking a new job without particular enthusiasm: “Comes what may.... I can make shift anyway... any work is a job.”

Some elements more frequently emerge from Emiliano’s narrative. First of all, his life story seems to be characterized by an involutorial trajectory in respect to his father: “My father [went to] the university [and] he attended the technical secondary school.... Then... he got qualifications [such as] aerial fitter... electrician... all that stuff.” This is a very relevant aspect; in Western countries, the progressive increasing of the educational level along generations was a common belief. Achieving a higher level of education for the family’s children was understood as a very important goal—an instrument of social mobility and an index of status improvement—related to the set of expectations for a better future.

Emiliano, like other early school-leavers, depicts the school experience as not actually meaningful: “With the teachers, yes... I was quite good [but with] studying [I received] pass marks... nothing more than this.” Emiliano and his brother achieved a lower educational level than the father, together with unsteady and low-qualified jobs. Emiliano does not attach too much value to education, just as a distant opportunity to get a slightly better job: “When I use to go to school maybe I could get a better future... a piece of paper that perhaps could be worth [it] for the job.”

This relationship with education is linked to the system of values and expectations and to the representation of a job that Emiliano shares with other people interviewed. Work is definitely more valued than education. In addition, a job (and earning money) is frequently opposed to education (wasted time without earning): “Yes I thought [that] I need... money [so] it was impossible to keep attending school.”

Despite his age, Emiliano is surprisingly not able to construct a system of expectations with anything but very low-level goals. Despite being at an age that is supposed to be oriented ahead, full of planning, building even ambitious expectations, from his words instead emerges a disenchantment with a dimming of sadness. In the excerpt below, it is possible to see the narrow psychological horizon and the kind of expectations in Emiliano’s life:

Interviewer: Are you seeking a particular job now?

Emiliano: No no... comes what may well I can make shift anyway. Any working is a job. If they give you the possibility to choose between different, you mean jobs?

I: Job opportunities... what would you prefer?

E: If they make me choose [between] office work or hodman, definitely I choose office work. Understand? Because [it] is less tiring.

I: Yes.

E: I am pleased with anything [that] is not that.

I: What you would like to do?

E: [*Does not respond*]

I: Did you ever think about that?

E: I would like... what everybody likes... Doing nothing... with money in your pocket, no?

I: Yes. [*both smile*]

E: But well... you must work to live, isn't it? Thus, what comes... I mean... I am not that kind that leaves... what I see... that I get... don't have preferences.... It's normal to have preferences.... Like if they must put me... in an office or doing the hodman [then] I prefer the office.... With the hodman, you break your back.

I: Yeah.

E: Eh... nothing that's it.

What kind of experiences would Emiliano need to construct a system of expectations, values, and motivations that lead to a better life perspective? He has self-esteem and talks about himself as a skillful and adaptive person, willing to work: "The paperhanger... I like it.... [It is] a good job [and] demanding." He is conscious of not loving study, and if he goes to school it is just for facilitating the job seeking. Nevertheless, he accounts for a meaningless school experience, as well as a job experience that provides him neither with economic means nor the opportunity to fulfill himself. Finally, he accounts for a progressive worsening of the family's economic conditions and for a local context almost exclusively based on tourism. In the light of these experiences and lacking different coping strategies (e.g., the idea of migrating in a social context with more affordances), it is very difficult to build a life project with ambitious goals or perspectives of improving one's own social and economic conditions.

Giorgio: A Feeling of Injustice

At the time of the interview, Giorgio is 19. He was born and grew up in the village of Sorso, where he still lives. He officially left a technical secondary school at 18, after only four days. In his account, the school failure originates in the two previous years, when he was attending the teachers' training school specializing in language teaching. He attended four years, but the last two years were characterized by withdrawals: "The first two years were all right... without school credit, debts, nothing. [In] the third year I found a female teacher who took [from] me the will to study." Immediately, Giorgio introduces this *coup de théâtre* into the narrative of his school leaving:

Giorgio: I chose the normal one, the simple linguistic specializing. I like languages. The first two years were all right, without school credit, debts, nothing. The third year I found a female teacher who took [from] me the will to study. Then I tried the

year after... but I lost the will to do it... also for personal troubles. I lost the will to study. Now I regret to not have finished the studies. Maybe later I will restart when I will be able to pay by myself, without weighing [on]...

Interviewer: [On] your parents?

G: On my parents. Yes.

I: I understand. But what did that teacher, what [did] she used to teach?

G: Latin, history, and Italian.

I: And in what sense [did] she [take] your will?

G: She used to offend... not just personal insults but also my family. She used to have favorite students and didn't consider the others.

I: I understand. And you think she picked on you?

G: Well... there's a story behind [it]. She confessed... that she has it in for students from Sorso [*a small suburb near Sassari*].

I: Ah, it's actually a matter of origin?

G: Yes, yes.

I: Why [does] she [have] it in for them?

G: Well... she taught some years at the elementary school in Sorso and then she was transferred to the teachers' training school... and meanwhile her husband met a woman from Sorso and he left her for a woman from Sorso, she said very clearly.

I: Ah, that's it... it was about a personal event?

G: Yes, indeed. Also in Osilo they call her—she is from Osilo [*a small village near Sassari*—and they consider her [to be] insane.

I: I understand... and so this person made you desist?

G: Yes.

I: I understand.

G: I even tried with the school psychological counselor to try to go ahead... but it didn't [help].

I: But when [was] this? It happened when you had personal troubles or when you had troubles with the teacher?

G: When I had troubles with the teacher.

I: I understand. And when the personal troubles occurred?

G: They came the following summer... after and... almost at the end of the following school year.

I: But what kind of problems? If I may... do you want to talk about that?

G: No.

I: [Are they] problems concerning you and your family or concerning only you?

G: More about me... because my family had to stay out of this.

I: I understand. So because of these things [then] you met the counselor for these problems?

G: For this personal problem?

I: Yes.

G: Mostly the social workers but they left me.

Giorgio's narrative of school experiences actually rotates on this episode. Naturally, it left its mark on his educational trajectory in a moment of his life

probably characterized by other events (his “personal troubles” when he “lost the will to study”). Giorgio definitely did not want to talk about this second episode involving social services. The story of the teacher ends with the account of the school principal’s behavior, who decided to not intervene once informed of the event. At this point, Giorgio decides to change school and transfer to a vocational school, where he stays only four days. He found himself in a different context (“the teachers’ training school was all right... definitely all right... vocational school[s] are totally different”), more problematic (“nobody cared if a student smoked a joint in the courtyard... or something like this”), to which he could not adapt:

“I just did four school days... I kept the distances more or less with everyone because... I didn’t mean to mess with things not concerning of mine. I didn’t know them yet. But also teachers were not... like those of the teachers’ training school.”

The psychological distance (“I didn’t mean to mess with things not concerning of mine”) and disappointment (“but also teachers were not... like those of the teachers’ training school”) characterizing the narrative of the last, very short school experience is striking. What kind of background is accounted in the first part of the interview?

The reader could feel a sense of injustice and disquiet because of the narration of these negative experiences, which take place over three years and lead to the school-leaving, without any real intervention when the student’s distress occurs. Although the account is one-sided and thus not impartial, what is relevant in the analysis of Giorgio’s narrative is the expression of his subjective background in the educational context. Nevertheless, a person’s resilience allows at least a partial recovery, and Giorgio is able to identify some positive aspects of his school experience:

G: Yes there was something positive.... I loved languages even more... and history... despite the above mentioned teacher. I liked it.

I: Yes, in spite of the teacher you liked the subjects?

G: Yes yes. But now with the English... I can’t speak [it] but I can understand it. Thus also a small job... I could be a cut above for a job even if I don’t have it on paper.

In the second part of the interview, Giorgio talks about his short job experiences. Small seasonal under the table jobs and an internship, obtained by the employment center and interrupted after two months. Again, there is the problem of mobility, as in other interviews:

I: But like summer seasons... you never worked before?

G: No. A shopping mall was a six-month stage but I only made two [months].

I: Why?

G: I had thirty-eight working hours per week. My daily salary was fifteen euros and... Without travel costs it would be good... but I had travel costs.... I used to knock off at nine in the evening [and] my father had to pick me up. Thus, the fuel... the food... because I had to eat.... I got the warmest months in the year.... I used to

start at two thirty in the afternoon.... I had to leave from my house at noon then catch again the train and the trolley and with the heat I also got sick.... I mean, it was not an experience rather a pain.

Like other narratives, the mobility problems, the dependence on parents, and the difficulty in reconciling the youth's needs with the family's needs are experienced as barriers to the job or the training. On a practical level, they do not seem to be insuperable problems, but they seem to strongly affect adolescents' background during the construction and reconstruction of their identity ("it was not an experience rather a pain").

The participants are late adolescents who are facing a moratorium after the crisis of school-leaving. During this phase, they must cope with the desocialization from the school context and the construction of their new identities oriented to the job market. Such an identity reconstruction implies the comparison with the system of beliefs, values, and norms shared by their community, resulting in the emergence of a vocational orientation (Marcia 1966). In the case of Giorgio's interview, this process is clearly illustrated by the moment in which he compares the present situation of job seeking with the reconstruction of his former aspirations:

I: Ok, so you don't know [about the] other employment centers, even in Sorso?

G: I heard about that but... I say that's [for a] crisis. Fathers don't find a job, they must take care of their own family and I find it that perhaps.... Thus I am a little blocked also because of that. If I find a small job... just what I need to get by... that's good, but... I met boys that before becoming economically independent did two years of internship.... That's what still restrains me.

I: Yeah, but when you enrolled at the teachers' school, you had a goal. I mean, besides [that] you liked languages, you had a job in mind for the future?

G: Of course... after the school... the university.

I: To do what?

G: Maybe law. [I] don't know.

I: Then not languages, but...?

G: After a degree and then trying... [I] don't know. The police... a pathway like this... academy, because I really love the army.

In the excerpt, Giorgio describes his present stand-by anchoring to his beliefs about the situation of his context of reference ("fathers don't find a job, they must take care of their own family and I find it that perhaps.... Thus I am a little blocked also because of that") and about the peer group ("I met boys that before becoming economically independent did two years of internship.... That's what still restrains me"). Conversely, Giorgio talks about his system of expectations and vocational orientation.

The process of construction of the self, with still open and uncertain outcomes, emerges from Giorgio's difficulty in defining his uniqueness, his points of strength and weakness with respect to a generic vocational project (Iannaccone et al. 2012; Marcia 1966). Like in the other narratives, there is a distance between the past-self-at-school, the future-self-at-work and the present-self-in-moratorium,

which generates tension and block. The process of mending the “tear” in the life trajectory is only managed by individual resilience resources, sometimes supported by the family network. The effective atmosphere evoked by these kind of narratives is that of solitude and distance of a wider social network support, which could and should help the adolescent in his own transition. That is the general feeling of “injustice” emerging from the narratives, despite the participants’ individual differences.

Marco: A Suspended Life

The last narrative is from Marco, an 18-year-old who grew up in the city center of Sassari. The peculiarity of this interview is that it is a “trialogue” between the interviewer, Marco, and his mother, who joined him at the meeting. Despite that the researcher could have done the interview without the mother, he understood the interest of this specific interaction, obtaining some very interesting data. Apart from the lack of “canonicity” and the clear interference of the mother in Marco’s answers, this interview provides a quite interesting perspective from the theoretical point of view. Marco’s family is composed of the divorced mother and a younger brother (10 years old). The divorce happened when Marco was only 2 years old, and he actually never lived with the father, meeting him occasionally.

Marco repeated once the third year of the middle school; then, he enrolled at the technical secondary school (“for two reasons... one was informatics and the other... because... a group of friends we all went there”). He repeated three times the first year of secondary school without succeeding. The mother enrolled him for the fourth time, discovering the first school day that Marco could not enroll in the same school after three failures. After that, Marco’s (and his mother’s) life narrative is “suspended”: there is no “after” but vagueness.

The interview is characterized by Marco’s short answers and the continual intervention of the mother—about 60 times during the interview, integrating, constraining, or often contradicting the son’s answers. In the following excerpt, the researcher asks Marco the reason for his secondary school failure:

Interviewer: [Why did you repeat] three times the first year of secondary school?

Marco: Eh... no will to do it.

I: According to you?

M: I didn’t study. No will to study, also because... they didn’t make me want it.

I: Didn’t [you] think to change school[s]?

M: Yes [*without conviction*].

Mother: But he didn’t want [to].

I: What kind of school [could you] have done?

M: (2.0) Mh:: or the tourism school (1.0) or the vocational.

Mother: He regrets not having studied... he got it.

I: Why didn’t you do it? You were likely to enroll in these schools but...

M: Eh... don't know. [I] don't know how to answer to such questions.

I: When did you leave the school?

M: Last year.

I: Last year?

Mother: No. I enrolled him this year.

M: Yes, but I didn't go... so last year

Mother: You attended the first day.

Marco's answers are short and don't go deeply into decision making, while the mother's interventions counterpoint and justify. This dynamic recurs in the interview. The mother justifies both the son and herself as the only person of reference, like in the following excerpt, in which the interviewer asks Marco what actions he has been taking to find a job after leaving school:

Interviewer: During the month you were not attending the school, did you ever think of writing a curriculum? Did you write a curriculum of your own?

Mother: Yeah, I [told] him [to].

I: Going around and asking for a job... in restaurants... did you try something to start?

Marco: Mh::

Mother: He's shy so... he wouldn't go [on] his own.

I: Yes?

Mother: But you should write something in the curriculum... what he did and what... No? I mean we never did.

M: Yeah, ok, but you start from something in the curriculum, there are those parts you write into...

In this excerpt, the mother seems to play the role of sole interaction partner of the interviewer, even coming to use the first plural person ("I mean we never did"). The son limits himself to a single utterance in the final turn, partially converging on mother's claims. This element is interesting not just because of the particular dynamics between Marco and his mother. This interview brings also a different perspective with respect to the other cases. The family is often the only support network and point of reference for youth coping with the difficult transition after early school-leaving. This role is played not only at the level of material support, but also with respect to the system of norms and values, such as the job ethics, the relationship with the others, and value of independence (Rogoff 2003). In this case, instead, the family looks like a "decompression chamber"—a waiting place into which Marco is suspended, also considering the father's absence.

After leaving school, the narrative goes on with the account of the few attempts to start a new pathway. Marco thinks of joining the army, but "forgets" to apply. He does not look for a job and registers with the employment service only because of mother's pressure. The interview ends with a question about the reflection upon the whole school trajectory:

Interviewer: Last question. What was wrong with your path?

Marco: School path?

Mother: No, ok. I always fed him... by pampering he never did.

M: Maybe that.

Mother: Thus is not.

M: Let's say I am all right with that... so...

Mother: He has no problems.

I: Yes, but he said he's bored.

M: Yes.

Also in this excerpt, the mother's answers prevail. Marco does not look to be reflecting upon the events. A kind of dependence-nursing relationship emerges, based on a form of alliance in which Marco is not in a hurry to grow up ("Let's say I am all right with that"), and the mother does not look like pushing for a change of the situation ("He has no problems").

Conclusions

One of the recurring issues in the public debate is the difficult relationship between the educational system, perpetually going through crisis, and the job market, with special respect to the situation of young people. Criticalities strongly emerge in areas, like the Sardinia region, that are structurally weaker from an economic point of view (Schizzerotto 2002). Nevertheless, one should never forget that behind the macro-systemic analyses, the voices of young citizens, who have the constitutional right to work, are sometimes hidden. At the end of this short inspection in the no-man's land of young NEET individuals, it is possible to suggest some further reflection. Through six case studies, I tried to understand the systems of beliefs, representations, values, and justifications of students, as well as the psychosocial dynamics contributing to school failure and early leaving. Through the participants' own words, I have tried to stress the relationship between individual personal experience and micro-social contexts (school family, local communities).

From the theoretical point of view, I discussed the idea of an autopoeitic development of the individual guided by delegated social institutions, such as school, that set the condition for the person's potentialities to express and contribute to the system organization. At the same time, this guidance is value-driven and defines the range of objectives, boundaries, and deviance that define an acceptable developmental outcome for the community. In the educational trajectory of the individual, this process takes place through the participation in socially organized activities and the internalization of adult definitions of the student's self (Rogoff 2003; Iannaccone et al. 2012). Nevertheless, the educational system can operate within the range of the individual's own structural features (Sawada and Caley 1985). It can operate on what is considered schooling and defining the boundaries of what is "not schooling", being unable to guide towards a new definition of the person. Thus, once a student drops out of the educational system without entering another system, such as the job market, a dramatic situation emerge.

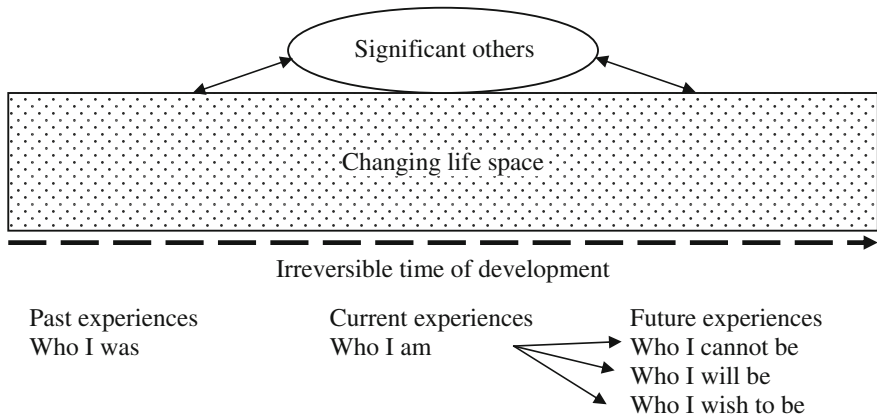


Fig. 3 Articulation of trajectories

It is worthwhile to summarize the different dimensions stressed during the analysis of the cases. The first element is that the meaning of educational experiences is constructed in function of an identity consistency and a life trajectory. In this process, the individual refers to his or her own social network and the cultural micro-context. The outcome of educational trajectories and the meaning attributed to the education are interpreted through contextual dimensions (mobility, family context, income, local job culture, etc.), and individual dimensions (expectations, interests, previous experiences, etc.). The different mix of these elements draws different life trajectories, both in spatial and temporal dimensions (Fig. 3).

There is something “before” concerning the past experiences in the micro-contexts of school, family, and peer-group. It helps to define a repertoire of identity options, representations, preferences, beliefs, and expectations about one’s future. In this way, we learn that not everything is possible, but also that there are some things we can aspire to. We also learn to modulate ourselves in response to others’ behavior and the cultural context.

Tito’s narrative is a good example of how spaces, identity conceptions, and the way to relate to peers and adults change over the course of time. There is also a current time, in which we make our choices and act in a specific situated social context. Finally, there is a “after” of one’s own trajectory in the future time, which is only supposable among a range of culturally defined options. This developmental dynamic takes place in different physical and cultural spaces, which contribute to the modification of the outcomes. An example is the change in the way of experiencing spaces represented by the transition from a school grade to another.

In a territory like the province of Sassari, the passage to the secondary school probably implies a reorganization of the life space by moving to a different town. The articulation between the temporal dimension, the affordances and constraints represented by significant others (parents, teachers, peers, etc.) and spaces (mobility, home, public places, schools, etc.) defines the set of future possibilities.

This suggests a range of potential futures and identities that the individual must negotiate in order to draw one's own life trajectory. This process is characterized by a structural tension between actualized and not-actualized possibilities in the elaboration of the self (Tateo and Marsico 2013). Often, the near-equilibrium features of educational and training institutions just narrow the range of young people choices between “who I cannot be” and “who I must be”, as in Emiliano's case. This is the easy part of educational institutions' role, guiding the development to narrowing the trajectories, but it is also the easy way to the reproduction of social inequalities. More challenging is the task of following development, which is related to the capability of widening the range of opportunities and removing the cultural and material barriers to development. This would allow young people to choose between “who I wish to be” and “who I will be”, according to their own aspirations and capabilities.

Another relevant element is the role of the family network in the construction of adult identity and life trajectory. The family actually is the bearer of a specific “culture of work” that plays a fundamental role in education and job choices. Such a culture establishes the hierarchy of values and the range of alternatives—for example, if it is more relevant, qualifying, or dignified to get a school qualification or to have a job; or if education is comparable to a work activity; at which age to study or to work, etc. Marco's case, for instance, is a clear example that the role of parents is fundamental in education or job choices, also from the material point of view concerning the weight of education on family budget or the dependence for mobility. The majority of participants' families are composed of a father who is a craftsman, a housewife, and a few brothers. No one, among the youth interviewed, claimed to be in a situation of poverty, even if the families were not well-off. Drop-out is thus not limited to multi-problematic families; risk factors are rather more subtle and not limited to poverty.

It appears quite clear from these young people's narratives that their representation of the role of institutions is quite negative: they are useless—young people do not look for them and they are not looked for in return. Participants' trajectories can be defined a “search for identity,” in which informal learning contexts often acquire more relevance than school. The six cases represent an endeavor for educational institutions, that of recognizing, valorizing, and nurturing capabilities, expectations, and motivations that manifest in “not-institutionalized” forms, requiring personalized answers. The first enemy of education is the perception of its inutility. The idea of school as a time-wasting alternative to real job—just a way to obtain a piece of paper—are all elements recurring in participants' narratives. The same happens with employment services. The perception of non-utility may be derived from different sources: direct experience, accounts of significant others, common sense, etc. These are the same informal channels of information about job opportunities used to form an impression guiding the choices. At the individual level, there are preferences, beliefs, and expectations guiding the sense making of the educational experience. At the social level, there are social representations about the meaning of school and work, social mobility, and hierarchies in a job, etc.

Approaching the problem of education, training, and insertion in the job market, even when it is claimed that the person constructs himself or herself in the everyday interaction with the contexts, the activities, and the significant others, the change is expected “only” by the individual. It would be worth also considering the opposite situation. Is it possible to consider also the changes that the developing individual generates beside himself or herself? In other words, what are the observable changes that the developing individual operates on the environment? The educational system set its mission to guide the learning and socialization process of the individual, in order to prepare him or her to enter the community. Little attention is thus devoted to the person as agent of change and active resource (Sawada and Caley 1985). Going back to the case studies discussed, the young boys seem to embody this sense of impotence by never reflecting about how their own actions can modify the reality around them.

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Beyond the Micro–Macro Opposition: The Multidimensionality of Educational Processes

Emiliana Mangone

Education-Society Relationship

Sociological observations on education are not focused on educational processes but on the education-society relationship or the relationship between educational ideals and practices and society. The sociology of education considers the bond between facts, educational processes, and the social reality, which includes all the constituent dimensions of the society itself. The establishment of reality is one of the factors that influence the trend of daily dynamics within a society. This allows each new person who enters a society (birth) or a new society (transfer or immigration) to adapt himself or herself to the socio-cultural context (society/system), without denying his or her own social psychological characteristics and identity. In other words, it is necessary to achieve a social relationship between the person and the system: this relationship only becomes effective through the education of new generations (Durkheim 1922).

If our object of study is the relationship between education and society, we have to consider its transformations that are related to social, cultural, economic and political changes (Besozzi 2006) that affect social contexts and the way that people interact with each other, as well as the objectives and educational practices. In the complex scenario of a global society where different dimensions mingle with one another, the sociology of education has many relevant objects (Lawrence 2008); by using the observations of the transformations in the education-society relationship, it is possible to develop the following topics:

1. *The effect of transformations on the relationship between formative systems and the job market.* The educational system of the industrial society was mainly

E. Mangone (✉)

Department of Human, Philosophic and Education Sciences,
University of Salerno, Fisciano, Italy
e-mail: emangone@unisa.it

based on school. Currently, in our global society, we have to reconsider this approach because the transmission of knowledge depends on schools, as well as other agents. Therefore, we have a polycentric system of education that is characterized by a continuous inter-exchange between traditional formative agents (school and family) and new agents (media and peer group). These transformations affect the agents' relationship with the job market, as well: in fact, the static logics of the correspondence between scholastic output and job market needs are not met anymore. The passage from training to the job market was once direct. Currently, this passage has become blurry, and the prevalent logics are those of the learning organizations (Senge 2006).

2. *Intercultural education and the equity of opportunities.* In the history of humanity, ethno cultural pluralism (Savidan 2009) does not represent a new concept; the observations that are linked to the educational processes and the formative systems that are involved in the integration of immigrants focus on cultural aspects. The debate on multiculturalism (Taylor 1992; Baumann 1999) is particularly topical; it is considered to be a new way of devising culture and its dynamics and realizes itself through cultural integration. The latter can only be derived from the multicultural education that is promoted in schools because it is only possible to create the conditions where everyone has the possibility to choose his or her own project of life, or *the chances of life* (Dahrendorf 1988), through integration. In other words, with regard to the equity of opportunities, we return to the notions of *functioning* (a state of being and doing that generates well-being) and *capabilities* (that allow for the acquirement of the "functioning of relief," which permits the possibility of choice) that were described by Sen (1982, 1987).
3. *Teacher's role.* In the past, this topic was exclusively related to the professional level of teachers and their knowledge, capabilities, and motivations. Currently, the role of teachers relates to other agents that develop (media and peer group), multimediality and the organizational and managerial aspects of scholastic institutions, and the sociocultural changes that exist. Due to the complexity of education systems, teachers often do not recognize that their role is central for the new generations. In other words, they fail to find meaning in their work, even when they put forward their best resources and implement interventions during their daily work. The intangible content of their work encourages their state of unawareness because this type of work is less determined and more uncertain and affects the relationships between individuals. Teachers do not recognize their own work and, above all, do not recognize the value of the work itself. This state of mind often leads them to experience frustration and dissatisfaction, which causes negative consequences for themselves, such as burnout syndrome (Maslach 1982), and the private or public organization that handles the design and implementation of educational paths. The fact that the educator's work will be seen does not mean that the educator wants to showcase his or her work, but it highlights the complexity of the issues that legitimate the work.

These are the main features of the relationship between education and society. Before delving into the heart of the critical reflection on the approaches to the study of the sociology of education, it is necessary to make a distinction between education and socialization. According to Danzinger (1971), both terms refer to an action that is perpetrated by social agents on people, but education examines the purposes and methods of education, whereas socialization identifies the processes through which education exerts its effects. In both cases, when the “power” of the social agents is stronger, one’s need to belong to a group or a society is greater, even if the socialization process captures the cultural elements and the relevant knowledge that are necessary to meet this need. A clearer distinction was provided by Cesareo (1972). According to his point of view, education is formed by the formal and institutional aspects of socialization, which always implies that there is a relationship (not necessarily asymmetric) between the teacher and learner.

This situation is certainly true in the Western world and, in particular, in Italy, where a clear separation between education and training institutions (school and university) and other forms of learning and professionalization, such as apprenticeships and traineeships, continues to exist. In fact, within education and training institutions, the pupils only have a limited active role in the processes of knowledge construction; the other forms of learning and professionalization require the pupils to have a more active role. The broader concept of socialization, therefore, includes all of the things that, actively or passively, contribute to the inclusion of an individual in social groups and, in particular, all of the components of the complex relationship between the social structure and the development of personality. If we make a distinction between the formal and informal aspects of the educational process, it is possible to affirm that “socialization is the large, continuous, and variously articulated and differentiated process that allows the subject to ‘join’ a social reality in a competent and reflective way. Therefore, it is a process that aims to create social bonds, memberships, and identities, where everyone lives in accordance to the socially shared norms, rules, and values that continuously develop at the individual and group levels. This process highlights the institutions or the formal places and informal experiences, as well as the mobility of asymmetrical and symmetrical relationships” (Besozzi 2006, p. 115).

Socialization is a process that occurs over the life course, and this is even truer in today’s society, where multiple roles or the capacity to adapt to new situations that involve de-socialization and re-socialization are frequently required. These processes involve a re-elaboration of people’s knowledge and, therefore, the representations of reality. In fact, socialization is intended to be a joint contribution between the self and hetero and between being socialized and socializing. This allows people to deepen their knowledge and secure greater autonomy and freedom. As a consequence, the analysis of the relationship between education and society in sociology is precisely directed to the problematic aspects of social change where the subject has to react. The “social discovery of education” is linked to the query for the formation of a *social entity* that is able to independently develop a process of dynamic adaptation (see the socialization process in Parsons 1964) to the needs that are dictated by modernization. Therefore, attention is focused on an education that

aims toward sociality and takes into account the social dimension of the person, as well as the agents and/or the educational institutions. In the sociological tradition, this means finding new ways of life that lead to the development of theoretical approaches that are based around the concept of socialization, which becomes, in a broad sense, predominant in the sociological lexicon, when compared to the concept of education.

The concept of *socialization*, however, does not denote a synonym for or substitute of the term *education*. In sociology, the former term is preferred because a broader view of the educational and training processes can be taken. This is because socialization inherently conjugates the strictly formal aspects of educational institutions with the other agencies (family, peer group, and the media) that also implement forms of education, but whose aspects are less formal.

Classic Theoretical Approaches

There are many theoretical approaches to the study of the classical sociology of education, but the peculiarity of this contribution is due to its identification of three different approaches on the basis of the elements of similarity and the constructions that share a common base.

The first approach is the functionalist approach, which is based on the Durkheimian idea (Durkheim 1922) that education is the means by which society renews the conditions for its own existence through the integration of people. The result is a model of socialization that is essentially based on the dimensions of conformity and adaptation (normative and prescriptive functions). According to this prescriptive and the normative view of education, the individual only emancipates himself or herself through integration with other people. In this context, education should be specialized and differentiated because society is intended to be a moral authority where the individual occupies a designated position in order to achieve integration. In this case, the school has, more than family, the core role of educating new generations in order to create community of ideas. Parsons (1964) took the Durkheim ideas into account and integrated them into the concepts and knowledge that are related to the transition from being an individual to being social. He believed that the balance in society comes from the fact that each individual plays a specific role that is perfectly combined with the roles of others (Parsons and Bales 1955).

The process of socialization is not only concerned with children's development. In fact, socialization can be divided into primary and secondary components so that the mechanisms by which we achieve different goals at different stages in life can be clarified. During primary socialization, the individual internalizes the values and role models that will generate the actions that aim to favor the development of personality; in the second stage (secondary socialization), the individual specifies, on the basis of different situations, the previously internalized guidelines. Therefore, the individual learns the basic requirements of the role that involve changes in the realities that are created by primary socialization, although Berger and Luckmann (1966) argued that

“the world” of primary socialization is stronger than the “new worlds” that are internalized during secondary socialization. Following this theoretical horizon, it is possible to identify two agents of socialization: the family in primary socialization and the school in secondary socialization. The school has the task of verifying and integrating what the individual has learned within the family, which guarantees continuity and complementarity between the two agents. The functionalist model of socialization is presented as a linear model where the individual tends to conform himself or herself to the social order and the reproduction of society.

The second approach is the conflictualist approach. This approach considers education to be a means of reproducing the power relations that exist in society and, therefore, the mechanisms that regulate the distribution of social resources (class conflict). According to this Marxist (the works of Marx and Engels) and Weberian (Weber 1922) inspired approach, socialization is linked to social relationships in terms of power: education is considered to be one of the forms of reproducing social power relations. More precisely, socialization is considered to be a form of power that allows the dominant group to retain its control over the others. This concept has been developed from a critical point of view and is the complete opposite of the functionalist concept because it is placed against the social organization, in general. The conflictualist approach to socialization and, in particular, to the role of education has played a significant role in condemning all of the educational constraints and has also contributed to deepening the dynamics of the socialization process and, therefore, to the transfer of culture from one generation to another.

In summary, according to the functionalist approach, the educational process that is provided by the school is perceived as an action that is exerted on individuals in order to make them suitable for the society in which they live so that they can completely fulfill the social expectations and share the same values. However, from a Marxist perspective, the process of education must be interpreted as the counteraction (which is intended as the exercise of power) among groups or the supremacy of one group over another. In Marxism, the school is the reproductive tool of the forms of power and supremacy of the class that is in possession of the production of goods (the bourgeoisie) over the one that uses the same goods in order to produce (the proletariat).

The last approach is the interactionist-communicative approach. Its basis is a society that is characterized by intersubjectivity and communication, which is unlike the other two approaches, whose basis is the concept of a society that is characterized by conformity and balance (functionalist) or by conflict and domination (conflictualist). The focus of attention moves from the macro dimension of the socialization process and the relationship between education and society to the micro dimension. The starting point of the interactionist perspective is related to the fact that man “actively constructs his social reality, his actions are not only determined by the social forces that act upon him, and his behavior is not just a reaction to the directives of certain subcultures or to the pressures that result from social stratification systems” (Haralambos 1984, p. 294). Social reality is the result of construction processes. It is a typical human activity and is linked to one’s ability to produce and reproduce the symbolic mediations where we represent reality.

According to this model, secondary socialization opens the door to the development of a thoughtful person (Archer 2003; Donati 2011) who is able to detach himself or herself from the identity that has been created during the first part of his or her life. In the relationship between primary and secondary socialization, reflexivity represents the “fundamental theoretical knot.” In fact, Dubar (2000) affirmed that in a perspective that centers on the relationship between primary socialization and secondary socialization, the *social reproduction* of identity appears to be a result of such articulations. Secondary socialization transforms the identities that are created by primary socialization, so the relationships between “general worlds” and “specialized worlds” become unstable and can generate a lasting crisis or *convert* in a social world around the “specialized world” that is built during secondary socialization. Because early socialization does not generate social identity, secondary socialization, which is unable to create a specialized identity, produces a permanent deconstruction of the individuals and the consequent *exclusion* from the social space. In light of what has been said so far, it is possible to find a reference to identity and its construction and problematicity, so the socialization process can also be defined as the progressive structurization of the personal and social identity of the subject.

The classic sociological approaches note the central problem of socialization processes, especially in relation to the assumption modality of the subject’s external reality (objective) that is actually inside the subject (subjective). According to functionalism and conflictualism, reality is a given fact, whereas the interactionist-communicative approach views reality from a communicative and intersubjective perspective. The emphasis that is accorded to intersubjectivity and communication is a way to recognize the subject’s ability to share, re-elaborate, and transform reality and the construction of the new meanings that have been shared. The objective reality penetrates the subject, who initially perceives it as unique but then develops, at the same time, the reflective capacity to consider the external reality as being relativized. Therefore, it is no longer considered to be the only credible view of the world.

Contemporary Theoretical Approaches: The Multidimensionality of Educational Processes

In a complex scenario, such as a contemporary society, where relationships (at different levels) play a dominant role in social phenomena and, therefore, also in the educational process, it is necessary to distinguish between the different dimensions of analysis in sociology (Collins 1988). The *macro* dimension relates to social systems and their forms of organization: in this case, the object of study is the structure and its systems (school and university). The *micro* dimension relates to the relationship between the individual/society and social actions: in this case, the object of study is the individual and his/her action (teachers and students). The

meso dimension relates to the relationships between the social system and the life-world, where the latter is conceived to be a series of meanings and representations of culture (educational process). The *meso* dimension allows people to overcome macro (structure)/micro (social action) opposition.

In the field of the sociology of education, theorists (Archer, Giddens, Boudon, etc.) have proposed several interesting theories. This particular contribution will examine the theory of morphogenesis that was proposed by Archer (1979, 1982, 1987, 1995). She recognized the simultaneous presence of several factors and levels in the process of defining the educational purposes and characteristics of the educational system to which they belong. In fact, she argued the following:

One of the biggest deviations in the 1970s sociology of education (which had its parallels in other specialism) was not the determination to study these neglected educational processes and practices taking place within, but the methodological decision that this could be done by shutting the classroom door and bolting the school gates because everything needed to explain what went on within was found inside the small enclosure. Yet closure is always a misleading metaphor which cancels the *impact* of external systemic and social proprieties and also the import of internal ‘micropolitics’ for reproduction and change of the social and the systemic. For the one hand, both teachers and pupils are enmeshed in broader *socio-cultural relations* which they carry with them into the classroom and whose first affect is which type of school class they enter! Once there teachers and pupils cannot freely negotiate the relationships they jointly will, given the impact of curricular controls, public examinations and the job market. On the other hand, classroom interaction is never without systemic import, whether this works for reproduction or for transformation. (Archer 1995, p. 11)

In this sense, the education-society relationship is presented in a multidimensional form that is characterized by an analysis of the morphogenetic theory where the macro emerges from the micro, and influences it through a retroactive effect (cycle). The two elements cannot be studied separately and cannot prevail over one another because structure and action constitute different levels of the layered social reality, and each level has its own specific and irreducible characteristics. For this reason,

The crucial linkage to make and to maintain is not between the ‘micro’ and the ‘macro’, conceived of as the small and impersonal in contrast to the large and impersonal, but rather between the ‘social’ and the ‘systemic’. In other words, systemic proprieties are always the (‘micro’) *context* confronted by (‘macro’) social interaction, whilst social activities between people (‘micro’) represent the *environment* in which the (‘macro’) features of systems are either reproduced or transformed. (Archer 1995, p. 11)

According to the morphogenetic approach, the socialization process depends on the interaction with the real world; therefore, the education systems, such as society, must be studied as what they become after taking their shape (morphogenetic cycle¹), rather than what we want them to be. The morphogenetic cycle, which, in its general form, is characterized by structural conditioning, social and cultural

¹The cycle represents a timeline because structure always precedes an action and its results, in the form of reproduction or innovation.

interaction, and structural elaboration, must be applied to culture and education in order to maintain the peculiar character of our work. In fact, by assuming that the cultural system is a result of human action—and that once it reaches autonomy, it influences future generations—it is possible to highlight (within a morphogenetic cycle) the importance of the interactions between subjects that are interconnected by cultural conditioning (structural setting of the cultural system) and the processing that we have as a result of moving in the direction of a confirmation (reproduction) or in the direction of its change (innovation). This shows that the results of a process permit it to record expected or unexpected outcomes and the processes of interaction, if we do not go towards a unique direction, because they produce effects in several directions. In the analysis of the educational system, it is, therefore, necessary to understand “where it comes from” and “how it works”, thus linking (meso analysis) its ability to become a system (macro analysis) and its interactions (micro analysis).

This multidimensional approach to education allows us to observe institutions, faculty, and students, as well as the relationships between them, thus overcoming the traditional views that kept these levels and the different elements that are involved in the educational process separate from one another. In regard to concrete reality, therefore, the sociology of education should combine the system (objective dimension) and the individuals (subjective dimension) (i.e., it should be able to combine objective and subjective aspects by taking into account all of the dimensions, levels, and factors that are involved in the educational process). The educational processes allow for the constitution of the social subject because it involves an exchange between the different actors through the activation of communication processes. Therefore, the educational process does not generate closures and is not meant to satisfy corporative or privatistic needs; this process is meant to connect with sociality and the population. The educational process is, therefore, an attitude towards knowledge. It does not end with the implementation of actions, and it is not crucial to imagining the problems that we want to solve, understand, and analyze in order to redirect our route along the way because its relationship with reality is never a sure thing. As a matter of fact, it is possible, at any time, for these processes to open up to new possibilities that need to be explored.

These definitions and reflections about the educational processes lead us to believe that the analysis should take into account the multidimensionality and the multifactoriality that characterize them. Each educational process, regardless of the context in which it operates, presupposes a union with knowledge, and this is even more necessary in a scenario where complexity increases and actions are less precise due to these constant changes. In other words, the process of socialization is important because it influences the relationships between people and people and society in an attempt to build an identity by taking into account the social role that is played by individuals as much as possible. In this way, we tend to give privilege to the spaces of the relationships within the educational process. Therefore, the educational process becomes an important factor for recognizing the relational investments of each individual. In fact, the identities create themselves in an area that has its own places, times, and symbols, which are essential in the cognitive

processes of self-meaning that each person, with respect to his or her own daily life experiences, has been able to activate since his or her primary socialization period. Identities are actually always on the move due to the dynamics of structurization and de-structurization, as the result of the continuous process of socialization that allows for the construction of individuality, as well as of a person who is inclined towards community (social subject).

The theory of a morphogenetic society (Archer 1979, 1982, 1987, 1995) is a key theory in understanding the relationship between education and society because the socialization process depends on the interaction with the real world. Thus, the educational systems and societies must be studied as they take shape (morphogenetic cycle) and not as one would like them to be. In fact, contemporary society, particularly European society, which is in a deep crisis economically, as well as in terms of values, is currently in a phase of revising its objectives for growth (Europe 2020). These are based on the awareness that in order to contribute to the reduction of poverty, the promotion of social inclusion, and the actual implementation of creating an inclusive society, it is important to increase individuals' employability, particularly through the improvement of education and lifelong learning systems (in a multidimensional perspective), which have become more urgent and more of a priority due to the continuous transformations of society.

Conclusions

In light of what we have discussed, the study of the dynamics that are connected to the education-society relationship cannot be resolved by a simplistic analysis because all of the activities of a person only materialize when we make a need that must be satisfied explicit and when that person forms a relationship with others. The multidimensionality and multi-contextuality of the conduct of everyday life require a meso analysis of the educational process.

As already mentioned in this chapter, the subject's reality builds itself through a process of socialization that refers to learning and internalization, as well as externalization and objectification² (Berger and Luckmann 1966). These steps describe the basic process of the structurization of the self that represents the link

²Reality is produced by people through a social dialectic that is built on the following three moments: The exteriorization, which consists of two determined and successive periods, corresponds to the time when individuals first create their own basic knowledge and define their expectations (first temporal space) and then recreate attitudes and lifestyles by virtue of their knowledge (second temporal space). Then, objectification enables individuals to perceive the consequences of their actions on behalf of themselves and others. Finally, internalization is the moment through which individuals create their own actions and perceive the consequences of those actions, as well as strengthen and confirm what they have objectified (legitimacy), on the basis of the satisfaction of their own needs. In order to clarify this "dialectical process" between individuals and the social reality, we assert that reality does not affect individuals based on what it means but based on what individuals think it should be.

between society, knowledge, and the person. On the one hand, this process must ensure the integration and adaptation of people; on the other hand, it must also ensure that the objectified knowledge that allows for life, in general, and the right level of competitiveness in the world of economy and labor to be maintained, developed, and updated. Education, therefore, must be included in the dialectical process that consists of the three moments that were identified by Berger and Luckmann. These moments should not be considered to be steps in a chronological sequence, even if there is a sequence in people's lives that begins with this internalization occurring through the socialization process.

The problem that is related to the relationship between education and society begins here, both in terms of equal access to the educational institutions and the utilization of knowledge resources because globalization has a great impact on the economic and sociocultural development of society. In fact, globalization has fostered the bonds of interdependence (especially those of an economic nature between the rich countries and the poor ones) and the constraints in social relationships, rather than reducing them. Actually, globalization has produced a reorganization of time and distance within the social contexts that has changed all of the social and educational processes, as well as people's lives and working styles. The changed and changing cognitive processes (time, space, communication, and knowledge) of society (Mangone 2012) demonstrate that the core of the education-society relationship has not yet melted. However, it is clear that education is the future. It is necessary to invest in education in order to promote the success of a *social subject* who is responsible for the positive actions of himself or herself and the society as a whole, as well as the success of education as a relational good (Donati and Solci 2011) and a common good that goes beyond the social, cultural, and economic differences. In this social order, education is intended to be a series of elements that enable the community and the individual members of society to achieve completeness and fulfillment.

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Dialogues Between Psychology and Education: Mediation of Competence Using a Historic and Cultural Perspective of Human Development

Claisy Maria Marinho-Araujo

Introduction

The organization and function of society constitute an intricate educative situation, as they are the manifestations of human creation and production that are transmitted through social relationships. In various cultural forms and many processes of socialization, the educative phenomenon is presented according to distinct contexts and realities. Education is overarching, but it is through the manifestation of human actions, products, and relationships that its context is built in a social and historical manner.

In Brazil, the National Educational Bases and Guidelines Law (LDB; Brazil 1996) distinguishes two paramount concepts: education and school education. LDB, in its first article, underlines education as a wide formative process that is developed “in familiar life, in human companionship, in work, in institutions of education and research, in social movements and organization of the civilian society and in cultural manifestations” (Brazil 1996). In regard to school education, in the first paragraph of this article, the law defines that it “develops, predominantly, through education in proper institutions” (Brazil 1996). Through these and many other points, the goal of the educative process, in its relation with society, is to be an instrument of organization, reorganization, and re-signification of values and concepts that will allow the subjects to have intentional and conscientious behavior in the context in which they are inserted.

The human being is essentially historic and is thus a co-constructor of the transformations of his or her cultural context. Therefore, the origins of education are confused with the history of man itself, in that the educative processes coincide with the act of living and surviving (Araujo 2003; Araujo and Almeida 2003; Barbosa and Marinho-Araujo 2010; Marinho-Araujo 2009, 2010; Marinho-Araujo and

C.M. Marinho-Araujo (✉)

Institute of Psychology, University of Brasilia, Brasília, Brazil
e-mail: claisy@unb.br

Almeida 2005). Education is therefore a process of permanent constructions that articulate systematic and formally organized scientific knowledge with the daily knowledge that, in being present in the most diverse experiences, the lives of people and social groups influence their development, acquiring social, cultural, and historical dimensions.

Accordingly, to educate *sensu stricto* is to build something as a social practice that produces knowledge and generates potentialities, introducing a fundamentally cultural dimension. According to this perspective, education is dialectically the origin and unfolding of the knowledge produced socially, regarding the needs or demands in people's lives. They emerge from their experiences of survival or production and creation (whether individual or collective) (Araujo 2003; Marinho-Araujo and Almeida 2005).

However, school education has characteristics that are defined by both its structure and organization and its function and contexts. The school is an institution with very specific conditions that allow the transit of knowledge based in sciences; however, in prioritizing the scientific production process, the school frequently fragments science and removes it from its context, separating the world in synthesized capsules separated by disciplines, modules, and courses. According to this perspective, the educational contexts may generate a type of transmission of knowledge that triggers a fractionated comprehension of the world and the involved subjects. Therefore, extensive thought is necessary with regard to the structural factors present in the school institution that intertwine it with the social dynamics and the development of subjects.

Straying from a dualist explanation of school—in which it either reflects the damages of the society, reproducing and installing the dominant ideology, or restructures itself to the point that it disappears, giving importance to more popular new forms of direct contact with the society—is a task that has been exposed by authors. These researchers understand that the school plays a mediating role in these limitations. Understanding that school is not the essential source of social inequality, nor does it passively reflect the dominant ideology (currently spread in numerous other media and contexts beyond school), is to defend that there are intentionality, goals, and utility in the school institution that allow it to reinterpret and resignify this ideology in transmitting and disseminating it. This approach removes it as a “source of social oppression,” although it exists as an instrument to the alienation that precedes it.

Academic environments may be part of a larger social and economic context that breeds inequality via an ideology of perceived “added value” as a result of a capitalistic system and societal emphasis on professional qualification due to the direct link between education and industry. However, it can serve as an instrument for another non oppressive social construct. Concepts of “failure” or “incompetence” stemming from academic environments are dialectically contradictory expressions of its function as a mediator of the “needs of the dominated.” The concepts are rooted in its common understanding, competence, day-to-day knowledge, and culture, and most members of society will develop their knowledge in school. Because of this extremely complex context, the educative process is

influenced by ideological, historical, economical, judicial, political, and social dimensions that need to be assessed.

The problem of social inequity is not reduced, therefore, to structural questions present in academic environments that are not only “reproducers of social organization” but also important historical and contradictory mediators. This mediating characteristic of the school highlights the day-to-day clash of social forces that do not reproduce accordingly but influence its learning and teaching processes, management, and development of interpersonal relationships. Theoretical, technical, cultural, social, and political mediations are necessary so that instead of denying ideals, they solidify the basis of education and are sustained by conscientious choices.

The mediation that may become a source of renovation *in* and *from* the school must recognize and face the social struggles that exist, denouncing what was supposedly “equal” and disguising social inequity and discrepancies in accessing opportunities. Educational contexts must assume pedagogical finalities that encourage cooperation, consider conflict, and employ its essential function of transmitting scientific and technical knowledge that is associated with the promotion of intersubjective and historical relationships that are capable of transforming social inequities.

Educative contexts are therefore a privileged *locus* where the contradictions and antagonisms are made explicit and articulate social interests, both democratic and sympathetic. To advance critical transformations is not sufficient to recognize and evaluate contradictions present in the school. Evaluating the gaps is needed. In addition, a lucid appropriation and conscientious and intentional approach to these traditions is needed, synthesized by collective work and mediated in social relationships.

Becoming aware of this mediating function of human development in educative contexts reveals new questions, as it reminds us of discussions about social, political, and civil rights of the individuals who are involved in these scenarios. The contribution of the school in reducing social inequities will not be effective without confronting the obstacles that oppose the construction of citizenship and exist inside the academic environment (through the curriculum—formal, real, hidden) and outside it. This confrontation can be performed through public policies that portray the negligence toward real needs, desires, and demands in the academic environments.

Accordingly, a school’s characteristics can both hinder and liberate students, even if they can encourage alliances “outside school walls.” Delineating mediations that explain the inequality, diversity, and transformation in educative contexts involves supporting actions within the educative system, revisiting practices, criticizing limits, arranging voices in scenarios of interlocution, and denouncing oppression and inequality.

The tensions that are present in schools continue to exist. Therefore, forces that support the re-establishment of citizenship are emerging. This resistance overcomes resilience through professional acting, which is sustained in critical theoretical and political bases that are committed socially. This acting, however, frequently works

in an unpredictable manner that is intuitive and based on circumstantial and occasional events. Practices that are intentionally planned and historically consolidated toward a consistent social transformation should be disseminated. They should involve lucid, conscientious, and competent educators.

In facing the enormous responsibility in educative contexts, as a fertile terrain for human development, the spectrum of psychology is amplified. Its contribution, especially related to matters regarding human development, has been extensively discussed in studies, and practices indicate innovations in regard to interventions and research in this area.

In the last few decades, the clarification of the relationship between psychology and education has been unfolded in new paradigms that redefine dialectic forms of comprehending human psychological development and the construction of knowledge in the context of education.

These ideas are understood by both psychology and education as critical and ideological conceptions that comprise the context of the individual and his or her fragmentation. These concepts include the naturalization of the phenomena of human development, the denial of the cultural and historical character of subjectivity, and the tendency to make the educational scenario more “psychological.”

One of the biggest challenges to understand this interdependence is the investigation and comprehension of the pedagogical *praxis* as a space for social construction of human development. In the search for this interface, school psychology—a field of theoretical and scientific production and of research and professional intervention—assumes this challenge. In sustaining the historical bonds intertwined between the two areas, school psychology is emphasized in creating an instrument from human learning, as well as proposing alternative ways to mediate and construct learning. The goal is to overcome existing problems and contribute to successful personal and collective development.

School psychology in various educational contexts (basic education, superior education, professional education, daycares, shelters, courses, nongovernmental organizations, professional formation programs, and others) is important in the promotion of qualitative leaps and fundamental alterations in human psychological activity. This activity is important for the development of children, youngsters, and adults in formal education. A psychological intervention created to mediate the development of conscientious thought in teaching and learning processes is also very important (Marinho-Araujo 2010).

According to this perspective, school psychology addresses the construction and consolidation of the identities of students, teachers, and managers. To establish advances in the development of these participants, the school psychologist must consider the strong interdependence between the institutional culture and the subjectivity of the ones involved. These factors are involved in teaching and learning processes, social relationships, expectations, desires, thoughts, and personal feelings. As a main goal for intervention, the psychologist must intentionally encourage an individual’s conscientiousness by strengthening autonomy and independence in his or her educational and professional paths, as well as empowering desires and intentions toward personal development (Marinho-Araujo 2009, 2010).

Committed to the educative process and being a part of professional and multidisciplinary team of professionals, the school psychologist must apply his efforts to human formation and the construction of citizenship. Therefore, he or she must consider subjective questions altered by context, with both an institutional and a collective unfolding. From a more specific perspective, school psychology may accompany the processes of development of the subjects, reveal their potentiality in the path to formation, collaborate in the definitions and significances of the expected profile to be constructed during the formation, and favor the dissemination of management processes involved in a quality education.

Additionally, the school psychologist may also focus on institutional, collective, and relational actions by encouraging the interdependence between development and learning in rich educative scenarios; collaborating in wide interventions and assisting in the educational scope by analyzing its characteristics, particularities, and necessities; and considering the intersubjective demands of the subjects involved in this scenario of social, affective, professional psychological development. These factors are the challenge of school psychology (Marinho-Araujo 2009, 2010; Oliveira and Marinho-Araujo 2009).

Competence Development: Psychological and Educational Bases

To construct and develop opportunities empowered by the context of schools, it is not sufficient to only “add” the contributions of psychological science to the knowledge of education. The development of various competencies in teaching and learning processes cannot be considered a “psycho-educative” mosaic of skills and capacities that, if well managed, would achieve the previously defined tasks.

In psychology, there is a vast and consistent epistemological, conceptual, theoretical, and methodological base that is made explicit, disclosed, recognized, and shared between educative actors. However, this same level of exchange is not present in the “know-how” of a professional practice (whether theoretical or methodological knowledge, practical or conceptual, fundamental or applied), especially if the knowledge has to dialectically structure itself and explain itself *in* the school context.

The competency development is an alternative formation that may contemplate *the articulation between structured knowledge and flexible-in-action knowledge* based on both psychology and education. The process of personal and educational formation in school is presented as an ideal scenario in competence-based work, considering both the development of students and the updating of professionals, whether teachers, psychologists, or educators.

Therefore, developing competencies in a formative process that simultaneously considers technical and empirical knowledge, as well as professional stances, is compromised by the construction of a professional profile that favors the integration

of practical and reflexive characteristics. These characteristics are capable of sustaining competent actions in facing the most diverse professional situations.

Using the competence-based approach does not, however, constitute an easy alternative in its conceptual explanations or in its practical operation. Therefore, it is necessary to articulate theoretical reflections and options regarding the competence approach and conceptual contributions facing the subjective self that dialectically constitutes himself or herself as a person and a professional. Finding a common theoretical base for the concept of competence in the literature has been a challenge to many scholars. The various explanations are based on distinct theoretical and conceptual themes that orient its description and evaluation.

The worldly changes that have occurred in social, economic, historical, and cultural conditions in the last three decades have influenced the relations and work situations, re-defined professional profiles and established new organizations of work. All of these changes affect education. The complexity of competence has grown according to this scenario. There have been competence criteria and “lore” categories, particular concepts associated with competencies. Competencies include performance, know-how, qualifications, and numerous definitions of “lore” that are acquired by habit or through formal or informal education.

The concept of competence has altered similarly to social, historical, and economic changes. This changing context generates greater complexity in educational and work processes, which require deeper scientific and technological knowledge and more utilization or complex cognitive capacities that are developed through systematic relationships with formal theoretical knowledge.

The demands for improving product quality and for flexible production and work processes highlight the competition, and education and school formation is a way to improve or adapt individual acquisitions to requirements of the market (Araujo 2003; Le Boterf 2003; Marinho-Araujo 2004, 2005a, b; Wittorski 1998; Zarifian 2001, 2003). Consequently, utilizing the competence approach was not reflected in the field of education in a clear manner, making contradictions superficial and emphasizing the training of competencies associated with operational, observable, apparent, or blatant behaviors, or to perform tasks in a barely reflexive manner. The reference to “competence” is also strongly present in psychology, including professional practice, research practice, and the teaching of psychological science.

Contemporaneously, beyond taxonomical or exclusively cognitive perceptions regarding the comprehension of competence, authors have looked for a *conceptual amplification* that would be the basis of competence as a complex process of human development that favors confronting a mutating and historical reality, which demands flexible choices and decisions (Le Boterf 1994, 1998, 2003; Stroobants 1993; Wittorski 1998; Zarifian 2001, 2003).

The description of competence that has been established by these scholars is expanded from “knowing-how,” which includes solving problems or doing determined tasks, and is based solely on mental operational schemes and cognitive domain and in the spectrum of knowledge, abilities, and attitudes. Competence is also not defined solely as skills or capacities that are used in circumstances for the

execution of a task. The end of a task frequently does not mean that its conclusion was successful; there are emergency situations that require a creative combination of technical actions with unexpected, innovative, and imponderable solutions regarding the resolution of urgent matters. Accordingly, the conceptual perspective acknowledges that being competent is characterized by the mobilization of many different resources that were identified in a problem situation, so that it is possible to make decisions and confront a situation, especially in relational contexts (Le Boterf 1994, 1998, 2003).

Learning to identify, mobilize and intentionally use *resources* (understood here as knowledge, lore, skills, mental schemes, affections, beliefs, principles, psychological functions, attitudes, behaviors, and other psychological processes) in relationships and in action is what comprises competence as an intrinsic dimension to human development. The resources that can be mobilized constitute symbolic contents based on the activities from which they will be transformed to new contents of more complex and diverse activities (Le Boterf 1994, 1998, 2003; Stroobants 1993; Wittorski 1998; Zarifian 2001, 2003). This perspective uses competence as a strong mediator of applying knowledge to daily actions, with a strong developmental apparatus that is reflexive, particular, and autonomous with regard to the choices of the subjects (Le Boterf 1994, 1998, 2003).

Competence combines knowledge, affections, skills, histories, lore and many other internal resources that may be evoked in many different ways, whether they are applied in activities, situations, or relationships. A competence is not defined solely in terms of *readiness for the undertaking of an action* but is constructed in historical and cultural routines, which requires subjects to identify pertinent knowledge and mobilize resources using a positive attitude towards challenges or problems.

This amplified conception of competence narrows it to the global aspects of human development, in that it strives for the construction and mobilization of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, as well as a specialized technical dimension composed of *praxis* and intersubjective processes of communication and interrelations in an intentionally reflexive dimension. It would be naïve to believe that only the possibilities of a formal education are sufficient to prepare an individual for the *intentionality* in the construction of a reflexive attitude. It is clear that paths to a conscientious attitude are not forged solely in educational contexts or through lore and competence construction processes; it is, however, very useful and necessary that the school education stimulate a conscientious undertaking, creating the opportunity for the exercise of lucidity, reflection, analysis, autonomy, and questioning regarding a quest for intentional and reflexive competence. The social and affective repertory must also be considered, as they are integrated and mobilized by competence; social and affective processes must be used as basic resources in facing diverse situations in the daily routine.

Another aspect that authors have been highlighting in the theoretical debates regarding competence (Le Boterf 1994, 1998, 2003; Paquay 2001; Wittorski 1998; Zarifian 2001, 2003) is its collective dimension; it is not considered to be a special attribute linked to the individual and does not imply relational, social, and cultural

characteristics required in specific contexts. Building competence assumes the influence of social, affective, and collective factors in the actions and learning in educational contexts. Many functions and psychological processes are revealed in a situation that requires competent action. Understanding the nature of these processes is extremely important to properly plan the teaching and learning processes aimed at developing competence in educators.

In school and developmental psychology, theories and research about human psychological functions establish a narrow association between the development of these chemical human processes and the learning that is built culturally and historically in social relationships. It is put into context and constantly transformed through a dynamic process of resignifying reality. The mechanism capable of promoting psychic transformations that characterize the human condition is the process of *semiotic mediation*, which “organizes” the system of signs and symbols present in reality by transforming language, a psychological instrument that influences the change in quality that occurs in the development and transformation of elementary psychological functions into superior psychological functions (Cole 1992, 1998; Valsiner 1987, 1992, 1993; Van der Veer and Valsiner 1996; Vygotsky 1984, 1989; Vygotsky et al. 1988).

Psychological functions are complex and are intensified by the influence of history, personal and collective culture, social relationships, desires, and intersubjective affections that mobilize and create a base for our actions and thoughts. They are part of the notion of *habitus* and mental schemes. These concepts are complementary, but other explanations should be considered while also aiming to comprehend the development of competence in subjects and the psychological processes implied in this transformation. Particularly, explanations that promote consolidated interventions should be evaluated.

Discussing processes of mediation and stimulation of a conscientious mind in the context of transformation, reflecting on the influence of mediation in the processes of changing complex psychological functions, and considering the role of language, imitation, and social and affective relationships in subjective processes may help to understand *how* competence is developed by individuals.

Competence and the Cultural and Historical Dimension in Human Development

Studies in psychology have been emphasizing the comprehension of human development in a global sense, by integrating individual, social, cultural, and historic aspects in explanations about human subjectivity. The acknowledgement of human development as a historic process, synthesized by social and cultural influences of contexts and relationships shared by individuals, is widely defended by the historic and cultural approach of psychology (Vygotsky 1984, 1989; Luria 1987, 1990; Leontiev 2004). These theories present a perspective of human

development that refers to the relationship between the individual, as a subject of his or her own history, and his or her historic, social, and cultural context. The psychological phenomena that are specific to humans originate in the mediation between social history and individual and real experiences of the subjects. These phenomena occur in social relationships and influences that the social, historic, and cultural aspects have on individual psychological processes.

According to this perspective, the human being is born with a genetic structure and a neural and anatomic apparatus that would not be sufficient to acquire a "human condition." For this process to occur, the individual relies on cultural conditions. Some development processes will only occur in a learning situation. Therefore, a person could, for example, have an organic apparatus that allows her or him to learn writing and reading; she or he will not learn how to read and write, however, if not inserted into the social practices that stimulate and allow for that learning to occur. The organic substrate is only a base for cognitive development and formation and use of symbols.

According to Vygotsky (1989), the social dimension of human development refers to culture as a vehicle filled with significations, which is internalized by the subject in a constant process of re-creation and re-elaboration of concepts and information. In this relationship between the individual and the world, the mediating elements are provided by intersubjective relationships. Accordingly, the origin of superior psychological functions must be found in social relationships between the individual and others.

Psychological development therefore depends as much on an organic and neurological functioning as in semiotic activities that are shared in society and culture. It is through exchanges in social interactions that cultural impressions in neural and biological mechanisms occur. Processes of resignifying signs and cultural meanings that affect its organization and functioning comprise these functions. The emergence of these psychological functions and complex cognitive processes occur in the transformation of individuals. A subject transforms nature by targeting specific objectives and using his or her activity of production and social labor. In this transformation, the individual recreates reality at a symbolic level and modifies his or her psychological development.

Human activity, as a producer of transformations in the natural world, has created tools and instruments that helped individuals with these changes. These tools mediated between reality and the object of the human action. Thus, the fabrication and use of tools has generated new mental operations and new relationships between function and use of tools. These actions originate in socially elaborated objectives, in a common and collective activity with other people. Human labor derived from these relationships and transformations and was influenced by a strong social and collective function. The mediations that were created by the use of tools in collective activities originated in intellectual activity; humans created the system of signs to mediate their thoughts, communication, and labor. The relationship between signs and tools combines gestures and words, technique and language, in a neural and cultural manner.

Work—understood as a real and symbolic activity that is typically human—is considered in the historic and cultural approach as a propelling factor of the outbreak of human consciousness. It constitutes an association between the phylogeny and ontogeny interdependence. The culture created by humans in the transformation of the natural world has become dialectically and progressively sophisticated due to real activities performed by subjects in situations of communication and social exchange. Accordingly, changes in human psychological activity generated in labor situations or in collective actions with shared objectives are not limited to a simple horizon expansion. They also involve the creation of new motivations to actions and radically affect the structure of cognitive processes. In this dynamic of transformation, Luria (1990) conceived that human consciousness is advancing to new levels and is mediated by more intentional and conscious activities.

Activity, as a complex form of the human–world relationship, involves conscientious finalities and collective and cooperative acting and is guided by intentionally planned objectives. The functions or finalities of these planned actions may be accomplished in different ways, depending on the objective conditions and cultural practice that are established.

According to Vygotsky (1984, 1989), Luria (1987, 1990), and Leontiev (2004), the genesis of superior psychological functions lies in human activity that is culturally mediated by the social group and its members. The semiotic universe in which the individual participates since birth is a rich environment for symbolic productions. According to Vygotsky (1989), this process is called the *internalization process*: the internal reconstruction of an external operation, promoting the development of interpsychological processes that will later be internalized. Things, objects, and events are not internalized; their meanings are. Instruments and external marks transform in internal processes through mediation; signs organize in complex and articulated structures and develop from symbolic systems that are essential to the development of superior mental processes. Accordingly, internalization is made of a long series of events and historic transformations, in which action is dynamically rebuilt internally (e.g., from an interpersonal process to an intrapersonal process).

Culture is left with the task of mediating signs and instruments in the construction of symbolic systems that will favor the internalization process. This mediation is an essential factor for the emergence of more sophisticated psychological functions, as it uses historic and cultural importance of psychological instruments in the human development process as evidence.

Opposed to external cultural marks, internal signs present mental representations that are substitutes to the objects from the real world. Internalizing reality can be socially measured by the cultural group and can be imbued with meanings of its own, particular to certain contexts and relationships. Thus, culturally built forms of ordering, structuring and signifying reality allow for particular and distinguished mediations to the subject. They create opportunities for psychological choices and actions oriented by intentionality, will, and control.

Conclusions

The considerations and reflections presented in this chapter propose paths to comprehending a competence approach, which involves concept-making in psychological human development and emphasizes historic and cultural perspectives. Understanding that semiotic mediation involves social and cultural relationships transforms elementary psychological functions to superior psychological functions. We are prompted to comprehend the development of competence and the psychological processes imbued in this transformation. We must conscientiously use the mind and mediation to apply individuals' activities to relational contexts.

In analyzing the various theoretical and conceptual essences that comprised competence, a strong influence of the constructivist conception is notable, mainly in the development of mental operatory schemes and cognitive domains needed for the manifestation of lore and knowledge. We must focus on the origin of competence in skills, perceptions, and personal re-signifying that an individual can use to develop cognitive structures to face their objectives and potentialities.

However, based on the historic and cultural perspectives of human psychological development, actions and mental operations are mediated through human social activity. This activity includes, dialectically, the subject and the cultural context. Accordingly, the strong influence of the social and affective dimension of human psychological processes in the development and expression of competences must be considered. This approach constitutes a different argument in associating the notion of competence to cognitive approaches. It is therefore suggested to consider cultural and historic conceptual origins as important in defining competence; empowering the cultural, social, and affective dimensions; and applying the relationships that constitute the subject's history. These indicators are important in understanding the development of competence.

In applying competence to social contexts, which is produced in historic and cultural times and spaces, we must articulate the collective activity parameters and have shared goals. Characterizing competence in this dimension means to incorporate an individual and collective historic context to the consolidation of a critically conscious and competent development process.

Considering human competencies in their contexts, in addition to the lore generated in social relationships and activities, is important for the numerous interventions by the school psychologist in academic environments. The school psychologist should use a competency approach, which is understood through human development psychology. The school psychologist may mediate the development of competencies by strengthening a collective action system, regarding education of students or formation of teachers and educators. Accordingly, the psychologist must convey to the subjects the importance of taking advantage of and using their personal and collective experience, as well as the development of knowledge and resources that favor teaching and learning.

School is filled with actions that unload personal responsibilities and responsibilities that become collective because of the assumed tasks and objectives. In these

moments, competency has distinct natures; therefore, they must be developed by favoring lucid, intentional and compromised behavior.

Competence in educational spaces, which are mediated by collective activities, is exercising an action by starting from the complex combination of historic and cultural characteristics. This perspective involves continuous constructing and reconstructing to understand the world and its transformation. The emphasis on collective processes does not minimize interests, expectations, projects, and individual aspirations; it favors autonomy by emancipating alienating relationships, strengthening sympathetic options, and articulating the professional and educational dimensions with social and political compromises.

Understanding competence in its historic and cultural dimension is more than understanding the social construction of its meanings. It should be considered a multidimensional strategy present in educative activities and the accomplishment of recreating personal identities and promoting drastic improvements in the history of the subjects' psychological development. Developing this amplified and progressive perspective on competence requires consideration of the diverse resources (knowledge, experience, lore, affections, skills, choices, attitudes) that can be used as symbolic subjects differentiated from activities that, through intentional mediation of mobilizing motives, will be transformed into new, more complex, and diverse content.

If the human species "learns to be human," we may learn to be more competent through mediation and intentional change in the activities we collectively share in our relational and educational contexts.

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The Dynamics of Self–Other Relationships in Educational Contexts: The Emergence of Values Through the Dialogic Construction of Alterity

Angela Uchoa Branco and Maria Claudia Lopes de Oliveira

In societies where schooling is a compulsory developmental experience, as in Brazil, educational institutions represent contexts of main importance for the ontogenesis of human values and the construction of dominant practices for self–other transactions. Therefore, school contexts are of primary importance to the reproduction and transformation of dominant social values. This chapter addresses the topic of cultural practices and values concerning relationships and interactions among developing individuals within schools, particularly highlighting the role of schools. We show how what happens in schools is closely related to cultural practices and values that are also prevalent in contexts such as family and other social groups.

The first section of this chapter elaborates on the topic of self–other relationships within schools as we discuss the cultural roots of educational psychology from a dialogical perspective. Next, we analyze social interaction patterns and cultural practices, as we elaborate on the ontogenesis and developmental perspectives regarding diversity, prejudice, competition versus cooperation, bullying, and the need for ethical positioning and moral actions within schools and society at large. We highlight, for instance, the absolute necessity of including such topics in a teacher’s professional trainings, as well as organizing permanent, in-service supervision concerning children’s socialization and developmental issues. References to empirical examples drawn from our own research are presented within the limits of this chapter, and the text explores the relationships between schools and other cultural contexts of Brazilian society whenever possible. We address and discuss some of the dominant cultural values in Brazil, analyzing, for example, why prejudice and bullying among students may have been encouraged—instead of inhibited—within educational settings. Last, but not least, we argue for the radical transformation of schools in order to actually construct inclusive con-

A.U. Branco (✉) · M.C.L. de Oliveira
University of Brasilia, Brasilia, Brazil
e-mail: ambranco@terra.com.br

M.C.L. de Oliveira
e-mail: mcsoliveira@gmail.com

texts oriented to alterity—according to public ‘inclusion’ policies—and oriented to democratic, prosocial values and practices that should guide our educational efforts in the contemporary world.

Cultural Roots of Educational Psychology

In modernity, schools emerged in strict connection with the complexification of industrial societies, in which workers equipped with advanced and specialized knowledge and abilities are increasingly needed. As economic development spread in many countries all around the world, a novel rationale for mediating cultural, scientific, and technological advancement was demanded. Schools were designed to attend to this social function; yet, under the label of *school*, significant differences in social values and cultural practices often remain hidden. Considering the specific social demands to be met, schools have adopted different formats and goals according to their cultural contexts. Indeed, to critically approach those differences, it is essential that we search for a better understanding of schools’ social role along time (Antunes 2003).

The development of schooling is very much connected to that of the psychological science itself. Schools have always been one of the main institutional settings within which psychological practices and research have flourished and developed. In many countries and sociocultural contexts, the necessity of planning learning activities, organizing classrooms according to developmental stages, and, especially, dealing with learning disabilities and behavioral maladjustment have brought education gradually closer to psychology. Learning problems emerged as unpredicted effects when schools became the main social device of intergenerational cultural transmission for society’s upper classes in the eighteenth century. In search of technical tools to deal with such problems, the fields of pedagogy and psychology joined their efforts; the latter performed a role of growing importance in providing answers for questions concerning school difficulties.

In Brazil, educational psychology became a subfield of general psychology, with its theoretical and empirical specificities directly concerned with interpreting the psychological dimension of educational processes. Differently, school psychology was defined as a field of applied psychology—that is, it was basically concerned with the use of psychological theories and techniques in order to solve specific problems that emerged within schools’ daily activities. It is interesting to note that the emerging field of educational psychology in the beginning of the 20th century followed the dominant trends of general psychology of the time, therefore suffering from the same prevailing scientific instrumentalism and paying tribute to the positivist scientific project. The concept of *mind* held by general psychology at that time suggested the existence of an entity constituted by isolated psychological phenomena, and the ‘subject’ was considered to be someone detached from his or her context, isolated from others and from the social order (Lopes de Oliveira 2003).

According to Yazlle (1997), psychology emerged out of a noncontextualized scientific perspective that did not consider the social factors ingrained in human phenomena. As a scientific discipline, it was mostly concerned with finding order, laws, and ways to control the phenomena under study; in short, it searched for general patterns of behavior statistically defined and attuned with instrumental reasoning. Therefore, the commitment of psychology to status-quo social projects preceded its effective emergence as a recognized profession. Its self-assumed role has been to standardize and regulate individuals within well-established social frames. Consequently, for many decades afterward, the main focus of educational psychologists has been on the various aspects of cognitive performance. Mental processes were conceived as if they might exist out of, or independently from, concrete human beings. Mental processes were studied without taking into account the cultural perspective we now know is essential for a better interpretation of social and subjective participation in school educational process, specifically those processes related to teaching-learning and developmental phenomena. Next, we elaborate on issues referring to the cultural roots of educational psychology, showing the need for a dialogical perspective to make sense of psychological processes occurring within school contexts.

Dialogical Educational Psychology

One can basically divide into two traditions the studies that converge to a dialogical perspective (in the sense that we understand dialogism nowadays). On one hand, we have a set of philosophers and theoreticians interested in a pragmatic approach to language in ordinary settings. Avoiding the reductionist bias of language as a formal, abstract, and artificial device, those philosophers adopted dialogue, communication, and interaction as their objects of study. They inspired the development of a new paradigm where semiotic transactions are expanded, and they refer not only to social interactions but are converted into a model to interpret the subject's internal functioning as well (see Pontecorvo 1993, 1997; Marková 2003; Linnel 2003, 2009; Rommetveit 1985a, b). On the other hand, there is a tradition that comes from studies in philosophy and psychology that, in the search for a non-essentialist or self-contained autonomous conception of individuals, have converged to a sense of self as interdependent to others, in inclusive separation, or in dual unity.

Thus, to take a dialogical perspective while approaching issues such as the mind and psychological process within school contexts demands a paradigmatic shift. Some important epistemological consequences came out of this paradigmatic shift, such as the following:

- (a) An emphasis on relativistic approaches over universalist ones
- (b) More attention paid to social and group phenomena in order to understand personal development as a result of human relations

- (c) A focus upon the ‘I–Social Other’ interdependence, which consists of an excellent example of the inclusive separation (Valsiner and Cairns 1992) axiom; this interdependence is necessarily constitutive of mental worlds
- (d) The assumption of an integrative approach that systemically includes all facets of the phenomenon, such as social, cultural, affective, and cognitive dimensions
- (e) The adoption of interpretative/hermeneutic methodologies as well as idiographic approaches, which search for contextualized explanatory systems linked to general processes, instead of universal, decontextualized laws

To draw our scientific knowledge on a dialogical perspective involves considering that the contact with the real world by an individual consciousness is always mediated by signs and, at some point, by social activity. In other words, knowledge construction is a product of a reflexive-interpretative relationship in which the knowing subject, the object to be known, and the other are closely engaged. The ‘other’ can be real or imagined other(s), social others/group(s), or symbolic devices that allow for the coconstitution of the psychological phenomenon, emerging out of the dialogical tension between ‘I–other’ interacting positions. The dialogical nature of the processes involved in the phenomenon, for instance, converts cognition into situated action, into a socially anchored activity that may lead both to the development of individual consciousness, and to the cultural improvement of humankind (Fávero 2005; Zittoun and Perret-Clermont 2009).

In dealing with the interdependence between culture, society, and the individual through dialogism, our arguments are necessarily sustained on Bakhtin’s and Vygotsky’s epistemological traditions in social sciences—not omitting, however, the potential differences between the two theorists (Matusov 2011). Our goal in this text, however, is just to highlight some of their main contributions to a dialogical educational psychology (Racionero and Padrós 2010).

Dialogism in Vygotsky

Vygotsky was dedicated to understanding and conceptualizing educational processes within schools (Vygotsky 2003; Van der Veer and Valsiner 1991), and not many theorists would consider him as a dialogist who assumed a cultural approach in psychology (Matusov 2011). As we take such position—Vygotsky as a dialogist and a historical-cultural psychologist—we clearly indicate we are paying as much attention to the facets of his work defined according to the materialist dialectical ground he shared with other scholars of the Russian psychological revolutionary tradition, as to the emphasis he gave to the semiotic nature of the psyche. This emphasis declares a position that is well underlined in his elaborations regarding the following: (a) the double (social/personal) nature of psychological events entailed in the dialectics interpersonal/intrapersonal contexts; (b) the conception of a symbolic arena in between self–other named intersubjectivity; (c) an emphasis on the

constitutive role played by social transactions (imitation, communication, interaction) to promote individual development; and (d) the centrality of semiotic mediation.

These aspects of Vygotsky’s theoretical project clearly highlight his interest in the individual as a whole—that is, the person is not an aggregate of specific mental functions; the individual constitutes a dialogical unity with other individuals in the sociocultural context. For him, no learning or developmental process is conceivable if we do not consider this dialogical unity. Moreover, for Vygotsky (1986), the social formation of the mind depends on both intentional and nonintentional educational transactions and contexts of socialization. Thus, the dialogical metaphor is adequate to describe the unity of dyads such as teaching and learning, where mind and self are formed and transformed within families and schools, as well as within other meaningful educational settings.

Dialogism in Bakhtin

Bakhtin is directly associated with the emergence of the dialogical approach, but he dedicated scarce attention to education and schools. However, especially in recent decades, his ideas have had an important impact over educational issues. The work of Freedman and Ball (2004) illustrates his potential contributions to a critical educational psychology. They explored Bakhtinian perspectives on language, literacy, and learning and reminded us that, having totally rejected the idea of an isolated or static self, he conceived of “the development of the whole person, and his or her complex of ideas and concepts, including political ideas” (p. 5). That seems to indicate that Bakhtin placed the individual within the social context, shedding light on the mutual constitution of individual and social worlds. Considering that social worlds consist of the junction and integration of societal and cultural components, it is possible to identify the lines where dialogical and cultural topics meet in his elaborations.

According to Landay (2004), four topics must be considered concerning Bakhtin’s contribution to learning practices in schools. Each one leads to a key concept that integrates the Bakhtinian conceptual architecture, as follows:

1. The multivoiced nature of language and its reproduction and transformation in social activities—as well as the tension between centripetal and centrifugal forces that lead respectively to the tendency to unify, repeat, and create norms, on one hand, and the tendency to invent, expand, and transform on the other: This topic relates to the concept of *heteroglossia*. The impact of this elaboration to schools is self-evident, for schools are considered settings for a vivid dynamic of meaning negotiations and (trans)formations, leaving little room, if any, for monological, rigid directive instructional designs or contexts supposedly free of semiotic tensions.

2. The social and ideological nature of language, which functions as an arena where social differences and tensions can be negotiated and resolved: According to this proposition, the discourses in which education is embedded are everything but neutral: they express conflicting interests of the different groups inserted in schools in terms of gender, ethnics, socioeconomic class, religion, etc. Their strategies to resist power are often hidden within pedagogical practices, communication, and meta-communication (Branco and Valsiner 2004).
3. The power relations manifested through language may result in authoritative/persuasive discourses—that is, in communicative practices in which speakers occupy asymmetric positions in dialogue, positions that become naturalized and perpetuated; otherwise, it may also result in creative counter-strategies that produce the emergence of new stances, especially among students.
4. The utterances are overpopulated with the intentions of others and are open to multiple meanings and possible opposite interpretations. They lie on the border between oneself and the other (Bakhtin 1981). This feature points to the unity ego-alter and the concept of *dialogism*, which involves both internal and external dialogical links.

In sum, the key concepts exposed above represent an invitation to rethink and analyze the social dynamic of classrooms, as well as the quality of teacher–student communication, the role of peers and partners in one’s personal learning and development, and, particularly, the social nature of school pedagogy. The other self is not only a witness of one’s individual formation but the main mediator acting to promote the person’s development. Taking into account the ideas presented before, now we focus on the ‘I–other’ relations within school contexts from the perspective of concrete social interaction patterns—from hostility to solidarity—as well as from a stance that considers human values and prosocial cultural practices.

Social Interaction Patterns, Cultural Practices, and Social Values: The Dynamics of ‘I-Other’ Relationships

The ontogenesis and development of social interactions and motivation are the central topic of this section. We want to demonstrate that the quality of teacher–student and student–student interactions is grounded on cultural practices and values that pervade society as a whole. Too often, practices and values related to social relationships penetrate the school context in subtle and nonintentional ways, such as a hidden curriculum (Branco 2003, 2009; Branco et al. 2012). From a historical and sociocultural theoretical standpoint, we highlight the fact that values related to individualism and competition have become more and more pervasive in our daily lives (Dumont 1985; Sennet 2012). Solidarity has been an almost forgotten value (Baggio 2009), and cooperation, particularly within school contexts, is more the exception than the rule (Branco 2009; Palmieri and Branco 2008). The widespread goals set forth by consumerism (Saraiva 2000) and competition have

produced a cultural tendency that relies on competition and aggression—instead of negotiation and respect—as the major strategies to achieve desired results.

While centered in individualistic life projects, individuals are often not aware of how discrimination, prejudice, competition, bullying, and other disrespectful ways of treating others have become naturalized within most cultural contexts. It is interesting to note, although unfortunate, how the presence of practices such as downplaying others can easily be detected in advertising, television programs, popular jokes, and worse, in everyday interactions among people at home and at school. As the social dimension of education still does not deserve special attention from public policymakers—nor from the school staff—what happens is that anti-social cultural practices and attitudes towards the ‘other’ permeate our social relations and interactions without any awareness by the members of our culture.

As the old saying puts it, a fish cannot perceive or analyze the nature of the water within which it lives. This naturalization, then, prevents educators from being able to identify and properly act regarding the quality of social interactions—namely, interactions that engender phenomena mostly known as the schools’ hidden curriculum (Giroux and Purpel 1983). This explains why issues such as bullying and prejudice practices remain so resistant or tend to increase within the school culture: adults compete with each other, teachers may subtly humiliate a student (intentionally or not), students bully peers who are seen as ‘different’—slow, poor, unattractive, with a different skin color, too tall, too short, and so on. Kids often boast about their supposed intellectual, social, or physical superiority—building their status, or popularity, on the pain inflicted upon others. It is worth asking, however, who insists on comparing children, on praising some and embarrassing others, on demeaning the efforts of a child with difficulties, or on establishing covered or explicit rankings regarding who is the better student. No wonder students compete. Each child will only care for his or her own interests, tasks, and activities, which are mostly designed to be individualist as opposed to cooperative.

In sum, events such as bullying and competition turn out to be considered absolutely normal, and as part of a supposed “human nature.” However, we should know by now that such antisocial interactions only occur and are accepted in their subtler and milder formats (“No, you cannot hit your peer in the face!”) because they are widely practiced and taken as natural within our culture, as Margaret Mead has long ago explained to the scientific community (Mead 1937).

In research projects developed by our team in the Microgenesis in Social Interactions Laboratory (LABMIS, University of Brasilia), we have found results that very much corroborate what was said before. Branco et al. (2012), Padilha and Branco (2011), Tacca and Branco (2008), Branco and Salomão (2001), and many other research projects show exactly how social and moral dimensions of school education stay mostly apart from teachers’ and school staff members’ major concerns. The school still is the privileged place where parents expect their children to learn mathematics, language, and sciences. Any other content or socio-psychological relevant learning, such as the meaning and relevance of ethics, morality, and human values, are considered to be superfluous and totally envisioned as part of an exclusive parental responsibility domain (Branco 2012; Barrios 2009, 2013).

Nevertheless, when teachers and staff members are interviewed, they frequently mention their worry about social and moral issues and refer to the school's objective to contribute to the development of a moral, responsible citizen able to care for a democratic society. As they speak their ideas more freely, however, it becomes obvious that actually they do not know the meaning of concepts such as cooperation and moral development (Branco 2012), and all they care about concerning social development is to foster disciplined bodies and minds by promoting obedience among their students. To cooperate is understood as 'cooperation with the teacher' (Palmieri and Branco 2008), and moral development means 'you must always follow the rules' (Barrios 2013). Everything else linked to the development of ethics and social values have nothing to do with school true goals, and if the students do not learn social and moral practices and values, only parents are to be blamed. It seems that in their minds the school experience is absolutely neutral concerning socio-moral issues, and the only important thing to teach the students is that rules established by the adults and the institutions exist to be followed without any questioning or further thinking.

As to the dynamics of classrooms, and young children's experiences within preschool contexts, we have found a surprisingly consistent pattern in the nature of activities offered—and hence experiences—to the students. Both at schools (Salomão 2001; Tacca 2000) and preschools (Barrios 2009; Barreto 2004; Palmieri and Branco 2008), teachers seem to rely only on individual activities, using the encouragement of competition to 'motivate' their students. The same has been found by most researchers on this topic (Johnson and Johnson 1989; Slavin 1991), and the isolation of each learner prevents them from experiencing the potential of human interactions—that is, the 'I–other' experience that boosts self-development, as well as all kinds of development: intellectual, socio-affective, moral, etc. Beyond the fact that excellent and better results concerning traditional disciplines are achieved in classrooms that adopt cooperative learning (Slavin 1991), most students declare their explicit preferences for such collaborative activities over individual or competitive ones (Johnson et al. 2000; Johnson and Johnson 1989). We think it is time to substitute old proven-wrong beliefs and practices in order to improve teaching-learning processes and to provide healthier contexts for children's and adolescents' development.

No One's Land: The Unacceptable Absence of Teachers' Planning on Ethical-Moral Guidance Within Classrooms

The following examples come from different research projects conducted within LABMIS at the University of Brasília under the present authors' supervision. Each empirical example unveils different aspects of the negative consequences of teachers' ignorance, negligence, or naiveté regarding their roles as educators concerning ethics, morality, and social values. They were not put together to demonstrate how inadequate the subjects of our investigations were, but rather they show

how educational contexts are embedded in cultural pitfalls and false beliefs found in society at large.

Example 1

Barrios (2013; Barrios and Branco, in preparation) provided a powerful example of how alterity and dialogue remain distant or too far away from educational practices, even when the explicit goal of a school activity is to promote moral development. She investigated the dynamics of a fourth-grade class in a private school in Brasília, whose teacher was considered by the school principal as the school’s best. In fact, he was good at promoting performance in math and Portuguese and at making sure his students remained quiet; he was also good at constructing an effective relationship with his students. However, when his classes were closely observed, it became clear that he inhibited questionings and all sorts of peer interactions. The teacher was the only one with the right to speak ideas and he imposed upon the students his truth about anything. No real dialogue between the teacher and students was observed, because he systematically adopted the ‘question-answer-evaluation’ strategy. Among the students, dialogues were forbidden and against the rules.

The most surprising result of this research, though, was what happened when the teacher was explicitly invited, by the researcher, to create and develop a couple of activities to promote children’s moral development. Throughout the activities, he maintained his all-mighty teacher’s style, and actually prohibited and avoided all opportunities to initiate a discussion about any topic whatsoever. When asked during the interviews if he had accomplished his task—i.e., the goal of promoting moral development—the teacher was convinced he had done his job very well. He was confident he did well because he engaged his students in warm-up games (like the bobo doll game), and taught them the content of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Most relevant, he said, was that he explained (again) to the students about the importance of following rules. In other words, the teacher was clueless about the fundamental role of true dialogue and reflectivity—namely, the role of alterity in fostering moral reasoning (Kohlberg 1984) and development (Branco 2012).

Barrios’ results, for sure, cannot be interpreted as though the teacher she investigated was a bad teacher or was totally responsible for his ignorance. The truth is that our society in general, and the school culture in particular, forges and praises this kind of teacher. As a matter of fact, the teacher does exactly what he is expected to do—he acts according to what he was taught as the right thing to do as a teacher: “Worry about content learning and discipline. Everything else is none of your business!” Therefore, the problem does not lie on the teacher himself, but on the institution—the school culture that canalizes this sort of professional performance.

Example 2

The second study analyzed educational practices in the context of correctional/educational institutions (Yokoy de Souza 2008; Lopes de Oliveira and Yokoy de Souza 2012). In this investigative context, the participants were

adolescents previously involved in criminal activities (and put under a freedom restriction program) and the institution's so-called social educators. In the Brazilian Youth Justice System, the social educator is the professional who takes care, accompanies, and guides the adolescents in daily activities such as going to school, doing school work, sports, and rest. This guidance happens for the time that the child is under the protection of the state institution in charge of making the adolescents fulfill a kind of rehabilitation program. In few words, the social educator is the agent that represents justice and substitutes for parents in daily situations for the period the adolescent is kept under the tutelage of the state. Despite their strictly pedagogic role—according to the law—social educators develop a self-image as 'security agents,' and this prevalent self-image totally mediates their practices as educators.

The majority of adolescents who participated in the study came from highly vulnerable contexts, and their opportunity to eventually construct novel developmental trajectories fundamentally depended on, besides their own motivations, the engagement of the social educators—that is, on the quality of interactions those educators (agents?) established with them.

Although most social educators reported, during their interviews, to be firmly guided by the belief in the "good nature" of the adolescents, they contradictorily attributed to the adolescents and their families the full burden of their maladjusted behaviors. Risk taking, drug use and delinquency tended to be "naturalized", and sometimes even considered as a "developmental stage" for that group of people, associated with immaturity and the emotional unpredictability typical of adolescents. Also, the adolescents' problems, they thought, were a transitive condition expected to be spontaneously overcome if children eventually wanted to show a proactive, positive, and committed positioning towards social reality. Those beliefs tended to guide most social educators to act with indifference and omission, and this resulted in their passive and poor role as mediators of the adolescents' re-signification of life experiences—that is, as effective mediators of social education and human development.

Observational sessions were conducted for data on adolescents and social educators during shared activities, and their results were convergent with interview data. Social educators were not only passive when observed, but they also said in the interview they did not believe in the efficacy of the socio-educational program to promote any kind of self-transformation or novel, better developmental trajectories for those adolescents. They believed in the cruel, evil nature of those kids, and in their total lack of motivation to change their behavior or subjectivity. As a consequence, and for fear of the adolescents, social educators acted as though the kids were in an endless debt to society and no punishment would ever be enough. According to Lopes de Oliveira and Yokoy de Souza (2012), in such a context the values become "upside down": instead of promoting novel developmental trajectories and improving their sense of futurity, the so-called educational context only favored conformism and inactivity, therefore contributing to the reproduction of the very same conditions that initially led the adolescents to criminality.

Example 3

The last empirical example comes from an investigation on the context of teacher training (Santana 2010; Santana and Lopes de Oliveira 2010, 2012). The study analyzed institutional documents and pedagogic practices found in an undergraduate course carried out by the education faculty at a community college in the state of Goiás, Brazil. Results showed that nowhere in the course's pedagogic project, nor in the contents to be studied during the course, could topics concerning school and teachers' role in promoting moral development, ethics, values, or peace construction be found. As a possible consequence of this negligence, we witnessed uncomfortable meaningful events concerning ambiguous moral positions in teacher–students interactions, as well as among students themselves.

In one of those situations, to exemplify the argument above, a professor of scientific methodology gathered her students to provide them with feedback concerning the first version of their undergraduate final monograph. Her body expression, as a whole, showed that she was really upset. However, she was also very polite while verbally navigating between two distinct orientations: for one, she referred to the fact that approximately 10 % of the monographs had clearly been plagiarized from websites; for the other, she was dealing with the information that the class had formally made a complaint against her to the faculty director due to her supposedly excessive academic demands. What is noteworthy in this episode is that the professor tended to overemphasize the second issue, the students' complaint, and no arguments were elaborated to discuss the legal, ethical, and moral dimensions of plagiarism. Yet, she extended the reproof regarding plagiarism to the whole class (not only to the 10 % really involved), and her speech was clearly guided by discomfort and annoyance in relation to the students' formal complaint. The interesting thing is that none of the students reacted to her admonishment, even those who had honestly prepared their monographs, indicating their passive resistance regarding her power as a professor.

Therefore, researchers concluded that the absence of a dialogical context, intentionally constructed to promote discussions about ethics, morality, and values, created a pernicious ambiguous atmosphere in which central moral issues were not actually discussed, giving rise to mistrust and mutual suspicions. We think that situations like this occur because of the cultural myth that moral issues are taboo and open discussions about them are extremely dangerous, leading to out-of-control situations. However, they also happen because professionals are not expected to question or discuss ethical and moral issues within educational contexts. This is a huge contradiction because we should expect that such relevant topics would be carefully analyzed and discussed exactly within educational contexts. As a consequence, teachers are incapable of dealing with conflicts and dilemmas that emerge in schools and everyday life, relying exclusively on their own, often distorted, personal perspectives and criteria to deal with ethical dilemmas.

Final Remarks: Ethics and Morality Are Education Business!

Ethics, morality, and human values are more than legitimate. They are fundamental topics to be addressed within schools, and they are important topics for teacher training programs. Educational institutions have a key role in the cultural coconstruction of ethics and morality. Why is it so difficult for educational institutions to accept that?

Reviewing the historical roots of educational psychology, we notice the predominance of cognitive approaches, which mostly focus on individuals' abilities or disabilities, or teaching methodologies and learning difficulties. Topics regarding socialization processes and conflicts are paradoxically far from psychology or education interests. This may be due to the conceptualization of ethics as part of the individual, subjective, private domain, instead of being a central dimension—a cultural dimension—of life in society.

Taking into account the previous examples, can we ask why teachers are so resistant to change and creating innovative pedagogical activities? There is no simple answer, of course, but we can suppose that giving up supreme authority over the students is a too difficult challenge to undertake. The creation of actual opportunities for students to participate, discuss, and question teachers' proposals and ideas can introduce a powerful element of uncertainty that may defy the all-mighty status teachers are used to in their everyday encounters with students. The experience of democratic, true dialogues among teachers and students requires an open-minded attitude about the other, plus the self-confidence, humility, trust, and courage to both stand up for one's values and change one's own certainties and convictions.

In this chapter, we presented data from three studies involving teachers and educators having to deal with moral values and actions that show how the school culture is in many ways resistant to tackling the issue with straightforward objectives and strategies. However, the consequences of such resistance are enormous, like increasing individualism, violence, and lack of respect in social interactions and relationships. It turns out that in the end no actual effort is made to develop good people or good citizens compromised with collective welfare, human rights, justice, or democracy. Notwithstanding, these are said to be the ultimate goal of a democratic society, but who is really in charge of promoting such values? Parents say they do not have time to teach, or deal with, their kids; schools say such issues are none of their business. Our guess is that the ethical dimension, when compared to academic disciplines, is very messy and somewhat fuzzy. Thus, it is better for schools to keep a safe distance from such dilemmas, right? Wrong.

Even though the responsibility is shared and families do have a central role, educational institutions still can do a lot to promote humanistic and democratic values, granting a reasonable context for dialogue and reflectivity over major ethical and moral matters. Of course, some issues that are traditionally considered as moral issues belong to private, subjective domains. However, many other central moral

questions and concerns must be discussed within social and institutional contexts. Hence, the most important conclusion of this chapter is that there is an urgent need to creating dialogical contexts within schools. Democratic dialogues plus intentional cultural canalizations (Valsiner 2007) of responsible ethical positionings and moral actions within schools and other social contexts may likely result in the active internalization of values of justice, compassion, and social responsibility.

The perspectives created by a cultural psychological approach can thus help educators to promote critical reflections on issues such as human relationships, moral development, and dialogical, democratic practices. Such practices then will help to foster cooperation, solidarity, and social responsibility, hand in hand with creativity and autonomy. The permanent work towards these goals is the best way to allow for the development of individuals who are not only constrained and limited to their selfish interests, but individuals concerned as well with society's development and collective well-being.

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Part II
Educational Contexts Through
a Cultural Lens. A Case
Study: Brazil

Conceptions of Education and Its Influence on the Brazilian Educational System: Some Examples Derived from the Socio-Cultural History

Marina Massimi

The Contemporary Crisis in Education and the Resumption of the Historical Roots

In Brazil, the education crisis is somehow permanent. A text written in 1954 (2003) by philosopher H. Arendt can help us understand the reasons for this crisis. The text highlights the evidence of a profound crisis in education in the context of the American society, and, in the author's opinion, this crisis would spread to the entire Western world. Arendt states that this crisis should be taken as an opportunity to "explore and investigate the essence of the issue": "the essence of education is the natality, the fact that human beings are born to the world" (1954/2003, p. 223). It is a fact that, in light of contemporary pedagogical theories, "prejudices disappeared", but it is also appropriate to consider that "we lost the answers that we ordinarily relied on" and that "these were answers to questions." (Arendt 1954/2003, p. 223) Right now, "the crisis forces us to go back to the same questions and demands new or old answers, but, anyway, it demands direct judgments" (Arendt 1954/2003, p. 223). A crisis could become disastrous in that "we respond to it with preformed judgments, namely with prejudice"; such an attitude, according to Arendt, not only sharpens the crisis, but it also deprives us of "the experience of reality and the opportunity of its provided reflection" (idem). Referring to the specific context of the Americas, Arendt argues that the issue of education becomes more politically decisive because the social contexture mainly consists of immigration, and the instruction and education of children are essential tools for the fusion among remarkably diverse ethnic groups. Arendt points out the "continuous role that immigration plays in political consciousness and in psychic structure" (ibid., 223–224) of the continent as decisive factor for reflection on education in the Americas.

M. Massimi (✉)

Universidade de São Paulo, Campus de Ribeirão Preto, São Paulo, Brazil
e-mail: mmassimi3@yahoo.com

Nowadays, this process occurs throughout the West, and multiculturalism has become a challenge of global proportions.

Arendt focuses more specifically on the history of North America and continues her discussion examining peculiar aspects of this country, centered on the ideal of constituting a “new world order” (1954/2003, p. 224), eliminating poverty and oppression. In this context, the attention given to children and their education immediately assumes a political connotation. The American utopians were not only inspired by the revolutionary ideal of J.J. Rousseau, but also by “all political utopias that, from ancient times,” consider “natural to start a new world with those who are young by birth and nature” (idem, p. 225).

Also according to Arendt, the ascription to the education of a political role in a land of immigrants implies triggering a process in which children and their families are induced “to get rid of an old world and enter a new world”; the illusion that this new world and its new order would be built through the education of children is inculcated in children and families (idem, p. 226). This position entails serious mistakes, according to the philosopher: on the one hand, the use of the intervention of the political reforms (and of their authors), instead of persuasion and willingness to take the risk of failure; on the other, “the attempt to produce the new, as if the new no longer existed” (idem, p. 225). As a result, “the fact that each generation turns into an ancient world belongs to the very nature of the human condition, in a way that preparing a new generation for a new world can only mean to tear away the own opportunity facing the new from the hands of the newcomers” (idem, p. 226).

According to Arendt, the most serious consequences of this position are evidenced in the American context, especially since the 1930s. In the United States, the “modern educational theories” that emerged in Central Europe were tested on a large scale; “an impressive miscellany of sense and nonsense carries out, under the motto of progressive education, a radical revolution in the whole educational system” (1954/2003, p. 226). In such manner that, “what remained in Europe an experiment, tested here and there,” in America totally dropped all established traditions and methods of teaching and learning; especially because of these theories, “all the rules of normal human judgment were set aside” (idem, p. 227). However, Arendt continues, in discussing political issues, the disappearance or renunciation of the use of common sense, which is the use of “human judgment in an attempt to provide answers,” entails serious crises insofar as “this kind of judgment is actually the common sense by virtue of which we and our five senses are adapted to a unique world common to all of us, and we move in this world with that help” (ibid.,).

Arendt points out three basic assumptions of the “progressive” educational proposal, which considers the causes of failure: first, the belief that there is a world of children, and a society formed by them, independent from the adult world where the adults do not have authority. Thereby, the authority is shifted from the adult to the group, and this authority is “stronger and more tyrannical than the most severe authority of an isolated adult” (1954/2003, p. 230). Thus, instead of emancipating and being free, the child is subjected “to a more terrifying and truly tyrannical authority, which is the tyranny of the majority” (idem, p. 230), before which the

child can neither rebel nor argue, nor escape. Arendt lucidly comments on the possibility that the reaction of the child to this situation is either conformism or delinquency—or even worse, a mixture of both. It is impressive to see the processes that happen today, which Arendt advocated in 1954 when she wrote this essay.

The second assumption concerns teaching. Under the influence of scientific psychology and of pragmatism, pedagogy became an educational science in general, entirely emancipated from the actual topic to be taught. The training of the teacher is thus focused on the tutorship method, and it neglects his or her competence in the specific topics.

The third assumption, directly derived from pragmatism, is “that it is possible to know and understand what we did ourselves” (idem, p. 232), thus replacing learning by doing. Therefore, the aim of teaching should not be to transmit knowledge but inculcate skills. In this process, the distinction between work and toy is merged, and the child’s activity is totally focused on playfulness. Such a pedagogical position tends to make the world of the child absolute; the child becomes artificially excluded from the adult world. The artificiality is based on the fact that the natural relationship between adults and children is extinguished, and the fact that the childhood condition is a temporary stage in the process of human development is concealed.

By contrast, according to Arendt, education conveys to the child the world in which the child must take responsibility, and the educator mediates between the old and the new—among the past, the present, and the future. Education demands respect for the past and becomes “the point at which we decide whether we love the world enough to assume responsibility for it, and with that gesture, save it from the ruin which would be inevitable unless there were renovation and arrival of the new and young people” (idem, p. 247).

In face of this challenge, a historical and critical reinterpretation of the Brazilian sociocultural world is appropriate, and specifically of the concepts of education that prevailed in this area. Taking into account the multiethnic and multicultural diversity featuring the country, we need to recognize the existence of a multiplicity of conceptions regarding education, which were present in several forms throughout history, using various expressive methods and instruments. In this chapter, it would be impossible to use up the knowledge of all of them, but we focus on just a few that deserve special mention for having played a decisive role in the course of Brazilian history and in the Brazilian educational system: the concept of education in oral, indigenous, African and Lusitanian cultures, whose past we know indirectly by reports from missionaries and travelers; the concept of education proper to the Jesuit missionaries who endeavored in the challenge of providing educational experiences in all locations of their operations in Brazilian territory; and the modern conception of education of the twentieth century, especially the groups that in Brazil became spokespeople and project handlers of American progressive education. Other immigrant groups belonging to diverse ethnicities, over the centuries, brought to Brazil their traditions (coming from Western and Eastern Europe, Asia, North America) and made the educational process an important ambit for the preservation and transmission of traditions to new generations. It would be

impossible to account for the complex and diverse wealth of contributions and for articulations that were created in the brief space of these pages. Therefore, this chapter has absolutely no intention to exhaust the subject, but only to trace some aspects of this topic and, thus, contribute to the framework of a broader and desirable historical reconstruction.

Education Conception of the Indians and of the Oral Traditions in Brazil

The contexture of Brazilian popular culture is especially marked by the plurality of contributions yielded by encounters among people and different sociocultural groups. Orality constituted a common and immediate communication channel among different cultural realities that suddenly found themselves interacting and living together. Orality characterized cultures proper to the various indigenous ethnic groups present in Brazil at the time of the arrival of Portuguese settlers; orality also characterized the African populations that were massively deported to Brazil after being abruptly uprooted from their countries of origin. Orality was also a common parlance among European settlers and missionaries present in Brazil; most of the settlers also came from a tradition of oral prevalence, such as Lusitania of the sixteenth century. On one hand, orality allowed immediate exchange relations and, moreover, led to the establishment of expressive cultural forms of performative nature (e.g., gestures, songs, chants); on the other hand, it hampered the direct transmission of information through written language. This is how the written record concerning the educational concepts and practices proper to African and indigenous cultures came to us only indirectly by the mediation of European colonizers and missionaries, a mirror of strange glances facing the new experienced by the authors, more than the trustworthy report of the observed facts. Somehow, however, taking into account this feature, it is rich documentation of interest to the reader of the twenty-first century.

Unprecedented aspects of Indians' interactions with their children gave rise to the curiosity of the Portuguese visitor missionary, Jesuit Fernão Cardim (1540–1625). He notes that from an early age, indigenous children take part in the social world, living together and going through a rapid process of socialization. While still babies, they are held in slings by the mothers, who take them to the fields. As soon as possible, parents take the children to the subsistence activities of the community, hunting and fishing, so that they participate in an early age. Cardim reports that the boys play and live “with much quietness and friendship... Among them we do not hear bad names, neither raillery, nor calling names to fathers and mothers, and rarely when they play, they disconcert, or quarrel for some reason, or argue for something, they rarely fight with each other, or wrestle.” (1583/1980, p. 93).

With regard to parental feelings, the narrator says that the Indians “extraordinarily love their children” (p. 91) and “do not give them any kind of punishment”

(p. 91). Cardim also underscores that the natives “do not have any kind of punishment for the children, neither there is father or mother in their whole life who punishes or touches the children, so much parents regard them” (1980, p. 153). He verifies that, despite this, “the small children are extremely obedient to their parents, and everyone is very kind and pleasant” (ibid., p. 153)—a fact that likely really intrigued the mentality and the pedagogical concepts of the European Jesuits, who considered punishment as necessary in the educational relationship according to the practice of that time, when it was common to punish college students, princes, and kings.

Another Jesuit, José de Anchieta (1534–1597), sought to understand the motives of some parenting practices that were particularly curious and strange to European eyes, such as the fact that, after birth, the father is the one receiving care and visits, not the mother. According to the author, the fact is explained by the reason that the Indians “consider that real kinship comes from the fathers, who are the agents; and that mothers are nothing more than sacks, in respect of parents, where children are reared.” (Sixteenth century/1988, p. 460).

In the context of indigenous traditions, the narrative, or *poranduba*, is a common ritual in the villages of the Indians as well as in the interior of Brazil—“oral expression of Indian odyssey, the faithful summary of what was done, seen, and heard in the hours away from the family camp” (Cascudo 2006, p. 84). At the same time, it is a means of transmitting “joyful stories, fables, tales, unmistakable dance rhythm” (ibid., p. 85). The children participate in this ritual, as the sources developed in the course of the sixteenth century and cited by Cascudo underscore (idem). These narratives transmitted to children in the Tupi language are relayed by them after their schooling in a language that mixes the Tupi with the Portuguese and is also reworked by them.

African cultures have very old narrative practices: the narrators and storytellers have specific roles in African societies. The *akpalô* is the creator of the tales and *arokin* is the narrator, who even walks from place to place to transmit them. The child is the main recipient of these narratives. In Brazil, this role was played by wet nurses as well as by women who walked through the mills telling stories to black women who were wet nurses. The writer José Lins de Rego portrays in his autobiographical novel *Menino de Engenho* (1932/2010) the figure of the “old woman Totonha” that “occasionally knocked on to the mill” (p. 71) and “lived off telling stories,” walking from one mill to another mill: “great artist to dramatize,” “in a voice that gave all tones to the words,” “she had a prodigious memory” and “she recited whole tales in verse, occasionally interspersing pieces of prose.” Totonha put a fusion of traditions in her narratives, led by kings, queens, shipwrecks, murderers and miracles, wanderings of Christ and the apostles. Rego emphasizes that one of the qualities of these tales was the ability to recreate the scene depicted by the words in order to insert it in the context of life of its listeners, giving a “local color” to the narrative of events that were even distant in space and time: “When she wanted to paint a kingdom, it was like she was talking about a fabulous mill. The rivers and forests where her characters walked looked very much like Paraíba and Mata do Rolo. Her Bluebeard was a sugar planter from Pernambuco” (idem,

p. 73¹). Totonha's stories "were always new," once she owned "a piece of genius that never ages" (idem, p. 75).

The few written traces that are available to us, slight indications of a distant past, may find greater support in the consideration of other languages proper to the orality, which are transmitters of the past in peculiar ways. Cascudo (2006) emphasizes the importance of childhood pastimes as practices of cultural transmission and examines the historical roots of some games and some toys, still used nowadays by children in Brazil. "Ring a ring o'roses" folksongs from the Iberian and Portuguese matrix, wooden spinning-tops from the Greek matrix, and *parlengas* (traditional rhymed and rhythmic literary formulas) constitute a patrimony consolidated over a long period of time and inherited by each child born in a sociocultural context that minimally preserves and transmits it. They transmit not only content but also forms of socialization. They also evidence a conception of education centered on child inclusion as protagonist and carrier of the culture of the people.

In short, in Indian and African traditions as well as in Lusitanian popular culture, education, society, and culture are deeply intertwined. The child does not occupy a separate place in the life of the adult; on the contrary, the educational process happens within the core of social relationships, and the child is soon responsible for the elaboration and transmission of culture—the active subject and creative heir of a past that is recreated and updated. Thus, in these cultures, the process is preserved whereby "each new generation, and, indeed, each new human being, inserted between an infinite past and an infinite future, must discover and laboriously pave again" (Arendt 1954/2003, p. 40).

Education Conception of Jesuits and Their Contributions to Brazil

In Brazil, during at least two centuries, Jesuits had a significant social and cultural presence. Despite being immersed in the context of the colonial regime, deeply imbued with contradictions and conflicts, and subjected to the rules and games of the royal power, the missionaries of the Society were responsible for creating the first school system in the country and for the construction of numerous works, aimed at the integration of indigenous cultures and European cultures. The plays, poems, and compendium of Tupi-Guarani language grammar, written by Anchieta (1988), stand out among others. The relevance of the contribution of the Society of Jesus in the elaboration of knowledge and of Western science, from the sixteenth century, has been pointed out by several scholars (Giard 1995).

In the perspective that the Society of Jesus assumed, especially from the second half of the sixteenth century stimulated by the demands of European society

¹The location is in a borderline region between Pernambuco and Paraíba.

(O'Malley 1999), education and the establishment of schools as educational environments become the main path of missionary work. The emphasis on education as ministry of the Society of Jesus goes back to its origins: Inácio de Loyola narrates in his autobiography that in 1524 he realized the need to devote himself to the study in order to help the souls, and he was convinced that there was close correlation between the acquisition of virtue and the study of letters. In a letter sent by Pedro Ribadeneira requested by Inácio to the Emperor of Spain Felipe II, where the commitment of the Society regarding the foundation of colleges is justified, it is stated that all humanity and Christianity welfare depends on suitable education of the young.

In Brazil, the educational efforts of the Jesuits concerning children are founded on the humanist conviction of religious people that the cultural inferiority of the native people is due to a lack of education and not the anthropological or psychological structural diversity. This is what Manuel da Nobrega declares in the text *Diálogo sobre a conversão do gentio* in the imagined conversation between two Jesuits representatives of two different emerging positions in the society about the methods and goals of missionary work. By comparing the “rudeness” of Indian to the civilization (“policy”) of the pagan peoples of antiquity, one of the speakers says: “The fact that Romans and other gentiles had more policy than the other did not come from naturally having better understanding, but from having better rearing, and from been more politically reared” (1988, p. 240). José de Anchieta states in a letter that the children of the Indians reared in the schools of the Society “will be strong Christians” (letter of 1557, ed., 1988, p. 159).

Thus, the conviction about the possibility of man “making himself” through the education process, characteristic of Humanism and the Renaissance, created a large laboratory for experimentation in the Brazil recently discovered by Europeans. Through education, religious people intended to transform the natives, their culture, and society into members of the “Christian social body” of the colony.

However, this transformation did not involve the denial of the other culture, at least in the aspects recognized as valuable, and as we saw above, they were pointed out by the missionaries. In this sense, one of the criteria that guided the pedagogical work of the Jesuits was the accommodation process, which involves a dialogue between different identities. This dialogue searches for points of convergence and renders porous the borders that demarcate the various socio-cultural identities. The “accommodation”—the rhetoric standard proposed by Cicero in *De Oratore* and used by the Jesuits—is thus propitiator of the mediation in search of more humane methods of interaction in a conflictual and violent context, such as colonial Brazil. This standard also implies the psychological knowledge of the other as the basis for the establishment of new social relations; its application is described in the reports about the Jesuit practices for the indigenous population in Brazil in the sixteenth century, such as letters and other informative documents (Freitas and Massimi 2007).

Due to the application of this criterion, the Jesuits aimed at adapting methods and educational resources derived from their cultural traditions to the methods and cultural traditions of the other individuals who were present in the colony,

especially the ones of the indigenous tradition, by introducing typical aspects of this tradition in their educational project (such as dance, singing, Tupi-Guarani languages, and the languages of other ethnic groups present in Brazilian territory). The accommodation, used as a resource for effective communication in a culturally different population, shapes, for example, the composition of Anchieta theater—a theater with eminently pedagogical purpose (Barros 2008). Among the autos of Anchieta, the best known and first to be composed in 1561 (*Auto da Pregação Universal*), an allegory of the story of human sin, was written in Portuguese, Spanish, and Tupi, with the following characters: Adam (miller), Guaixará and Aimbiré (devil and his servant), Angel, 12 white sinner men (led by the devils), and 12 Indian boys (dancing with feather costumes), (Anchieta 1997). In general, the autos represent the fight between good and evil and have indigenous children among the characters. According to Barros (2008, p. 85), “the characters in the autos are adjusted to the customs of the Indians with positive or negative accentuations.” Thus, for example, “customs that, according to the Jesuit vision, demonstrated the richness and beauty of Indian culture” were valued, whereas those who were opposed to the Christian vision preached by the Jesuits were thematized as “inventions of the devil.” Still, according to this author (2008), the autos are “a method of appropriation of indigenous signs” that aimed at “transforming the Indian imaginary” so that the Indians would see themselves as Christians (p. 85).

The important role of the Jesuit schools should also be highlighted. The first schools built in Brazil were designed to teach reading and writing. Initially, the students lived with the missionaries; however, after the promulgation of the *Constitutions* (1556) that prohibited this coexistence, they moved in with families. At the end of the sixteenth century, Alexandre di Gusmão founded the first genuine Jesuit college: the Seminário de Belém da Cachoeira (Salvador). In several places of missionary presence in Brazilian territory, the Jesuits created primary schools for teaching the catechism and literacy, Latin and grammar schools (for example, in schools of Salvador and São Vicente), schools for the study of classics and the practice of theater and rhetoric, and courses in philosophy and arts, mathematics and physics, moral and dogmatic theology. The studies in these schools were structured by precise rules condensed in the *Ratio Studiorum* (1559). Among others, the *Ratio* recommended that the studies should be free, the schools should accept students from all social classes, the teaching methods should take into account the psychological characteristics and character of each student, and there should be equilibrium between scientific and humanistic education.

Alexandre de Gusmão (1629–1725), a Jesuit from Bahia, founded the Seminário de Belém da Cachoeira, of which he was the rector. The author of several pedagogic books, he stands out for producing the allegorical novel *História do Predestinado Peregrino e de seu Irmão Precito* (Lisbon 1682: see Massimi 2012) and the treatise *Arte de criar bem os filhos na idade da puerícia* (1685). The education conception that inspired him is synthesized in the statement that opens the treatise: “From the teaching and education which you give your children early in their lives, you may know what they will come into being.” (1685, p. 4). The *Arte*

de criar bem os filhos is inspired on the conception that “the human being as a child is arranged in such a way that any image can be formed” (idem).

The goal of the voluminous treatise is already placed in the Proem: the formation of a “perfect child, so that in the years to come in Adolescence he/she becomes a perfect young adult” (p. II). The treatise aims at explaining to parents what the “good rearing” is and also “how they will do it with success” (p. III). It should also be underscored that this book is also aimed at women (“daughters and mothers”) (p. IV).

With respect to the method, in the *Prologue to the Reader*, Gusmão states that it is based on the experience of the Society of Jesus: in fact, education is a “special obligation” of the Order, “and the Institute is responsible to teach the good arts and to inculcate the good morals to all for greater Glory of God” (p. III). The experience acquired by the Society in over two centuries is cited through numerous examples. It is not the mere presentation of a pedagogical theory, but the discussion of acquired results through experience: in this sense, the work of many Society educators is quoted by Gusmão. The argumentation method used by Gusmão to support his positions interweaves the doctrines of the ancient and the experiences of the modern peoples.

In the treatise, the educational process is considered in its various phases: the need for parents to take responsibility in first person concerning childrearing since the first years of life is emphasized. Gusmão warns mothers about the importance of breastfeeding their children themselves, and Gusmão dedicates a whole chapter to this need. The given reasons are several: firstly, the confirmed fact by the authority of Galeno and Avicena that “the mother’s milk is the healthiest to the child” (p. 180); and secondly, a reason of psychological content, extremely interesting—the fact that with the milk the “inclination” is communicated (p. 184). Gusmão defends the need for females to receive education in the first letters and in the liberal arts equal to man—a revolutionary assertion if we consider that, at the time, education was forbidden to women in the Colony and Metropolis (Massimi 1990). Caring for psychological development is proposed along with care for moral development: this approach, so different from ours, is, however, proper to the tradition that underlies the culture of the seventeenth century. The integration of the psychological dimension in all the other dimensions of the human being, including ethics, characterizes the conception of man and the psychology of this tradition.

The central thesis of the book about the “importance of the good rearing of the Boys,” as stated in the title of the first chapter of the treatise, is based on the conception of Aristotle in *Ética a Nicomaco* (text base of Renaissance Aristotelianism). Gusmão states that “all the welfare of the boys depends on their good rearing” (1685, p. 2) and then discusses the purpose of education in a perspective entirely inspired by Humanism, assuming that “the liveliness of the boys are as a tabula rasa that a distinguished painter has equipped to paint any picture, whatever he wants to paint will be represented, if Angel, Angel; if Demon, Demon will be represented. Whether it is well or badly painted, the picture depends on the first few lines that the Painter drew, so, whether the child is well or badly reared, it depends on the first directives that the father outlined in the child, while being a tabula rasa” (ibid., 2–3).

The pliability of the human being—namely, the infinite possibilities of being that he can choose for himself—was commonplace in the philosophy and humanist pedagogy of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. As Cassirer (1977) notes, the famous *Oratio de hominis dignitate* of Pico della Mirandola reversed the traditional sense of the relationship between *being* and *carrying out*, and that human dignity will not reside in *being* anymore, in the place where man situates in the cosmos and that prescribes, once and for all, the direction of his path of formation. Instead, the being of the man is born in his carrying out. Thus, the man reared as “neither angel nor demon, neither heavenly nor earthly” can give himself the form that he chooses for himself as “free artificer” (Cassirer 1977). The educational process is an expression of this “making himself” of the man, paraphrasing an expression of the Spanish humanist Luís Vives (in Delumeau 1994, vol 2).

Gusmão emphasizes that, the same way that the diversity and success of the possible “paintings” in the tabula rasa, which is man in his birth, depend on the “first lines of the first blurs,” also “the same happens in puerile liveliness, which as tabula rasas they are willing to form any pictures in them. According to what the first doctrine is, according to the first education, which you give to your children, you will be able to know what they will come into being: they will be good children, if they are well reared in puerility, and bad if they are bad reared in principle; because the panel being well or badly painted depends on the first sketching, over which the officer launched his hand; in such manner that the child being well or badly reared depends on the first rearing that his father did to him/her” (1685, p. 4).

A very important social consequence of this process is that well-educated children also educate their own children when they become parents, and so on. Thus, generations that have good behaviors are formed. In some generations, certain virtues reign and certain other vices are hereditary. The theme of social and political utility of education and the relevance of the Jesuit mission in this ambit are introduced—a topic largely developed by Gusmão in the fifth chapter of the first part of the treatise: “it is, therefore, of great utility to the Republic the good rearing of children in the puerile age insofar all of the Republic welfare depends on this, as well as its lack leads the Republic to its entire ruin” (ibid., p. 38).

A particularly interesting chapter is the one devoted to “how there might be parents with children in bad condition” (pp. 134–143). Defining “the children with bad condition” as those who “are not docile in nature to the discipline” (p. 135), Gusmão ascribes this situation to three different causes: the “misunderstanding”, that is, the lack of intellectual capacities; the “rebellious will”, that is, the difficulty in motivation level; and the group of the previous causes. All three conditions are “able to be disciplined” because “no boy has such bad condition which cannot be correctable and domesticated, if there is vigilance and prudence in the parent or teacher to rear him while a boy” (ibid., p. 137). A very important consequence of this statement, in the pedagogical field, is that “parents should not abandon their children who seem to be in bad conditions, distrusting of producing fruit in them, because none can be so naturally bad that indoctrinated and tamed might not be of advantage through good rearing” (ibid., p. 139). When parents feel unable to

accomplish this formation task, they should seek the help of those who have competence in the matter. In this case, it is recommended that the parent “consult the politicians set for this issue, that is, the ones who wrote boy policies, or the experienced ones who may give advice” (ibid., 141–142).

With regard to the available resources in the educational process, among others, the use of moral and physical punishment is contemplated; this use should be moderate—that is, inspired by reason. Gusmão condemns the excessive severity in punishment and warns of the need to punish children at the appropriate time, based on the medical humoralist doctrine of Hippocratic-Galenic derivation: “To prevent these disorders it is good advice not to punish the children in flagrant delict, when the deformity of guilt naturally changes the cholera, and anger breaks into outbursts; by contrast, reserve punishment to night, or dawn... because, once in dawn moods are quieter..., the liveliness is more rested to punish with rigor, suitable to that delict, and not with the excess which cholera compels to.” (p. 323).

The games are considered to be an important resource in the process of formation of the child’s personality, mainly because they take children away from the “idle,” defined as the principle of all vices. Gusmão states that “it is really proper and natural for boys to play and take rest, that the same Latin word *puer* which means boy, in Hebrew it sounds like play, or taking rest; and denying the boys to play is to take away their nature” (idem, p. 368).

A few decades after the publication of Gusmão’s treatise, Manoel de Andrade Figueiredo, born in Espírito Santo and a former student of the Colégio da Companhia de Jesus, the Lisbon Court calligrapher, writes in his book *Nova escola para aprender a ler, escrever e contar* (1722/2010), offered to King João V of Portugal: “the good doctrine corrects the bad nature” (2010, p. 2). Moreover, Figueiredo warns that the learning rhythm of the child should be determined by its real capacity, which is the task of teachers to evaluate and respect it.

In conclusion, the humanist concept of development, with regard to the infinite possibilities of the *being* and to confidence in education, is understood as the process by which these possibilities converge in the choice and effective construction of certain modality of being man. It arrived in Brazil through the influence of the Society of Jesus and its pedagogues. The expulsion of the Society from the national territory and the extinction of its entire works by the Pombal politics in the mid-eighteenth century abruptly stopped its operation in the area of education.

The Education of Modernity

From the perspective of the Brazilian Republican state in the early decades of the twentieth century, school and education are privileged tools for creating a new mentality and society, and the humanities are built in the positivist mold as important instruments of this process. The aim was to propose a new model of man and civil society to be enacted in Brazil, as an alternative to the vision of man and society conveyed by tradition, guiding the Brazilian culture in the Colony period.

The process of introducing Brazil to “cultural modernity” implied rejection of the earlier tradition, especially the one of religious nature, and implied an interest in scientific theories applied to social and political reform, such as social Darwinism (Massimi 1999).

Leading this process were figures such as the doctor and politician Miguel Couto (1865–1934) and the journalist and politician Mário Pinto Serva (1881–1962), a participant of Constitutionalist Revolution in 1930 and 1932. Both authors contributed to elaborating the foundations of the thesis by which education would be the driving element of society modernization. In this sense, Serva argues that the condition would be to destroy the “deforming education of the race,” based on a “false concept of man” “possessing a soul,” whereas in fact “the man is worth for the brain” (Serva 1929, p. 82). Also in this sense, Serva attributes to the Catholic Church and Catholic culture in general the responsibility for illiteracy and educational backwardness of the country, and compares Brazil to Protestant countries, especially the United States, where there would be no illiteracy: “the Catholic clergy never did anything for the instruction of the people (...) introduced positive obstacles while judging that the diffusion of the lights only tends to spread free thought and spirit rebellion” (1924, p. 183).

Another component of the “modernization” process of education in Brazil was the eugenics movement, which attributed the country’s backwardness to diversity and the blending of races. Therefore, the creation of a new mentally and physically healthy people through “hygiene education” was proposed, which would accomplish the purification of the Brazilian race. One of the Eugenism drivers, Renato Kehl (1889–1974; under the pseudonym Macróbio), writes: “Brazil is a country without homogeneity of culture, sentiments, and racial type,” so that “the habits, education, and culture of one person are sometimes completely different from the habits, education, and culture of the other person” (1931, p. 4). In this context, the task of modernizing education would be to act on “this cultural, civic, and moral patchwork” in the sense of “an approximation, of a homogenization of education,” with the goal of creating “a Brazilian mentality” (idem).

A third component of Brazilian modernization is the *Escolanovista* movement, based on the confidence that the insertion of psychological science would provide a revolutionary renewal of education, to be immediately applied to Brazilian education through teacher training in the *Escolas Normais*. This trend has new purposes for the educational process: to replace the traditional aim (the formation of the individual according to a philosophical or religious ideal), by the aim of the individual adaptation to the environment, together with the statement that adherence to the guiding principles, ideas, and values of the existence will be the result of each individual choice, and not of the work done by educators (Rudolfer 1930). Educational reforms, grounded in this vision, in the ambit of public instruction, were held in Brazil in the state of Ceará, by the work of Lourenço Filho, and in the State of Minas Gerais, by the work of Francisco Campos. The referred concept was inspired by American pedagogical pragmatism headed by J. Dewey and W. James: it is central the statement that the aims linked to social conditions and to

professional insertion of the subject must prevail over the spiritual aims of education, based on an upshot proper to the notion of trust in terms of utility and efficacy.

One of the most significant heralds and builders of this education conception in Brazil was Anísio Teixeira (1900–1971), who was a native of the interior of Bahia and educated at the Jesuit school. Later in 1928, he achieved a Master of Arts, and he was a student of John Dewey and William Kilpatrick in the United States. He contributed to the institutionalization of Brazilian education with several pioneering actions. For example, he implanted preschool education with the “Reforma do Distrito Federal” of 1931; he created the universities of the Distrito Federal and Brasília; he reunited the primary and middle schools and promoted the creation of single and multi-curriculum high school; and he implemented the post-graduation.

According to Teixeira, “Dewey did the formulation of a new method of human knowledge” that highlights the “march of experimental intelligence” in the humanities, “march which will give us a new order, more humane than anything we have known so far” (Teixeira 1959, p. 1). And still, “no great modern philosopher was more explicit than Dewey concerning the need of this educational transformation, imposed by philosophy based on new science of the physical world and on new science of the human and the social” (idem).

In this new perspective, “the educator, studying and solving the problems of educational practice, will obey the rules of the scientific method, just as the physician solves, with a scientific discipline, the practical problems of medicine: observing with intelligence and precision, registering these observations, describing the followed procedures and the obtained results, in order to be appraised by others, and repeated, confirmed, or denied, so that his own practice of medicine also becomes research, and the results accumulate and multiply” (Teixeira 1957a, b: 1–2).

The role of society and the market as decisive instances of the educational process is emphasized. In 1929, Teixeira participated in Columbia University’s first course on *education economics*: “Professor Clark gave us, then, in his first class, a definition of education that I keep to this day and to which I always allude to convince certain spirits that education is not only a process of formation and improvement of man, but also the economic process of developing the human capital of the society”. The definition was that “intentional education, namely, school education, is the process by which men are properly distributed by the different occupations of society”. School education is conceived as “the process by which the population is distributed among different levels and branches of diverse work of modern society,” ensuring the “diversification of functions and specialized occupations.” According to Teixeira, “the modern industrial society further intensifies the process of diversification of functions and occupations, determining, for this reason, an education not only lengthener, but also more varied” (Teixeira 1957a, b, p. 28).

In turn, the state intervention becomes necessary. With the division of responsibilities among the three orders of government, conditions for a national public school system could be created, with an intention to educate people of different ages: in childhood, youth, and adulthood. This system would be in constant

development: Thus, there would be “a true institutional readaptation of the school, opening opportunity for a period of extensive social experimentation in which the country will discover and build itself for its own autonomous destinies” (Teixeira 1958, p. 32). Teixeira believes that reforms in public education policies would accelerate the process by which “education for development, education for work, education to produce” would replace “transplanted and obsolete education, education for illustration, for ornament and for leisure” and that “education tailored to Brazilian cultural conditions” would become “authentic and real, identifying themselves with the country and helping to discover it best, to cooperate, as it should, in the great task of construction of Brazilian culture, the highest flower of its civilization” (Teixeira 1958, p. 32).

Conclusion

We highlighted three conceptions of education in the history of Brazilian culture. The observations of Arendt concerning the historical scenery of American education provide us with a critical criterion to analyze them.

We saw how the concept of education that shaped the educational practice of the Society of Jesus in the territory of the colony was inspired by the humanistic view of the individual being pliable in the educational process, and the goal to be achieved was defined in terms of Christian anthropology. Such a process was abruptly interrupted by the political military action of the Portuguese government in the mid-eighteenth century. We also saw that the ideals of education planners in the Brazilian Republic partially resembled the utopian vision of the thinkers of North America; moreover, in the republican period in Brazil and in the United States, education had strong political connotations, as a means of creating the citizen of the new Brazilian state. In contrast, we saw how the multiethnic composition of Brazil resulted in a complex, original, and multifaceted sociocultural universe as a carrier of experiences and diverse educational conceptions. Therefore, a constant tension in Brazilian history between educational experiences created by social subjects and institutional policies is evinced.

Our opinion is that education can become a process centered on the child as an individual and not as an object of educational policymaking if society considers the educational experiences (and conceptions derived from them) that are inherent in Brazilian culture. The future is open.

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Evidence of Medicalization in Medical Discourse From the Inaugural Theses About School Hygiene in Brazil During the First Republic

Patricia Carla Silva do Vale Zucoloto and Antonio Marcos Chaves

Introduction

The high demand for mental health services by children on public health assistance is a serious problem that has generated research aimed at understanding the phenomenon and intervening in response to it (Boarini and Borges 1998; Collares and Moysés 1996; Moysés 1998). In this chapter, we intend to clarify the observed medicalization evidence by analyzing the content of dissertations about school hygiene that were presented in the Faculty of Medicine of Bahia between 1889 and 1930. We analyzed signs of the medicalization of difficulties in schooling in the medical discourse from the selected period, aiming to determine the possible genesis of the reasoning that shifted responsibility from the school institution to the pupil himself or herself with regard to the burden of the disorder.

Theoretical and Methodological Considerations

This research was conducted in a cultural-historical psychological framework because it studies the meanings that were written in a historical time, in a certain culture and place. This work is part of the psychology produced within the “linguistic turn”—a meaning-centered, culturally oriented psychology (Bruner 1990).

Cultural-historical psychology, according to Vygotsky’s (1933/1984) perspective, considers the human being as a historical and cultural being with an individual

P.C.S.V. Zucoloto (✉)
Catholic University of Salvador, Salvador, Brazil
e-mail: patriciaavz@ig.com.br

A.M. Chaves (✉)
Universidade Federal da Bahia, Salvador, Brazil
e-mail: amchaves@ufba.br

history; the individual is a co-builder of the collective history insofar as he or she is a part of the cultural environment in which he or she participates. In any event, social relationships are constitutive of the human individual and are constituted by him or her (Vygotsky 1933/1984). Vygotsky explains the social construction of the mind and argues that the individual constitutes relationships with others through the use of signs and language. The relationship with the world and with others is mediated by language.

Scribner (1985) traced Vygotsky's three levels of history: the first level is the overall history; the second is the ontogeny, or the history of the real child; and the third level is the history of higher psychological functions. For Scribner, the work of Vygotsky should be observed as an attempt to intertwine and connect these three lines of history into a system capable of explaining the specifically human aspects of human beings.

In this research, it is possible to assert that it belongs to the cultural-historical perspective inaugurated by Vygotsky. Our study is based on the understanding that each society holds a historical and cultural construction of childhood and proposes the study of meanings of childhood that are written in a historical time and culture embodied by a particular time and place. Thus, Vygotsky, based on his perspective of the social-historical formation of the mind, believed that ontogenetic development is influenced by its particular socio-cultural environment and, thus, that modern children are different from children of other times and places.

As Scribner (1985) noted, Vygotsky's historical approach is thought to fail to account for a fourth level of history: the history of individual societies. Our research would be included in this fourth level because it proposes to study signs of the medicalization of schooling difficulties in Bahia's medical discourse during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (1889–1930).

Document Analysis and Selected Sources

This is historiographical research based on document analysis. The tertiary sources are documents that give us information about how and where to find particular information specific to a primary or secondary source—for example, library catalogs.

In this research, we used primary sources: inaugural and physician dissertations on the subject of school hygiene presented in the Faculty of Medicine of Bahia (FAMEB) and written from 1889 to 1930. Secondary sources, such as articles and books that also researched those dissertations, were also used, as were tertiary sources, such as library catalogs consulted to locate the primary sources.

The inaugural theses corresponded to the legal requirement for the degree of physician (Article 26, Title 3 of Decree of October 3, 1832, promulgated by the Second Empire Regency), which stipulated that students defend in public a dissertation written in the national language or in Latin, printed at the author's own expense (Castro 1996).

The choice to research the Faculty of Medicine of Bahia was made for four reasons: (1) many studies produced there discussed public hygiene (Schwarcz 1993); (2) the dissertations on school hygiene at the Medical School of Rio de Janeiro had already been studied (Gondra 1998; 2000a, b, 2002, 2003; Gondra and Garcia 2004); (3) the inaugural dissertations on school hygiene at the Faculty of Medicine of Bahia are a rich collection not yet sufficiently explored (Massimi 1989, 1990; Zucoloto 2003, 2007); and (4) these materials were quite accessible.

Stages of Data Analysis

A qualitative analysis of the discourse of the dissertations was performed based on the contributions of the method of content analysis proposed by Bardin (1977) and Bauer (2003). The research was conducted in two stages: a pre-analysis, which included the organization of the analysis, and the content analysis itself. Details of this two-stage research process are described in the following sections.

Pre-analysis

- Step 1 **Search for historical documents:** The procedure proposed by Meirelles et al. (2004) to gather the inaugural or physician dissertations at the Faculty of Medicine of Bahia (FAMEB) and at Memorial Brazilian Medicine (located in Salvador, Bahia) was consulted. Then, the titles of the dissertations were read for the purpose of selecting sources.
- Step 2 **Selection of relevant historical documents for the corpus of the analysis:** The process of choosing historical documents allowed the corpus to be analyzed. The formation of the corpus followed two rules: exhaustiveness, because we took into account all of the documents in this corpus, and relevance, because the documents selected were to be adequate for the purpose of the analysis. To do this, a survey of the dissertations on school hygiene and on hygiene in schools was conducted.
- Step 3 **Preparation of the material upon which to conduct the content analysis:** This step consisted of three items: (a) an initial reading of the material, in which the first aspects that stood out were highlighted; (b) a reading with previously developed guiding questions (Appendix B), while still keeping an open eye to the document itself so as not to miss other relevant data related to the purpose of the research; and (c) developing a first synthesis of the content of the dissertation.

Content Analysis

Content analysis involved two steps: categorization and inference.

Categorization: The content of the dissertations was classified according to themes through the semantic criteria of categorization. Here, categories emerged as a result of an analogical and progressive classification of the context. Thus, the category title was only defined a posteriori.

Inference: Inference is a procedure that refers to a controlled interpretation of the text, which—in this study—primarily focused on meaning. We considered the meaning of the message as used by the signifier, rather than the linguistic code. Two aspects were considered: present themes and their succession—that is to say, how they repeat or get changed, according to a diachronic reading.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the results and discussion regarding the evidence of medicalization present in four dissertations on school hygiene written in 1905, 1921, 1924, and 1930.

Evidence of medicalization was compiled, being characterized by assigning responsibility to the individual, as occurs today, with a focus on the student, for alleged disorders that would prevent the student from learning or behaving as expected. Thus, answers for the following questions were sought: When and how was medicine posited to be essential for the teacher so that he or she could identify the problems or difficulties arising from the student as being organic problems? When and how do student selection and the separation of “abnormals” start? What type of abnormality does it pertain to? What do they say about the topic of attention?

No evidence of medicalization was found in the dissertations from 1895, 1898, and 1920. In these dissertations, concern was exclusively focused on the school institution because of its importance in caring for the welfare of the child. This concern was also observed in other dissertations, although they also showed signs of medicalization comparable to current medicalization concerns.

The following were considered to be evidence of medicalization:

1. Signs of the emergence of the perspective of individual responsibility from a pathological perspective—that is to say, when the focus was on the student and his or her body, with an emphasis on individual differences, health problems/disorders that jeopardize his or her learning (academic performance), or the causes of unacceptable behavior from the school institution’s perspective.
2. Being healthy and normal to be enrolled in regular school, explicitly expressed as a prerequisite to be accepted in the school institution (i.e., to be healthy and not to suffer from any contagious disease); this is a marked contrast to the selection and exclusion of those considered abnormal.

The results of the content analysis were interpreted based on a context analysis, meaning that they were inscribed within the historical period during which they were elaborated.

In Ferreira (1905), the requirements for a child to be admitted to school were found as evidence of medicalization. The conditions for admission of students were considered signs of medicalization because they revealed for the first time a focus on the student—i.e., on the requirements that the student be healthy, clean, vaccinated, and revaccinated, with clothes and books in good condition. In 1930, Moscoso elaborated on the impossibility of setting such requirements for children matriculating into public schools and said that it had been a great challenge for adequate public schooling given the realities of its clientele. As previously stated, these requirements for the child to become a student reveal the emphasis on pre-conditions presented by the student and not just by the school.

More evidence of medicalization, which was revealed by Ferreira (1905), was the recommendation that medical inspectors make the selection of students who were to attend the school. In the dissertation, there was an indication that students who suffered from contagious diseases, as well as those whose health was not adequate with regard to the school work, should be expelled from school. This was the responsibility of the physicians, who were tasked with inspecting and excluding students who did not meet the requirements to be in school, on the grounds of caring for the health of each student. This reflects the requirement to be healthy to be in regular school. The author did not explain what characteristics of health status make it incompatible with school work, but he recommended the selection and exclusion of children with nervous diseases, for example, so that other children would not develop these diseases through imitation. He also recommended that children affected by these diseases should not enroll in school activities. For example, he recommended the exclusion of children from regular school and indicated special education, including for the treatment (and curing) of epilepsy.

In other, later dissertations, the requirement of being “normal” would be explicitly added to the requirement of being healthy as a prerequisite to being a student at a regular school. The defense of medical inspection in schools was not considered a sign of medicalization itself because it depended on what task the physician was called upon to perform—for example, whether the physician inspected just the school’s conditions versus the school as a whole and the students’ conditions. Only the latter was considered evidence of medicalization. As we have observed, already by 1905, there were specific tasks for the physician regarding the supervision of the student.

The signs of medicalization, such as they occur today, were more evident in the arguments presented by the author, such as, for example, when he stated that the cause of the inadequate behavior of the student might be a disease. Costa (1921) explicitly argued that teachers needed the physician to understand the behavior of the student so the former would not punish the child without knowing the real cause of his or her mode of action, meaning that the behavior should be understood as a symptom of a disease that needs to be diagnosed.

Costa (1921) made assurances about the importance of the presence of the physician at the school because he believed that the teacher was not required to know about special medical affairs. He believes that the school physician should always be consulted, especially regarding boarding school.

In Costa (1921), it is evident that the discourse on prevention paved the way for medicalization because prevention included the classification of children into “normal” and “abnormal” categories, and being “abnormal” meant being excluded from regular school. Thus, prevention led to medicalization.

The same author affirmed the responsibility of the physician to classify students as normal or abnormal and to not allow the abnormal children to enter regular school. In turn, the student who was already enrolled would be monitored through “the student record, the diseases acquired or inherited, in which needless to say, in these cases, professional secrecy is especially imposed” (p. 76).

Costa (1921) advocated the exclusion of abnormal students from regular school. For him, the adequate medical procedure with regard to abnormal children was to refer them to a school institution that was able to educate them according to the abnormalities they had, which would be defined according to the tests made by the specialist. He argued that enrollment in special schools for the abnormal was a duty of society. The author considered abnormal children to be those who had nervous diseases, those with intellectual disabilities, and those who had “an absolute inability in which the sigma traced their destiny” (p. 50), as well as blind and deaf-mute individuals. Mental illness was understood as a result of heredity, and the school doctor was exempt from being responsible to serve these children, except to refer them to “adequate establishments for treatment” (p. 50).

Dr. Costa (1921) also referred to “nervous diseases” that affect school performance and are affected by school work, such as neurasthenia. He described hysteria, epilepsy, neurasthenia, and asthenia and how the school doctor should behave with each one. Costa (1921) considered it necessary to refer to a specialist “all causes of imbalance resulting from these states” (p. 55) because he considered referrals to be the “only way to unravel the neuropathological mysteries and simulated vagaries existing in school life” (p. 55). Explicit evidence of medicalization appears in this statement because the physician becomes indispensable in identifying psychological problems hidden in the school environment.

As with Costa (1921), Jorge (1924) stated that inappropriate behaviors of students could be caused by diseases. This is a clear sign of medicalization because he explained the student’s behavior as the result of pathology that was unknown to the teacher.

Jorge (1924) demonstrated, through the work of Professor Bouillot, the importance of the teacher knowing his students and the student’s possible diseases and skills, in order not to judge them incorrectly. In considering how important it would be to know the health problems of the students, Jorge (1924) recommended ensuring that the learning conditions be adequate with regard to the child’s problems.

The same author recommended “sanitary surveillance of the student,” which included checking the health status and conditions of the student from the time of

school entry throughout his stay, to monitor his or her physical and intellectual development. In the surveillance measures, da Jorge (1924) included individual medical examinations for students upon admission or transfer to other schools, with the purpose of investigating “the most important parts and those more subject to the influence of school work” (p. 98). Similar to Costa (1921), there was a belief that school work could affect the health of the child. The doctor had to elaborate in the student’s individual health record, based on tests, regarding the student’s health and physical condition. This record would enable the doctor to know what precautions to take with each student as well as how to separate the normal from the abnormal, the latter of whom “[should] be subject to milder discipline and less stressful work” (p. 103).

Jorge (1924) stated that, based on the evaluation of the student conducted by the school doctor, it was possible to categorize students as “abnormal,” “physiological abnormal,” “organic abnormal,” and “pedagogical abnormal.”

The physiological abnormal were characterized by hearing or vision problems that complicated school life. The organic abnormal were children who, due to their physical constitution, were likely to have tuberculosis and other infectious–contagious diseases. Pedagogical abnormal presented “psychic nerve defects” (i.e., “limited ability to pay attention and memorize”; p. 104). The author noted that the criteria for selecting “*pedagogical abnormal*” were “provided by the notion of ergasthenia, or relatively precocious disease” (p. 104).

Dr. Jorge (1924) did not recommend the exclusion of abnormal from regular schools; instead, he merely advocated for the softening of the school subjects and the work proposed to these students. However, he warned that the ideal situation was that schools have only normal students: “normal and robust children, educated according to the healthy habits since early age” (p. 77).

The author Jorge (1924) established a distinction between hygiene and pathology, in which he clarified the purposes of hygienists, whose focus is on prophylaxis. However, as we have observed, prophylaxis and prevention can also lead to medicalization. The same author recommended that doctors verify the students’ levels of intelligence and their intellectual development to evaluate their “ability for school work” (p. 104). He did not concern himself with the possibility that teachers themselves might evaluate students’ intellectual ability, inasmuch as they might to overload students with difficult, tiring, and badly organized school work, which is a trigger for brain fatigue.

We may conclude that the defense of a medical examination before enrolling at school indicates a focus on the individual and his or her body, pointing to pre-conditions that students must have to be accepted in school. Being healthy and normal are among these pre-conditions. We observe that the classification of the students into normal and abnormal categories, as advocated by Costa (1921) and Jorge (1924), is explicit evidence of medicalization, similar to the current medicalization in our society. It shifts focus from the institution to the student, in search for a supposed abnormality that would prevent him or her from learning and behaving according to what is expected by the school.

Moscoso (1930) indicated the conditions for admission of children in schools. He stated that ill students should not be accepted and that they should recover before entering school. He also required a health certificate and vaccination certificate from the student before enrolling at the school. He added that children carrying contagious diseases would not be accepted in regular schools due to the likelihood of harming themselves and other children. According to him, “nothing is taught to the ill. Ill children do not learn; the efforts spent with this purpose are useless and may worsen the disease” (p. 24).

Dr. Moscoso (1930) did not mention any classification of students into normal and abnormal categories. He referred to the medical-school inspection service, created by Dr. Barros Barreto, and the board of education and child hygiene service, headed by Professor Dr. Martagão Gesteira, who performed his work on behalf of the Bahian school.

The author Moscoso (1930) presented the advantages of the medical school inspection, the medical examination of the student who was enrolling in school, from which all information is placed in the health record. In this examination, including in the sanitary record, an observation of the student’s physical features is emphasized. Moscoso (1930) reported that the school-medical inspection occurred in cultured countries and other states, such as Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo. He considered that, in Bahia, the creation of the Child Care and Hygiene School Service was a “promise of better days” for this “blessed country” (p. 24), which would be completed as soon as “his conditions allow[ed] him and governments turn their eyes to the sacred cause of popular education” (p. 24).

Conclusions: Evidence of Medicalization

In these dissertations, not only is a discourse oriented to the school institution present, but so are prescriptions for school hygiene, which clearly represent a shift in focus from the institution to the student. We suggest that the evidence of a focus of medical prescriptions on the individual, on his or her body, on individual differences, and on health problems that would jeopardize his or her school performance is evidence of medicalization because this is a sign contrasting to the previous selection of healthy and normal students, who are considered capable of learning and behaving as expected by the school institution.

Additionally, when medical knowledge arises as being essential for (1) explaining a student’s behavior, (2) classifying students as normal or abnormal, (3) identifying psychological problems hidden in the school environment, and (4) measuring a students’ intelligence, to the point of disqualifying the knowledge of the teacher, it is considered evidence of medicalization. In turn, medical inspection allows an increase in the process of medicalization of school difficulties, wherein the pre-examination and the student’s medical record are necessary for the student’s admission to the school.

We also noticed the beginning of an individualistic way of thinking, based on organic aspects, which means that the signs of medicalization, having been present since 1905, were becoming more evident in 1921, 1924, and 1930.

The medical discourse present in dissertations on school hygiene in the twentieth century appear as a fractured discourse: on one hand, there is the consideration that the school must fit the characteristics of children (physical aspects and the teaching program); on the other hand, the culpability of the student for his potential or actual failure starts to emerge, with a concern for interpreting the student's inappropriate behavior or learning difficulties as a result of some disease, culminating in the recommendation of the selection of students into categories describing them as fit or unfit for school work—that is, into normal or abnormal categories.

However, this is only an apparent fracture because the discourse of prevention led to medicalization. As we have observed, when Costa (1921) approaches the subject of “school prophylaxis,” he mentions the measure that should be taken to prevent the emergence of diseases in students. He also mentions measures to address emerging diseases, which include the separation of normal from abnormal students and the exclusion of the latter from school. Thus, we conclude that prevention also led to medicalization.

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School and Child Development: The Real and the Ideal of Brazilian Educational Context

Raquel S.L. Guzzo and Vera Lúcia Trevisan de Souza

Both inside and outside of the educational context, one can analyze the objective conditions through which children and adolescents grow up and develop. Understanding this process of child development, beyond the strictly educational context, provides a necessary breadth to interpretations about the numerous problems experienced by school-age children.

The dynamics and culture of school are an inalienable part of human life in the present world. Children are being inserted into formal education at early ages and must remain there until they complete a process of professional training and formation. In Brazil, however, indicators of entrance into the formal education system and the completion of each cycle show that, between the ideal and the real in this process, there is a gap to be bridged that is difficult to overcome.

Social policies define education as a state duty and right of everyone, proposing that part of the state's public budget is dedicated to ensuring the educational process of children, adolescents, and young adults. However, the ideal of a school that fosters the development of children and adolescents has been confronted by reality. For example, policy guidelines may not take effect, and an increasing number of children drop out of school or are testing below grade level. In many countries, such as Brazil, educational policies may seem to prioritize education for all children but do not ensure a process of development, particularly for students from lower classes.

This chapter attempts to systematize some elements of this reality, which are not always evident in Brazilian public schools, including the challenges of psychologists in public education. Without fear of undue generalization, we can say that this black-and-white portrait does not distort the reality: The school has not been an ideal place for the development of children in order to prepare them for life. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a critical view of public education in Brazil and the consequences of this situation for students, who pass through without understanding the meaning and role of school in their lives.

R.S.L. Guzzo (✉) · V.L.T. de Souza
Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Campinas, Campinas, Brazil
e-mail: rguzzo@mpc.com.br

V.L.T. de Souza
e-mail: vera.trevisan@uol.com.br

To this end, this chapter is organized into three parts. The first part presents the theoretical foundations of the development process as a shared historical dimension and as determined by social and economic structures that directly impact the activities and social relations present in the educational space. The second part highlights, through the work of psychologists in these contexts, the challenges and the contradictions of everyday education, especially in the public system, which make the school a place of suffering, disillusionment, and alienation for all those who are part of this scenario. The third and final part seeks alternatives to a process that, for many structural and conjectural problems, has shown signs of fossilization when facing the challenges of reality. The final proposed contribution of this chapter for a human and political emancipation given by school education aims to keep alive the hope in becoming a necessary energy to a process of change affecting the majority of Brazilian children and adolescents.

Human Development: Historical and Cultural Processes

Several scholars in the field of psychology and education have examined human development as a historical process, with regard to the subjects' interactions with the environment in which they operate. In the field of school psychology/education in Brazil, recent surveys show that the assumptions of historical-cultural psychology, notably the concepts of Vygotsky, have been adopted in recent decades as the theoretical research and interventions in schools, precisely because of this postulated development with centrality in objective conditions and social relations.

Vygotsky's ideas about human development based on humanistic principles involve three actions: overcoming, cooperation, and empowerment. While *overcoming* refers to the continuing need for individuals to overcome the current limits of their ways of life, *cooperation* implies the former action, in that it requires the overcoming of concrete material conditions for its realization; cooperation would be the most important of these conditions. Thus, overcoming is possible by cooperation among people by conquering the emancipation of freedom of thought and action, exercised collectively—with the collective and by the collective. (Puzirei 1989).

The consideration of these principles is fundamental for understanding the concept of development that is advocated in this chapter: to humanize the process, which is the biological framework inherited by the subject, by the mediation of culture gives centrality to the social and resembles more a revolution than an evolution. This involves the permanent action of the subjects in relation to the environment, which is considered a source of development because it derives content and dynamics in a unique and singular way. This appropriation provides its own psychological system and personality. In the words of Vigotski (1933/2006b): "The superior psychological functions of the child, the specific human properties arise first as forms of collective behavior of the child, such as cooperation with other people, and only then they become individual interior functions of the child" (p. 7).

By this process, the subjects increasingly may expand their trade with the world and thus expand the representation of the environment around them, forming new concepts and developing awareness of self and reality. Hence, by the understanding that the subject is a product and producer of its history, the constitution is only possible, precisely, by its social-historical character.

Vigotski (1933/2006b), when referring to the context, does not consider it as a purely environmental factor, but rather as a relational movement between the internal and external situations that would constitute a *sui generis*—a unique, situation that he calls the development social situation (DSS). For Vigotski (2006a, b), the way the subject experiences something is modified to an extent that modifies its DSS. From these considerations, it is possible to define an experience as meaningful for the subject, full of emotions, and generated in a specific situation (DSS) that does not qualify as foreign, but rather as the junction of the aspects of the subject and the situation itself. What we discuss here is about the school, which should be a favoring space for the development of children, but, contradictorily, is an area where significant livings are marked by violence, insecurity, fear, and humiliation, among other negative elements.

In the words of Vigotski (2010, p. 686)

The experience is a unit in which, on the one hand, so indivisible, the environment, what is experienced is represented—the experience always binds to that is located outside the person—and, on the other hand, is represented as I experience it, i.e. all the particularities of the personality and the particularities presented in the experience, both that which is taken from the environment, all elements that have relation with given personality, what is taken from the personality, all traces of the character, constituent traits that have relation with given event. Thus, in experience, we always deal with the indivisible union of the particularities of the personality and the particularities of the situation represented in the experience.

From this perspective, it is impossible to consider development as detached from the middle or the subject's action. These meanings break the dichotomous visions of development, in which the pole now stands in the subject, sometimes in the middle. It also implies the subjects are present in the context in which is undertakes the development of the child as promoters of development. Hence, the school is important as a privileged space of coexistence and provider of formal knowledge, allowing children and young people to achieve more elaborate ways of thinking and acting in the world. It is a precondition for critical consciousness as a way of appropriating one's own life as a producer of the history, present, and future.

These meanings play key roles in the education provided to children and youth. However, in Brazil, public school, which is attended by the vast majority of the population, does not provide the material conditions necessary for the development of children and youth. The public school system is organized in an extremely bureaucratic way, which does not consider the real demands of schools; the professionals who work in schools were not consulted, the public that attends is not listened to, and the wage conditions of the professionals are not considered. Several elements are responsible for this situation. One aspect to be considered is the vicious cycle that exists in the chain of training and practice of public school teachers. One aspect to be considered is the vicious circle that exists in the chain of training and

practice of public teachers. Beginning with a poor structured training that disregard the subjects and their stories, the organization assumes the curricular content to be taught as protagonists of learning process. In this direction, schools engage in more bureaucracy to improve, at any cost, the rates of student performance as measured by external evaluations than engaging effectively in the promotion of the space as a social situation of development, providing promoter experiences that give meaning and direction to activities for students and teachers.

An example of the failure that has characterized education is the level of students' academic performance. Research conducted by a traditional nongovernmental organization on the development of public education in Brazil pointed out that only 10 % of students possess the expected knowledge in mathematics and 29 % demonstrate the expected knowledge in Portuguese (Prado 2013). The report highlights even more alarming data about the inequality of rights to quality education and the consequent development of children and youth; these results are even lower in the black population and the poorest states in the country. Despite the consequences of the students' lack of ability, what is most aggravating is that operating with complex knowledge is a prerequisite for the development of higher psychological functions, which enables more abstract ways of functioning and development of critical consciousness.

Diversity and social inequality characterize Brazilian education but it involves the subjects in their singularities, the collective and its construction, and relations between people of different ages, social classes, interests, values, and desires. This is, the challenge to school psychology in Brazil, especially in the election and planning of actions to address this diversity in the educational process and child development.

According to Guzzo et al. (2010), the maturation of a profession is related to how much a particular area of knowledge is consolidated and the prospect of the relationship, which establishes the theoretical knowledge with practice, and the demands of reality. The relationship between psychology and education is not different. Although narrow and old, it is in the midst of the concrete circumstances that it consolidates in theory and practice (p. 131). This statement sums up what we have been defending and justifies the questioning of the demands put on school psychology in light of what has been discussed and produced in the area. These issues are discussed in the next section.

Challenges and Contradictions of the Everyday Educational Context

In most counties of Brazil, despite the efforts of various professionals in schools and educational psychology in recent decades, there is a policy of inclusion for psychology in the school systems of basic education (Souza 2012; Guzzo and Mezzalira 2011). This has forced professionals to act outside the system to gain a place in school participation, which requires overcoming resistance, especially of its

professionals. Therefore, there are planned activities with psychologists in schools. Intervention research has been the path taken by researchers who are involved with the problems inside these contexts, especially those experienced by children and young people (Petroni 2012). After years of experience in schools, through research and interventions, the contradictions become apparent and need to be addressed in order to overcome them. The first contradiction involves the right and access to education versus the quality of teaching and education offered at the school.

In Brazil, access to elementary school became universal in the early 1990s, when the state was able to create enough jobs to cater to all children and young people of school age in the range 6–14 years. In the early 2000s, regular education became compulsory and parents who do not send their children to school are punished. However, the state has failed to ensure the quality of education in schools. Currently, after spending 8 years attending school, students often do not understand complex sentences and are unable to perform mathematical operations that require abstract reasoning. The school has lost its meaning for children and young people, who may only attend because of the obligation imposed on parents.

Paradoxically, when asked about the importance of school, students state that it allows them to have a future and to be someone in life—something also declared by parents when interviewed. Conversely, when asked about the importance of school, students declare that is to have a future, to be someone in life, something also declared by the parents, when interviewed. That is, the school that does not promote the assignment of meanings and senses by the students, does not favor the appropriation of formal knowledge or promotes their development, continues to be one of the few hopes of a better future for children, youth and their families (Bordignon and Souza 2011).

Another contradiction involves the relations undertaken in school. Educational practices, social characteristics, and therefore the collective—consisting of singular subjects, teachers, and students, with different stories, beliefs, values, and social classes—organize themselves from a hegemony that assumes a level playing field, without considering diversity. However, even this form of organization, with content-curricular activities and centrality of the role played by educators, does not guarantee that the school has collective work. Instead, what we see are people who seek to survive individually, without considering other relationships or without teasing the end-goal of education: student learning. Thus, teachers are immersed in the problems of relationships with managers, who may ignore their demands in the classroom. The managers, in turn, complain of teachers who resist any change to their practices, adhering to the proposals from the local government while complaining of these proposals, which may not consider the real conditions of the schools. Still, the teachers cannot claim to pursue quality education outside the students' behavior, which according to them is always inappropriate and disinterested, with excessive conversations and disrespectful attitudes (Barbosa 2012; Souza 2008, 2012; Dugnani and Souza 2011).

These conditions that have characterized Brazilian public schools—already well publicized by research and the media—have caused different types of health problems for the teachers, a lack of interest in teaching activities, and a lack of availability of training courses. The teaching profession has little appeal in Brazil (Davis and Almeida 2011; Souza et al. 2009).

Precisely because teachers and other school professionals remain steeped in bureaucratic and relational issues, the end goal of education—the learning and development of children and youth—seems to be forgotten. Because there are few opportunities to participate, problematic relationships and a lack of curricular activities lead to catastrophic outcomes: students simply drop out of school. The informal labor market is enormous, and those who are forced to keep attending have absenteeism rates on the order of 70 % in the final years of primary school (Torres 2013).

This situation became worse with an became worse with the approved policy, called “continuous promotion” that aims to recover the not learned contents by students in later years, in order to combat the evasion and school dropout. This is taken by education as an automatic promotion and by the students it is as a routine of being promoted without having acquired the necessary knowledge to advance in the process of appropriation of formal knowledge. After a few years, the gap of knowledge and skills of many students is an almost insurmountable barrier to their development.

Children are the biggest victims of this process because they are priced out of attaining higher levels of knowledge, more expanded ways of thinking, critical consciousness, and ownership of their lives, with no hand in the direction of its history or its future.

Liberating Education: The Horizon of Emancipation

In public education in Brazil, we aim to break the inequalities and injustices present in schools and communities. Our approach to overcoming these conditions features an exclusive educational process. As shown by Guzzo (2007), Brazil is a country with many illiterate citizens and an educational system that maintains social inequality, institutionalizes violence and discrimination, and subjects students to domination and oppression, such as not being respected in their difficulties, not learning in schools, and suffering prejudice and discrimination because of poverty and family problems. Our desire is to start questioning our professional actions without regard to social and political situations. Understanding this reality requires a historical understanding that reveals deep scars of a colonized people who do not recognize their strengths, submit and give up the struggle for sovereignty, with its development, qualified by education of all children and adolescents. These marks, when naturalized, leave us immobilized and powerless against the prevailing social order, especially when we criticize. It seems there are no exits—we feel surrounded.

However, over the years that we have been immersed in schools and communities, we eventually found some paths that point to the possibility of a liberating education that can be built by a partnership of school psychology/education with the school. These actions and accomplishments also have opponents in the dialectical movement that characterizes them.

Partnership Versus Acting as an Expert

The insertion of the psychologist in Brazilian schools as an expert geared to individual care, especially of students, was a failed model of practice over many years, resulting in the removal of vocational school educators and resistance to their presence. Our actions that partner with school professionals (teachers and managers) provide support and subsidies to reflect on the conditions that characterize their actions, on the potential of practices geared to the interests and needs of students.

Collective Action Versus a Focus on Individual Care

As part a social space characterized by diversity, psychologists in schools should focus on the collective. Meetings with groups of managers, teachers, and students should reflect on and propose innovative practices, leading to the pursuit of dialogue needed to build autonomy and emancipation of individuals.

Actions Aimed at Emancipation Versus Tutoring

To that extent, the psychologist should promote awareness of the subject toward the critical consciousness that is necessary for a constant evaluation of the development process in the school context. The construction of a political pedagogical project ensures space for the participation of the collective school, while also involving the community. The school is not, by itself, the only space where the development process of children and adolescents occurs. Therefore, integration with the community is important, but this change is still far from reality in Brazil.

In line with the discussion on liberating education and the social psychology of liberation made by Guzzo (2007, 2009) and Guzzo and Moreira (2012), it is important to highlight some elements that are essential for the coincidence of the real and the ideal in the educational context: the critical importance of always being present in the school routine, the freedom to create a condition for emancipation, as well as reflection, questions, argumentation, and decision making. If we can make the school a place of emancipation exercises, we can expect that reality can change.

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“Becoming Professionals”: Exploring Young People’s Construction of Alternative Futures

Elsa de Mattos and Antônio Marcos Chaves

One of the most critical moments in the life course is when young people develop into adulthood. At this time, several psycho-social transformations simultaneously take place between the person and his or her environment. As the person begins to navigate new spheres of experience, significant ruptures might occur and challenge his or her sense of self-continuity (Zittoun 2007, 2011). For instance, a sense of discontinuity can emerge when a young person enters the world of work, begins to reflect on abilities developed at school, and starts to question what she is able to do, as well as her sense of identity and the meaning of her actions. Many skills and abilities previously constructed during childhood and adolescence in other spheres of experience (such as family, school, or in paid jobs) may also be challenged by new demands emerging in confrontations with new settings and social expectations prevailing there.

Young people’s experiences may become especially critical when they live in poverty and have to help support their families, as is the case in many large cities of Brazil, such as Salvador, the capital of Bahia State. In a context of inequality of opportunities, school and work are two particularly prominent spheres of experience outside the family where young people may circulate starting in childhood, seeking to include themselves and to be included. These experiences therefore may become especially relevant for the emergence of self-regulation processes, as well as for the reconfiguration of their perspectives towards the future, social opportunities, and opening possible pathways or trajectories to these youth.

In this chapter, we examine the lives of disadvantaged youths and argue that, when young people start to navigate new spheres of experience (such as a social program and an apprentice program) and begin to confront new challenges with old ones, a new sense of “*becoming*”—and especially of “*becoming professionals*”—may emerge and project these youths into alternative futures. From their interac-

E. de Mattos (✉)

Faculdade Independente do Nordeste - FAINOR, Bahia, Brazil

e-mail: e.mattos2@gmail.com

A.M. Chaves

Universidade Federal da Bahia, Bahia, Brazil

e-mail: amchaves@ufba.br

tions and negotiations with multiple spheres of experience—family, school, apprentice training, and work—they begin to forge a new future-oriented time perspective that allows for self-continuity across settings and across lived time. This process of integrating values and actions gives them a new meaning for themselves and the world—a new sense of direction in the life course.

This chapter consists of three parts. In the first part, we draw on two theoretical perspectives of cultural psychology (Valsiner 2006, 2007, 2011; Valsiner and Rosa 2007; Zittoun 2006, 2009, 2012, in preparation) and of dialogical self theory (Hermans 2001; Hermans and Hermans-Jansen 2003; Hermans and Hermans-Kanopka 2010; Salgado and Gonçalves 2007; Salgado and Hermans 2005) to explore and discuss how people construct a future-oriented time perspective—a perspective of *becoming*—emphasizing the role of processes of semiotic-dialogical regulation within the *self system*. The second part presents the cases of George, Marcelo, and Neuza, highlighting their interactions in the sphere of education, apprenticeship training in a social project, and work over the period ranging from 16 to 23 years of age, through which they build versions of themselves capable of projecting actions, thoughts, and feelings that will allow them to better adapt to the uncertainty of their futures. They project signs and personal meanings to the future, reflecting something that they not yet *are* but *wish to become*. The third part presents the analysis of cases and discusses the dynamics of the processes that are involved in regulating semiotics of coming-into-being, generating significant changes in these youth's self systems.

Self-regulation as Semiotic-Dialogical Emergence

The construction of a sense of *becoming* is associated with semiotic processes of self-regulation, and more specifically with the process of semiotic “emergence” within the self system. This chapter draws on the perspectives of cultural psychology and dialogical self theory to explore the way young people construct a future-oriented time perspective—a perspective of “*becoming*”—that will orient them to overcome challenges they face when they start to participate in a new sphere of experience, such as the workplace, and guide their construction of alternative futures. In this section, we briefly describe both theoretical frameworks and discuss the combination of these approaches to the understanding of self-regulation as a process of semiotic and dialogical emergence.

The Perspective of Cultural Psychology

According to the perspective of cultural psychology, *semiotic mediation* is the process that allows human beings to synthesize new meanings, both in the reflexive (i.e., through generalizations from the meaning of words) and affective domains

(Valsiner 2004). This perspective regards the experience of time as central to human life, because the person has the capacity to question *what-is*, to imagine a possible futures-to-be (*as-if*), and to continuously project herself in that imaginary meaning field to orient her life trajectory (Abbey and Valsiner 2005).

Valsiner (2006b, 2007, 2012) stresses the importance of a semiotic perspective on development and suggests that the developing person acts in the present moment, departing from a *pre-figuration of reality*, because what he or she sees in the present (and takes as a basic starting point for her or his actions) is the moment immediately following (Lyra and Valsiner 2011). *Semiotic mediation* is essential in this dynamic, because self-regulatory processes may enable people to take their immediate reality as a holistic pre-organization for their actions, thinking, and feeling. These processes allow for an *integration* of different elements into a whole that cannot be reduced to its parts (Valsiner 2008). People experience the present moment through *imagined constructions*. They create something that *is* not present yet in their immediate environment, but that may *come-to-be* in the next moment, in a near future. Elaborating on these aspects, Abbey (2012) suggests that the person acts in the present based on the relationship between *real* and *unreal* (or imagined) meanings, transcending his or her immediate here-and-now context. Therefore, people live in a constant process of *becoming* something/someone else, and semiotic mediation is needed to deal with the tensions and uncertainties both in the present as well as in the future (or what the future may bring).

Along these lines, Zittoun (2006, 2009) advocates for a semiotic perspective of the life course where processes of meaning making after *ruptures* take a central role in development. Constructions of new meanings are triggered by *ruptures* that occur when people face situations that question what they take for granted, their existing operating meaning fields or *semiotic sets* (Zittoun et al. 2012). Therefore, a semiotic dynamics is created to help the person overcome ruptures and reduce uncertainty, dealing with emerging feelings, as he or she negotiates, modifies, and transforms cultural and shared meanings, creating *new semiotic sets* that organize and (re)structure the individual's personal path in life, knitting past and future in the present (Zittoun 2012). As they face significant ruptures, young people semiotically construct and reconstruct themselves, shaping and reshaping their life trajectories (Zittoun et al. 2012).

Processes of *rupture-transition* are regarded as important moments for meaning making, demanding a reorganization of the *self-system* that enable people to build imaginary spaces (Zittoun 2006). These imaginary spaces are relevant for ascending to a different space-time relation—more distanced from the immediate present and from the person's current environment—and for producing *alternative futures* (i.e. a new imagined paths that the individual may take). Recent elaborations from Zittoun suggest that the construction of meanings, such as alternative futures or personal life philosophies, are essential for developing continuities in the self-system, promoting an integration and hierarchical organization of patterns of actions, thoughts, and feelings that occur in a given sphere of experience (Zittoun and Grossen 2012; Zittoun, in preparation). According to Zittoun and colleagues (2013), *alternative futures* are projections or anticipations of what the person might come-to-be,

anchored in the past and oriented towards the future. The same authors suggest that personal life philosophies are a form of synthesis (often not conscious) of past experiences and of possible futures, representing a “signature” that characterizes one’s life as unique and singular. To build alternative futures, a person draws both on inner resources, feelings and expectations—wishes, fears, hopes—and on social guidance or suggestions. Alternative futures, therefore, emerge as a coordination of real and imaginary dimensions of the person’s life.

The Perspective of the Dialogical Self

A *dialogical perspective* of the self is a useful approach to understand how psychological regulation occurs. The notion of the self as dialogical was elaborated by Hermans (2001) and colleagues (Salgado and Gonçalves 2007; Hermans and Hermans-Jensen 2003; Salgado and Hermans 2005; Hermans and Hermans-Konopka 2010) who put forth the **Dialogical Self Theory** to highlight a dynamic and multivocal movement of construction and re-construction of meanings inside the self-system. Such a perspective highlights a dynamic and multifaceted view of the self, as endowed with multiple voices and different positions that co-exist and hold different perspectives about the world. The self maintains its unity through dialogue and is produced as plural and polyphonic through communication interactions (Hermans 2001, 2002).

From a *semiotic-dialogical* perspective, some voices in the self have the potential to bring innovation into the self-system (Gonçalves and Ribeiro 2012; Cunha et al. 2012). Gonçalves and Ribeiro (2012) suggest that “innovative moments” are expressions of alternative modes of being that emerge in the context of psychotherapy. These innovations challenge dominant voices that rule the narrative of the person and have the power to transform current self-configurations. One type of innovative moment that is particularly generative of change is defined as a *reconceptualization voice* (Gonçalves and Ribeiro 2012; Cunha et al. 2012). When emerging in clinical settings, voices of reconceptualization have two distinctive features: (1) they establish a contrast between a previous dominant way of functioning and a new emergent one, representing an alternative voice a new direction toward which the person is turning; and (2) they highlight the process of transformation from past to present ways of functioning (Gonçalves and Ribeiro 2012).

Bringing changes and innovation into the self-system seems to be related to two other relevant concepts: the notions of promoter position and of meta-position. Following the original concept proposed by Valsiner (2004) of the promoter sign, Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010) articulated the notion of promoter position to account for the organization of the self from a developmental perspective. According to the authors, the promoter position focuses particularly on the “temporal aspects of the self and organizes the self over time-frames” (Hermans and Hermans-Konopka 2010, p. 228). Promoter positions become particularly relevant

for the construction of a new sense of “becoming” because they allow for the openness of the self-system towards the future and may have the potential to produce differentiation in the self, in the form of a diverse range of more specialized and qualitative different positions in the future self. Moreover, promoter positions have an integrative function as they integrate previous existing positions in the self-system with new emerging ones. And lastly, they may also allow for a reorganization of the self towards a higher-level of development—that is, a more abstract and generalized level of experience.

Promoter positions may function sometimes in a similar way as meta-positions (Hermans and Hermans-Konopka 2010), widening the horizons of the self. Meta-positions have several specific qualities, but for the purpose of the perspective developed here, it is useful to highlight that they create a certain distance from other positions and may allow for an overarching view of several positions and their mutual relationships, making it possible to see and establish links or bridges between positions in one’s personal history (i.e. memories or recollections of past experiences) and to envision future developments (Hermans and Hermans-Konopka 2010). Therefore, we believe that promoter positions may function as meta-positions and as reconceptualization voices when certain ruptures take place and call for reorganization of the self.

This semiotic-dialogical view of the self may be especially relevant to understanding how young people construct a future-oriented time perspective—that is, an alternative future. When a young person faces a given bifurcation point in her life trajectory, she is confronted with new perspectives and social demands, which call for new adjustments. At these times, she may use previous meanings as resources for building continuities, and can rise above her present tensions, generating alternative futures, imagining new future paths for herself (Zittoun 2006). Here we propose to consider these new future paths—*alternative futures*—as innovative meanings emerging through cycles of production of innovation (Valsiner 2006, 2008), that act much the same way as reconceptualization voices in the self-system (Gonçalves and Ribeiro 2012), having the potential to transform previous ways of being into new ones. We will focus on changes taking place over time, in a longitudinal perspective of youths’ trajectories, and in multiple spheres of experience—such as the spheres of apprentice training and work—that call for new adjustments of the relations between the young person and her environment.

In our analysis, we take the notion of *emergence* as a way to convey a new type of causality in psychology. Elaborations in cultural psychology (Valsiner 2002, 2006a, 2007) indicate that to understand the processes involved in semiotic mediation—and especially psychological regulatory processes—it is necessary to avoid a linear explanation of changes, and adopt systemic models of causality of phenomena. These models highlight that there is no point-by-point correspondence between what enters into the composition of the system and what it presents as a result. Psychological processes seem to depend on a special form of causality to occur—catalytic causality. This form of causality represents an analogy with catalytic synthesis processes observed in the field of biochemistry (Beckstead et al. 2009; Valsiner 2004, 2006b, 2007, 2008; Cabell 2010). This analogy seems relevant

because it allows us to think about exchanges between person and environment, taking into consideration how different parts of a system are organized and the way the system operates to ensure achievement of relatively stable results over time.

Catalyzing processes—such as the *personal cultural synthesis*—are capable of producing emerging differentiation at bifurcation points in the person’s developmental trajectory (Cabell 2010). Specific signs or meanings emerge in the landscape of the self and facilitate further development (Beckstead et al. 2009; Valsiner and Cabell 2012). Along these lines, when the person faces discontinuity in her self-relations with the social world, the emergence of certain type of signs, such as promoter signs (Valsiner 2004), may allow her to distance herself from the here-and-now experience and build meaning bridges between past and future, and/or between different spheres of experience, allowing the emergence of a new life trajectory that brings self-continuity across time and space.

The Emergence of a New Sense of “Becoming”

In our view, the construction of *alternative futures*—that is, projections of imaginary futures—seem to be intensified during youth transitions—because at this age people start questioning what their future may hold. This is the time when people usually wonder: Who will I be in the future? What am I going to do in life? What kind of job can I get? What will I study? Interacting with new environments, experiencing new values and creating new bonds of belonging with these life spheres, young people may start to plan future goals and to construct intensely and intentionally a new sense of their historicity. This process may become even more critical among young people living in poor neighborhoods. Life in poverty brings specific challenges for young people. For instance, they don’t have access to qualified educational resources and to good jobs, and may become more prone to experience ambivalences associated with their futures. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the mechanism that allow for such projections to occur. How do young people regulate their relationship with time? How do they create future goals that orient their actions and feelings towards the future?

As we propose here, when young people start to question what they might become in the future, the active construction of a sense of becoming is more prominent, and they engage in sense-making that is adaptable to their life circumstances and may guide their life trajectories. We suggest that the process of self-transformation that happen when youths navigate multiple spheres of experience may be paradigmatic for studying the emergence of a new sense of *becoming*—and more especially of *becoming professionals*—that will serve as powerful meaning complexes orienting their future trajectories.

In this chapter, we consider alternative futures as the construction of an innovative meaning in the self-system that allows for the emergence of a new path towards the future, a new sense of “becoming” someone that the person not yet *is*, but may come to be, in the future. We will show that a new future perspective for

the self, in the form of a sense of “becoming a professional”, emerges out of overcoming challenges that a young person faces when interacting with a new sphere of experience—the world of work—engaging as young apprentice. This new meaning of self and the world is able to project the young person into imagined possible futures, qualitatively different from past and current experiences. We suggest that this new sense of “becoming a professional” represent a personal synthesis, an innovative meaning that operates in the self-system as a reconceptualization voice [see Gonçalves and Ribeiro (2012) and Cunha et al. (2012) for a detailed explanation], and to transform previous ways of being into new ones.

As we will show, drawing on the cases of three youngsters, an innovative sense of “becoming” emerges through catalytic cycles of production of innovation (Valsiner 2006, 2008). In this process, a new promoter position (Valsiner 2004; Hermans and Hermans-Konopka 2010)—that is, Responsible-Apprentice—emerges when youngsters seek to overcome tensions in their relations with the sphere of work. This promoter position allows for the openness of the self-system towards the future and is later expanded and differentiated through other emerging innovative meanings, configuring a complex thread of more specialized hierarchical meanings that progressively leads to a new way of being: “I-Professional”. Moreover, the promoter position as a Responsible-Apprentice integrates previous existing positions in the self-system with new emerging ones. And lastly, it also allows for a reorganization of the self towards a higher-level of development—a more abstract and generalized level of experience (I-Professional).

Along these lines, we argue that a promoter position [as proposed by Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010) following Valsiner (2004)] emerges out of confrontations between previous positions and new demands of the workplace and starts to act as a reconceptualization voice (Gonçalves and Ribeiro 2012), integrating past experiences with an imagined future and projecting these youths in the direction of a new life trajectory.

In the following section, we discuss the cases of George, Marcelo, and Neuza to illustrate the mechanisms of semiotic self-regulation that young people develop as they start to participate as apprentices the world of work, making new meanings for themselves and the world in the “border zone” between their past experiences and imagined futures, and building a new sense of “becoming professionals” that contributes decisively to the overcoming of previous tensions and to orienting their futures.

Method

The present study was designed as a longitudinal qualitative study of multiple cases (Stake 2006). It was structured in three rounds of in-depth interviews with six Afro-descendant youths who participated in a youth apprenticeship program

developed by a nongovernmental organization (NGO) in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil. During the first round of data collection (*Time 1*), the youth were 18–19 years old. In the second round (*Time 2*), they were age 20–21, and in the third round, they were 22–23 (*Time 3*). This chapter reports the cases of George, Marcelo, and Neuza and focuses on their experiences from between *Time 1* and *Time 3*. These particular cases were chosen among others in our study because they showed the operation of the cycle of intransitive production of new meanings—the mechanism of building a flexible hierarchy of meanings within the self-system over time. This mechanism allows for the construction of a time perspective that directs young people’s action, thinking, and feeling towards the future. The opposite mechanism of building a rigid hierarchy of meanings within the self-system and of emergence of inhibitor signs was reported elsewhere (Mattos and Chaves 2012).

In the following section, we begin by highlighting characteristics of dominant discourses and experiences present in the spheres where youth circulate. Next, we present a synopsis for each case and, last, the analysis articulating them with theoretical perspectives.

Family, School and Work: Central Spheres of Experience for Brazilian Youth

Literature on youth transitions in Brazil highlight that the main spheres of experience in which young Brazilians circulate are family, school, and work. These studies show that ambivalences and contradictions prevail in the social discourses configuring these spaces.

Family Sphere

Family serves as an organizer of life and a significant place for the formation of attachments and a sense of security for Brazilian youth (Abramo 2005). Studies show that young people in Brazil usually rely on their families for affective support and material structure (Abramo 2005; Sarti 2005). In contemporary families, the mother usually has a central role and stands out as the primary resource for help in solving problems (Gonçalves and Coutinho 2008). However, family is not only a source of help but also of conflict (Sarti 2005). Conflicts between teenagers and their parents are sometimes related to the degree of autonomy that parents want to give to their children and the type of expectations they carry over them. Contradictions and complexities of Brazilian society are reflected in family conflicts, apprising simultaneously traditional (i.e. less autonomy to children) and modern values (i.e. more autonomy to children) (Borges and Magalhães 2009). This kind of conflict may be intensified among poor adolescents as youngsters are expected to provide for their parents in difficult times or in old age, as well as to contribute to household expenses through paid work. In our study, George, Marcelo, and Neuza were all very involved in their family lives and were trying to support family members.

School Sphere

Another significant sphere of experience for Brazilian youths is the school. In Brazilian culture, school acts as a privileged space for socialization and construction of knowledge and a source of social and emotional support, as well as for gaining academic credentials that may open more opportunities in the future (Mattos and Chaves 2010). Several studies show that school is experienced ambiguously by Brazilian youngsters, as it is needed to provide the academic credentials to achieve future goals, but it is also distant from everyday youth experiences (Dayrell 2007, 2010; Ferreira-Santos 2005; Mattos and Chaves 2010). Problems associated with poor quality of teaching and with lack of material and human resources continue to degrade the school environment (Amparo et al. 2008; Leão et al. 2011; Sposito 2005), contributing to the increase of school failure and dropout, as well as the lack of interest in schoolwork among adolescents and young people (Leão et al. 2011; Mattos and Chaves 2010). Although school has become more accessible to the poor, it has not really been able to establish “a dialogue” with students’ social realities (Dayrell 2007) and with the dynamics of youth culture (Costa 2010). One important aspect of young people’s experiences in Brazil is that the last years of schooling are usually accompanied by work.

Work Sphere

The sphere of work is regarded as one of the conditions of entry into the adult world for a significant part of the youngsters in Brazil, who need to work in order to help support themselves and their families (Camarano et al. 2006; Sposito 2005). Work also becomes relevant because it allows for young people’s participation in youth cultures of leisure and entertainment (Dayrell 2007). However, the phenomenon of labor insertion of young Brazilians is marked by intense economic, technological, and institutional transformations and by deregulation of state policies. Such conditions contribute to deepening socioeconomic inequalities, restricting opportunities for poor people, especially for youth living in the outskirts of urban centers (Ferreira-Santos 2010; Sposito 2005). Therefore, young people face several problems entering the labor market, such as employers’ requirement of previous work experience and professional qualifications (e.g. expertise in computer technology and foreign languages), which are generally not accessible to young people living in poverty. Moreover, labor insertion among Brazilian youth still remains precarious and youngsters have great difficulty finding formal employment and obtaining legal guarantees and benefits in their jobs (Thomé et al. 2010). On top of these circumstances, young people also face discrimination for being “poor”, for living in slums, or even for being “young”, since there is a social representation of youth and the poor as irresponsible and unskilled. Along these lines, some studies show that young people feel disrespected and mistreated in the workplace by adults who distrust them and do not believe in their capacity to perform job tasks (Castro and Abramovay 2002). Recently, there has been a growing governmental preoccupation with the reduction of early exploitation through forms of precarious and burdensome jobs. Several initiatives of labor insertion for young people have been established by

public policy (Law of Apprenticeship 10.029/2000; Youth Employment Program, First Job, etc.). These experiences, however, are still little explored by academic research.

In the following section, we analyze this process of rupture-transition as a crucial juncture in the lives of George, Marcelo, and Neuza—at a moment when there is a tendency for proliferation of complex experiences that demanded the development of a person's capacity for reorganization in their self-system, for a new adjustment with their environments, searching for self-continuity. In this sense, we believe that our study may provide a significant window for the understanding of self-regulatory processes related the construction of a future-oriented time perspective, the projection of new goals, and the shaping of new life trajectories.

Case Synopsis

In this part of the chapter, we present a synopsis of the cases of George, Marcelo, and Neuza, emphasizing their interactions within the world of work. Next, we provide tables showing the main I-positions associated with significant transitions during this period of their lives.

George—“I Can Trace My Own Path, I Plan My Future”

At the age of 18, George was living with his parents and sister in a poor neighborhood located in the city of Salvador, Brazil. He began to work during childhood (at 11 years old) in his father's bakery, acting as a clerk, cashier, and baker, after a period of economic hardship in his family. His mother is a housewife and his father is currently working as operator of topography equipment. In late adolescence, George attended a social project and became an apprentice in the computer laboratory of a private university. When he arrived at the company, George realized that there was not a place for him in the area in which he was located. At first, he felt “lost” as an “extra element”, because the team was already formed and he was just watching the other employees work.

Then, he decided to “find [his] space there”, and began to actively seek and perform activities he had seen others doing. Over time, he began to gain recognition from his colleagues and supervisor for his achievements. George thought that this experience “opened [his] mind to different things.” He went from being “a boy” to becoming a person “with responsibilities,” as he committed to strict work schedules and tasks to accomplish. In this process, he gained autonomy to accomplish tasks without adult support and earned other people's trust. He began to see himself as a “professional,” having a broader view of the professional world, as one in which he would have to grow and develop as a professional.

Working as an apprentice, George learned to manage very well the wages he earned, not only contributing regularly to his family expenses, but also saving money to invest in something for his own future. After finishing high school, George decided to continue his training in the domain of computer technology. With the money he had saved, he took several courses to complement his work experience as computer technician and instructor. He became an instructor in the computer laboratory of a social project and set up a small business in his neighborhood in partnership with friends—an *internet point*.¹ George also began to focus more on his studies and passed a competitive examination for a technology course. He realized the need to have a technical qualification that, in the future, would increase his professional opportunities. He believed he could “trace his own path”, because he developed a “matured view of the future.”

Marcelo—“I’m Pursuing a Career, and I’m Increasingly Growing”

At our first interview, Marcelo was 18 and lived with his mother and siblings in a poor neighborhood, located in the periphery of Salvador. He began to work when he was 14 in an electronics workshop in his neighborhood, after a period of economic hardship in his family, when his mother got very ill and his father had lost contact with his family.

Marcelo began the apprenticeship program at the age of 16 years old and started to work in the administration office of a private school. The training he received at the NGO helped him to develop a professional interest in the area of computer technology and web design; this represented “the starting point of his professional career,” because it provided a direction, a path for him to follow. Once he arrived at school’s office, however, much in the same way as what happened with George, Marcelo became very disappointed because he realized there was not a place for him at the computer laboratory, and he could not put into practice the computer skills he had learned during the NGO training.

After this initial disappointment, though, he realized that “there are two sides of the coin: the good and bad side.” He realized he had the support of his colleagues, who explained all the activities he could do, and soon he gained recognition from others for his achievements. Within just three months, he was transferred to work at the pedagogical coordination, a school department that demanded greater responsibility (he was responsible for the distribution of examinations for the students). Marcelo realized that his superiors trusted his competence and recognized his good performance. Working as an apprentice, he could gain more autonomy and experience with different kinds of activities. Using the money he earned, Marcelo could not only contribute to his family expenses but could also buy a computer. He

¹A small shop that sells Internet connections.

became an autodidact, self-teaching himself at home after work, and becoming savvy in computer technology.

When the apprenticeship contract ended, Marcelo took a course in computer programming and worked as a technology instructor for a training company. He started to work as a web designer but continued studying and practicing at home. Over time, besides working as a technology instructor, he decided to start a business and became a consultant on web design and computer programming. He reflected he could “turn a hobby (design) into a profession (web design)” and is “building a career.”

Neuza—“Today, My Goal Is to Build a ‘Blue Ocean’ of Tranquility in My Professional Career”

At the beginning of our study, Neuza was living with her mother and two brothers in a poor neighborhood, located in the city of Salvador. When she was 14 years old, her parents got divorced and her mother left her home. After some time, her mother returned to live with her grandmother, and Neuza went to live with them. When she was 17 years old, her father became unemployed and Neuza entered the apprentice program, starting to work at the administration office of a private university.

When she started her new job, Neuza felt a little confused because it was necessary to rotate between various sectors, and she realized that she was not going to spend enough time at each activity to learn the tasks and to find out what people were expecting from her. There were some people who had patience to explain what she had to do, while others did not. So, at first, Neuza was a little disappointed with the work environment and even created enmity with a colleague, but soon she overcame these negative impressions. Throughout her work as an apprentice, there was a person who gave her support in the workplace—a person who looked after her and gave her some advice about future changes.

While working, Neuza never abandoned her duties at school. She was always a good student and got good grades, and she never stopped studying because of work. She had a quite tiring daily routine because, besides work and school, she took a pre-university preparatory course during the evenings.

Soon after the end of the apprenticeship contract, she entered college to take a course in international relations. At the same time, she was hired to work in the sales department of a local newspaper. However, she did not like that job very much because she thought “selling was a very big challenge, because we always had to hit performance targets.” Therefore, she sought another job and started to work in the administration office of a residential condominium. She studied at night and worked all day long. In that job, Neuza could learn a lot of different tasks and administrative routines and was able to coordinate other workers. Moreover, she earned a good wage, so she was not only able to help her family but also save to money. Neuza thought that the experience “was important to [her] personal growth

and maturation in relation to work,” because she could start to “think much more about her future and about the consequences of things”.

Neuza acknowledged that there was a significant change in her life around the age of 23 because she came to see that “everything is a process”, and it is necessary to plan the steps to achieve future goals. She realized she would have to do an internship in order to become a professional in her field of studies. With this objective in view, she saved money so that the internship was secured. She began an internship in foreign trade in the last semester of college. After her graduation, Neuza continued working as project coordinator, and she explained: “Today, I’m doing everything to get into a ‘blue ocean.’ It’s my goal to build a professional life that looks like a blue ocean of tranquility.”

Case Analysis

The trajectories of George, Marcelo, and Neuza show how the processes of semiotic regulation in the field of *self* emerges over time, leading not only to a dynamic positioning and repositioning within the self-system, but also to the emergence of *promoter positions*, which participate decisively in building a future-oriented time perspective. In the analysis that follows, we show that emerging promoter positions become key components in a new hierarchy of meaning in the self-system. A new version of the *self* is progressively consolidated, as tensions between previous positions are overcome and young people become more able to confront past experiences with a prospective future.

In the following analysis, we show how transformations in the self-system of George, Marcelo, and Neuza took place over the three time periods of our study: Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3. Firstly, we draw on the perspective of the Dialogical Self Theory to examine the shifts in I-positions and dialogical strategies used by these young adults to restore continuity in the self that is disrupted by the uncertainties and ambiguities they face as they enter the world of work and confront new demands of the workplace. Secondly, we explore the mechanisms of self-regulation employed by these youth in an attempt to restore continuity in the self-system and show how they build a new sense of becoming that will orient them towards alternative future trajectories.

Time 1

Our analysis of the three cases departs from the initial dynamic in field of self, in which the family is the central sphere of experience in the lives of these youth. As shown in Table 1, at Time 1, the position of dependent or dedicated son/daughter was the most prominent in self-systems of George, Marcelo, and Neuza. Such positions emerge from dialogical exchanges with significant others in the family, especially with their mothers. These positions create a field of meaning that reflects

Table 1 Synthesis of I-position’s changes over time

Time period	George	Marcelo	NEUZA
Time 1	<p>Dependent son Assistant in family business (acts as support for) ↓ Apprentice (computer laboratory)</p>	<p>Dedicated son Assistant in electronic workshop (acts as support for) ↓ Apprentice (starting point for career)</p>	<p>Dependent daughter Dedicated student ↓ Apprentice</p>
Time 2	<p><i>“Without space there”</i> + Underskilled (external position) × I-confident ↓ <i>“Running after”</i> ↓ Responsible-Apprentice</p>	<p>I-Disappointed × I-Recognized (supported/guided/taken care of) (external position) ↓ Responsible-Apprentice I-Guided <i>“Running after”</i> + Provider-Son</p>	<p>Inexperienced + Unprepared × Recognized/Oriented ↓ Responsible-Apprentice</p>
Time 3	<p>Responsible worker (integrates and differentiates previous positions) ↓ Technology instructor Entrepreneur Dedicated student (technical training) + Provider-son Good administrator of money ↓ I-Professional</p>	<p>Responsible worker (integrates and differentiates previous positions) ↓ Technology instructor Computer programmer Entrepreneur (web designer) Autodidact + Good administrator of money ↓ I-Professional</p>	<p>Responsible worker (integrates and differentiates previous positions) ↓ Seller Administrative assistant + Dedicated student (university) + Good administrator of money ↓ I-Professional</p>

the family experience as a sphere of proximity and significant ties between people, where everyone worries and takes care of the welfare of others. They express how young people interacted with their families, as a place of mutual support and help in times of need. On the one hand, they show that parents must act as providers of the needs of their children; on the other hand, the reverse may also occur, because children should support parents and provide for their needs later life and in times of distress. Therefore, in the initial stage of our investigation, the interests and concerns of young people were significantly influenced by the needs of their families.

At the same period (see Table 1), however, other prominent positions emerged in the self-system through young people’s interactions within life spheres other than

the family: assistant in the family business (George), assistant in an electronics workshop (Marcelo), and dedicated student (Neuza). In the work sphere, George and Marcelo had exercised paid activities prior to the apprenticeship program as a way to directly support their families. Since the age of 11 years, George had worked as an assistant in his father's bakery; Marcelo, since 14 years of age, worked as assistant in an electronics workshop in his neighborhood. Neuza did not exercise any kind of paid work in either childhood or early adolescence, but she was always a dedicated student and interested in academic activities. She sought to support her family (especially her mother) after the separation of father and unemployment.

All three youth entered the apprentice program of the NGO around age 16 as a way to overcome disruptions in the family, seeking to help support their parents and siblings who were facing hard times. It is possible to suppose that the previous positions as assistant in the family business (George), assistant in an electronics workshop (Marcelo), and dedicated student (Neuza) acted as resources that could support these youngsters in moving toward the apprentice position in the world of work. They acted as relevant *symbolic resources* (Zittoun 2006), which were readily accessible and facilitated their adaptation to work routines and demands. These positions generated an internalized confidence these youth had already built in their competence and skill to perform work and academic tasks. However, this initial confidence was challenged in their new work environments by new emerging demands.

Time 2

Time 2 reflects the adjustment of the youngsters to the challenges of the work environment and their search for continuity after the disruption caused by their entrance into the sphere of work experience. As shown in Table 1, the individual's transitions into their new positions as apprentices were not without conflict. The entrance into the workplace as apprentices represented a discontinuity in the self-confidence they had previously built in earlier work or school experiences.

All three youths confronted ambivalent discourses when they entered the world of work—discourse both accepting and rejecting youth in the workplace. They were accepted into the apprentice program, but people in their workplaces did not trust their competence and skill to perform complex tasks. Therefore, these young adults had to just observe the activities others were doing instead of practicing these activities. As a result, negative feelings emerged in relation to the work environment. George felt displaced and excluded, “without a space” there. Marcelo was initially “disappointed” because he could not put into practice what he had learned in the NGO training course. Neuza felt “confused” and also “disappointed” due to her frequent changes between departments.

To address these ambivalences, these youths developed close relationships with their supervisors, coordinators, and/or coworkers. Marcelo, for example, indicated that his supervisor, Zelia, played a key role in his overcoming of initial ambivalences. She was always willing to help him perform his tasks, showing him better

ways to carry out his job activities and highlighting his abilities and skills. The voice of Zelia presented Marcelo with a set of alternative positions, expressing confidence in his abilities to succeed at work. In response, Marcelo seemed to manage a quick internalization of Zelia's external voice of confidence and rapidly gained new job attributions, starting to perform more complex tasks. He went to work in a school department that required more responsibility, controlling the distribution of the students' final examinations. About these changes, Marcelo explained:

My superior, Zelia, told me everything I had to do, she was always available when I had any question or doubt... Then, in four months, I was transferred to another department. There, in a way, it is the most important sector of the school, because it was there where the students' exams were distributed. So much responsibility and they put a lot of trust in me when they put me in this sector.

Likewise, George and Neuza also went through similar processes. George initially realized he had "no space" in the workplace. However, he used the strategy to "run after" job activities. He started to do things he saw others doing, and gradually he started to be recognized by his peers and supervisor, who "soon realized that [he] was able to perform that same job they were doing." George then began to perform more complex tasks and to take on more responsibility, processing the enrollment of new students. Neuza was initially confused because of her frequent changes between departments. She felt she had no time to gain new job skills. But with the support and recognition of her coordinator, Teresa, she became informed in advance about future changes. She started to have more productive job relations, and her adaptation to the work environment became easier.

Then, with all three youths there was a movement of dialogical positioning and counter-positioning that quickly evolved towards the internalization of alternative voices [i.e., of the external voices of confidence; for a more detailed explanation of this mechanism see Mattos and Chaves (2014)]. There was a relatively rapid recognition of their abilities and efforts to successfully perform new tasks by significant others present in the work environment (superiors and peers). From that starting point, the youths could take a distance from the flow of opposite tendencies (ambivalent discourses) present in their daily routines, recognize their own ability to perform new functions, and regain their self-confidence. They created a sense of belonging to their work environments that enabled them to overcome the tensions through the rapid consolidation of a promoter position as a responsible apprentice. The following report from Marcelo illustrates that process:

There are two sides of the same coin: the good and bad side. I was kinda sad because I just received training in webdesign and computer graphics. So I expected that the company would put me to work in that area, but unfortunately it didn't happen the way I expected. But, somehow, it was good for me [to stay where they put me to work] because I gained experience in other departments. So, it was beneficial for me. One side was beneficial.

Therefore, in face of challenges and uncertainties, a new position as *Responsible Apprentice* emerged through dialogic encounters and the recognition of significant others present in the workplace. This anticipated recognition from social others

represented a bifurcation point and a decisive shift towards the construction of a new perspective of the future for these youths. The new position as Responsible Apprentice can be regarded as a promoter position, because, as proposed by Valsiner (2004, and later by Hermans and Hermans-Konopka 2010), it allowed for the openness of the self-system towards the future and (as we will see later) produced differentiation in the self-systems of these youngsters, in the form of a diverse range of more specialized positions associated with an imagined future self. Moreover, the position of Responsible Apprentice had an integrative function. It integrated previously existing positions (such as assistant in the family business, assistant in an electronics workshop, and dedicated student) in the self-system with new emerging ones (apprentice). Lastly, it also allowed for a reorganization of the self towards a higher level of development—that is, a more abstract and generalized level of experience (I-Professional). Along these lines, we propose consideration of the emergence of the position of Responsible Apprentice as the result of a first cycle of production of innovation—a cycle of hierarchical intransitive meanings (Valsiner 2006a).

As shown in Fig. 1, in the cases of George, Marcelo and Neuza, a first cycle of intransitive meanings production is created at the border zone where new positions are confronted with former ones. This cycle was triggered when these youths started to circulate in the sphere of work. At that time, their previous expectations and positions were challenged by the new activities they had to carry, and by hegemonic discourses present in the workplace (discourses that distrust and devalue youth skills and their capacity to perform). To overcome these ambivalences, the youths

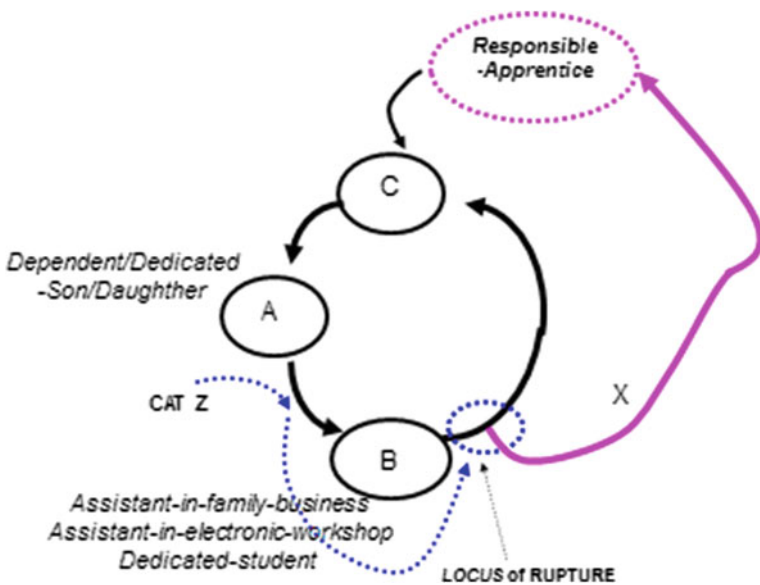


Fig. 1 Construction of a hierarchy of intransitive positions

struggled to produce a new synthesis, with support of significant others, and built a new meaning for themselves and their environment—as Responsible Apprentices—at the border zone between past and future. This new meaning represents a pre-adaptation that is capable of projecting them into the future.

Time 3

Time 3 shows expansion and differentiation of the promoter position as Responsible Apprentice into new and qualitatively different positions, and also a consolidation of a new version of the self as I-Professional. The position of Responsible Apprentice played an important role in promoting a creative and healthy adaptation of the youngsters to the work environment. They developed new skills and a new sense of responsibility and commitment to work, were recognized by others as competent, and were even “promoted” to perform more complex tasks and activities. They began to feel more confident and sure of themselves, showing more autonomy at work.

When they finished their apprenticeships, George, Marcelo and Neuza remained employed, took up new job functions in other companies, and even created their own small businesses (George and Marcelo). Progressively, the Responsible Apprentices turned into Responsible Workers, expanding the former position into a more specialized one. Responsible Worker can be differentiated into a more complex thread of specialized hierarchical meanings (Technology Instructor, Entrepreneur, Dedicated Student, Autodidact, etc.). These developments progressively lead to a new way of being: I-Professional. Along these lines, the position as Responsible Worker may be regarded as the unfolding of the promoter position as Responsible Apprentice—a more specialized and differentiated position—which facilitates the continuity of the young people’s trajectories towards professionalization (i.e., becoming a professional).

After the end of the apprenticeship contract, as they gained new positions in the job market, these youngsters showed that they have managed to integrate and differentiate previous positions with new and increasing demands. As Responsible Workers, both George and Marcelo became technology instructors, and, later, started small businesses, acting as entrepreneurs in the field of technology. George opened a lan-house (a kind of Internet point) with friends in his neighborhood, Marcelo started a business to provide services in computer programming and web design, and Neuza started to work for the administration of a residential condominium. Later, she entered the university (to study international relations), increasingly integrating work with studies, seeking a placement in that area. Therefore, it is possible to think that the position of Responsible Worker allows for the following characteristics to emerge: stability, accountability, attendance, belonging to the working environment. Such characteristics are reported by Neuza as follows: “I [gained more] stability in my job, I worked there for two and a half years, and I was never at fault, never late, or ‘sick’, never asked for a license, this kind of stuff. So I’ve got a backup in that company.”

In Time 3, together with Responsible Worker, other self-positions emerged and played important complementary roles in the construction of a future-oriented time perspective of becoming a professional: Good Administrator of Money and Dedicated Student. These positions form an alliance with the Responsible Worker in order to empower the self-system towards becoming a professional. For instance, the position as Good Administrator of Money seems to be a relevant passage point (if not obligatory) in the direction of becoming professional. Knowing how to manage money—that is, how to spend as well as how to save it—was an important step for allowing George and Marcelo to take technical courses in their area of interest, to buy computers for study at home (Marcelo), and to pay for a university course (Neuza). About this process, George revealed:

As soon as I get the money, I have a good control over money, I don't go on spending it... I'm not the kind of person who spends a lot of money, I keep it. I do the following: I try to invest in me. Part of the money I get I use to support my family, and the rest I take a small part of it to invest in something I need to buy. But most of it I use to invest in me, invest in something that will make me a better professional.

Another complimentary position that is relevant for becoming a professional in the future is Dedicated Student. For instance, after his experience as Responsible Apprentice, George became more interested in studying. He realized that in order to achieve the goal of becoming a professional he needed to “invest” in himself, in something that could help him “to be a better professional.” George decided to take short technical courses (e.g., computer maintenance) and later passed a very difficult examination for a long-term course in computer technology. Marcelo also invested more in his area of interest. He bought a computer, took a course in computer programming, and started a new small company as web designer. Neuza got into the university and paid for her course with money she earned at work. She remained employed throughout her university course, combining work and study—believing that, along with personal support, work could teach her useful skills to use in her professional life (e.g., management skills). As George explained, it all seems to stem from a mature vision of the future that these youngsters have developed: “I have already got a mature concept of the future, and of what I can do for my future to be better. I can trace my own paths. I do this, to see if I can get there, in order to get there.”

The Architecture of the Self-in-Motion

Departing from the analysis presented above, it is possible to think that these youngsters have developed an internalized perspective of their futures that serves to orient their actions in the direction of something that they not yet are, but wish to become. Departing from the initial point, the emergence of the promoter position as Responsible Apprentice, there is an expansion and differentiation of new positions in the self-system as youths gain a new perspective of becoming-professional,

which starts to guide further transformations in their self-systems. This process occurs in a coordinated relationship between what has already emerged (from the past into the present) and what can still emerge (in a selection of future possibilities).

Therefore, the movement of transformation from Time 1 to Time 3 is oriented by the projection of the self-system into becoming-a-professional, which guides new cycles of meaning production. In this process, when new positions are created, they produce new levels of a hierarchical chain of intertwined positions. This movement can be seen as a semiotic entanglement or “knitting” between past experiences and future projections, which creates new meanings of the self and the world. The future projection as I-Professional emerges as a powerful version of the self in the future loaded with affect and able create a continuity of self in the flow of irreversible time.

Along this chain of intertwined meanings, promoter signs act as bridges between different time frames (i.e., past and future). They are powerful because they can expand as well as differentiate the sense of self and the world—that is, they can differentiate former limited self meanings into an amplified version of the self (I-Professional).

Figure 2 illustrates the mechanism of self-regulation operating through the production of a chain of entangled meanings. This chain is formed by qualitative “loops” in which former positions in the field of self (A1) and (A2) (e.g. as

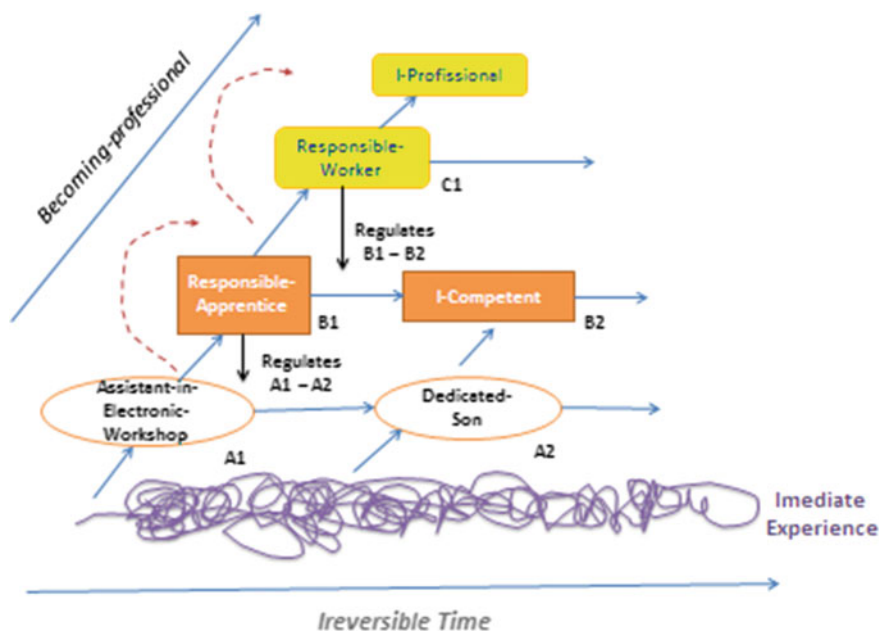


Fig. 2 Self-regulation through the creation of a hierarchy of flexible signs (Adapted from Valsiner 2001, p. 18)

Assistant in an Electronics Workshop and Dedicated Son/Daughter) will be simultaneously expanded and differentiated by new emerging positions situated at a higher level (a more abstract level) in the “architecture of the self” (e.g. B1: Responsible Apprentice). These new emerging positions take a flexible control over former positions, regulating their relations. New “loops” are produced, arising from young people’s confrontations with specific life circumstances presented in their contexts and giving rise to new positions (e.g. C1: Responsible Worker). The process generates powerful signs that dominate the landscape of dialogical relations of these youth in their work sphere of experience.

A hierarchical chain of entangled positions is created in which the central axis is becoming-professional (as a version of self that is projected into the future). The meaning of I-Professional emerged as a generalized meaning located at the highest level (i.e., more abstract) of a semiotic hierarchy, capable of integrating different “times” experienced by these young people and of orienting their developmental trajectories.

These emerging hierarchies are intransitive—that is, irreversible—because new meanings operate as points of no return. After the emergence of a promoter position (such as Responsible Apprentice), there is no reversibility to a “former” position. Simultaneously, there is expansion and differentiation of former positions at this bifurcation point. The new emerging position provides a continuity of some aspects of former positions but also is qualitatively different from them. Intransitivity, however, does not imply rigidity. The “architecture of the self” reaches a higher level and new meanings begin to take a flexible control over previously produced meanings. Without the creation of such (intransitive) hierarchies, the self-system becomes rigid and fixated in sequences of positions, or vicious cycles between positions are created (mutual-in-feeding), instead of producing virtuous cycles that bring development to the self-system [for a more detailed explanation of this mechanism, see Mattos and Chaves (2013)]. These hierarchical chains of interwoven meanings seem to be essential for the creation of a future-oriented time perspective in the self-system and for the production of semiotic “entanglements” between positions.

Concluding Remarks

The aim of this chapter was to analyze the process of construction of alternative futures among disadvantaged youths. We drew from two conceptual analytical frameworks, Cultural Psychology and Dialogical Self Theory, to explore and discuss transformations that occur during a critical developmental period when youth start to participate in the world of work and begin to actively imagine what they are going to become in the future. We claim that, by building hierarchies of meanings departing from the promoter position as Responsible Apprentice, George, Marcelo and Neuza were able to distance themselves from immediate experience and put

into a new perspective their previous positions, turning previous limited meanings into more generalized ones.

We suggest that the emerging position of Responsible Apprentice acts as a promoter sign that plays a significant role in organizing the self over time frames (Hermans and Hermans-Konopka 2010). It is particularly relevant for the construction of a new sense of “becoming” because it allows for the openness of the self-system towards the future and produces a differentiation in the self, in the form of a diverse range of more specialized and qualitative different positions in the near future (Responsible Worker, Technology Instructor, Entrepreneur, etc.). Moreover, as a promoter position, the Responsible Apprentice facilitated the integration of previous existing positions in the self-system with new emerging ones. Lastly, it also allowed for a reorganization of the self towards a higher level of development—that is, a more abstract and generalized level of experience. Therefore, this promoter position as Responsible Apprentice operated as a meta-position, widening the horizons of the self.

The youths built new identities, negotiating between various positions in a setting permeated by multiple voices. There emerged a new version of self: “I-Professional,” corresponding to an integrated and integrative self-perspective, radiating its influence to different dimensions of life, and allowing for the overcoming of challenges faced by these youths across different contexts and time dimensions. George, Marcelo, and Neuza developed a different outlook over their lives, taking a proactive (i.e., agentic) role to gain social recognition and to achieve further goals.

In this motion, former positions become semiotically “entangled” or “knitted” with future projections, producing a new pattern—a new fabric of meanings for the self and the world. Thus, the future and past intertwine, creating historicity of the person over time, within the irreversible flow of past-present-future. The process involves the projection of a new self-version in the future, in the direction of becoming something or someone that the person currently not yet is but may become. Individuals begin to trace their future trajectory and perceives themselves as the authors of their own stories, building an “architecture of self-in-motion.”

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Editorial Intermezzo

Experiencing the Educational Contexts: Insiderness, Outsiderness, Betweenness

**Marilena Ristum, Ana Cecília de Sousa Bastos, Virgínia Dazzani
and Giuseppina Marsico**

In a broader sense, educational processes encompass several domains and activities of human life, across different societies, in time and in space. Education is a never-ending process. Strictly speaking, to complete schooling at the basic, elementary level remains among the most cherished goals for a human being, representing an advanced frontier for human development. When Brazilian society recently restarted, once again, the effort to eradicate illiteracy, it was not without emotion that aged people, some of them almost centenary, proudly reported in front of television cameras how long they had cultivated—then accomplished—the dream to master basic reading and writing skills. At the other extreme, in some countries of the contemporary world, girls can pay with their very lives for daring to make real their dream to attend school.

It is not possible to analyze the issue of boundaries in education without assuming a variety of perspectives on the dynamics through which these different educational contexts intertwine, counteract, and develop together. Following the theoretical coordinates presented in the first part of this volume, at the more abstract level and while considering Brazil as a case study—some past, present and future developments and implications—this section assembles concrete examples about experiencing educational contexts from inside, outside, and in between. We assume here that educational processes entail liminality: human beings develop in the measure that their continuous meaning-making activity produces distinctions between borders, creates borders, and modifies borders. They become educated—develop their “educational self”—when they cross boundaries (Marsico et al. 2013).

M. Ristum (✉) · V. Dazzani
Institute of Psychology, Federal University of Bahia, Salvador, Brazil
e-mail: ristum.ufba@gmail.com

A.C. de Sousa Bastos
Federal University of Bahia, Salvador, Brazil

A.C. de Sousa Bastos
Catholic University of Salvador, Salvador, Brazil

G. Marsico
Department of Human, Philosophic and Education Sciences (DISUFF),
University of Salerno, Salerno, Italy

In this part of the book, we deal precisely with the challenge of analyzing processes occurring on the borders—the implications of which need to be considered as they connect to realities that here we call *insideness*, *outsideness* and *betweenness*, and that we name the following three sections, briefly explained here.

The *Insideness* section focuses on developmental processes that take place within the school, elaborating on such topics as cooperation, social rules, relationships between language and developmental processes, violence, and family–school interactions. Diverse cultural realities set the scenery here in that the studies come from different countries: Italy, Brazil, Argentina, and the United Kingdom.

The very first chapter of the section emphasizes the emergence of novelty at the intrapersonal level: Cristina Coppola, Monica Mollo, and Tiziana Pacelli discuss the relations between language and the development of logic tools in the context of “linguistic-manipulative” activities. They assume that children are able to choose various strategies for problem solving through cooperative activities related to the shared creation and manipulation of a socially and culturally constructed language.

The emphasis is at the level of the classroom in the next chapter by Marilena Ristum, who, using a rich and diversified set of empirical data, analyses processes at the point where teachers’ discourses and practices meet when it comes to the meanings of violence in the school context. The novelty emerging from the data leads to new, unexpected directions in understanding school violence.

Ramon Gomes and Maria Virgínia Dazzani’s chapter discusses the mechanisms involved in the semiotic constitution of the educational self in the academic trajectory of one teenager, emphasizing the dialogical dynamics and the I-Positioning established in the relationship with his or her parents within the family–school discourses. Here, the authors advance into the dynamics process of the emergence of the self in the educational context.

New contexts to analyze *insideness* and education are presented in the two final chapters of the *Insideness* section. Vania Bustamente Dejo and Cecilia McCallum, in their chapter, built from an ethnographic study conducted in childcare centers, considers various dimensions of the daily construction of care as it occurs within the relationships between adults and children. They identify tensions between academic knowledge, linked to ‘planning,’ and practical knowledge, which the informants associated with abilities posited as intrinsic to women. Looking at boundaries here allows one to take into account various facets of childcare.

The other context, considered by Gabriela di Jesu, is the teaching of English as a second language. Her chapter discusses how social representations about the students’ performance as non-native speakers of the language, the perceptions that they have on the English language, and the emphasis on the lexical and grammatical units of the language set boundaries that inhibit rather than catalyze learning processes. The author then formulates new strategies to expand those boundaries.

The *Outsideness* section includes five chapters that, coming from distinct sociocultural contexts (Brazil and Japan), share common interests and inquire about educational contexts and activities beyond the walls of the school. Such contexts and activities define individual and collective trajectories of human actors, and simultaneously result from their actions, in a complex and continuous dynamic

process. When and where do educational processes start? What happens at the boundaries of their multiple systems, fuzzy as these boundaries might be?

No doubt, research should go beyond academic boundaries and dare to look at experiences, such as the case of the Laje Collection, described in the chapter by José Eduardo Ferreira Santos. The reader will be at the advanced frontier of an alternative space for education and is invited to reflect, with the author, on the experience of people who have visited the Laje Collection, their autobiographical references, and their possibilities to poetically reinvent life in the measure that new meanings and values emerge from the community-art encounter.

Glimpses of Japan's cultural reality are given to us by Yassu Omi and Yoriko-Omi-Okamoto, allowing for refreshing perspectives concerning the issue of where and when schooling processes begin. Yassu Omi offers a critical cultural perspective on the unique types of sports clubs and activities, known in Japan as *bukatsu*, which are relevant as part of Japan's junior high school experience, with relevant consequences for the understanding of the Japanese way of instilling discipline in children—which appear to be condensed into *bukatsu*. The author discusses *bukatsu* practices under the influence of globalization.

Yoriko-Omi-Okamoto, in her chapter, analyzes early parent–baby communication, particularly the complex nuances found in parental proxy talk, considered from multiple perspectives and changes over time. This early, even preverbal, communicative phenomenon is at the core of cultural canalization: parents attempt to instill their own cultural meanings to children, who are not exposed merely to those parents' isolated utterances, but rather to dialogue between multiple voices embedded in a cultural context. It is here that culture begins to be maintained and modified.

Elizabeth Tunes, Ingrid Lilian Fuhr Raad, and Roberto Ribeiro da Silva seek to show that daily human social life is full of other activities that allow thinking through scientific concepts. This understanding implies consequences that their chapter approaches in an interesting way.

The fifth and last chapter in that section will focus on learning processes at the family–school boundary, as a source of new roles and identities for children and parents as well. The authors, Ana Cecília de Sousa Bastos and Delma Barros Filho, discuss the ways that poor families represent and promote their children's schooling processes, contextualized in a broad concept of education that includes activities developed in diverse contexts: family, school, and neighborhood.

The four chapters found in the *Betweenness* section analyze various facets at the school–family–work intersection. The first of these chapters, by Felicity Wikeley and Joanna Apps, explores differences and tensions concerning teacher and parent viewpoints on parental involvement in education and is set in a United Kingdom context. The authors present very productive insights on how these tensions might be optimized to reframe and expand teachers' and parents' roles, leading to a better way of supporting children's educational trajectories.

A different perspective on family–school relationships, set in a Brazilian context where urban violence was significant, is presented in the next chapter by Demóstenes Neves and Marilena Ristum, who investigated how teachers

understand their negotiations of family–school relationships. Negotiation and conflict management were central to the analysis.

Lia Lordelo’s chapter addresses the complex and multi-voiced reality of children’s work in Brazil, to consider the children’s viewpoint related to work and other significant daily activities. The cultural psychological perspective she assumes to analyze how children and teenagers make sense of their experiences will contextualize well the metaphor of “school as work and work as school,” which synthesizes part of the conclusions of the study.

School *in-between* work and family is also studied by Olívia Silveira, Delma Barros Filho, and Ana Clara Bastos, who analyze the young egress reports of Projovem (a program that sets the National Youth Policy), aspects that influenced the permanence and conclusion of Projovem activities, considered a boundary zone between family and work. This chapter easily leads to reflection on public policies in education in Brazil and represents well the need to cross boundaries to expand the limits of the academic dimension of educational processes. As the authors remark, “contemporary demands, globalized discourse and the new requirements of the work world trigger a resignification of the schooling process.”

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Part III
Insiderness

The Development of Logical Tools Through Socially Constructed and Culturally Based Activities

Cristina Coppola, Monica Mollo and Tiziana Pacelli

Introduction

In this chapter, we reveal associations among social and cultural developmental psychology (Bruner 1974, 1982, 1990, 1996; Vygotskij 1934), the social-genetic perspective (Perret-Clermont 1979; Iannaccone 2010), and mathematical logic (Kneale and Kneale 1962). We describe a teaching experiment in which we want to explore, at different levels of analysis, the relationship between language and developmental processes of logical tools using “linguistic-manipulative” activities that are socially constructed and culturally based.

Considering the literature in social and cultural developmental psychology, Bruner’s study (1990) is central to this field. He emphasized the role of interactions in the social and cultural cognitive development of children. Interactions are integral to a child realizing his or her potential by appropriating cultural tools such as language. By interacting with other people, the child experiences the world; by interacting with more experienced people, he or she can solve problematic situations that could not be solved alone. Accordingly, the child moves from the sphere of actual development to the sphere of potential development. He or she experiences the world within what Vygotskij (1934) called the “zone of proximal development.”

C. Coppola (✉) · T. Pacelli
Dipartimento di Matematica, Università degli Studi di Salerno, Fisciano, Italy
e-mail: ccoppola@unisa.it

T. Pacelli
e-mail: tpacelli@unisa.it

M. Mollo
Dipartimento di Scienze Umane, Filosofiche e della Formazione,
Università degli Studi di Salerno, Fisciano, Italy
e-mail: mmollo@unisa.it

According to this perspective, cultural tools are seen as out-and-out mind activators, and the development is connected to both the acquisition and the development of cultural artifacts. Moreover, Vygotskij maintains that cognitive development is a social process and that the reasoning capability increases in the interactions. According to Bruner (1990), development is a progressive accomplishment of a child's potential, and it occurs in the interactions with others and by means of cultural tools, such as language.

Formal logic is a useful tool in studying the development of cognitive capabilities if it is seen as the explicit expression of some features regarding *language* (Gerla et al. 1990). Language is a communication tool that can also be a manipulative object. The interpretation of the language can lose its univocity; the same word can denote more than one thing, and the same description can refer to more than one situation. Mathematical notions rise not only by abstraction processes from direct experience but also by the language's objectification and by identifying linguistic manipulation rules.

Theoretical Background

Using a historical-cultural perspective, Vygotskij (1934) asserted that higher mental processes should be studied through practical activities of daily social life, which are mediated by culture and its characterizing artifacts (Gilly 1997). According to this perspective, children's development first appears on a social level as an activity performed by individuals, and later on an individual level as an activity that the individual performs by himself or herself.

Vygotskij (1934) underlined that human society uses psychological tools, such as language, that not only facilitate children's development through their acquisition but also become mind activators, assisting the elaboration of the existing cultural artifacts and their subsequent development.

Language, in all its verbal and written forms, represents a cultural artifact produced by human beings. It has a basic role in learning processes and in the social practices of the classroom. "*The idea of artifact is very general and encompasses several kinds of objects produced by human beings through the ages: sounds and gestures; utensils and implements; oral and written forms of natural language*" (Bartolini Bussi and Mariotti 2009, p. 271). According to Vygotskij, the use of the artifacts has a fundamental role in the *interiorization* process. This process is defined as the internal reconstruction of an external operation and "*it describes the process of the construction of the individual knowledge as generated by social and shared experiences*" (Bartolini Bussi and Mariotti 2009, p. 276).

From another perspective, Bruner (1990) stated that cognitive development is a process in which a child is a cultural interpreter of the situations in which he or she has to solve problems. A child enters social life and the social group through interactions; children do not relate to others in a "private" and "autistic" process. They participate in a public process of negotiations of collective meanings. This perspective means

that a child's cognitive activity cannot be reduced to a study of logical coherence, but it is strictly associated with the child's interpretation of the world, of himself/herself, and of others. Based on Bruner's theories, the study of cognitive processes reveals a crucial understanding of how children, interacting with each other or interacting with the *worlds constructed by the others*, succeed in creating themselves and their world's view and succeed in *communicating and sharing meanings*.

The research on reasoning has assigned substantial relevance to *formal (deductive) logic* (as an example, see Casadio 2006). It is not possible to consider formal logic as a complete formalization of all the forms of human reasoning.¹ According to Dapuetto and Ferrari (1988, p. 779), "*The contexts in which everyday reasoning develops and those in which deductions, which (also) logic deals with, are built are completely different, with different acceptability and coherence criteria.*"

Another crucial issue is releasing logic from the foundational role that characterized its birth. According to this perspective, the notions of *axiomatic system* and of *theorem* have to be re-interpreted in a wider sense, as *available* (generally not complete) *information* and as a *deducible consequence* from this information, respectively (Coppola et al. 2007a). It can be useful to refer to real-life situations (the set of clues in an investigative situation or a description of a daily situation) and not only to mathematical structures.

In our research, a didactic path was designed based both on *cooperation* and *meanings' negotiation* (Bruner 1990) in interactional situations (Iannaccone 2010) and on socio-constructivist theories (Vygotskij 1934; Perret-Clermont 1979; Bruner 1990). The activities were deduction tasks. The focus was on the conditional construct. According to mathematical logic, language becomes a concrete object that can be manipulated (Coppola et al. 2007a).

Our research hypothesis was that through cooperative activities related to the shared creation and the manipulation of a language, which is socially and culturally constructed, children will be able to choose various strategies for problem solving. The aim is to lead the children in group activities to a change in the representation and in the use of the language (from being only a communication tool to being also an object that is manipulated). In particular, we wondered how and if the transformation of deduction processes in the manipulation of "linguistic objects" can support the understanding of some fundamental aspects of logical-deductive processes.

Method

The gathered data refer to a teaching experiment conducted in a fifth-grade class at a primary school (Istituto Comprensivo Fisciano, Fisciano). The participants were 20 children aged 9–11 years old. The children performed the activities working in

¹Even more so, formal logic cannot be considered the standard to refer to in order to distinguish what is "rational" and what is not.

cooperative groups (Yackel et al. 1991), each composed of six or seven members. The cooperative groups' activities were video- and audio-recorded. The activities occurred in the presence of the mathematics teacher and the Italian teacher, one at a time, and with three researchers. The teachers' role was to observe, and the researchers' role was to act as scaffolders.²

The activities were designed by the researchers according to the *poor informatics* paradigm (Fasano et al. 1986), in which it is possible to develop abilities similar to a data processing frame not only by means of software but also by means of "poor" materials. The 'instructions' are executed by the children instead of a computer. Children become "inventors" (they code a language), "interpreters" (they decode a language), and "manipulators" and users of "programs" in the language (Gerla et al. 1990). The general aim of this paradigm is to support the development of attitudes, such as identifying problems, devising more or less formal language to codify them, identifying suitable procedures to solve them, and describing these procedures unambiguously (Gerla et al. 1990).

At the end of all the activities, the children were interviewed using a semi-structured interview based on the explication interview method (Vermersch 1994) and on the biographic report (Bruner 1990). The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Three independent judges performed content analysis (Berelson 1952; Blanchet 1985). This procedure required a segmentation of the corpus data into semantic units identified in the interviews' reports. Lexical units, referring to the same theme or argument, were classified into semantic units called *Topics*. Judges discussed any disagreement until reaching full consensus.

The Teaching Experiment

The teaching experiment consisted of two phases:

1. *creation of the axiomatic system;*
2. *deduction through paper cards.*

In the first phase, the researchers played the role of moderators in the discussion among the groups in the classroom; in the second phase, they played the role of scaffolders (Bruner 1974).

In the first phase, the purpose of the first activity was explained to and shared with the children. It was about creating the conditions for the subsequent activity. Each group was asked to express its own preferences regarding sports and friends both to collect "facts" (called "information" by the children) and to create "rules" (written in conformity with the "if/then" construct). The axiomatic system was constructed collaboratively. According to the logic programming terminology,

²Although the teachers were present in the classroom, they unfortunately did not participate in an active way.

“facts” are closed atomic formulas, and “rules” are atomic formulas with free variables or rules, such as $A \rightarrow B$, in which B is an atomic formula and A is an atomic formula or conjunction of atomic formulas.

Both the information and the rules created by each group were written on the blackboard. The children first used everyday language to express the information and rules. As an example, “Volleyball is fair” was information and “A *child* plays a *sport* with *another child* if...” was a rule.³ After this first activity, the subsequent task was to extract a single subset of information and a single subset of rules from the entire set of information and rules. The amounts of information and rules belonging to the final extracted subsets had been established previously, and both the information and rules from each group were discussed and shared by the entire class to reach consensus. After the negotiation, the children wrote the chosen information and rules on a billboard using everyday language.

In the second phase, the axiomatic system (information and rules created by the children) was transcribed by the researchers on two billboards (Figs. 1 and 2) in a more “formal” way by introducing the “variables” in the rules.

In order to make clear how to instantiate the predicates in the deduction chains, the researchers chose to represent the variables with symbols: different forms and colors for different variables involved in the same rule (Fig. 2).

Each group received a part of the produced cards: a billboard with *information* (Fig. 1), a billboard with the *rules* (Fig. 2), and cards with *arrows*. The billboard of the rules was the same for every group in the sense that the same rules were listed. The information billboard differed between groups in the sense that different facts were listed. Consequently, each group had a different axiomatic system.

To perform the activities, the children handled other paper cards that were common to all the groups and were placed on the desk. Some cards had *predicates* such as “... like...”, “... is fair”, “... invite...”, and other cards had *constants*.⁴ After distributing the cards, the task for each group was to state whether some information was deducible or not. Accordingly, the children were asked questions such as “Does Carmine find Alin nice?” The answer regarding the deducibility or nondeducibility of the information had to be obtained by constructing a deduction chain (Fig. 3) using the cards.

Because each group had a different axiomatic system, the same statement could be deducible for a group and nondeducible for another group.

In every group, the children designated one child as a “courier.” He or she had to fetch the necessary cards to perform the task. Within each group, the children decided together which cards the courier had to take through a spontaneous discussion.

³We report in italics the expressions that turn into variables in the formalization of the axiomatic system made by the researchers.

⁴In this case, the constants were represented by the names of the children and by the sports, for example, “Carmine”, “Alin”, “volleyball”, “soccer”.

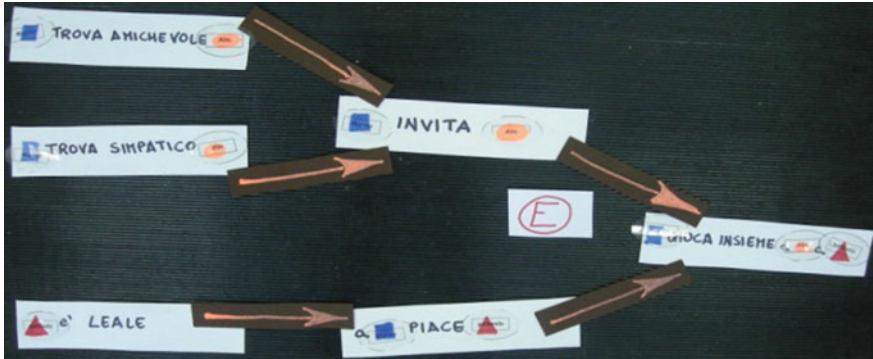


Fig. 3 An example of a deduction chain

The algorithm proposed to the children for the deduction chain was based on the *Prolog*. It is a backward procedure, starting from the goal and going backwards; it considers only the information and the rules useful to achieving the goal, avoiding fathoming all the rules and producing all that can be deduced from the available facts. This procedure is also called *goal-oriented* because it starts from the goal that had to be achieved.

Results

In this section, we discuss the activities performed by the children and the results obtained by the content analysis of the interviews. The interviews' analysis and the investigation of the activities were conducted at three levels (Doise 1982):

1. analysis of the *psychological* or *intra-individual aspects*: how the children developed and organized their experience;
2. analysis of the *inter-individual aspects*: how both the relationships among the children in the groups and the various communication systems helped (more or less effectively) them in solving the problematic situation in which they were involved;
3. analysis of the *ideological beliefs*: how the social norms, which regulating social behaviors and contexts, influenced the children's representation of the tasks.

Through the content analysis of the interviews, we obtained the following main topics.

Intra-individual Aspects: *Deduction as Manipulation*

The first topic revealed by the content analysis refers to how the children constructed the deduction chains. In the following excerpt (Excerpt n.1),⁵ it seems that a child identifies the deductive process with the “composition” of the cards (line 5). The artifact language becomes “concretely manipulable” through the transposition of the axiomatic system onto the cards with which the children work. Accordingly, the manipulation involves sensory-perceptual aspects becoming an integral part of the cognitive processes performed by the children.

Excerpt n.1

4. Interviewer: Could you describe these plays (.) what was done?

5. S4: Then (.) we wrote some rules and some information, and then later (.) following these rules and information (.) we did a game in which we had to (.) compose (.) deduce something from the rules and the information.

In this excerpt, the pupil uses the word “to compose” to refer to an act of arranging the cards to form a chain. The word seems to be considered synonymous with “deduce”.

Intra-individual Aspects: *Deducibility According to the Available Data*

The second topic that emerged from the content analysis concerns the issue of being able to make inferences considering only the available data, without being influenced by external factors (with respect to the problem), such as one’s own beliefs or convictions.

As it emerges from Excerpt n.2, it seems that the children do not have trouble answering only on the basis of information written on the billboards or of the information already deduced. It seems that they understand the concept of “deducibility according to the available information.” It seems that the process of negotiation and sharing, through which the children had constructed the axiomatic system, supported the understanding of the possibility of various inferences, depending on the available data.

⁵In transcribing the interviews, we used some of the conversational analysis norms (Jefferson 1985). In particular, the font is Courier, which allocates the same space to each type, including the spaces and the tabulations; the speech’s turns are numbered progressively, indicating the name of the speaker; (0.5) indicates the length of the pause in seconds; an (.) indicates a shorter pause than 0.5 s.

Excerpt n.2

9. Interviewer: [...] you had some different information with respect to the others (.) therefore some facts could be deduced and some others couldn't. In your opinion how come was there this difference? In your opinion how come was this difference there?

10. S5: Because we didn't have it written in the rules and information.

In combining this topic and *deduction as manipulation*, it seems that, in some cases, the language's "objectification" also allowed a reflection on the structure of the rules. Accordingly, the understanding of some concepts related to the deductive process was spurred, in particular the difference among rules, information, and deducibility, as evidenced in the following excerpt.

Excerpt n.3

5. Interviewer: And how did you do when you looked at the rules and information? (.) What did you do?

6. S6: I gathered information and then I checked (.) whether it could be deduced (0.5)

7. Interviewer: And how did you make this deduction?

8. S6: It depended on the question (.) for example if Marino found Alin nice and in the information there was (0.5) and then if the question was would Marino invite Alin? we can deduce that if Marino finds Alin nice then he should invite him to his house (.)

[...]

19. Interviewer: One last question (.) could you tell me the difference among deductions (.) information and rules (.) if you can (.) on the basis of what you were able to perceive from the games we carried out?

20. S6: Information and rules give us exactly the information that is true (.) they are based on the truth (.) and they are concrete (.) whilst (.) instead (.) in order to deduce a question even if it is not too clear (.) putting together the rules and the information we can deduce the answer (0.5) or a subject (0.5) anything (0.5).

Inter-individual Aspects: Cooperation

Based on the content analysis, we observed very frequent references to the workgroup. Cooperation may be considered a process that allows the child to "decentralize" himself or herself by analyzing the problem from perspectives that

differ from his or her own. Cooperation facilitates the shift from pre-logical thinking to logical thinking in children, allowing them to go beyond the immediate perceptual datum (Carugati and Selleri 2005).

For example, in the following excerpts of two different interviews (Excerpt n.4 and Excerpt n.5), the solutions to the problems did not occur in an individualistic manner. This finding was evidenced by the use of verbs not in the first singular person but in the first plural person (for example, lines 6, 10 and 14 of Excerpt n.4 and line 14 of Excerpt n.5).

Excerpt n.4

5. Interviewer: What was your role in your group? What did you do?

6. S3: (.) we helped each other (.) we did together (0.5)
[...]

9. Interviewer: But you were good (.) you succeeded in solving the problem (.) how did you get this insight?

10. S3: Because (0.2) with my friend Francesco we looked together at the rules and the information (.) we examined what was written and we fetched the billboard and we did (0.4)
[...]

13. Interviewer: Did you learn something new from these games?

14. S3: Yes (.) I learned that we must be a team (.) we have to help each other.

Note that the interviewer intentionally used the second-person singular, whereas children continued to speak in the first plural person.

Excerpt n.5

13. Interviewer: And which was the best moment?

14. S3: When (.) we say (.) we won

15. Interviewer: Did you learn something new?

16. S3: Yes (.) that we must be cohesive (.) we have to enjoy (.)

The children strongly felt the importance of cooperation in performing the activities. In the interviews, the children consistently emphasized this aspect by stating that cooperation was the basis of their success in the activities.

Inter-individual Aspects: *Negotiation*

This topic emerged from the continuous interaction both among the children within the groups and between the children and the researchers.

According to line 2 in both of the following excerpts, we allowed the children to choose the information and the rules to be included on the billboard. Consequently,

the scenario becomes “homely”: the children give a meaning to it, and therefore, the process of interiorization is facilitated.

Excerpt n.6

1. Interviewer: We made some games (.) I suggest to you (.) if you want to describe the activities we carried out (.) of course you can think it over (.) when you are ready you can start to tell me about them
2. S3: The first thing (.) there were plays (0.2) which are fun (.) that we like and each of us said something different (0.5) for someone a play was fair (.) fun (0.5) .

Excerpt n.7

1. Interviewer: I propose to you (.) if you want to describe the activities we carried out.
2. S5: Ok (0.5) so the first time you came (.) we explained together the game’s rules and how it had to work [...]

Ideological Beliefs: *Rules’ Representation*

At the intra-individual and ideological level, a personal transformation and processing of the tasks seems to emerge.

As stated in line 11 of Excerpt n.7, the child assigns a double definition to the rules: the rules of the play are also the *rules to be respected*. This double view of the rules, at an ideological level of analysis, seems to highlight the influence of cultural aspects on the meaning that the child assigns to the task itself. The double meaning assigned by the children to the word “rules” refers to *pragmatic schemes*⁶ (Roux and Gilly 1997) elaborated in familiar routines. These schemes influence cognitive responses. As an example, children learn the meaning of rules in their family-context, interpreted as respecting someone or something within the family.

Excerpt n.8

10. Interviewer: Could you tell me the differences among rules information and deduction?
11. S2: Then (.) the rules are (.) that they have to be respected (.) the information informs us and the deductions (.) that we deduce something from these rules and information.

In another interview, a child uses the word “fair”, which, in the activity, corresponded to a logical predicate of the axiomatic system. Evidently, the children

⁶For *pragmatic schemes* (Roux and Gilly 1997), we mean the set of representations of a situation or a task and the ways of solution.

also assigned a relational and social sense to this word, which was interiorized by the child: the child uses it to describe how he or she learned to behave in the play with his or her teammates.

Excerpt n.9

1. Interviewer: I suggest to you (.) if you want (.) to describe the activities we carried out (.) the plays we made
2. S5: Then (.) we made a play during which we learned to be fair (.) honest (.) we enjoyed.

Discussion

The content analysis and observations of the activities helped us to identify topics related to the processing and reprocessing of the activities by the children. The analysis of the interviews revealed a real support to the deduction process given by the cards' manipulation.

The topic *deduction as manipulation* arises from a particular situation: the children identified the deduction with the cards' manipulation (predicates, arrows, constants, etc.). Therefore, the language, the cards, and the "children's hands" became mediating instruments. Because thinking cannot be reduced to only mental-cerebral activity, "it is not only *mediated by* but also *located in* body, artifacts, and signs" (Vygotskij 1934; Radford et al. 2005).

The topic of *deducibility according to the available data* was connected to the distinction that Bruner established (1990) between logical-scientific thinking and narrative thinking. Specifically, it is associated with how the formulation of a problem can support the activation of logical-scientific thinking or of narrative thinking in the child. The child may have a different interpretation of the question compared to the teacher (e.g., the child uses narrative thinking and not logical-mathematical thinking).

Our reasoning skills depend on the material used in the activity, the context, and the given instructions. Our aim was to focus on logical thinking (but not on a strictly mathematical context) by asking the children to make deductions closely based on the "axiomatic system" they had.

A similar teaching experiment was previously conducted by us in a primary school (Coppola et al. 2007b). In that study, the activities began with reading a text we gave to the children, and then we asked some questions. First, the children were asked to answer only on the basis of their reading. The questions regarded facts that were in the text or facts that could be deduced from the text. We observed that most children did not give answers only according to the information in the text or to the information deducible from it, but they involved their own beliefs arising from their own culture.

For example, some children said that it was not possible that a boy and a girl played football together, apart from what was actually in the text. Then, after having "formalized" the "system of axioms" from the text, we asked the children to answer

the same questions by using the cards and by constructing the deduction chains. We observed an interesting event: there was an improvement in the number of “correct” answers with respect to those answers given only after reading the text. However, it seemed to us that the children perceived the axiomatic system as something “imposed” from the outside. For this reason, in the activity described in this paper, we chose not to begin with a text produced by others, but we decided to involve the children actively in posing the problem.

In our opinion, the negotiation of the axiomatic system by the entire class, in which the rules and the information were decided, selected, and shared, facilitated the understanding of the concept of deducibility according to the given information, as it seems to emerge from the interviews. The interviews revealed that the children fully recognize the *cooperation* by giving the workgroup merit for solving the problems presented during the activity. According to the socio-constructivist perspective, concepts of cooperation and competition represent an effective tool in the cognitive development of the child (Iannaccone 2010).

Another interesting aspect from the content analysis was the *meanings’ negotiation* that, according to Bruner (1990), can occur if the child is able to access the *meaning*. This ability allowed the children to effortlessly approach the task by becoming familiar with it.

The final topic was *rules’ representation*, in which, in addition to the usual logical dimension (related to “true” and “false”), prescriptive and social dimensions also existed. This finding implies that the cultural dimension is inevitably involved in the meaning that the children give to the rules. This effect is obvious in thinking about the rules that children learn in the family (as an example, “if you are good, you’ll get the game”). Of course, these assignments of meaning affect the development of these cognitive tools in children, as demonstrated in the research conducted on the pragmatic patterns of reasoning (Iannaccone 2010).

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Meanings of Violence: The Classroom as a Meeting Point for Discourse and Practices

Marilena Ristum

... the world of a classroom is a microcosm of a society, in which some structure of social roles (e.g., the asymmetric power relation of teacher \leftrightarrow pupils) is pre-given, yet much of the further differentiation of social relations is constantly in a process of reorganization)

Valsiner (1997)

The school is a social institution that has important connections with other societal institutions because it falls within a sociopolitical and historical-cultural context that surrounds it and permeates its entire conception, organization, and everyday form of action. However, the school has unique characteristics that define it as an institution focused on processes for the teaching, learning, and social development of students. Thus, although the school is recognized as having the broadest social determinants in its essence, this chapter will focus on the school itself.

More specifically, our attention is focused on the academic and social practices of elementary school teachers from first to fourth grade related to students in the classroom. Thus, we aimed to verify how these practices are embedded with the perceptions of violence constructed by teachers.

Based on the assumptions of the cultural-historical theory, definitions must unify discourse and action. Thus, we understand that meaning processes are constructed in verbal narratives and in human actions, forging an integrated whole, and we can assume that meanings can be accessed through both discourse and actions.

The Human Actions

The view of Wertsch (1998) regarding human action suggests considering it a unit of analysis for socio-historical research because it constitutes a privileged context of integration between the social aspect and the individual. In this regard, Wertsch

M. Ristum (✉)

Federal University of Bahia, Bahia, Brazil

e-mail: ristum.ufba@gmail.com

(1998, p. 60) argued, “Action provides a context within which the individual and the society (as well as mental functioning and sociocultural context) are seen as interrelated moments.” Thus, although there are individuals and social times for each action, an action is not performed by the society or the individual but by the dialectical interaction that involves them.

According to Bronckart (1999), the unit-of-analysis problem in psychology comes from the physical and psychic duality that leads to the issue regarding the interaction between bio-physiological, behavioral, mental, social, and verbal aspects involved in human conduct. The unifying concept, suggested by Vygotsky, which should be able to organize and integrate these dimensions, did not reach a conclusive definition in his work, and his disciples later undertook this task. Leontiev then proposed that action and/or activity should be selected as this integrator unit (Bronckart 1999).

When criticizing the conceptual isolation between mind and behavior, Vygotsky emphasized their inseparability by integrating the analysis of psychological processes and social actions. Behavior is mediated by signs and tools. Meaning is central to human activity (Moll 1996). In a study that focuses on the meanings of human action and practices, Smolka (2000, p. 31) suggested that “all actions acquire multiple meanings, multiple directions, and become significant practices depending on the view and modes of participation of individuals in relationships.”

According to Leontiev (1978), activity develops through actions and involves general forms of functional organization of behavior. Actions constitute practical social modalities through which activities are performed. In addition to its historical importance, when stating that individuals appropriate the social construct and their subjectivity through activity, Leontiev’s proposal emphasized the importance of activity to the formation of the human psyche and originated a series of further studies and reflections.

Bronckart (1998) fully recognized the global relevance of the concepts Leontiev introduced but noted that they do not elucidate the conditions required for an individual agent to participate in socially ruled actions. The writings of Bronckart (1998, 1999) seek further clarification on this issue. Verbal interactions mediate and regulate cooperation and negotiation of subjects in the activity, which, according to Bronckart (1999), can then be characterized as a communicative act that is able to transform the environment in represented worlds. These worlds consist of accumulated collective knowledge and have three types: objective, referring to representations of environmental parameters from the physical environment; social, referring to conventions established among the components of the group to perform the task; and subjective, regarding specific characteristics of each constituent of the group.

These represented worlds thus constitute the specific context of activities. Because human knowledge originates in activity, which is always social, they have a collective nature. Part of these collective constructions, which refer to cooperation processes between individuals, is structured in the social world, which regulates the way that individuals access the environment, thus conditioning how the objective and subjective worlds are structured (Bronckart 1999). In his analysis, this author

demonstrates the way that social and individual aspects are imbricated in the activity. This analysis extends to human actions that, according to the author, have dual status. From the point of view of an external observer, the action can be defined as the part of social activity attributed to a human being; from the internal point of view, it can be defined as the set of representations constructed by this human being regarding his or her participation in the activity, which make the human an agent who is aware of his or her capabilities and making. When the human agent engages in an action, he or she uses knowledge of the represented worlds appropriate in other interactions: objective, social, and subjective.

A chain of phenomena involving a human being can only be considered an action if the psychic properties and their relationships with behavioral properties present in the action are considered. Thus, Bronckart resumes the unit-of-analysis problem, which, according to Vygotsky, should integrate mind and behavior because action mobilizes and makes the physical (or behavioral) and psychological (or mental) dimensions of human behavior interact. Thus, the ability of the agent to make cannot be identified without considering the observable behaviors that enable it. In addition, reasons cannot be independently identified from behavior. In other words, there is no possibility of independently apprehending and defining mental and behavioral parameters.

According to Bronckart (1999), the methodology for studying actions must allow examining relationships that actions maintain with parameters of the social world to which they belong so that the scientific procedure focuses on the structural and functional characteristics of human actions. The methodology should also focus on the mental and behavioral capacities that actions put into operation, particularly on building these capacities.

This methodological perspective must encompass all varieties of human actions, but it particularly emphasizes those actions that target the development and training of others so that they refer to the action of the school.

Thus, educational interventions, in their school form, are one of the greatest objects of psychology and this explains the engagement of most psychologists inspired by Vygotsky in the didactic and/or pedagogic field (Bronckart 1999, pp. 66–67).

This study involved the observation of the actions of teachers in the classroom during their interaction with students to identify aspects of the meanings of violence constructed by these teachers in actions performed by them while performing their daily work in the classroom.

The socio-historical theory assumptions are presumed capable of providing the epistemological and methodological orientation for studying imbrications of meanings in social practices. However, an important methodological issue arises: although we assume that both the discourse and actions are guided by the same meanings, narrative and practical situations may exhibit characteristics that are so peculiar that we may have difficulties in integrating the two data sets. Furthermore, we address two issues: the discourse is often ruled by what is canonical in society (Bruner 1997), and conversely, the presence of an observer in the situation can introduce barriers or limits to everyday actions.

Observation of the Classroom

Mercer (1997) discussed interesting aspects of observational research in an article focused on analyzing important theoretical and methodological issues affecting the progress of research on the teaching-learning process that occurs in school. Mercer noted relevant contributions that arise when considering research that uses systematic observation, such as when studying interactions in the classroom and understanding the style and organization of educational standards within and across cultures. Conversely, the author severely criticized the use of systematic observation when studying discourse in the classroom, and the most important criticism is that systematic observation does not treat communication as a continuous and dynamic activity but reduces it to discrete categories of verbal acts. Contextualization as an interactive, continuous, and cumulative process is not contemplated. Thus, if used alone, this type of observation is not adequate for socio-cultural research.

Mercer's criticism (1997) seems quite relevant based on the theoretical and methodological assumptions of socio-historical theory. However, the observation that will be described in the following pages had different characteristics than the systematic observation Mercer criticized. Two observations were performed for each class in 29 grade 1–4 elementary school classrooms of two public schools (Schools A and B) of Salvador, State of Bahia, Brazil. The observations were continuous, and the entire sequence of the class was observed so that the records described the academic and social progress of the class, involving the behavior of the teacher and the students, including any participation of other people such as the observer, directors, employees, and advisors. The observer was not intended to be neutral; in many cases, she responded to children and teachers who addressed her, making comments or inquiries.

After the classroom observations were completed, these same 29 teachers were interviewed, following a script¹ (Ristum and Bastos 2004) that, in addition to sociodemographic data, included questions aiming to capture the meanings of violence. The interview was held in a room of the school at a time chosen by the teacher, and the audio was recorded.

Because we intended to verify how the practices and discourse of the teachers were integrated in the configuration of the meanings of violence, two data sets had to be compared: those obtained in the interview and those recorded during classroom observations.

Initially, the observation records did not seem suitable for integration with data obtained in the semi-structured interviews because major differences appeared to

¹The interview script consisted of 22 questions and addressed other objectives of a broader research project. This study focused only on questions that sought to capture the teachers' perspectives about forms of violence, causal factors, concepts of severity, acceptability of violence and damage due to violence in addition to requesting accounts of experience with violence at the school.

exist. Records of teachers' speech during the interviews were filtered by the teachers themselves, whereas records of observations were filtered by the researcher. Moreover, even using a semi-structured interview, which provides the respondent some freedom, when focusing on violence, the questions turned to responses to the teachers' definitions of violence. For data from the observations, the restricted classroom situation did not provide a wide range of events from which the meanings of violence could easily emerge. Furthermore, we must consider the possible observer bias, particularly when dealing with unstructured observations such as those conducted here.

However, it is important to note that the same subjectivity in the discourse of teachers was also found in their social and academic practices in their direct relationships with students in the limited classroom environment, establishing a developing bond between the two data sets. Some episodes of violence in the classroom also revealed an important shortcut for this approach. Other less obvious approaches would undoubtedly have to be unveiled by the analysis and interpretation of the data, in which the categorization would be the initial step.

Aiming at this approach, we initially tried to identify the episodes that favored the occurrence of the teachers' actions that involved or could somehow be indicative of their definition of violence. Thus, three types of episodes produced by the students were identified in the records of classroom observations, which occurred more or less often in all lessons observed:

- Episodes of fighting or disagreement between students
- Episodes of undisciplined behavior
- Episodes of games guided by the violence theme

The following are some considerations with which we intend to justify the selection of these three types of episode.

Episodes of fights between students were selected because they allowed the occurrence of student behaviors that generally favor reactions from teachers whose ways of responding to conflicts would be indicative of some aspects of their definition of violence. Episodes of undisciplined behavior were selected due to the assumption that they are episodes that, when contradicting traditional classroom adaptation patterns and breaking pre-established rules or hindering the progress of the class, could lead to reactions from teachers ranging from orientation of students to practice of restraint or physical aggression, in which aspects of the teachers' definition of violence could be identified. The reactions of teachers to episodes of playing guided by violence could indicate how they interpret this type of playing, a view that is supposedly related to their definition of violence.

Observation data indicated that episodes of undisciplined behavior were the most frequent, followed by episodes of fighting or disagreement between students and playing guided by violent themes.

What the Data Reveal

As previously explained, the socio-historical theory supports our assumption that meanings exist in the essence of social practices. However, the suspicion that the practices displayed in the classroom environment might not be appropriate to highlight the meaning of violence revealed the following questions:

1. Would the classroom be a situation in which there would be episodes favorable to revealing teachers' actions related to violence?
2. Would the practices of teachers in the classroom be able to provide some visibility to the meaning of violence?
3. Would the actions of teachers in the classroom be practical "equivalents" of the meaning of violence?

To determine answers to these questions, the initial step would be to organize data based on violence—that is, they would have to be organized in a way that the supposed imbrications could be found. Thus, the three types of episodes outlined above guided the categorization of reactions of teachers so that for each type of episode, all forms of behavior that teachers adopted in relation to students could be identified.

After identifying all actions against each of the three types of episodes, the next step was to qualify these actions into three categories that we believed could lead to a better understanding of the data: repressive actions, guiding actions, and neutral actions.

Actions When Facing Episodes of Fighting Between Students

Given these episodes, the teachers acted with:

1. **Repressive actions:** reprimands, punishments, threats to punish, yelling "stop", holding by the arm, taking an object, quips
2. **Guiding actions:** asking to stop, talking and guidance involved, requiring clarification, separating
3. **Neutral actions:** ignoring, pretending not to notice.

The forms of action displayed by teachers are exemplified in the following reported episodes:

A girl and a boy argued about what she reported as her classmate's intrusion in the activity she was performing, hindering it. The teacher told the boy: "*She wants to do it alone, without you telling her what to do; let her learn, okay?*" (Teacher B4²).

This same teacher acted again, talking and guiding (guiding action) when faced with an episode in which a student performed a gesture usually considered

²The letters A and B indicate whether teachers belonged to school A or B.

pornographic with his fingers directed to a classmate, who complained to the teacher. The teacher approached the student and quietly guided him on the inappropriateness of his behavior.

When facing several episodes of fights between students, teachers chose to ignore them—that is, they did not have any reaction, although the observer believed they saw what happened. Some examples of ignored episodes (neutral actions): a student broke the ruler of a classmate, who threatened to “beat him up”; two students argued and one student shoved the other; and two students fought and one ran after the other, trying to punch him.

However, in many cases, the teachers acted to reprimand, admonish, and punish, as in the following examples:

A student ran through the room, hitting the head, arms, or shoulders of several classmates. Teacher A3 asked him to stop. Because the student did not respond to her request, the teacher put a chair in the corner of the room, which she called “the dunce chair,” warning and threatening punishment; she told him to be careful not to be the next “dunce” to sit in the chair.

One student was fighting with her classmates. Teacher B8 warned and threatened to punish her by saying he would call the supervisor to take the girl from the room.

One student, who had recently been reprimanded by the teacher for having mocked a classmate, was throwing an eraser and pencil sharpener at classmates. As punishment, Teacher A8 expelled her from the room.

In response to episodes of fights between students, repressive actions were most common, followed by guiding and neutral actions.

In a few episodes, the teachers seemed to perceive the fights as violence between students that had to be interrupted either by repression or by guiding the students involved. Interestingly, guiding or soothing actions were almost always performed by the same teachers, such as A7, B2, and B4. The repressive actions were also quite characteristic of some teachers, such as A3, A8, B8, and B6.

In general, when analyzing the content of the speech that followed the actions, the meaning of violence was clear. It was more easily identifiable in guiding actions, as exemplified in the action of Teacher B2 who, when facing the fight between two students, approached them and explained with a calm and gentle voice that fighting and aggression do not lead to anything good, only to more violence, and that talking is the best means of resolving disagreements.

However, in many cases, it was not possible to assert that episodes of fighting or disagreement between students met the teachers’ definition of violence because their reactions, particularly the repressive ones, could be interpreted as aimed at stopping episodes that disturbed the order and therefore the progress of the class. Thus, at least in these episodes, teachers could be identifying the fights as undisciplined behavior, which should be suppressed for disturbing the class. In addition, neutral actions occurred almost 15 %³ of the time, though they occurred less frequently than other actions.

³Percentage calculated based on the total number of actions counted in the classroom.

These considerations raise the normalization of violence issue identified in definitions obtained through semi-structured interviews that seems to be present in teachers' classroom actions. When analyzing words used by teachers in the interviews, who referred to fights, biting, and shoving as "normal things" and "children's stuff," we can see the normalization of certain aggressive actions of children as expected for the age. This trivialization present in the speech of Teacher B5 ultimately legitimizes these actions as defense of rights:

I do not see it as violence, I think of it more as defense...a way to defend themselves and their rights. Sometimes, they push, bite classmates, slap them, but I see it as a form of defense, of trying to defend their space, which was overrun by someone.

Through these considerations, combined with data from interviews about the reports of teachers regarding violence between students, which generally involved more serious misunderstandings than those witnessed in classrooms, and the almost total absence of the perception of teachers regarding the trivializing role of the media, we can assume that many forms of fighting are not included in the teachers' definition of violence. Faced with such serious and shocking violence in everyday society, the "bickering" of their students most likely lost the connotation of violence.

Actions When Facing Episodes of Undisciplined Behavior and Lack of Attention

The forms of action adopted by the teachers when facing episodes of undisciplined behavior and lack of attention were observed in greater numbers and with greater diversity than those performed in response to episodes of fighting or disagreement between students.

Teachers' actions related to episodes of undisciplined behavior and lack of student attention were classified as follows:

1. Repressive actions: complaining, yelling, warnings, threats to punish, holding or pulling the student (by the arm, jaw, neck, or shoulder), mocking, applying various types of punishment (including physical punishment)
2. Guiding actions: talking with those involved, advising, asking for clarification, singing songs, playing, telling a joke, asking students to resume the activity, asking them to sit or relocate
3. Neutral actions: ignoring

Repressive actions were used more often than the others, followed by guiding actions and neutral actions.

Actions to warn, threaten, and punish were observed most frequently. The most commonly used punishments by the teachers were expelling students from the room, referring them to the coordination or the school board, calling the parents to talk, leaving them with no recess time, and delaying their exit. Sometimes, different

punishments were observed, such as sending students to the “dunce chair” or placing them in front of the room, standing facing the blackboard.

However, the most surprising event was the occurrence of corporal punishment in the classroom, with actions such as pushing, slapping, pinching, hair pulling, or hitting the student with a ruler, as in the case of Teacher A8, who pinched the arm of a boy who was standing and told him to sit down. We considered it important to highlight these punishments because they have a different connotation in the school context, in terms of both their legal prohibition and ethics. Although in certain situations, some nonphysical punishments may have more harmful psychological effects than those produced by physical punishment, the latter are more disapproved of by the community.

Some interesting aspects of these data can be highlighted. For example, guiding actions, which would be the most important type considering the educational function of the school, were less frequent than repressive actions. Another aspect concerns the repressive characteristics of teachers’ behavior, which refers to violence from teacher to student. Only 15.9 % of teachers mentioned this violence in the interviews.

In the observations, we found that the most repressive teachers in the classroom were those whose definition of school violence did not include violence from teacher to student, which again raises the issue of the normalization of violence and indicates the imbrication of the definition of violence in teachers’ practices.

Another issue must be addressed regarding corporal punishment. Although few teachers used corporal punishment, it is surprising that this type of action still occurs in schools, particularly in the presence of an observer. One way to interpret these actions is that the teachers must have lacked self-control following certain episodes. However, teachers who used corporal punishment did it without any embarrassment that would suggest a perception of unethical, anti-pedagogical, or illegal action; they would most likely be embarrassed after a temporary absence of self-control, which would lead teachers to try to justify their actions with students and to the observer, in particular.

The fact that students did not show surprise or indignation in reaction to physical punishment was also noticeable. There was even acceptance of the legitimacy of the corporal punishment practiced by teachers in the classroom, as in the conversation observed by the researcher between two students in a second-grade classroom about punishments given by the teacher in response to a discipline problem committed by another student. One student said that the teacher should pull both ears, and the other argued that the teacher should “slap”⁴ the hands of the undisciplined student. This conversation reveals these students’ complete acceptance of the legitimacy of the corporal punishment practiced in the classroom by teachers who have authority and power to do so.

Another observation revealed that in addition to teachers’ violent actions toward students being trivialized to the point of not being perceived as violence, there is the

⁴Slapping the palm of the hand.

issue of the power of adults to punish children, as seen in the words of a teacher after a fight in which students physically assaulted each other: “*Do you see any parent here, to be hitting each other?*” This sentence contains a clear message from the teacher to the students, meaning that if one of them were the father of the other, he would have the right to beat him. Episodes of this type eventually constitute a contribution of the school, through the conceptual clarification presented in the daily practice of the teachers, to legitimize and normalize family violence. However, it seems difficult for teachers to be aware of their role in this process.

Actions in Response to Episodes of Playing Guided by Violence

Teachers responded to this type of playing with few actions and little variation, unlike the responses observed for the two types of episodes considered above.

These actions were also classified into categories: repressive, guiding, or neutral. Neutral actions were predominately observed, more often than repressive and guiding actions. For example, the neutral position was observed in the following episode:

A student approached the classroom window, pointed the pencil (as if the pencil was a weapon) toward a lady passing in the street and said: “*Now I’m going to shoot that woman.*” The other students laughed and commented: “*He said he will shoot...*” The boy, still pointing his pencil onto the street, said: “*I’ll shoot that old man.*” Teacher A1 ignored the whole episode.

The predominance of neutrality indicates that, in general, teachers did not consider this type of joke important either in terms of their definition of violence or as behavior that was hindering the progress of the class. When the teacher was involved, in most cases, she seemed motivated by the fact that the students’ playing was seen as undisciplined behavior that disturbed the order in the classroom, such as in the episode in which boys were playing by showing their muscles and simulating punches. In that case, Teacher A5 told them to stop because it was time for class.

The way teachers responded to episodes of playing guided by violence reveals that the episodes are not perceived as violence or seen as important for the development of the student to permeate the students’ vision of reality. In the interviews, only one teacher mentioned playing with toy guns as a cause of violence, strengthening the assumption that these episodes are not considered relevant factors in the context of violence.

In young children, behavior prevails over meaning, but when children reach school age, a structure of action that produces a type of inversion in this relationship emerges so that meaning overcomes behavior (Vygotsky 1989). However, the influence of meaning on the child’s behavior is circumscribed by the structural aspects of the action. To illustrate, we describe an episode observed in a

second-grade classroom in which a boy held the arm of a chair, which was loose, as if it were a shotgun and simulated gunfire sounds with his voice. This action is not simply a symbolic way of behaving but an action that demonstrates the presence of basic categories of the reality in which the child lives, according to Vygotsky. Thus, his action allows, in Vygotsky's words (1984, p. 114), "*the basic categories of reality to pass through his experience*".

From the cultural-historical perspective, playing is an important development factor. At school age, playing permeates the child's attitude to reality. Thus, games that symbolize violence permeate the way that the child addresses a reality that brings violence in its essence. However, when ignoring children playing this way or treating them as mere discipline problems, teachers seem to be unaware of their importance in the education of their students.

Comments from Teachers

The three categories of episodes identified in the observation records were insufficient to characterize the variety of comments made by teachers about students during lessons. These were comments made out loud, sometimes directed to the observer, sometimes to the student who motivated the comment, and sometimes to the class as a whole. A few times, the comments were directed to mothers or relatives of students who came to the classroom to search for some information about the child.

Because another categorization was necessary, teachers' comments about students were grouped into three categories that are able to qualify the comments and thus facilitate the identification of meanings behind the actions to which they referred.

Teachers in the classroom exhibited the following distribution: disapproving comments were much more frequent than others, followed by flattering comments and finally by derogatory comments. This pattern repeats what is routinely observed in schools: teachers' attention is more focused on those behaviors that they determine to be inadequate than on those considered suitable, both academically and socially. From the observer's point of view, this pattern contributes to an unpleasant atmosphere in the classroom in which rather than constituting a constructive whole, teachers and students seem to place themselves in opposite trenches. This observation is consistent with the view of Dimenstein (1999), who stated that the school contributes to the frustration of students, causing them to feel incompetent and "dumb" and humiliating them with failure in the form of a daily punishment. The teacher and the classmate, says Dimenstein, "*are just another opponent of their existence, in a circle of marginality*" (p. 5).

However, the teachers do not seem to realize the importance of this form of action in establishing an environment that is not very favorable to learning. By commenting on the zone of proximal development concept by Vygotsky, Tudge (1990) stated that in different circumstances, children can be led to the development

or regression of their thinking, depending on the nature of their social interactions, considering, as Vygotsky argued, that the context in which these interactions occur is crucial. We assume here that the academic and social environment of the classroom, characterized by failure, would be unable to contribute favorable interactions to the development of students.

The disapproving comments were directed mainly at undisciplined and academic behavior; a few comments were directed at other issues such as social behavior, bad posture, unhygienic behavior, delays, or missing class.

After yelling at students to stop the conversation, Teacher B3 said loudly to the observer: *“You can write down that I’m crazy, that I’m violent, that I yell at the boys. This is not a lie. You need to have a firm hand with them, or they will take over the class.”* She added: *“The school is a madhouse. The boys are not easy.”*

Teacher A2 called on a student to correct the homework on the blackboard. Because he could not do it, the teacher said that she could not believe that he did not know the subject that had been taught. She said, yelling, that he was bad and that he did not know anything. She kept yelling beside the boy, telling the class that he needed to learn so he would have to answer the whole question. She pounded her hand heavily on the board and yelled very close to the student’s face. She said that if he kept going on in this way, he would receive a bad grade on the test.

Teacher B5 also disapproved of a social behavior. Without specifying which students and without addressing someone in particular, she commented that the boys were very rude.

The flattering comments were generally addressed to academic behaviors of students, and very few compliments were made about social behaviors. Below are some examples of compliments.

To students that demonstrated that their homework was completed, Teacher B7 offered compliments such as *“good”* and *“very good.”*

One teacher complimented the students on their writing, saying: *“I was wonderfully surprised by the texts you wrote, and the pictures are beautiful. You have great taste”* (Teacher B1).

Teacher A1 asked if someone could read the text out loud. One student volunteered and read the text. The teacher complimented him on his participation and reading.

There were few compliments about social behaviors, such as when after talking with students about a disagreement that occurred between some boys in the schoolyard the day before, a teacher told the observer: *“These students are not aggressive. They hardly fight. When I’m sick, they worry. They ask: hey, how are you, teacher?”* (Teacher B4).

The negative comments were characterized by belittling or mocking the students. The derogatory criticism generally shamed the criticized students in front of their classmates and the observer, causing embarrassment to the students, such as in the comment that a student *“does not learn anything. He is a bit dumb. I think that he is not normal”* (Teacher B6).

The tone used by the teacher when making the comment evidently helped the observer to describe it. In addition, the classmates turned their attention to the

criticized student and laughed or mocked him. The following examples of quotes from teachers demonstrate the depreciating comments observed in the classroom.

Teacher A6 told a student that if he did not show interest in studying, he would be transferred to another class. She continued saying, “*You’ve been here for two years. I’m giving you a deadline. If you do not improve, I will put you in (another teacher)’s class.*” She approached the observer and said out loud that this boy is not interested in school and that he does not learn. “*He’s a bit dumb,*” she added.

Teacher B3 asked a student why he was missing classes. He said that the day before, he had a headache. The teacher told him he was a liar because some students saw him playing ball.

A boy went over to the teacher and said something. Teacher B8 asked him if he was crazy, making circular gestures with her hands next to her head.

Similar data were obtained in the study of Nascimento and Ristum (2012) about violence in the relationship between teacher and student. The teacher treated students with learning difficulties with actions of rejection, humiliation, and indifference. The following were among the most important actions in the perception of children: verbal aggression (swearing, yelling), physical aggression (shoving the student onto the desk, making the student sit, pushing him or her), indifference (not reviewing the homework), and rejection (lack of teacher attention compared to peers).

Derogatory comments were not very numerous but, combined with disapproving comments, there is an alarming proportion of approximately 80 %⁵ disapproving and derogatory comments versus 19.9 % compliments. Considering that what teachers say and do have an important role in the formation of students’ sense of self, we can assume that the classrooms ultimately constitute an environment that is not very favorable to the development of children and adolescents.

Final Considerations

Historical-cultural theory provides a basis for defining violence and the teacher-student interaction as relevant social phenomena to the formation of the individuality of students, particularly in a period of child development in which the internalization of social, moral, ethical, and religious values occurs with greater intensity. The theoretical approach to thought and language, related to the issue of meaning and consciousness, defined as the reality filtered by meanings and socially developed concepts, provides elements essential to the understanding of meanings, in their origin and historical-cultural development.

The theory about the integrated way that the social and the individual are in the activity is the essential foundation for understanding actions. According to Bronckart (1999), actions mobilize and make behavioral and psychological

⁵Percentages calculated based on the total number of comments recorded in all classrooms.

dimensions of human behavior interact and constitute the practical social modalities through which activities are performed.

In this study, analysis of data from the observations outlined the characteristics of the classrooms observed in terms of episodes of student behavior and teacher responses. A predominance of episodes was directly related to academic tasks. Next were episodes involving conflicting relationships among students, regarding academic and/or social issues. Finally, the fewest episodes reflected playing involving behaviors that simulate violent actions, which may occur individually, in pairs, or in groups of students. The identification and categorization of these episodes were important to identify and organize the teachers' actions related to them.

Regarding the actions of teachers, the overall analysis reveals a predominance of repressive actions compared to guiding and neutral actions. When faced with episodes where students fight or play guided by violence, in which violence is more present in the classroom in reality or symbolically, teachers act predominantly in a threatening way and in a neutral way, respectively.

In addition to these characteristics, a similar pattern was revealed regarding comments made by teachers about students because the disapproving and derogatory comments were far more frequent than the flattering ones. Actions of guidance to students were not very frequent in classrooms, which would be the ideal place for building and exchanging knowledge because teachers also play a key role in mediating culture. In this study, we highlight the importance of the definition of violence that teachers associated with their actions in the classroom.

The predominance of repression and neutrality, both for actions in response to the three types of episode and for comments about students, points to the imbrication of meanings of violence in the practice of teachers, but this issue was only considered relevant in a few respects.

The semi-structured interview was able to capture the meanings in a wider and more contextualized way involving different types of violence, their causative factors, and their consequences. However, the data indicated that the classroom environment restricts opportunities for the meaning of violence to emerge to its full extent. Among the types of violence identified by the teachers and that, therefore, composed their understanding of violence, it was assumed that school violence was a form of violence whose meaning could be easily captured in daily classes through observations of teachers and students. However, even with this restricted meaning, only some aspects of school violence can be identified. For example, in interviews, school violence involved school vandalism, students assaulting employees, and employees assaulting students, which were not observed in classrooms.

When considering the difficulties of integrating the two different data sets, two important issues that promote the use of both interview data and data resulting from classroom observations were noticeable. The first issue relates to the normalization of violence among students, which, according to Sposito (1998), results from the constant repetition of episodes of violence that "has important consequences within the school unit, when structuring various forms of sociability that withdraw the occasional or episodic nature of certain acts of destruction or use of force" (Sposito 1998, p. 62). Sposito argued that the defining boundaries of a destructive act against

others will incorporate the everyday experience that integrates violence to trivialize it in the context of sociability.

The actions of teachers before the episodes of fights between students indicated that many of these fights were not perceived as violence. In general, they were interrupted by repression for disturbing or disrupting the progress of the class. The fact that the way the teachers responded to several of these fights was similar to how they responded when faced with undisciplined behavior supports this statement. Thus, we can assume that, except for some more severe fights, fighting was perceived as mere undisciplined behavior.

The process of trivialization—largely promoted by constant, exacerbated, and spectacular dissemination by the media—ultimately narrows the definition of violence. This restriction implies withdrawing from the definition of violence those forms considered less severe to provide a growing acceptance of violence that was unacceptable before. One teacher clarified in the interview her reluctance to classify the fights that occur between students as violence. In this regard, she said:

I think that the word violence is so strong for us to report an episode of a boy on recess time, a slap, a more aggressive word. I think violence is just too strong to... I think violence is like when there is blood, gunshot, a knife. So I think it's more of a disagreement, I would put it that way.

Thus, regarding the understanding of violence, it seems that we are treading a path that crosses contexts in which changes occur fairly rapidly in a continuous process of the normalization of violence, making the concept increasingly strict and unable to cover forms of violence that seem to represent the first steps in the climb.

The second aspect of the imbrication of the perception of violence in the teachers' actions in the classroom refers to the violence practiced by teachers against students. According to data from the interview, only 15.9 % of teachers included violence practiced by the teacher against the student in their definitions of violence. Furthermore, the few teachers that did include it referred to the behavior of other teachers; only one teacher referred to her own behavior.

Accordingly, data from classroom observation indicated that teachers generally do not perceive themselves as perpetrators of violence. On several occasions, the researcher witnessed the teachers' violence, such as yelling, diminishing, ridiculing, threatening, and applying punishments of various types, such as forcibly expelling students from the room, putting them in the "dunce chair," hitting them with a ruler, pinching, slapping and pushing them, pulling their hair, or forcing them to sit.

The teachers were not embarrassed in front of the researcher, which leads us to suppose that, as a part of the teachers' everyday practice, these actions were not meant as violence. In addition, students demonstrated no astonishment or indignation at these actions, indicating that they also did not perceive their teachers' actions as violence. These data refer to the statements of Zanella and Cord (1999) that any child care institution, according to its purposes to educate, care for, and socialize, conveys meaning through actions, particularly those of teachers, who constitute the related subjects. In addition, the study of Silva et al. (2007) highlights that there seems to be a real denial that phenomena such as humiliation,

disqualification, derogatory criticism, and exposure to embarrassing situations are in fact forms of violence.

It is noteworthy that this type of relationship between teacher and students belongs to the poor socioeconomic strata. These students already suffer social exclusion, and a new exclusion is promoted within the school.

Paradoxical as it may seem, the dynamism and complexity of the social relations involved in historical and cultural issues, which lead these teachers to promote social exclusion in conjunction with the process of impoverishment and social devaluation of teaching, also ultimately exclude these same teachers from society.

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The Formation of the Subject in the Family-School Boundary During Adolescence

Ramon Cerqueira Gomes and Virginia Dazzani

Introduction

Topics concerning the family-school relationship cover a wide field of studies in various fields of knowledge. Many studies addressing the engagement and participation of parents in the academic life of students highlight certain parenting behaviors and how these behaviors relate to children's academic lives, including school achievement (Cia et al. 2004, 2008; Rocha 2006; Amato and Gilbreth 1999; Fan and Chen 2001).

We consider that children and adolescents are actors and reflective agents of their own lives. Studying children and adolescents through their positioning related to the voices of their parents and others school agents in the multiple dialogic space of the self can provide resources for identifying the emergence of the subject from the school-family boundary. For this, it is necessary to value the "voice" of children and adolescents, who create meanings and narratives that emerge from the school-family boundary, interfering in the constitution of educational self. According to Iannaccone et al. (2013), the educational self comprises a legacy of symbolic resources built from knowledge, beliefs, narratives, and affective states established during each person's educational life.

The school, as a stage upon which most experience their youth, is revealed as an important social space. On the one hand, a higher level of education is associated with improved income and health, reduced propensity for crime, and increased employability (Menezes-Filho 2007); on the other hand, failed academic experiences are characterized as a social risk factor (Barros et al. 2001). Therefore,

R.C. Gomes (✉) · V. Dazzani
Federal University of Bahia, Salvador, Brazil
e-mail: ramon_catu@hotmail.com

V. Dazzani
e-mail: dazzani@superig.com.br

academic life is a significant aspect of both personal and collective development and thus warrants investigation of the factors that contribute to a better schooling process.

One of these factors is the participation of parents in their children's academic lives, referred to in many studies as *parental involvement*. The concept is largely defined as parenting practices related to school or children, with the aim of benefiting children's school performance (Hill et al. 2004). Many researchers who have dedicated themselves to better understanding the factors that affect the school system have addressed the influence of parental involvement on academic success (Cia et al. 2004, 2008; Menezes-Filho 2007; Barros et al. 2001). Parental involvement is therefore recognized as an important factor that contributes to the quality of a person's schooling.

Although studies have been conducted on parental involvement in children's academic lives in the early grades (Koutrouba et al. 2009), research focusing on adolescents is less common (Wheeler 1992). Moreover, qualitative research on how adolescents understand the various factors that contribute to their education are even scarcer (Checchia 2010). This finding indicates a knowledge gap in the research addressing teenagers as reflective actors who negotiate the effects on their selves of the voices that emanate from both the family and the school contexts.

The scientific literature investigating the relationship between parental involvement and education from a quantitative approach shows that parents influence different aspects of a student's academic life. Deslandes and Cloutier (2002) concluded that parental involvement in adolescents' formal education results in better academic performance, the development of higher personal aspirations, and fewer disciplinary problems. According to Hill et al. (2004), although parental involvement changes as the level of schooling advances, there is evidence that in adolescence, specifically in high school, parental involvement has a significant impact on a student's academic life. Our study, however, proposes one question related to these scientific findings: what do children and teenagers think about their parents' participation in their academic lives?

The Educational Self and the Emergence of the Subject: A Novel Approach to the Study of the Self in the Educational Context

Zittoun (2012) investigated the emergence of the individual within the surrounding semiotic dynamics. The individual is not predetermined by the culture. As the "subject" emerges, novelty may appear in the self-system. Subjectivity results from some process of retraction, or of shaping these flows, to create a space from which one can reflect, remember, and imagine while changing (Valsiner 2012a; Zittoun 2012).

Parental involvement in the academic trajectory is conceived here as an important condition for the development of the educational self. Thus, it is understood that its constitution unfolds in the semiotic mediation process as an emergence of the subject. By internally negotiating parental voices, the individual may develop novelty in his or her semiotic system, changing the configuration of the educational self.

It is proposed, therefore, that Zittoun's (2012) notion of the emergence of the subject is in line with the idea of Iannaccone et al. (2013) about the educational self, because the significance of parental involvement renders each academic trajectory a unique subjective experience. It is from the unfolding of the emergence of novelty in the development of the educational self that the semiotic mechanisms being internalized create a unique "subject" in the educational context, caused by the circumstances of parental involvement in a student's academic life.

It is also possible to identify (in the process of semiotic mediation) the semiotic catalysts that engender emerging differences (Cabell 2010) in bifurcation points along the developmental trajectory. Through catalytic processes, some signs may arise in the self and act as promoters or inhibitors of development. Depending on the contextual support of the semiotic catalyst, several semiotic regulators can be enabled (or disabled) to act directly on the I-positions and their dialogues (Valsiner and Cabell 2012).

The role of the promoting signs is to "feed forward" a range of possible limits for the meanings of unexpected experiences, albeit ones that are expected in the future. The person constantly creates meanings before the time when they may need to move toward either side of the anticipated experience and thus to prepare for it (Valsiner 2004).

Finally, we conclude that adolescence, as a period marked by bio-psycho-social transformations, is a privileged stage for identity formation in the school context. The school provides a space for relationships in which the dialogues produced by different actors (parents, teachers, students, community) participate in the formation of the educational self through the narratives that make up this process and whose guiding thread is the dialogical negotiation established by the individual along his or her educational trajectory.

The Dialogical Self and the Dynamics of I-Positions: The Dialogic Construction of the Educational Self

According to Silva (2010), culture refers to the processes by which people relate to their social worlds; it concerns a person's relationship with the environment, the process of mutual constitution—that is, in the I-world dyad, an intrinsic process of co-construction is established, mediated by signs, which are crucially involved in the formation of the self that is reflected in a person's cultural life.

Regarding the concept of the self, Valsiner (2012a) stated that a person works through two dialogical processes: heterodialogue (dialogue with others, including imaginary ones) and autodialogue (dialogue within oneself). According to that author, the dialogical self is “a theoretical entity (self) that organizes (exists) by means of a process of dialogical relationships between its components” (Valsiner 2012a, p. 127).

In the views of Hermans and Kempen (1998), the concept of “core self” should be replaced by the multiple positions of self (I-positions) in dynamic motion. The individual, by enabling the dialogical self, must execute an obligatory reflection on his or her own position in the vital space. The dialogical self creates a tension between being *as-is* and *as-if* he or she were another. This tension can be the *locus* of birth of being, of becoming: the movement toward a new state (Valsiner 2012a). This tension of I-positions may build in the personal culture different forms of semiotic organization and acquire new settings, which according to Zittoun (2009) can emerge from rupture-transitions—that is, periods in which people define new identities and new skills and give meaning to their lives and worlds (Zittoun 2006). System ruptures can be understood as breaks in conservative cycles that force the system to be restored in another hierarchical order. Such restoration on multiple levels may be called a *transition* (Zittoun 2008); thus, it is relevant to developmental studies.

In the theory of the dialogical self, the concept of I-positions corresponds to the notion of variability in the inner self system. Instead of referring to a single and individual entity, the I-position notion presents a broad overview of the self’s system components. In that sense, I-positions may relate to the individual’s social roles (socially expected), reflective senses, and affective states. Some I-positions are continuously activated and take the lead in the configuration of the self, establishing a relationship of dominance and subordination with others. Therefore, it is possible to state that a person builds his or her subjective experience in a dynamic way, through a continuous flow between past, present, and future I-positions, each expressing a voice that gives meaning to the person’s experiences in the here and now (Mattos 2013).

The dialogical self is always linked to a particular position in space and time (Hermans 2001). For example, a mother goes to her daughter’s school and asks her classmates to help her daughter with classroom activities because she has learning difficulties. This situation creates different I-positions for the daughter. In the position of I-daughter, the girl then says: “I understand my mother’s concern—she wants to take care of me.” Meanwhile, in the I-student position, she considers that “Because I am independent in my school life, it is embarrassing that my mother comes to the school to ask my classmates to help me.” In the daughter’s dialogical self, the “other” is a real person: her mother, who is judged by the I-daughter and I-student positions. In the I-daughter position, there is a relationship of understanding regarding the mother’s behavior. In the I-student position, the mother’s behavior is viewed as embarrassing and is condemned by the daughter. This example illustrates a situation in which I-positions are in conflict: the I-daughter and

the I-student express contradictory positions related to the mother's participation in the daughter's academic life.

The individual is constantly engaged in building a dynamic structure of I-positions (Valsiner 2005). Every I-position creates a voice that interacts with voices of others I-positions in a dynamic dialogical relationship (Valsiner 2012a). Through the dialogical self, the self fluctuates among different and even opposing positions and has the ability to imaginatively guide each position with a voice, to allow the establishment of the dialogical relationships between each position (Hermans 2002).

Method and Idiographic Perspective: Reading Between the Lines of the Educational Self-narratives

According to Bruner (2003), we constantly build and rebuild our selves to cope with the demanding situations that we face, and we do so based on a guide formed from our memories, hopes, and fears of the future. This phenomenon results not only from the stories we tell about ourselves but also from the stories that others tell about us. Therefore, Bruner (2004) concluded that something we might psychologically call "life in itself" does not exist; it is, at the least, a product of selective memory. Moreover, that author states that telling one's own life story is an "interpretive act,"—that is, the narrative about our own experiences shapes an interpretation about the self that is permeated by meanings.

According to Bruner (1996), school is a stage for forming narratives. Investigating the self in the school environment is therefore timely because, according to Valsiner (2012a), the self is based on the stories told by individuals. Through narrative, people remember what happened, put an experience into a sequence, find possible explanations for what happened, and play with the chain of events that form the individual and his or her social life (Jovechelovitch and Bauer 2012). Thus, the narratives are relevant data for research in the school environment, considering that the educational self develops during the educational process (Marsico and Iannaccone 2012).

This study investigated adolescent's educational self through her own narratives about her educational trajectory, emphasizing the meanings of parental involvement in her academic life. Our goal was to understand the mechanisms involved in the formation of the educational self system in the academic trajectory of three teenagers, emphasizing the dialogical dynamics established in their relationships with their parents and the I-positions that emerge in the formation of the self. Bete¹ was chosen to exemplify semiotic processes occurring on the school-family boundary, emphasizing the participation of parents. The focus of this chapter is the understanding of the semiotic processes in which Bete describes the importance of

¹Fictitious name.

parental involvement in her school affairs, especially the alternation of power in the dialogical space of the self in the mother-daughter dyad.

Within cultural psychology, this phenomenon is addressed from an idiographic perspective (Valsiner 2012b), considering both the person and the psychological field in its uniqueness and continuity over time. This understanding of that psychological phenomenon has important implications, especially for current practices in methodological design and data analysis. The starting point is the understanding that the psychology subject is idiographic—that is, a person's psychological processes are functioning and are unique. This concept resonates in the posture of the researcher toward the phenomenon because the use of rigid methods for interpreting reality will eliminate the evidence of the psychological phenomenon's dynamic flows (Valsiner 2012b). The researcher is viewed as a developer of knowledge pierced by the theoretical, philosophical, and phenomenological skills that come into play in front of the investigated object.

In science, the methodological choice must be consistent with the stated objectives. One of our research objectives was to understand the mechanisms involved in the formation of the educational self system in Bete's academic trajectory in vocational high school, emphasizing parents' voices in this process and the I-positions that emerge in the dynamic settings of the dialogical self. Thus, this study fits within the idiographic research approach because it focuses the uniqueness of the phenomenon on the person in his or her temporal narrative.

This interest in investigating the meanings present in the discourse allows the study of the subject to reveal aspects of the person and his or her culture. Minayo and Sanches (1993), for example, noted that the qualitative definition of the typical condition of a group or society allows them to be understood with a certain degree of probability.

Yin (2001) proposes two general strategies for case studies: (1) to base the analysis on theoretical propositions, organizing the dataset according to intrinsic characteristics and seeking evidence of causal relationships suggested in the theory; and (2) to develop a descriptive framework to help identify relationship patterns within the dataset. In this research, the first strategy was adopted to consider the theoretical concepts in the field of cultural psychology to divide the participants' trajectories and to select narratives that enable achievement of the stated research objectives. Additionally, this research is composed of multiple case studies (Pires 2008).

The Federal Institute for Vocational Education (*Instituição Federal de Ensino Profissionalizante*—IF) in the state of Bahia (Brazil) was the organization selected for this study because it is the workplace of the first author, who had significant information about parental involvement in students' academic lives. Additionally, this institute is special because it offers full-time education, which leads to students having less daily contact with their families than if they were enrolled in a half-day educational institution.

The selection of participants was based on the researcher's knowledge of cases he had worked with himself or on information from other staff, taking into consideration the criteria requiring diversification of the group, as described above.

According to Pires (2008), it is necessary to include one or two individuals per group to fulfill the saturation principle. Therefore, two individuals were included per group (grade).

To maximize the group's diversification and considering the research objectives, three criteria were selected: (1) the gender of the participants: male and female subjects were included to characterize gender diversification; (2) the last two years of the vocational high school program in the institution: individuals in these two grades² were included; and (3) satisfactory academic performance (approved to move on to the next grade) or unsatisfactory academic performance (repeating the grade): subjects within both performance classes were included.

Bete's case will be presented in this chapter, which will include both major ruptures-transitions involved in the subject's academic trajectory and the mechanisms of semiotic mediation present in the narrative about parental involvement, along with significant others. She had a satisfactory academic performance.

Bete's Case Analysis: Dialogic Interactions with Significant Others and Alternating Voice Domains in the Mother-Daughter Dyad

Bete is 16 years old and is finishing high school. She lives in the countryside and travels every day to the educational institution, which is in the nearby town. Her parents separated when she was a baby; since that time, she has lived with her mother, who works as a civil servant. Her father is also a civil servant. However, in Bete's narrative, there is a substitute figure for her biological father. She calls that substitute her "foster father"; he is her uncle (her mother's brother). Bete's uncle participated in her schooling, especially during her childhood. Bete has studied in private schools, with the exception of her current school, which is public and maintained by the federal government. Recently, Bete broke ties with the Baptist Church, which is frequented by her mother.

Here, we present the main periods identified through more elaborated narrative, in which Bete expressed greater affective involvement, semiotic mediation, and rupture-transitions related to parental involvement in her academic life. Specific periods of her academic trajectory were divided based on parental involvement in the settings of educational self, following the work of Iannaccone et al. (2013). Only two periods will be presented to illustrate the dynamics of Bete's educational self relatives to the voices of her family.

²In Brazil, the high school has, commonly, three grades. Each is completed within one year, totaling three years. In the Federal Vocational Institution, where the study was conducted, the student completes the common high school combined with the professional course chosen in full-time education.

In Bete's narrative, there is a prevalence of two I-positions: the I-student and the I-daughter. At various times, Bete positions herself as a daughter facing parental expectations, rewards, and demands; at others times, she positions herself as a student. Sometimes, these two I-positions coalesce in a semiotic effort to integrate the self. This integration supports Valsiner's (2005) views that a person is always involved in building a dynamic framework of I-positions. During childhood, Bete maintained an open and close relationship with her mother and later had personal and relationship conflicts with her mother, which required the reorganization of her self system.

In her early school years, Bete's mother and "foster father" had a prominent place in the dialogic interactions. Nevertheless, as Bete reports on their academic life, her mother and her biological father are evaluated in polarities. The mother is seen as a partner of the school process, who follows Bete's daily routine and visits her school. Meanwhile, the biological father is seen as a figure absent in academic subjects, merely supplying material elements for Bete to stay in private school. Gradually, the mother, however, becomes a figure who begins to occupy an ambiguous position in Bete's understanding, which demands transitions related to the development of the self in dialogical relationship with her mother. This can be seen in the presentation of the following periods.

5th and 6th Grades: Academic Failure and Changing Schools

Beginning in the fifth grade, Bete studied in a Catholic school. Her mother had warned her that if she had to retake examinations for any school subject, repeating the year would be automatic. The following year, in the sixth grade, there was a rupture in Bete's trajectory: she had to retake a subject's examination and her mother enforced the rule that was set earlier. Despite the intervention of her god-father in an attempt to pay for the re-examination, her mother did not accept, and Bete had to repeat the sixth grade. Her biological father was never informed of this decision because, according to Bete's mother, he would want Bete to move to a public school.

The mother's action in forbidding Bete to retake the examination caused a rupture-transition in Bete's academic life (change of school, peers, and teachers and the emergence of new signs), which affected her identity construction. According to Zittoun (2008), transitions are catalyzed processes of change due to a rupture and they lead to a new, sustainable adjustment between the person and his or her current environment. In this case, Bete had previously considered herself "kind of remiss." After her mother's intervention, the academic failure, and changing schools, Bete began to "give more value to school." Surprisingly, this last sign plays the role of promoter in her academic trajectory, as will be seen later.

Bete's academic failure resulted in a new position of the educational self. Entering a new school allowed her to experience a new positioning of the I-student, moving from a failing student to a genius student:

In my new school, no one knew I was repeating the year and because I showed a better performance than the other students, because I already knew the content, everyone thought I was a genius. For example, the teacher in the new school's 6th grade was very challenging; he would come into the room, had not given the material, would write a question on the board and say, 'I'll give a point to the student who is able to answer the question.' Without even explaining the material, just to make us think about it. Then I went and answered the question without having his explanation, so everyone thought, 'How does she know? My God!' [...] Everyone thought I was an Einstein.

The situation in the new school context allowed the event of grade repetition to become an aspect that differentiated her from other students, because she had previously acquired knowledge unknown to her new classmates. This new context interfered in the identity formation of the participant through the rising of the new positioning of the self. The position occupied by the participant in the class placed her in a prominent position, contributing to a better adaptation to the rupture and to her socialization process.

Bete's dialogical interactions at the new school allowed her to occupy a new position related to the I-student. Significant others (teachers and peers) acted as catalytic agents in this transitional process of her I-position, interfering in the settings of her educational self: she began to play a role of her educational self never previously experienced in her trajectory, the position of student-genius, because her classmates did not know she was repeating the sixth grade. This allowed her to experience new relationships at school, promoted by the prominent place that she was occupying among her peers in the classroom, determining the relevance of the voices of the peers, which greatly affected identity formation in the school context at that moment of her life.

Conversely, the punitive attitude of Bete's mother through the enforcement of the previously established rule of not allowing Bete to participate in the re-examination also acted as a catalyst event in her personal trajectory. The fear of punishment began to guide her educational self, promoting a process of regulation based on that fear. The fear of punishment appears as one of the most important aspects contributing to making the maternal figure an ambiguous character in Bete's self: "I was afraid of it happening again [having to retake the examination] and repeating the year again."

Although the mother's voice, in the settings of Bete's self, dominates in Bete's early academic trajectory, its strength later weakened in the face of significant others appearing in the self system as Bete progressed in her education. This transitional process of transformation of the relationship between Bete and her mother is related to the construction of the maternal figure as an ambiguous sign. According to Raggat (2014), this ambiguity is the third dynamic of the dialogical self. It occurs when a player has ambiguous properties such as support and rejection or help and antagonism, which promotes the creation of I-positions and counter I-positions in the dialogical dynamic of positioning.

High School to the Present

Entering the Federal Institute for Vocational Education resulted in several changes to Bete's self system. Being away from home for longer, meeting different people, and coping with an institutional process distinct from those she had previously experienced were some of the contextual factors demanding reorganization in the functioning of Bete's self. Joining the new institute, therefore, represented a rupture event in her academic trajectory:

I was delighted with the number of people, the size of the school, with the teachers, I was delighted with everything. Yesterday, I was talking to freshmen here at school. I said that when they leave here, they will not be the same people. I remember the first day I got here and today I'm not the same. The Federal Institution (current school) showed me this, a moment of maturity that would face things, more independent than before, but that would be a time to mature, I believe.

The sign that emerges from this context of rupture and transition is "maturity." The characteristics of the new institution promote and act catalytically to develop students' autonomy because they attend full-time. Significant others beyond the family must then step into meet needs (relational, institutional) that emerge daily and must be resolved in the absence of parents.

The sign of "maturity," used by Bete, is associated with the concept of symbolic responsibility (Zittoun 2006), once she begins to take on positions in various spheres of life. At that point in her trajectory, she must make her choices and defend them, even under the protests of her mother, who wants to know about Bete's school routine. Love relationships and new friendships with peers and teachers are some of the aspects involved in the transformation of the settings of Bete's personal culture system, which encourages her autonomy. In this process, the mother's voice is losing strength to the new relevant social voices in the formation of the self; these voices participate even in the resolution of tensions related to the I-religious and ultimately resonate in the academic life, as described next.

Bete's self system undergoes profound changes in high school. Coming from an evangelical Baptist family, she begins to interact with students from various locations from inland Bahia and must interact with people of different religions at festivities and events not related to the church, along with new friendships, courtships, and knowledge. The need for diversification in her identity leads to new decisions. She decides to build new relationships, engages in extension programs, and even takes a leadership position in these projects. In this identity transition, she also decides to break with religion but finds it very difficult to talk to her mother about this affair. Conflicts related to religious choice arise and Bete begins to change her behavior at school, such as skipping class, and her academic performance suffers, greatly affecting her school life.

Her religion-related conflicts are omitted for a period in Bete's relationship with her mother. Given the difficulty in revealing to her mother her break with religion and her need to "find herself," Bete chooses to seek the company of peers and even teachers in this transitional process. Because this transitional aspect of the I-religious

is an issue closely related to her mother—it represents a rupture with her mother’s religious choice—significant others take prominent positions in the formation of the educational self, in seeking support and protection during this transition of the I-religious. The ambiguous figure of the mother gives way to others social actors participating in her daily life and who are close to her (friends, teachers); these contribute to the resolution of the conflict about whether to remain attached to her mother’s religion or to break with it.

The promoter sign created at the time of rupture created by Bete’s failure in the sixth grade (“giving more value to school”) reappears in Bete’s trajectory. When confronted by performance problems in high school, she re-adopts this idea about herself—that of a student who values school. Therefore, her I-student repositions herself, opposing her current identity state of underperformer and missing classes. The promoter sign (“giving more value to school”) serves to guide the construction of signs from a certain perspective (Valsiner 2004), which in this case is that of an interested and motivated student. Although the current situation related to her behavior and performance in school does not strongly support such a perspective, Bete relies on it to maintain her integration into the positioning of her educational self. She justifies her poor academic performance and argues, giving a defensive voice to the position of the I-student:

Because it was a time of transition for me [her break with evangelical religion], a time of choices, I guess I was kind of lost. I like to study, I think it’s important. I like to read, to write, but I needed to find myself somewhere, and the place where I found myself was out of the classroom, chatting away. I needed to find myself somewhere, so whenever I came home I was sad because I had to tell my mother and couldn’t. I was always in the bedroom. The moments I had to laugh and talk with my friends were here at school, and it ended up affecting me, not directly related to religion but related to my need to find myself somewhere.

Therefore, facing the confrontation between her current conditions (low performance and low class attendance) and her positioning as an I-student who values school, Bete defends the positioning of the I-student, blaming the conflicts related to the I-religious and the I-daughter for her unsatisfactory situation in school. The I-daughter appears when Bete reports that in her relationship with her mother, she could not express her religious issues. Thus, she does not find support for solving these conflicts at home, in the position of daughter, in which the I-daughter position withdraws from the mother.

In high school, Bete definitely assumes a position of greater control over the communication of her academic affairs, although her mother still requires knowledge about her school routine and participation in formal school meetings. Demands from the school and the mother for more information about her academic routine are now controlled by Bete, who decides to take control of communicating the content related to her educational process. Bete actively negotiates the power to act in this dialogic space and this negotiation of power with parental voices intensifies in adolescence.

From the rupture-transition experienced with the failure in the sixth grade, to an extent induced by the mother who did not authorize Bete to take the re-examination, there have been major changes in the organization of the self. Significant others

(peers, teachers) began to occupy the highest position in the dialogic hierarchy in lieu of the maternal position, which became increasingly frail throughout the high school period. In her identity formation, Bete finds the support she needs to resolve tensions and conflicts in her I-positions from others social actors in high school, because her mother appears as an ambiguous sign in the dialogic dynamic restricting the process of subjective differentiation.

Bete's decision to break with the Baptist church during high school appears as an important aspect, with reverberations in her academic life. The resolution of the tension related to her decision to break with religion is related to behavior changes in school. There is a strengthening of her position of detachment from her mother with respect to school matters, and she omits mentioning the conflicts related to her religious belief. In this case, the I-position related to religion also signals the role of another context that participates in the school-family boundary, forming a triad—that is, the third context (religion) enters the educational self in the school-family boundary, feeding the strength of certain semiotic mechanisms in the system. In this case, the I-student and the I-daughter coalesce to address the conflict of the positionings of the I-religious—that is, to either stay in the religion or break with it. The second option is supported by the perspectives of the I-student and I-daughter, who manifest independence from the mother. Therefore, there is an enhancement of the position to break with religion, a movement that contributes to the process of creating meaning about the participation of the mother, who currently reflects as an anti-model for Bete's negotiations with her personal culture.

When Bete reports her mother's complaints related to problems of performance and school attendance, her positioning expresses the role that her mother occupies at present in her self system configuration. The mother's power in dialogue interactions decreases and gives way to the entry of other social. With regard to the need to change current behavior in school, Bete privileges the voice of a new boyfriend. The mother's voice, at the time, could not strongly reach the I-student who is in coalition with both the I-daughter as with the I-girlfriend.

Who talked to her [mother] was a teacher of mine. [The teacher] said it actually was not all [underperforming and missing school], I had gone through some problems, she needed to understand, so she did not fight with me. She tried to understand me and this year it was always warning me and yet I did not care. [...] For example, she spoke: "Do you remember last year, you will not always have someone to defend you" (referring to the class council), it did not wake me.

The appearance of these significant others socially is related to ruptures in Bete's adjustment mode in the institution. In the position of I-girlfriend, for example, Bete creates rules with her new boyfriend for the maintenance of their relationship when they are present in the school environment. She reports about the behavior change in the third year, when she started to have a more disciplined behavior in school, which is assigned to the pact created with her boyfriend:

When I started dating, now in my last relationship, it was a condition that we put each other, or you study to complete soon and go right here, or we'll be bumming class and losing and

repeat grades. I think at the beginning of my relationship was important [to define] these conditions we put each other. The penny dropped.

Bete's self system shows a departure from the mother figure that points to a need for differentiation in identity formation. There is a process of identification with peers and with her boyfriend. Her mother appears as a character in conflict with her need for transformation and constitution of herself that is related to the construction of the symbolic responsibility in this transitional point in their life.

The construction of this rule with her boyfriend worked as a catalytic process in the education of both selves, in that it favored self-regulation with regard to studies. To Valsiner and Cabell (2012), depending on the contextual support of semiotic catalyst, several semiotic regulators can be enabled (or disabled) to act directly on the I-positions and their dialogues. In this case, the voice of the boyfriend triggers particular placement in the coalition between the I-girlfriend and I-student to regulate the behavior of both in school. Other voices, like those of colleagues and the boyfriend, acquired relevance in the self dynamic rather than maternal voice. While the mother's rule is imposed, in the new configuration of the self, new rules are built among peers and act as an auto-regulatory mechanism that worked for Bete, as a break, as defined in Zittoun (2006).

Final Thoughts

Parental involvement is actually a contextual aspect that the student must manage semiotically during his or her academic trajectory. Negotiations, rejections, and alliances may contribute to this dialogical construction of meanings about parental involvement in their children's academic lives. The participation of voices emanating from a third context—religion—was identified and played an important role in setting the educational self at the school-family boundary.

In Bete's case, she recognizes the important maternal role in her school trajectory from her earliest years to the present. The biological father holds a minor position in the dialogic hierarchy and is substituted by the foster father. The foster father appears more often in the reports of the schooling process during childhood, and his participation is perceived as relevant because he was a present figure in some events and school activities, replacing the figure of her biological father in the school context, even in formal situations.

From the rupture-transition observed with disapproval in the sixth grade, somehow induced by the mother who did not allow the realization of recovery, there have been important changes in Bete's self organization. The significant others (classmates, teachers) have moved to higher positions in the hierarchy dialogue at the expense of maternal position, which has become increasingly fragile, culminating in high school. In its identity construction during high school, Bete finds the support she needs in significant others to resolve tensions and conflicts in their I-positions; her mother appears as a character in her dialogical dynamics that

restricts the process of differentiation subjective, appearing as an ambiguous signifier.

Bete's decision to break with the Baptist Church during high school appears as an important aspect, with reverberations in her academic life. The resolution of the stress related to this decision is associated with changes in behavior in school. There is a strengthening of distance positioning in relation to the mother, with regard to school matters, to omit their conflicts related to religious beliefs. In this case, the I-position related to religion also signals the entry of another context that participates in the school-family boundary, forming a contextual triad—that is, the third context (religion) that enters the family-school boundary in the educational self. It fed the strength of certain semiotic mechanisms in the system. In this case, the I-student and the I-daughter go into coalition to address the conflict between positions in I-religious. The position occupied by Bete's "foster father" worked to protect the self from the frustrations and conflicts related to her father's absence. The mother appeared as an important player in her dialogical dynamics during childhood. However, during Bete's adolescence, her mother was perceived as an ambiguous figure who restricted the process of identity differentiation, which was established primarily with the contribution of others' social actors: peers and teachers. In the rise of the educational self, Bete claimed autonomy from the maternal figure in the dialogic space and actively sought to define the boundaries between school and family in building the idea of the I-student, especially in adolescence.

The experience of schooling, therefore, may favor the emergence of the individual in the school-family boundary. The need to resolve multiple psychosocial and cognitive demands, such as academic performance, socialization, sexuality, and interference from other contexts, such as religion, were relevant factors in the formation of the educational self. The actors involved—parents, teachers, peers and significant others—contributed to the construction of positions that each requested more autonomy in the dialogic space, which allowed the emergence of changes in the self.

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Everyday Child Care in Daycare Centers: An Ethnographic Study

Cuidado Infantil no Cotidiano da Creche: Um Estudo Etnográfico

Vania Bustamante and Cecilia McCallum

Introduction

In this chapter, we seek to contribute to the theoretical discussion of childcare in daycare centers, based on analysis of the results of ethnographic research. We start our study with a historical contextualization of the emergence of daycare and the political discussion that accompanied the process.

Daycare first appeared in Europe in the first half of the 19th century. Freitas and Shelton (2005) reported that kindergartens first appeared in 1883. Kindergartens were private institutions to which only wealthy families had access, with a purpose to educate. By contrast, the institutions known as ‘creches’ were places where working-class children received daycare. Rosemberg (2002) shows that the social inequalities present since the creation of these institutions offering care for children remain in place in Brazil today. She argues that, despite attempts to increase access, quality remains low in Brazilian daycare centers or ‘creches’, reinforcing processes of exclusion from school.

In a report on everyday practices in early childhood education published by the Ministry of Education (Brasil 2009) there is a reminder that, since the 1996

V. Bustamante (✉)

Instituto de Psicologia, Instituto de Saúde Coletiva, Universidade Federal da Bahia,
Salvador, Brazil
e-mail: vaniabus@yahoo.com

V. Bustamante

Programa Integrado de Pesquisa e Cooperação Técnica em Gênero e Saúde (MUSA),
Instituto de Saúde Coletiva, Universidade Federal da Bahia, Rua Basílio da Gama s/n,
Salvador, BA 40110-170, Brazil

C. McCallum

Departamento de Antropologia, Faculdade de Filosofia e Ciências Humanas,
Universidade Federal da Bahia, Salvador, Brazil
e-mail: cecilia.mccallum@uol.com.br

approval of the “Law of Guidelines and Bases for Education”, preschooling is considered the first stage of basic education. For this reason, the report continues, it is necessary to give its specific contours due consideration. In this sense:

In order to demarcate the “identity” of the *crèche*,¹ its place in public policy and in Brazilian Basic Education, to dissociate it from social work and to distance the pre-school from “preparation for school education”, it was necessary to emphasize and to insist on the inseparability of education/care, as a political strategy to bring the two together, [thus] reshaping children’s education (Brazil 2009, p. 66).

The importance of the daycare center as an educational space and as an option for families unable to spend all day with their child is related to the increase in the supply of this service, even if supply still does not meet demand. This growing importance is also expressed in the considerable body of new research on such daycare. Our review of this literature shows that particular attention is paid to the topic of ‘care’ in this research, especially in areas such as nursing, education, and psychology.

Several studies focus on educators’ thinking about the function of the daycare center, care, and the children’s families (Verissimo and Fonseca 2003a, b; Maranhão and Sarti 2008; Bógus et al. 2007). Others investigate families’ or mothers’ thinking about the care offered by the centers (Delgado 2005; Maranhão and Sarti 2007). The authors of these studies make clear their concern by providing recommendations on how to improve practice, drawing attention to the need to improve caregiver training and to the complexity of the relationship between the “family” and preschool care professionals. However, all the cited studies discuss the topic of care without clarifying how they understand this concept.

The low value of care in relation to education is discussed in several papers. For example, Verissimo and Fonseca (2003a) explored notions of care among workers in a daycare center attached to the University of São Paulo, comparing coordinators’ points-of-view with those of teachers. According to the authors, although seen as an area of increasing importance for child development, there is still uncertainty about the mission of daycare centers, which has oscillated from the purely paternalistic mission of the centers of old to the present emphasis on their educational functions. In practice, they note, there is a marked lack of regard for the care aspects of work at the center and a relatively high value given to the educational dimension.

Against the practical difficulties in the political and pedagogical discussion of early childhood education, there is a clear emphasis on the “inseparability of educating and caring,” which is considered to be one of the five educational principles aimed at achieving the Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education. In the report on these guidelines, some well-consolidated conceptions concerning the duo of education and care are outlined and a number of disputes and problems are presented. There is a consensus that:

¹TN (Translator’s Note) daycare center.

The act of caring goes beyond mere protection and care of physical needs such as food, sleep, hygiene, comfort and pain prevention. Caring requires listening to needs, desires and concerns, encouraging or restraining collective actions, supporting children as individuals who dream and face challenges, recognizing their unique achievements within the group and also accepting their own forms of reasoning as expressed in their choices and attempts to explore movements in the world (Brazil 2009, p. 66).

The report also criticizes usage of the twinned concepts of education and care. Use of the two terms suggests that “these actions are separate, to be undertaken by two different kinds of professionals, thus legitimizing the existence of a teacher and an assistant” (Brazil 2009, p. 67). Yet there is dispute concerning which of the terms is hegemonic:

The ascendancy of the term care over the term education derives mainly from philosophical debates, where it is argued that all relationships and interactions among individuals presuppose care. Care, as a specific modality of relations between humans, is necessary for survival. In this line of reasoning, all daily practices are care (primary care, care for the collective, physical, natural and social environments). On the other hand, some authors argue that educational processes always involve the dimension of care. This debate is just beginning and the arguments on both sides are relevant and consistent (Brazil 2009, pp. 67–68).

In this study, we work with a concept that is the product of a thesis on childcare. In Bustamante and McCallum (2010), we summarized our approach to care as follows.

Care can be thought of as *the construction of projects of the person which is expressed in everyday practices and which occurs in a framework of power relations between agents who occupy different social positions*. We show, through ethnographic analysis, that for the subjects, care necessarily involves work focusing on the person, as Thomas (1993) argues. Our conceptualization of work as taking the form of the construction of projects in everyday practice may both be connected to Ayres’ perspective and also held to be distinct from it. While Ayres restricts himself to examining care in a sphere delimited by restricted inter-subjectivity, in our research we show that it is in fact constructed culturally and socially within structured relations of power (...)

Projects of the person may be related to the multiple interests of caregivers occupying different positions within a social field, in the sense, with respect to this latter concept, ascribed by Bourdieu (1996, 1989). Such projects are not reducible just to a concern for practical success. Following Rabelo’s (1999) concept of project, which derives from Schutz and Merleau-Ponty, we argue that projects involve more than simple discursive or mental constructions. Indeed, projects can have corporeal expression without necessarily having passed through a level of mental representations; what is more, several projects may coexist in the same situation. Based on Rabelo’s contributions and upon anthropological discussion about the social construction of the person (see Bustamante 2009), we argue that care (and with it the person) is always being built and rebuilt in this form – that is, as projects that indeed might not be spelled out discursively, in so many words. (p. 609)

After several years of contact with residents of a poor neighborhood of Salvador and caregivers in various spaces, we grouped the people who care for children in three categories: internal, external, and intermediate caregivers (Bustamante 2009). The internal caregivers are blood relatives or relatives by “consideration,” some of whom live with the child in the same household or in houses belonging to the same

“configuration” of houses.² Other caregivers perhaps do not cohabit but maintain frequent contact. By external caregivers, we refer to professionals with high school or higher education, who mostly do not live in the neighborhood. Intermediate caregivers are people working with children, usually women with little formal training enduring poor working conditions, who often live in the neighborhood. These caregivers sometimes identify with the internal caregivers, sometimes with the external.

External and intermediate caregivers are subject to the demands of institutions, where “planning” is central. This term is an expression of the presence and power of the state in the caregiver’s day-to-day. It condenses institutional demands powerfully. These demands relate to the policies and programs, protocols, and productivity criteria proposed and established by public agencies, especially federal, state-level, and municipal ministries and secretariats of health and education. To plan as a function of institutional demands—and to put plans into practice—is seen as a good indicator of job performance.

The notion of “planning” allows us to understand how the various types of caregivers construe and construct their positions. Intermediate caregivers, such as the people who work in the daycare center, find themselves in a conflicted position. On the one hand, they have a kin-like relationship with the child, for they think of the children through the lens of their own experiences as internal caregivers. On the other hand, they are in the position of professionals who enjoy superior knowledge, who are able to give “guidance” and to make demands on families, for these attitudes are central to consolidating themselves in the workplace.

The concept advocated here involves a critique of the tendency to universalize the meaning of care and, at the same time, a proposal to extend this notion by showing that, in fact, care is built daily through a diversity of interactions and not just out of a concern with happiness or well-being. In the discussion that follows, we show that care is carried out on a daily basis, through both words and actions, at daycare centers. Thus, we seek to contribute to a conceptual discussion that is in a wide-ranging dialogue with practice.

Methodology

This analysis is part of an ethnography about childcare in a low-income neighborhood of Salvador (Bustamante 2009). Like Jackson (1996), we consider that ethnography is more than a type of writing: Indeed, it is best understood as a good

²We adopt the term ‘consideration’ to translate the Portuguese term *consideração* which, when used to denote kinship connections, implies bonds of relatedness built up progressively over time that may take preeminence over those generated in the first instance by what Bahians call ‘ties of blood’. For a discussion of the constitution of relatedness as kinship within the symbolic domain of houses and configurations of houses in this region of Brazil, see Marcelin (1999), McCallum and Bustamante (2012).

way to understand and to demonstrate how people from different groups live and how they relate to each other.

As Toren (1997) observes, participant observation is the method that is most characteristic of the ethnographic approach. It involves being both a participant and an observer who questions his or her own and others' participation in ordinary events, in such a way that nothing that is said is treated as irrelevant. According to the author, ethnographic analysis is not intended to be based on representative samples. Rather, the challenge is to know as much as possible about the people whose behaviors and representations are under scrutiny. For this reason, it is important to do in-depth interviews with a number of informants.

Our research on childcare involved ethnographic explorations over several years of the neighborhood in various contexts: seven residential units, a family health center, a public school, a private school, a Pentecostal church, a Candomblé temple, and a daycare center run by a neighborhood resident's association. This daycare center run by one of Prainha's residents' associations was chosen because it is attended by several children known to us. Another reason for the choice was because the association's leader, Clovis, had played an important role in the neighborhood's history. During this part of our study, we conducted two visits a week over a period of four months.³

We observed the day-to-day activities of the daycare center, marking presence in different classrooms and watching the routines of arrival, departure, feeding, and hygiene of the institution. We kept up an ongoing dialogue with several people who worked in the daycare center: Clovis and his relatives who worked in the center as administrators, the educational coordinator, teachers, helpers, children, and the latter's relatives. After the first months of participant observation, we had some taped interviews with some employees and teachers. The criterion for selection was the availability of the interviewees and their importance in the everyday life of the daycare center.

Analysis was ongoing throughout the research alongside the writing process (Becker 1994). Interviews and field notes were transcribed, read, and organized by date in folders. A preliminary general reading of the material was followed by a second type of reading, involving the identification of important themes, the selection of related excerpts, and the creation of new files. New readings of selected material—and sometimes a return to the original material—followed as we built the arguments of the study. Thus, a profounder understanding of the material emerged from this process. Some important findings emerged after new readings of the same notes.

We organized the results around the themes that emerged as the most important in daily work in the childcare center: a contextualization of the place of this institution within the district, the dispute between the pedagogical work and feeding

³Research assistant Lorena Oliveira did most of the fieldwork, supplemented with a few visits by Bustamante, the principal author of the present chapter.

routines; tensions over the work of teachers; and different perspectives on children who attend the center.⁴

Results and Discussion

On the Neighborhood and the Daycare Center

Prainha has similar characteristics to other low-income neighborhoods: inadequate services, poor urban infrastructure, some unpaved streets, lack of green spaces and recreational facilities, presence of homes “under construction,” among others. Residents have a low educational level and income.

“Seu Clovis’s Daycare Center,” as it is dubbed in Prainha, is a *creche-escola* (daycare center and nursery school) that belongs to one of the neighborhood resident’s associations, which he founded and directs.⁵ This institution serves children from one to six years old. In each room, there are between 25 and 30 children and two caregivers, one of whom works as a teacher and the other as an auxiliary. This number far surpasses the recommendations of the Ministry of Health (Brazil 1989): six children per educator, for babies aged 0–11 months, and eight children per educator for infants between one year and one year and 11 months.

The caregivers are women in the community, most without formal training, with a long history of contact with children in the neighborhood, both as mothers and as relatives or teachers or school support people who are paid to “take care” of children at home. These women sought the position because they needed a source of income.

The institution has characteristics similar to those noted in several studies of childcare centers in Brazil which demonstrate that, although the purpose of supporting such creches is as a means of promoting improvements to early childhood education, public policies encouraging low-cost early childhood education services lead to institutions where children spend the day with women who earn low wages and have limited training in wholly inadequate physical surroundings (Rosemberg 2002; Rossetti-Ferreira et al. 2002).

Care in the Daycare Center: Between Nourishment and Planning

Below we highlight some aspects of the day-to-day at the daycare center, which we link to different ways of constructing care—at times more centered on the

⁴The research project which gave rise to this article was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Institute of Collective Health of UFBA, the Federal University of Bahia.

⁵“Seu” is an honorific in Portuguese denoting “Mr.,” used before first names. Its feminine equivalent is “Dona” (T.N.).

perception of children as “in need” and at others more on the pedagogical work, which is opposed routine activities (especially feeding). The difference between what a daycare center and nursery school offer is explained by Liana, an administrative assistant, as follows:

Because the child that is in a daycare center (creche) ..., she is mostly there to be cared for - cared for there, because the mother has nowhere to leave her. And the child who goes to school (escola), she goes to study. So her development is quite different from that of the child who was in daycare. (Excerpt from interview).

In Liana’s interview, she uses the word “care” in the sense of “to mind” or “to take care of” (Bustamante 2009; Bustamante and McCallum, 2011). This involves spending time with children, offering nourishment, hygiene, and the means to avoid injuries—something that could also be done at home and that is different from what is done in school: studying. The differentiation between “caring” and “educating” is discussed in other studies of schools (Carvalho 1999) and daycare centers (Verissimo and Fonseca 2003a, b). It is noted by Freitas and Shelton (2005) as a reality that needs to be rethought if the goal is to offer a higher quality service to children. Moreover, Liana speaks of the daycare center as a place for “mothers who do not have anywhere to leave their child”—that is, as a place for children “in need,” an understanding that has been documented in other studies conducted in Brazilian daycare centers (Bogus et al. 2007; Maranhão 2000).

Thinking of the daycare center as a place that serves children in need is linked to the great importance attributed to Dona Dora, who is in charge of the kitchen in the organization of the institution’s routines. Dona Dora is the director’s sister—something that, although everyone in the daycare knows, he prefers not to be spoken about openly. According to the teachers and helpers, Dona Dora interferes with their work, giving opinions or making criticisms, and does not accept any comments or criticisms regarding the frequent delays in meals, something that alters the routines of the teachers, which are organized around mealtimes.

The director Clovis personally hired Gina, the new educational coordinator. She is the only professional at the daycare center with a university education. On her first day at work, Gina had already formed some ideas about the teachers and on what she proposed to do as part of her job:

Gina said that there was a need to change some things in the daycare center, mostly in teaching. She said no teacher had undergone training, and that some had not even completed high school. She said that the philosophy of the daycare center is very paternalistic and that this damages children’s learning because there is no proper lesson planning: “Here the teachers do not plan lessons; they do not have a defined goal. In fact, they told me that they do not know how to plan! My work here would be help them, give them some suggestion, but I’ll have to start from scratch, teaching how to do planning (field notes).

Throughout the months of participant observation in the daycare center, Gina had little success in teaching the teachers to do planning and to apply it in the way she saw fit. According to Gina, only Cristina, a teacher who had done teacher training, could do it on her own.

Teachers Who Are ‘mothers’

In the daycare center we studied, there is constant reference to idealized motherhood—where the mother is a woman dedicated to meeting the needs of the child—taken as a model of how caretakers working in childcare centers should be. During the interview, Cristina said at various times that to be a good teacher you must be a mother. Initially, she linked the experience of motherhood with the ability to treat children with the affection they need, especially at the times when they need comfort. At another point, Cristina said that to work in the center one should be a teacher and a mother, due to the situation of children:

Teacher and mother, because here there are many very needy children. Not just a teacher! I am a daycare teacher? No, I am a teacher and I am a mother, because here, my daughter, one has to be a mother. There are so very many needy cases.

By tracking the day-to-day of the center, we can see that affectionate references to motherhood as a parameter of the teacher’s role coexist with distance and difficulties in the relationship with the children. We interviewed Alice, the teacher most criticized in the center, and she also made reference to her experience as a mother when discussing her work. Like other colleagues, Alice started “minding” children at home, entered the daycare center as an assistant, and is now a teacher. When asked what it was to be a teacher in her view, Alice said: “*Being a teacher is also being a child, right? You must rejoice, play, do everything that a child likes, right? [...] Learn to discipline, learn to create.*” However, the work in the classroom does not reflect the concerns she put into words:

Alice was sitting all the time doing the “planning” for classes. She only spoke when the children were too noisy, to ask them not to talk and to sit in their seats. Around ten o’clock Alice set a task, and called each child one at a time to do it at her desk. It was to join points forming the letters A and U, which she had written in each child’s notebook. While a child was doing this at her desk, another would sit waiting their turn to do it as well. During the rest of the morning the children had to watch TV. The kids were not allowed to get up because Alice – who had now returned to planning lessons – would complain and order them to sit down again.

That day there was a new student, who spent most of the time alone crying; I think she did not attract much attention because she was crying quietly. The only person to approach her was the teacher’s assistant who always told her not to cry, that she would go home soon, but at no time proposed to her interaction with other children. (field notes)

In contrast to the position she expressed in interview, Alice shows no concern for students’ emotional states. Also during this morning, there were no periods dedicated to “playing with and doing what the child likes.” To keep a distance through “planning” could also be a way to protect oneself from the intense feelings generated by daily contact with one’s charges. Here it seems that planning is less a material reality—it was impossible to see what Alice was writing—and more a strategy to avoid contact with the children, which is accepted by the daycare center because it involves the purported performance of a highly valued activity.

Unlike Alice, Nanda expressed intense feelings in the relationship with the children: “Come with Mummy to change your diaper,” she said to one of twenty children, aged from one to two years old, who were in her class. That was how she habitually spoke with them. During participant observation, the intensity of the children’s demands in this room were notable. Many asked that the caregivers stay close, with some requesting drinking water, while the former had to change another child’s diaper. Nanda said she was already accustomed to the pace of work in the room where she had been working a few months. According to Nanda—and other colleagues confirmed this—although initially she worked with another class, she was asked to work with this group because several other aides had failed to deal with a boy of a year and a half:

“No teacher could care for him. He was too busy rushing around, always running, not listening when we spoke with him, and used to bite his classmates! I think he is very needy [...] he improved a lot after I came to work in this room.” I asked what she thought she had done to improve his behavior. “I think that it was because I began to pay more attention to him, he was always alone in the room, as the classmates did not want to be near him, they already knew that he would bite.” I asked why they decided to call her to care for him. “Several teachers tried to care for him, but none had succeeded. Even the teachers ended up isolating him from the rest of the class. I did the opposite, sitting next to him and putting the other children to sit there as well. I didn’t leave his side! I always talked to him when he tried to do something wrong, until he started to learn. Today he does not bite anyone anymore, and classmates can already sit near him and play with him. (field notes)

In this account and in the day-to-day contact that was observed between Nanda and the boy mentioned, one can discern an intense emotional investment on the part of the caregiver, which engenders a response from the children. There is here a stark contrast to what we observed in the case of Alice. Nanda feels comfortable in her position as an auxiliary because “an auxiliary does not have to do planning,” and she gives attention to a child who behaves differently from the others, unlike Alice, who ignored the crying new girl.

Nanda treats the boy as someone who is able to relate, despite his aggressive behavior, and puts him in contact with others. In the relation with Nanda and other children, a total project of the person emerges—integrating “good” and “bad” aspects—in which this child is no longer an aggressive boy who no one tolerates but a child who wants to engage in relationships, albeit in a different way.

The bond built between Nanda and her student had some unpleasant consequences for both, for they became very close and missed each other when absent: “Nanda also said she loves to work with children and the only ‘problem’ with the daycare center is that she becomes very attached to the children. She added that this boy had become very attached to her too” (field notes). Just as Nanda used her own intuition to take care of a difficult student, constructing a project of the total person, she had to deal with her intense attachment to him.

The above account contrasts with the findings of other studies of daycare centers and preschools. For example, Carvalho (1999) identified no references to motherhood in the way preschool teachers spoke about their work. Veríssimo and Fonseca (2003a) described how teachers from a university daycare center insisted that this

space offered professional care, as a way to enhance the value of their work. The results of our analysis of discourse in the daycare center closely resemble the findings of Delgado (2005) on the relationship between a woman who takes care of children at home and the mothers who entrust their children to them. Both the mothers and “minders” she studied understand the relationship as involving the delegation of the maternal role that mothers cannot exercise full time. This leads children to call the minders “mother” or visit their houses even when they are not under their care. In what follows, we describe and analyze the position in which children are placed in relation to the caregivers at the daycare center.

“Needy” and Autonomous Children

There are different ways of thinking about the children who attend the daycare center, and indeed multiple perspectives are important to make care at this institution viable. On the one hand, children are seen as “needy, aggressive, and with little development.” This view is important as an underpinning for the idea that the center is a good place for them, because the caregivers are “motherly” women, who can meet the needs of children, even if they lack formal studies.

However, during day-to-day interactions, children show that they have their own personalities, autonomy and ability to build their own relationships. This independence is vital to facilitate work in the daycare center since, given the very high number of children in each class, there is a need for children to fend for themselves. On the other hand, their relationship with the children is the main source of recognition for caregivers, who find few opportunities to increase their economic capital in the center. Additionally, the relationship between children and caregivers of daycare can take the form of kinship.

Cristina expressed the coexistence of different perspectives on the daycare center’s children. Initially, this teacher listed their negative characteristics:

Interviewer: What do you think of these children here in Prainha? What are they like?

Cristina: Boy, are they pretty violent. Children ... with little intellectual development ... They use a lot of slang ... bicker a lot, you see that they are of a much lower level.

When asked how she felt about her work, Cristina highlighted positive aspects:

For me working with them here is turning out great, because they represent something to us. There are those that are quieter, and those who are more active. And we take it day by day. As you saw yourself in my classroom. Being a child is what you saw there, some are fierce, some quieter, others more hyper, others more ... more blessed.

The closeness between children and caregivers in daycare—which is expressed in using kinship terms to address the adult, besides visiting their homes receiving gifts, or even wanting to live in their house—cannot be explained simply as a response of adults when faced with the children’s needs. It is evident that children are important for caregivers at the center—just as they are for their families—as

contact with them is pleasurable and source of recognition. Teacher Luciene made this clear:

Interviewer: How do you feel about working here?

Luciene: Ah, I feel good. I laugh. Children always ... how do you say ... gives us a “Good Afternoon,” a “Thank you.” There’s nothing better, you see, than having your work recognized, especially by children. And when they get it and point, when they understand some task, you feel really happy—it’s a reward for all your efforts.

The demand for recognition—to feel important and valued by someone—was cited by Dalsgaard (2004) as a great motivator of human action. Interestingly, teachers value most the recognition coming from children and less that of their colleagues, the directorship of the center, or the families, with whom there is often conflict—as also described in other studies (Maranhão and Sarti 2007; Bógus et al. 2007). On the other hand, there are times that caregivers protect themselves by restricting the relationship with the children to the institutional environment, like Nanda and others who “get involved” as they would with relatives or neighbors. The different perspectives on the children are associated with the ability to construct different projects in relation to them.

Final Thoughts

In this study, we have sought to go beyond offering evidence of the precarious nature of working conditions and services offered in the childcare center, which has already been shown elsewhere by other authors (Barros et al. 1999; Rosemberg 2002; Rosetti-Ferreira et al. 2002). In the literature, it is unusual to find studies on daycare initiatives organized from within a community. However, some of our findings are similar to those of other studies. Our informants spoke of care both as pertaining to the child’s body and also as based on the idea that is appropriate for “needy” children who can neither stay at home nor attend a private school, as Maranhão (2000) also noted. She drew attention to how educators feel that it is unacceptable that a very small child frequent a daycare center and thereby see their work justified as relief for the poor. This perspective is also present in the institution we studied.

On the other hand, we also showed how women with limited or no formal training and very poor working conditions construct their practices in environments with scarce educational materials and a high number of children in each class. Rather than evaluating them as good or bad, we understand the practices as an expression of power relations. On the one hand, there are efforts to formalize the teaching because it is a childcare center and a preschool—to have the recognition and resources the caregivers need to show that they do pedagogical work within its walls. Hence, the presence of the educational coordinator who seeks to deploy planning is needed. On the other hand, there are the practical activities that are considered to be intrinsically linked with feminine nature, such as providing

nourishment, affection, and protection for children. In addition, we show here that what sustains the work in the childcare center is neither just planning nor a loving and benevolent vision of childhood. Children actively construct their own care: they challenge the authority of adults, they are autonomous in carrying out routines, they provide recognition, and they build family relationships that support the work in the childcare center and its deep connection with the community.

Like Delgado (2005), we consider it necessary to know and appreciate the various forms of childcare outside the home. We argue that to strengthen the capacities of childcare centers to care for children in a broad sense—which necessarily includes educational practices—is not just a matter of improving infrastructure, working conditions, and worker’s training but also of grasping the logic of kinship present in the childcare center. If this is accepted, then it follows that in future studies it will be necessary to expand the analysis to include a focus on how families relate to the childcare center.

We identified some theoretical, political, and practical outcomes. We need to think of care practices and education in an integrated way and also to work in the framework of intersectoral policies. One aspect that requires urgent attention—besides the already indicated precarious conditions within which early childhood education is offered, and as well as the possibilities for improvement offered by university education for caregivers (Faria 2005)—is the basic training of care professionals. We consider it essential that the training of caregivers be based on a realistic perspective, without the idealization of the term that is all too frequent. Such training should include consideration of the contradictions that are part of everyday life and should also give due value to the capabilities of different social groups, such as the ability to build bonds of kinship.

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Culture and Affect in the Practice of English Teaching as a Second Language

Gabriela Di Gesú

Introduction

This work is contextualized in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Considered as social capital, English is part of the curriculum in elementary and high schools, whereas English reading courses for academic purposes are primarily offered at universities. According to the Argentinian *Diseño Curricular de Educación Primaria y Secundaria* (elementary and high school English curriculum), the aim is to furnish students with tools that enable them to communicate with the global world, with English being one of these tools.

For students and teachers alike, this goal seems to be a far-reaching objective. Learning a language is a subjective, lifelong process. Class size, the availability of technology to enhance foreign language classes, social representations of learning English as a second language (L2)¹ and of English teachers (ETs), and teachers' attitudes toward their students can either inhibit or promote foreign language development.

Research on second language acquisition (SLA) has had a long tradition and has produced different lines of work. The sociocultural theory in L2 development investigates this phenomenon from perspectives beyond the cognitive and linguistic aspects (Lantolf 2010; Kramsch 1993; Lantolf 2012). Research on the construction of students' identity (Norton 1997) and Pavlenko's work with nonnative teachers

¹Following Ortega, we adopt the term L2 to mean any additional language learned after language 1. For an elaboration on this, see Ortega (2009) *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*.

G. Di Gesú (✉)
Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento, Buenos Aires, Argentina
e-mail: gdigesu@ungs.edu.ar

attending a teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) program in the United States (Pavlenko 2003) reveal how affect regulates teachers' practice because they feel deficient in their language competence. Recently, when delivering a course for ETs in Buenos Aires, the author of the present study observed that teachers were fearful and uncomfortable interacting with one another in English or in front of the instructors because they felt that their English was not "good." This self-imposed representation of "I don't speak like a native speaker" has inspired the need to study the various social representations that operate as catalyzer or inhibitor signs in the development of nonnative TEs in Argentina.

This chapter aims to contribute to the discussion of how social representations shape teachers' identity and practices. It will explore converging theoretical frameworks to show that when theoretical boundaries are expanded, novelty can emerge. Teachers' comments were recorded by the author in an ethnographical style during coffee breaks in teachers' lounges, meetings at English teachers' associations, and conferences. The names of interviewees are omitted.

The Feeling of Being Non-native

Although people who are learning English as a L2 are often eager to interact with native speakers, some teachers in this study may feel reluctant to assume the lead when talking to native speakers. The hypergeneralized feeling of awkwardness that they feel generates tension regarding their own performance. While some teachers can cross this perceived boundary to discover that they are not deficient speakers but different, others cannot. The former teacher can understand the process that their students are experiencing and use this knowledge to foster language development. However, when this overwhelming sentiment cannot be resignified, some teachers *border in* and keep themselves in a safe environment, restricting their practice to the teaching of lexical or grammatical units or delivering their classes in Spanish.

As in any other learning process, teachers and students engage in "a co-constructive process in which both actors individually construct their knowledge by semiotic mediation" (Maciel et al. 2004). As the knowledge that is taught and learned is the knowledge of a L2, both teachers and students develop a new level of subjectivity borne from the need to ruminate on their ideas in L1 before expressing them in English. The semiotic device used to construct this new knowledge is their native language (L1). The L1 mediates the learning of the L2. As Kramsch notes, "I speak to you in your tongue but it is in my language that I understand you" (Kramsch 1993, p. 203). However, as they advance in their language development, some subjects may adopt a different attitude when speaking English or even develop a different L2 identity (Coffey and Street 2008).

Teachers as Promoter Signs

In Argentina, nearly all ETs working in formal education have learned English in school or private institutions. Their teaching credentials were obtained in a four-year course plan at public or private teacher training colleges or university courses. This type of plan includes core subjects such as English, grammar, contrastive analysis, literature, history, phonology and methodology courses, as well as a student teaching period. Training at public institutions is rigorous, and only those who pass the admission test in English are admitted.

Various motives may have led these teachers to their chosen career, including the identification with relatives, the desire to construct an identity that they identify as positive, and to join a community of speakers different from theirs. The ability to understand a foreign language has enabled them to be exposed to other cultures and many different sources of information. The coexistence of two cultures and two language systems in the minds of ETs makes them good L2 facilitators; while sharing culture with their students, these teachers are better equipped to bridge the two cultures and promote student development. In Di Gesù (2012), adult students of English were asked whether they prefer native ETs to non-native ETs, they reported that they favor non-natives “because they know how to teach” (Di Gesù 2012).

However, ETs’ teaching practice can also hinder students’ learning. Practices involve externalizing the internalization of many voices, such as culture, institutions, country history, personal history, and social representations. The way that teachers make meaning of these aspects is reflected in their interactions with students. The following verbatim comment illustrates this point. When asked about his apparent failure to learn English in in-company training, a 52-year-old adult answered as follows:

“My English teacher was a crabby old woman²... if you didn’t talk well, she told us to shut up.”

In addition, a Ph.D. student conducting research in a high school in an impoverished neighborhood in Buenos Aires said:

High school students in our research claim that the most difficult course is English. Can you tell me why?

Valsiner suggests that “human personality is a cultural process at the level of constant constructions of personal culture by the developing person, and as a way of reflection upon as socially suggested by the collective culture” (Valsiner 2000, p. 40). Subjects mediate culture ideas, expectations, or constructions around a concept intra-psychologically through their own system of beliefs and expectations. Language mediates this process semiotically. When an English teacher labels a student as *bad at learning languages*, it is difficult to remove that label. As Valsiner (2007) suggests that “semiotic mediation is also a tool in the goal oriented actions by social institutions, which try to regulate both the inter-personal and intra-personal psychological function” (Valsiner 2007, p. 30).

²In Spanish, “*la de Inglés era una vieja brava, sino hablabas bien, te mandaba a callar.*”

However, students can meet other teachers who can act as psychological catalyzers (Valsiner and Cabell 2012, p. 88)—that is, “signs within the psychological system that provides the conditions necessary to enable the production and regulation of other meanings in the stream of consciousness of the person” (Cabell 2011). When ETs act as a catalyzer sign, they help individuals navigate the tension that the school environment created and arrive at new syntheses, or they act as promoter signs “through canalizing future actions, and most importantly, becoming internalized in the form of feeling” (Valsiner 2007, p. 59). When adult students are able to make new meaning of their proficiency, they can change their attitude and learn English more readily.

Teachers’ Identity and Dialogical Self Theory

English teachers have also experienced the same vicissitudes as their students. Most English teachers in Argentina are native speakers of Spanish who studied English at public schools or private institutions. Students consider them to be expert speakers of English and identify them with the British or the American culture. However, as stated previously, when interacting with natives or with other ETs, some teachers may feel as intimidated as their elementary students do, fearing that their English is not very good. A 50-year-old female teacher reminisced:

I will never forget my first day in English Language I at teacher training college. We were asked to read aloud a passage of a novel. When I finished reading, the professor told me to start again because I had not read the text in English. I felt awkwardly bad; it took me a while to control my anxiety when talking in English in front of other ETs.

Similarly, a male 26-year-old teacher recollected:

When I was studying at teacher training college, it was difficult to get a passing grade in the English language course. I could barely speak in English during the first year, I feel somewhat intimidated.

Because identity is not static but continually reconstructed, the concept of subjects that dialogically mediate with different signs becomes relevant. Individuals develop their professional identities in a process in which their own conceptualizations are mediated through society’s ideas.

Dialogical self theory (DST) is a bridging theory enabling the present or future meeting of diverse theories, research traditions, and practices to create new or unexpected linkages (Hermans and Gieser 2012). This theory offers a framework for analyzing the construction of teachers’ identity. DST is applied to the self and to the dialogue, with the self as an internal component that dialogues externally with others. Hence, the self is an intrinsic part of society (Hermans and Gieser 2012). In this process, the self develops and changes as society is recreated and renewed. Because the self is part of the society, what society expects from or thinks about a person modifies and recreates the person and the society.

In DST, the self can be viewed as *I* in multiple contradictory positions (Hermans and Gieser 2012, p. 2). In a dynamic way, in its interaction with the environment, an embodied *I* fluctuates among different and even opposed positions (Hermans and Gieser 2012, p. 2). The process of positioning, repositioning, and counter-positioning is enabled by the mind as a semiotic demand setting (Hermans and Geiser 2012; Valsiner and Kabell 2012). Our teachers in this study are role models not feeling able to speak English well and their development occurs in the context of these opposing attributes.

Ligorio claimed that this view of the self can facilitate the convergence of educational research and DST (Ligorio 2012). In the learning process, the flux of information and knowledge transmission is accompanied by a process of self-construction in the relationship between teachers and students (Ligorio 2012; Maciel et al. 2004). Therefore, it can offer a positive perspective for the analysis of changes in the self by showing the enrichment and fluctuations from one position to another, resulting from the language practices that occur in educational settings.

Borders and the Theory of Social Representations

Valsiner argued that individuals construct their identities in a double process of internalization and externalization. To internalize incoming messages, subjects decompose and transform them into something new to subsequently create new forms that will be experienced in the social world and then reinternalized. This dual process of analysis and synthesis creates unique subjectivities. Two subjects encountering the same situation will react to it in a completely different manner. As Marsico argued, a border is a line that both demarcates and connects simultaneously (Marsico 2013). A developing person encounters and oversteps borders all the time, leading to new developments.

Social representations are part of those incoming messages. Subjects encounter them and decompose them to be internalized and later externalized in the form of practices. Following Wagner, social representations are “structured mental content about socially relevant phenomena, which takes the form of images or metaphors and which is consciously shared with other members of a social group” (Wagner 1994). This mental content can be affective, cognitive, evaluative, and symbolic. From a collective perspective, Moscovici states that social representations can be defined “*as the elaborating of a social object by the community*” (Wagner 1994).

Subjects have a tendency to see others or objects through representations superimposed on objects or persons (Moscovici 2001, p. 19). Pure and unbiased views do not exist social representations help subjects conventionalize objects, persons and events (Moscovici 2001 p. 21). As in any other educational setting, ETs are exposed to different role models who contribute to construe the representation of a teacher or of a good speaker of the language. This may later guide their practice.

Wagner's elaboration on different fields of research (Wagner 1994) can be considered an approach to analyzing the different social representations that teachers of English have with regard to the language, themselves, and their practice. An analysis of these different representations can help us understand how they can influence teachers' practice.

I Speak English, but What English Do You Speak?

The research on cultural imagination gives rise to studies of the English taught at school. Back in 1994, Widdowson's address at TESOL Convention revealed the tension in teachers' beliefs about English and the Standard English³ (SE). SE is a powerful communication device, a *lingua franca* devoid of any particular community of speakers; it establishes a border that maintains distance between the culture and the language. Widdowson suggests the idea of the ownership of English, the notion of one community identified as the only true voice and keeper of the language.

Subsequent research and many counter-voices to the notion of an imposed dialect (Norton 1997, 2006; Bhatt 2001; Pavlenko 2003; Canagarajah 2004; Choudhury 2008; Clemente and Higgins 2009) suggest that the *fabricated representation* (Moscovici 2001, p. 40) of an artefact such as SE is continually evolving. In Argentina, the concept of *World Englishes*—varieties of English spoken in different parts of the world—began to grow several years ago. However, a 2013 school competition sponsored by the British Embassy in Argentina fixed the language as belonging to Great Britain. The poster explains as follows:⁴



English Week

The British Embassy in Buenos Aires is organising the "English Week" to promote the English language as a communication tool and a gateway to other cultures.

The "English Week" will take place from 23 to 28 September throughout the country. The British Embassy, together with several other organisations concerned with English language teaching and usage, will co-ordinate a range of activities including talks, expert-led workshops and competitions for students and teachers.

If you are interested in joining the initiative and would like to organise an activity in your school, please share your idea with the Embassy team, led by Marisa Miodosky (marisa.miodosky@fco.gov.uk). Useful aids like brochures or prizes may be available to support your activities.

ENGLISH IS GREAT
BRITAIN

³For an elaboration of the origins and expansion of Standard English as a *lingua franca*, see Boyle (2002). See also Crystal (1994).

⁴The circle was placed by the author.

As stated before, non-native teachers of English are also language learners themselves who have developed a view of an imagined community (Anderson 1991, p. 6). Anderson coined this concept to describe the notion of a nation. A nation is imagined because it is not possible for the members of even the smallest nation to know or hear from one another, but they build up the representation of single body of people, identified as a homogeneous group.

Pre-service training colleges in Argentina instruct teachers to speak SE. When asked about their perspectives on this mandate, many agree that it is acceptable because it is the way English is spoken in Great Britain. This statement reveals their lack of awareness that SE is the dialect of the high middle class and royalty in the eastern part of London. Other teachers believe that native speakers in any English-speaking country speak the language in a uniform way. The following comment illustrates this idea:

Once I escorted a group of high school students to a visit to England; we visited Oxford first. I considered myself a good speaker of English, but I could not understand when people talked to me. I remember asking myself what dialect they were speaking. It took me one or two days to be able to understand them. I learned there that English was different in different communities. (retired Argentinian lecturer)

This teacher found herself on an uncomfortable border. She thought of herself as a good speaker of English, but she could not understand native speakers. Her imagined community drew a boundary that she needed to cross to enable communication. That repositioning was neither spontaneous nor rapid; it took her one or two days to do so. Marsico states that boundaries are often the result of intersubjective negotiation (Marsico 2013). This teacher was able to overstep the boundary once she could acknowledge the existence of a dialect that she had not expected to encounter.

Who Can Learn English?

Teachers' perceptions of *who* can learn English has roots in folk knowledge; it is the result of internalizing "bits and pieces of scientific ideas" (Wagner 1994). When science is regarded as an authoritative voice, teachers often adhere to findings from neurology or cognitive science that help them group people into closed sets, people who *can* learn English or who *cannot* learn English for a particular reason—that is, setting boundaries for students. Although they are valid, these beliefs are not determinant in L2 acquisition. However, they can set new boundaries and hinder learning, especially among adult learners of English and especially when teachers share this belief.

In Argentina, English is taught at all educational levels in public schools. Some private schools offer content and language integrated learning courses. Some parents opt to enroll their children in privately owned language schools without any formal oversight from educational authorities. English teachers working in such

schools are usually undergraduate students attending teacher training colleges. This situation leads to an array of representations of the purpose of studying English and the place to learn it.

Although the role of English as a *lingua franca* cannot be denied, there is a type of counterculture that operates as a boundary, especially in public schools located in disadvantaged neighborhoods. Some school principals in low- to middle-class settings would not consider English to be a relevant course and would not consider the role of ETs to be relevant. The following comments show the effect of these imposed boundaries and the impossibility of crossing them.

How can I motivate my pupils to study English when they say that they don't know why they study English at school if they'll never use it? And I guess they are right... (ET in a low-middle-class school in the suburbs of Buenos Aires)

You know, the school principal has pressured me into passing students with substandard grades. He says English isn't a core subject. I followed his advice. I can't argue with him. (24-year-old ET in the suburbs of Buenos Aires⁵)

Some teachers feel challenged by their students when they claim that native speakers teach English or that non-native teachers speak a variety of English that differs from the language of videogames and movies. This hopeless feeling creates a new boundary:

My high school students are driving me mad; they ask me about the expressions they've heard in movies, and I don't know where to look them up. I sometimes feel hopeless about their claims. (ET in a high-middle-class private school in the city of Buenos Aires)

At other times, colleagues from other disciplines undermine their work.

If you want to study the identity of teachers of English, you should go and listen to what the teachers of other disciplines say about us. They don't consider us teachers. (ET in a high-middle-class private school in the city of Buenos Aires)

ETs believe that they contribute to student development; however, they feel that they are considered substandard teachers—as instructors of irrelevant knowledge. When the latter view prevails, teachers resign from their positions.

Borders at School

Tardif (2012) argued that “teaching within a school environment actually means to show up in person in a classroom and interact in and with a group of students in order to modify their thoughts and behaviors to meet work objectives.” His definition fixes the act of learning to classrooms, sets a nonphysical boundary between teachers and groups of students, and refers to language as a semiotic device.

⁵This author met this teacher later. She is now working in a private school.

In the act of teaching, teachers and students develop when both of them can cross this perceived nonphysical boundary. This process includes the communication of ideas, knowledge, and views and the metacommunication of attitudes, wordless expressions, glances, and gestures that can be reinterpreted differently by the two actors.⁶ However, the previous analysis shows that teachers have difficulties with becoming aware of their role as catalyzers and therefore accept students' beliefs rather than attempting to modify them.

Tardif claims the existence of three "eras" in the concept of teaching: teaching as a vocation, teaching as service, and teaching as a profession. This useful elaboration depicts the underlying representations that cause teachers to identify themselves as members of a homogeneous group. The first era featured the concept of teaching as a vocation. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, a vocation is "summons or strong inclination to a particular state or course of action." Beginning in Europe in the fourteenth century, this idea prevailed until the nineteenth century. It meant that instruction was in the hands of religious communities. Teaching was associated with low pay and a lack of instruction for lay teachers. It features a hierarchal system in which men played the role of administrators exercising strict control over classroom work, leaving teachers with little autonomy in their practice. Although this has led to the concept of teaching as service, it underlies the social representation adopted by teachers and society in general.

The vocation era led to the concept of teaching as service. In this era, the state has become the employer and administrator of schooling. Born in the nineteenth century, this era meant job stability and better compensation, equal access to administration positions for men and women, and the possibility of a career path. This era implied a growing sense of autonomy but could still involve the strict following of educational policies and the adoption of suggested textbooks, leaving little room for teachers' decisions on how to teach. Among ETs, it is often heard "it's better to follow commercial books to teach English as there is a lot of research behind them." Teachers become the mediators between the language in the textbook and their students. Teachers follow the book and the script in the teachers' guidelines without questioning the authenticity of the language or the underlying politics of the book. The following comments from two teachers illustrate this point.

I follow a book; it's too complicated to write your own material, and I don't know how to do it. (High school ET)

My students ask for textbooks; they say they feel uncomfortable without one. (ET working in adult courses)

⁶For an elaboration on the metacommunication process, see Maciel et al. 2004.

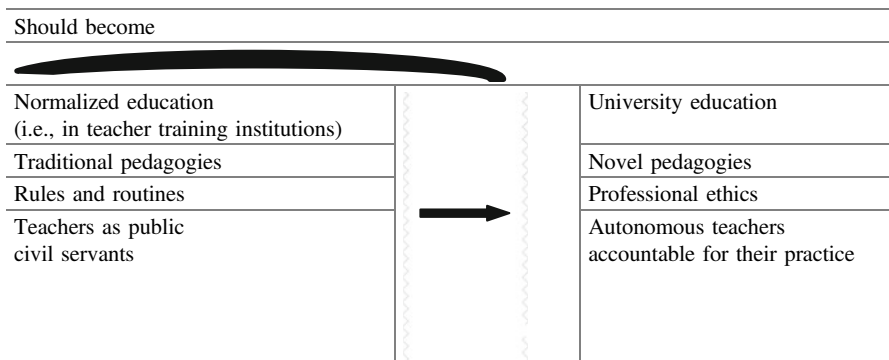
Expanding Those Borders

An informal survey conducted among ETs in Buenos Aires in 2012 revealed that the concept of *teaching as a vocation* was operational. Most teachers surveyed claimed that their choice resulted from their desire to become teachers and their love for English and for children. A small number of teachers opted for a career in English teaching for professional development reasons. However, both groups claimed that they want to grow professionally. The seemingly opposite but complementary signs of *profession* and *vocation* continue to mediate the practices of ETs.

Returning to Tardif’s classification, the third era is based on the professionalization of teachers’ practice. Barber states that the attributes of a profession are the following:

high degree of generalized and systematic knowledge; primary orientation to the community interest rather than to individual self-interest; a high degree of self-control of behavior through codes of ethics internalized in the process of work socialization and through voluntary associations organized and operated by the work specialists themselves; and a system of rewards (monetary and honorary) that is primarily a set of symbols of work achievement. (Barber 1963, p. 672)

Elaborating on teachers’ education, pedagogy, rules, and their role as civil servants, Tardif proposed a bridge connecting the two representations.



There is not a unique path connecting these two zones. Each path is created through the internalization of new emerging social representations in a dialogical manner. As Marková noted, “The human mind is dialogical, which means that it is engaged in multiple ways with the reality that it creates and imagines” (Marková 2013).

Teachers are expected to acquire a thorough knowledge of their discipline in academic settings, become critical of their practices, and be able to question and research to find solutions in their classrooms. The inclusion of technology has also

generated changes for which the effects have not yet been deeply analyzed. The classroom has expanded its boundaries. In addition, the increasing mobility experienced during the first decade of the twenty-first century has led to a surge of multicultural student populations. Teachers are confronting new problems with the unsurmountable feeling of being unprepared to meet the new demands.

The labor of schooling is again being reshaped. Marsico argued:

Development (and even more education) deals with the object in transformation putting the attention not on “what the child is at specific age” (being) but “what he/she is becoming” moving towards another state. At a wider level of analysis, the theoretical focus on phenomena in “becoming” implies the centrality of time and of crossing processes. Any developing person moves from a previous settled, already known state to an area of indeterminacy (a not-yet region). (Marsico 2013)

When students learn English as a foreign language as children or adults, they must leave the comfortable L1 zone to move to an arena in which bubbling, hesitations, and the failure to find words to engage in conversation create *hyper-generalized sign fields* that capture the whole person (Valsiner 2010), thus inhibiting or promoting foreign language development. Development will depend on the systemic relations in the teaching–learning process and can be so powerful that it can influence L2 learning later in life (Di Gesú 2012). Because teachers’ role as promoters is crucial, the study of how teachers cope with the perception of their own borders and expand them to reach new zones of development may be an unusual but fruitful path for future research.

Within the psychology of borders, the transition from a comfortable known zone to a new, uncertain, and unknown zone implies dynamism and the emergence of new signs despite the inhibition of others (Marsico 2013). As Simmel argues, boundaries are necessary for human beings, but they must have the freedom to remove those boundaries when new signs emerge (Simmel 1994). As in any other teaching situation, English teachers need the boundaries and freedom to search for new zones of development, but it seems that they also need catalyzers to encourage them to want to expand those borders.

Conclusions

This chapter aimed to show how social representations shape the identity of ETs and influence their practice. Constructs such as DST, the psychology of borders, the theory of social representations, and the process of catalysis can provide innovative ways to analyze these teaching phenomena. Any teaching act implies the creation of strong, long-lasting relationships (Ligorio and Tateo 2007) with students that cross the boundaries of place and time. The emotions and feelings present in the act of teaching mediate the internalization and externalization processes in both teachers and students. Teaching a foreign language cannot be devoid of affect. Restricting

analysis to individual elements exposes research to the risk of omitting crucial aspects.

We argue that for teachers to develop in their practice, they need to have opportunities to reflect upon the boundary conditions affecting their work and ways to expand those borders to facilitate their repositioning as professionals able to speak English despite their nonnative speaker status. Such opportunities may contribute to a better understanding of such boundaries and devising programs to help teachers cross these borders and address the day-to-day issues that emerge in their classes. As professionals, teachers can thus recreate and renew their approaches for facilitating student development. As stated earlier in this chapter, the self develops and changes dialogically while emerging as a new self in a continuous process of development.

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Part IV
Outsideness

Boundaries Between Art and Education: The Case of the Laje Collection

José Eduardo Ferreira Santos

This chapter aims to describe the performance of an alternative space for education and its consequences based on the autobiographical narratives of people who visited the Laje Collection who, after crossing these symbolic boundaries, elaborate new meanings. We propose various reflections on how a visit to the Laje Collection provokes new, positive, and reflexive experiences and elaborations regarding an area on the periphery that is marked by stigma. We emphasize how a visit to the Laje Collection instills the notions of knowledge of experience and poetic narratives, and how overcoming borders facilitates ruptures that are caused by the encounter with the works of art that are produced by artists from the periphery.

The Laje Collection is an alternative education space that is located in the slab of a house in Novos Alagados,¹ which contains hundreds of cultural and artistic works (paintings, sculptures, images, masks of wood and aluminum, antique plates, etc.) that are produced by the residents of the Railroad suburb of Salvador, which is on the outskirts of the city. One of its goals is to promote the gathering of people from the periphery and the city through the local art and local culture, which, in most cases, are unknown to the population. The theoretical framework of this study sought to exhibit the meanings of the experience, which are analyzed based on the perspective of human development in cultural psychology (Valsiner 2012) and the notion of *poetic motion* (Rabinovich and Bastos 2012; Bastos and Abbey 2012).

Based on autobiographical narratives (Brockmeier 2001), we intended to analyze texts that were written by visitors in the log book and on screen, based on the paintings from the Laje Collection, which take into account the concept of experience, as discussed by Bondía (2002), and the concept of interacting with a

¹“Novos Alagados is a slum that is located in the Salvador’s Railroad Suburb, which is known for its *palafitas* that once randomly occupied the Enseada do Cabrito. The district of Novos Alagados originated in 1970 as a result of the occupation of the tidal area by people from the old Alagados in Lobato, who moved from areas along where the current Afrânio Peixoto Avenue used to exist, which is referred to as Suburbana (Santos 2005), and even residents who came from the Recôncavo Baiano, a region of the Brazilian state of Bahia” (Alcântara and Ferreira Santos 2009, p. 349).

J.E.F. Santos (✉)
Federal University of Bahia, Salvador, Brazil
e-mail: ferreirasantosenator@gmail.com

masterpiece, as discussed by Snyders (1993). Written during the period of 2011–2013, the narratives follow a presentation template, including the content and date. For ethical reasons, we omit the identity of the participants, although we indicated to them that their narratives would be used for further studies on experience.

The Wisdom of Experience

The encounter with knowledge in its various forms can be a factor that creates a person's experience and enables him or her to reach syntheses, knowledge, and new elaborations. Bondía described the experience, as follows:

The knowledge of experience occurs within the relationship between knowledge and human life. Indeed, this experience is a type of mediation between both knowledge and human life. It is important, however, to note that from the standpoint of experience, neither “knowledge” nor “life” indicate what they normally mean. Currently, knowledge essentially refers to science and technology: something infinite that can only grow and something universal and objective. In an impersonal way, there is something outside of us that we can appropriate and use and fundamentally relates to something useful, in a closely pragmatic and strictly instrumental sense (Bondía 2002, p. 26)

Mahfoud (2012) proposed the notion of elementary experience, which refers to a set of the constitutive needs of a person who acts based on his or her encounter with reality and his or her most personal criteria on the existence of expectations.

In the formulation by Luigi Giussani, elementary experience refers to the original impetus that underlies all human gestures and positions, by which a person can recognize its fundamental requirements (e.g., of happiness and justice) and evidence (e.g., the existence of a reality that transcends it). After being identified, the experience provides evaluation criteria that enable us to reach personal judgments about the correspondence between all that the subject encounters in the world and in history and the aspirations that constitute the person (Mahfoud 2012, p. 34).

Regarding the people's experiences at the Laje Collection, we emphasize the following narratives, which show its impact on the visitors:

My visit to the Laje Collection was a unique experience. I marveled at the memory of this place and of so many beautiful things that escape our sight. The professor should be congratulated for this beautiful work. May you impress us more each day. 18/04/2012

Excellent experience, very impressive! 16/11/2011

I visited the Collection. I liked what I saw very much, especially the fish. I hope you continue to look for more things of the past so that young people can know and see more of its simplicity, be proud of it, and value the present and the future! 13/12/2011

The room condenses a multitude of life and the history of the people who History cannot forget. S/d

The experience that is narrated in these statements exhibits the people's expressions of wonder in the face of the beauty and memory that are present in the Laje Collection, which holds the aesthetic and artistic memories of the periphery of

Salvador within its structure. This memory “operates with great freedom in selecting its happenings in space and time, not arbitrarily but because they are related through common indices. Settings are more intense when they focus on the brilliance of a collective meaning” (Bosi 2003, p. 31).

Poetic Motion in the Narratives of Visitors of the Laje Collection

Because it is a space that seeks to rescue the artistic production of the periphery, the Laje Collection addresses beauty and the emergence of novelty in a social context that is characterized by poverty. For this reason, there is tension between what is expected to affect people and what actually affects people, which causes a rupture that is present in their narratives. Regarding this emergence of novelty, the notion of poetic motion allows us to analyze what occurs, in terms of human development, when people meet an external reality that exceeds their expectations and provokes new elaborations. Regarding *poetic motion*, Rabinovich and Bastos (2012, p. 33) stated:

Abbey (2006) proposes the concept of *poetic motion* to make sense of the dynamic tension between the literal and imagined domains. The concept of *poetic motion* can be understood as an analogue of human development, or the developmental process that is defined mainly by its property of emergence. The novelty arises from the psychological relationships between fields that are full of tension: literal-imagined and present-future. It is through these spaces that the developing person expands himself/herself and the world.

It is important to highlight this aspect of human development when examining the people who visit the Laje Collection because they find themselves in between the literal and the imagined present-future when they are in contact with a new experience that possibly presents psychological novelty, resituates the developing person, and generates new meanings, as the authors emphasized.

The main point here is that the notion of *poetic motion* can help us overcome the gap between theoretical approaches and everyday life, where the narratives exist because this notion assumes that the quality of emergence is life-transforming and results in people achieving a form of transcendence of space and time and the construction of new meanings. The idea of *poetic motion* also seems closer to the heart of the phenomenon and favors the desired quality of being close to real life. The poetic dimension originates in the field of dreams and projects and converges in the future, which is driven by one’s personal desires for a different life, on several levels (Rabinovich and Bastos 2012, p. 33).

By analyzing the narratives of the visitors of the Laje Collection, it is possible for us to identify the relationship between transcendence and real life, which results in a new elaboration of experience. These narratives illustrate how people of various ages allude to the sacredness of the space and reference elements that transcend time and space.

Really, a sacred place! 09/11/2011.

Today's Gospel (Luke) says: "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures ..." but have friends, life brothers as thou, my master. It is successful; it is life itself. Peace and good for you and everyone who comes to this sacred place! 17/10/2011

Thanks for everything! I cannot explain my feelings. As one child said, the place is "sacred." I hope that the collection will continue and that more people who come to visit you and the community - here and throughout Brazil - will appreciate this work! Congratulations! 27/11/2011

Kisha means offering. This collection offers beauty to the world. How wonderful to be here, in the house of the origin of beauty, the source of the purity of life. A sacred place! 11/07/2012

Dear brother, friend, anyone. In the rooting, an entire opening of life. In the attachment, all freedom. In Liberty, a mark in History, the meaning of each one of those in the big Eternal hug. Thank you! 11/07/2012

Thank you for showing me, once again, that beauty lies in the seemingly banal things. Things that are as banal as they can be are a catch up after the years. Thank you for the beauty that you transmit in your eyes and smile. Only such a person can create such a place. May God continue to bless you! 19/10/2012

The narratives that are presented above are characterized by establishing a relationship between artistic beauty and the elements of transcendence and religion, which we can identify in different studies, such as that by Bodei (2005), who examined the history of aesthetics and philosophy (where beauty refers to other, more intangible meanings), or Amatuzzi (1999, p. 127), who indicated that when the religious field interacts with "the transcendent issue, it is as if we provide an account of all of the horizons, without which those questions would be silenced."

Regarding the aspect of the sacredness of the space, which is mentioned in the visitors' narratives, we can note, according to Giovanetti (1999, p. 90), that

Holy is defined as an opposition to the profane, and expresses, in a very broad sense, the modern man's religious disposition toward something that transcends him. Man will call Sacred what he finds different, in response to his question of finitude. It is the appreciation of something absolute, mysterious and untouchable that transcends him and remains something that deserves veneration.

Another dimension that is found in the narratives is the perception of silence and the contemplation of the artwork, which shows that art has the ability to promote contact between the subject and its interior and to present reflections that are often not possible in everyday life. The narrative that follows is illustrative of this phenomenon because the person relates his encounter with silence to his revelation of the self:

Here, I found a silence ... Not "the" silence, but silence, the kind that shuts out superficiality and the easy vocabulary that we use in everyday life to describe experience. Here, I register that I found the silence, the one that holds the tongue, prevents advancement, and brings redemption and memory strength. Here, I found silence, memory, willingness for myself and yearning for more of myself. I found dots, colors, the comma, shades, and a frameless screen that forced me to revise myself and re-encounter myself ... Thanks for the friendship and the love that inspires us to give to the world. Here, I found the world and the life that is in it. Big hug, admiration. 04/06/2012

As observed in this narrative, there is a relationship of encounter between the people and the artistic works that causes them to transcend space and time and fall into the transcendental perspective, which can be found in their references to various cosmologies and religions and to bring experiences of belonging to the world and other dimensions.

Laje Collection: A Crossing Boundaries' Phenomenon

Reaching the outskirts of a big city that is characterized by poverty is a confusing experience. However, while traversing the gates of a house that is in this periphery, the visitor is surprised to find a space that is intended to house the artistic beauty that is produced by a population that is recognized as poor and violent. Valsiner describes this movement of crossing boundaries:

In all of these movements, actors cross boundaries that are folded by themselves or created by others. Boundaries vary: there are those that are public and political (crossing national borders, with or without a visa), those that relate to one's personal environment (entering the house of another person as an invited guest or a thief), and those that relate to the most intimate spheres of the psyche (Valsiner, 2012, p. 206).

When crossing such borders, people find a different cultural universe, which is presented as novelty in the face of their lived reality and changes their way of conceiving the population and territory. In this space, there is a synthesis of the artistic and cultural production of these subjects, which exhibits new meanings in a context that is not expected (i.e., on the outskirts of Salvador).

In cultural psychology, Valsiner described people's movements to cross boundaries. According to the author, there are impacts in the process of moving: "The movement of one leads to the transformation of the environment and of person's own self. The movement is goal-oriented, and the targets can be multiple" (Valsiner 2012, pp. 202–203).

To reach the Laje Collection, visitors must overcome boundaries and doors to find the works of art in the slab. This movement is well described as such: the opening and closing of doors and gates, whether it be in a bedroom, a bathroom or a home or in the gates of a city (medieval) or the political boundaries of countries, are always cultural acts that regulate the mobility of cultural agents. Every invention of cultural tools that are meant to ensure the selective permeability of such boundaries, such as keys, visas, and passwords, indicates the need to regulate the dynamics of exchange between "this side" and "the other side," within a spatio-temporal arrangement of living. (Valsiner 2012, p. 198)

Certain narratives show how the impact, in relation to overcoming borders, reaches the people who come in contact with the works of the Laje Collection.

Here, the narrator describes the frontiers of the territories that he has passed while listing personal crossings that were recollected when encountering these works of art and even his amazement toward the unpredictability of finding such

works in this vicinity, which, for him, constitutes a contradiction. At the same time, it becomes a cause for happiness:

I've traveled a lot, been through many places, and seen many things. However, I am awed by the Collection and have no words to say or write about this artistic wonder. I'm just happy to be here, meet this person, and see this phenomenal work in a slab in the suburb of Salvador! (...) 04/11/12

Other narratives illustrate the idea of crossing boundaries and entering a “new world,” or another universe of meanings, which is related to the sense of history and accessing one’s “own” world.

It's like stepping into another world, being in touch with history and realizing that it is not lost! 29/01/2011

I'm in my world. The energy here is very good. Congratulations on this work, (which) breathes and enjoys art. 04/11/2012

When we say that the encounter with art generates knowledge and something new, we have identified with this narrative, in which the author describes his discovery of a new territory and a new history of his city, which indicates that his visit to the Collection of the Laje crossed invisible boundaries:

I was very impressed by this other history of Bahia that points toward the future of art and life and positively reflects the production of dreams and the life of this population, which today creates the Suburban Railway. This collection has great value for all of us; it creates, altogether, another (invisible) city of Bahia. 16/03/2012

Therefore, here, we analyze the wisdom of experience, the poetic narratives, and the crossing of frontiers when encountering the works from the Collection of the slab. We describe how, through their encounter with the aesthetic and artistic works that are produced in the periphery, people develop new meanings through the break that is caused by the different reactions and feelings that are evoked in the narrative and relate to the experiences of wonder and astonishment, among others. The importance of art in the educational process is also indicated, according to Brazilian law.

A Few Theoretical Reflections: Art as a Rupture

Snyders (1993) highlighted the importance of masterpieces in the education of students and indicated that a rupture in their perception of what is admirable exists.

Rupture: there are things that go beyond and even transcend the usual. Students understand that there are great works, great actions, and great characters that go far above what is seen on a daily basis. Shock, attraction to shock, attraction to the passing of measures, or at least my measures (...) Rupture indicates confidence in masterpieces, both in the action of the masterpieces and in the role of the school so that they will not be foreign to the student. (p. 161)

Art has an important semiotic role in people's lives and constitutes a heritage that is built by mankind and can continuously communicate, regardless of time and space. With art, humans learned how to create symbols and how to dialogue with them. However, today, art is often perceived as extraneous in vulnerable contexts where the people do not have access to it and live in such a state of deprivation that they do not have the basic requirements to appreciate, enjoy, and create. Art is "a cognitive activity that has a purpose to fulfill: to be experienced by anyone who creates it and by those who relate to it" (Pereira and Fávero 2010, p. 215).

When analyzing youth who are in vulnerable situations, we see that they, in their developmental transition, undergo moments of rupture that are not perceived by their parents, their family or their community of origin. These disruptions are typical within the developmental course, occur as they grow and are the genesis of the trajectories of marginality. Here, risky experiences may indicate such choices (Santos 2010) because many of these people have never left their streets or neighborhoods to travel to other places, cinemas, exhibitions, museums, etc., which becomes a problem because the deprivation of beauty (the aesthetic and artistic) places the subject in a type of cultural exclusion and, hence, may result in limitations in that person's human capabilities. A human being who does not know art has a limited learning experience and has escaped the dimensions of dreams, the communicative forces of the objects around him/her, and the exciting sounds of poetry, musical creations, colors and shapes, and gestures and lights that cause a person to search for the meaning of life (...). Knowledge of art opens students' perspectives so that they can have an understanding of the world in which the poetic dimension is always present. Art teaches students that it is possible to continuously transform existence and that it is necessary to change our every moment and to be flexible. This means that creating and knowing are inseparable and that flexibility is a prerequisite for learning. (Brasil 1997, p. 21)

Creating the experience of rupture through art presupposes encountering artistic expressions in both predictable and unpredictable places, and this encounter can occur preemptively when people face situations of vulnerability and psychosocial risk.

Encountering the works, enjoying them, reflecting upon them, examining their particularities, making comments about them, being impacted by them, and experiencing encounters with art can foster the development of new life trajectories because art's semiotic function can produce significant changes in the cognitive and overall development of children and youth. However, if we analyze the works more accurately, we can recognize through aesthetics that several of their nuances are a part of education, particularly when we realize that intelligence is required to think of the beauty and that many human elaborations are present in culture, such as art. Art and education have important roles in the development of the subject. According to the National Curriculum Parameters, "art has a function that is as important as the functions of other knowledge domains in the teaching and learning process" (Brasil 1997, p. 19) because, according to the same document:

Art education enables the development of artistic thought and aesthetic perception because it features a personal way for people to organize and give meaning to human experience. The student develops his/her sensitivity, perception and imagination by producing art forms and appreciating and knowing the forms that are produced by him/her and colleagues based on their nature and aspects of different cultures (...). By knowing the art of other cultures, students are able to understand the relativity of values that are rooted in their ways of thinking and acting, which creates a field of meaning for the recovery of their own resources and encourages them to be open to the richness and diversity of human imagination. Moreover, students become able to perceive their everyday reality more vividly by knowing the objects and shapes that surround them due to their critical observation of what exists in their culture, which provides them with the ability to create the conditions for a better quality of life. (Brasil, 1997, p. 19)

In this sense, it is possible to highlight the importance of art in the education and training of students because it can be seen as a way of promoting cultural and psychological elaborations and internalizing the elements of culture.

Art and education have important roles in empowering people, and this can be seen in the initiatives of educators in Brazil, such as Anísio Teixeira at the Park School (Nunes 1999) and those of the Axé Project (Reis 2000). It is interesting that education provides resources for human demands. Education, in this sense, is a determining factor regarding people's inclusion of and access to what was best produced by culture. The drafting process implies an active, critical, and demanding subject, which can increasingly develop one's cognitive skills.

Several experiences can be found in the narratives that relate to people's wonder, enchantment, new perceptions, sense of belonging, sense of gratitude, discovery, inexplicable experiences, and appreciation of beauty and glamor. After experiencing the artistic works, the person in the following passage is impressed and promises to bring another person, which demonstrates a characteristic of the communicability of experienced beauty.

"Impressive! I'll bring another person!" s/d

Other narratives indicate the cultural richness of the place and their need to return or to not lose their memory of this lived experience:

...and in everyday life, I find myself experiencing a mix of humility and wisdom. It was such a pleasure to see this place, so rich in culture and humanity, on 10/26/2011. This is a place of great cultural wealth, and I saw it! 11/09/2011

I thought about photographing everything here, but I did not because I intend to come back another time. 11/09/2011

I loved it so much that I plan to come back here more often. I enjoyed the art! 11/09/2011

I am very passionate about the work; I loved it. I really enjoyed being here in this exciting space. I took many photos to show the art teacher; it is exciting. 11/09/2011

Other narratives indicate the fascination that is provoked by the people's experience (i.e., a break from everyday normality). Below, we can see how experiencing the Collections of the slab produced a series of associations that approximate the expressions that are present in the definitions of beauty and aesthetics:

Everything that is seen here is surprising, I'm delighted due to having the pleasure of experiencing it! 11/16/2011

It was great. I see that we have artists on the outskirts! 16/11/2011

I liked it very much because there are many interesting things. It was very good! 11/16/2011

I really enjoyed encountering various art works that I did not know of! Thank you for this opportunity. 11/16/2011

The collection is wonderful. It has very beautiful works. I'm delighted because the works are really, really pretty. Wonderful. 29/11/2011

My dear, your collection is very good and inexplicably beautiful. 12/01/2011

I wish I knew how to describe such beauty; it is pure perfection! Congratulations! 12/06/2011

I am very delighted and happy to have known the greatness of this work! 03/05/2011

Another important aspect that should be emphasized here is that these narratives indicate the moment of the emergence of new meanings, or the poetic motion.

For a few of the visitors of the Collection of Stone, this was the first time that they were able to see artworks that were gathered in an area on the outskirts of Salvador, which is an area that is loaded with stigma about poverty and violence. Thus, expressions of gratitude, wonder, discovery, fascination, and beauty are related to the moment when something new is presented, and the narratives expressed this moment as the emergence of new elaborations about the territory (before, accented stigmas and feelings of shame accompanied their thoughts about the inhabitants of such a territory). Thus, these narratives are the initial documentation of a longitudinal process of changing perceptions about the presence of beauty in this area (i.e., after seeing these works, people begin to realize that beauty can also be close to them, which can cause significant changes in the orientation of life projects and educational processes).

Within a complex and dramatic social reality (due to social vulnerabilities), art is a protective factor that redefines people's lives because it transcends the quotidian and produces empowerment that can restore existential aspects that have been neglected. This perception is based on the work of the Russian psychologist L.S. Vygotsky (1896–1934), who wrote the book *Psychology of Art*, among many others, which demonstrates the semiotic functions that are present in works of art. In an article about the author, Lima analyzed the importance of Vygotsky's contribution.

When analyzing works of art, the function of the artistic sign is revealed, for Vygotsky, to socialize emotion and “bring to the circle of social life the most intimate aspects of human experience” (Vygotsky 1976). Art is defined by Vygotsky as the “social technique of emotion.” The notion of art as a technique reminds us of Russian formalism, where the definition of art as a technique or a procedure relates to the fundamental concept of estrangement as an essential effect of the artwork. This strangeness is also an artistic means and an objective procedure (...). Art has the purpose, as an activity, of restoring the relationship between the sensitive subject and what is real. This relationship tends to, in everyday life, constantly establish itself as passive, largely due to habits, routine and the sensitive poverty of contemporary life. (Lima 2000, p. 78).

Art creates an internalization process through its external, culturally elaborated symbols and serves to educate the sensitivity, the perception, and the sense of belonging within human beings. According to Lima in the analysis of Vygotsky's theory:

The emotional shock of artwork (Vygotsky identifies the experience of catharsis) contributes to resizing the emotional experience of the subject. Here, it is important to note that when we speak of 'shock,' we do not refer to the intensity of the emotion itself but to a specific attribute in the process of aesthetic appreciation. Artistic catharsis also overcomes the conflict in the process of emotional synthesis, which aims to release additional emotional energies (of both biological and social origins) that according to Vygotsky, do not flow in everyday life. Through art, individual life is structured and manifested: the dimension of possibilities of the individual human being (for example, the exceeding energy of one's biological background), in contrast, is, at the same time, linked to the person's updated life. (Lima 2000, p. 80)

Because art is a cultural elaboration that directly addresses subjectivity and has an important role in the functions of socialization and communicability, it needs to be taken into account in the process of human development. When education makes use of the possibilities of discovering art, aesthetics, and playful aspects, it fully realizes the students' encounter with culture in their more elaborate syntheses, rather than deviating from its functions and purposes.

The narrative below illustrates how access to art can produce ruptures in the perceptions that people have of their existence. The narrator emphasizes his encounter with the artistic beauty of the Collections of the slab, which leads to his weaving questions and inquiries about this beauty. The narrative's author is a teacher, who, on her first visit to the Collection of the slab, was seized by a strong need to express her experience in words, which shows how the space and the works that she saw were internalized and generated new insights.

Where is the beauty of beauty? Beauty is here, inside me right now ... Beauty is something that belongs to those who contemplate the object, and it does not contain beauty in itself but in the meaning or sense that awakens the beholder. Today, I spent an afternoon experiencing contemplation and ecstasy. Being with good people and smart people and in a place that awakens people's sensitivity is a balm that refreshes us and makes us feel that we belong to a specific and universal place. It feels like we are revisiting Jung to discuss the personal and collective unconscious and the synchronicity that binds beings.

Her words will reveal the date of her encounter with the works of the Collection of Stone and the developments that are being constructed at this time:

In an effort to be more direct and less wordy, today, I once again visited the Laje Collection, a place of meeting with the Being. Each work that is present there, each story that is contained in each of the objects, and the emotional and exciting conversation of the curator of that space guaranteed an afternoon that passed by in fractions of seconds. Saint Augustine was right when he said that the time dimension is different than we believe it to be; the past and future do not exist, and the present is so fast that we do not realize it. St. Augustine did not say (perhaps) that although the present may pass quickly, its meaning is eternal. When will we understand the Emilia doll at the time she decided to tell her memoirs because she understood the importance of registering "every little thing"? The

Laje Collection is, nonetheless, the memory of a people whose life was perceived as something that does not deserve to be remembered, rather than the memories of Emilia.

Finally, her narrative describes the impact of art through a question that emphasizes one of the goals of this article, which was to show the impact of artistic works in an alternative space for education and how these narratives reveal elaborations that are expressed in one's encounter with the aesthetics within the outskirts of Salvador:

When the subject is touched by art, he/she changes. Is art the incarnation of Midas?
11/07/2013

Final Remarks: What Can We Say About Narrated Experiences?

The narratives that are presented here allowed for the analysis of the impact of art on the lives of visitors at a given point in their lives. In these narratives, we noticed that there is an experience of encountering the artistic and cultural works that promotes new meanings about territoriality (in a place that was once seen as being stigmatized by poverty and violence), as well as new opportunities for different interactions with reality. The perception of the cultural and artistic heritage of the territory and its residents is also promoted. Another possibility is the identification of new personal elaborations, such as a new perception of belonging, the rupture of stigmas, and the need for transcendence, which indicates that the reality of the periphery is more complex than is usually conceived because there is a dialectical tension between memory and forgetting.

In this sense, it is possible to say that alternative spaces that work with art can contribute to education, particularly due to the novelty of the proposals that are established in them, and for this reason, they are able to correspond to and expand the demands of those who attend them, due to the following reasons. School and education should be seen as a space of differences and diversity and as a place for encounters, dialogues, differences of opinion and possibilities; eminently, they should be seen as a universe that is marked by the presence of people. Art leads us to reflect on our own terms, our experiences, what we bring with us, our origins, our habits, our stories, power relations, what we consciously authorize ourselves to show and what we unconsciously show, and what we exchange with others and receive from others. We become the result of contamination. Each individual apprehends what is convenient for him/her and reacts according to his/her time of life, the circumstances under which he/she has lived up to that point, the influences of various media, and happy or sad situations. (...) (Pereira and Fávero 2010, p. 214)

The performance of the Laje Collection as an alternative education space that addresses aesthetics and artistic production in the outskirts of Salvador has promoted, beyond the permanent exhibit, several other actions that aim to spread the beauty that is produced in the periphery through exhibits, workshops, photography, and actions that may cause a change in people's perceptions about the territory and

allow them to overcome stigma. With these actions, we seek to promote the development of new meanings that can be attributed to the periphery, such as beauty and art, rather than the violence, poverty, and marginalization that are commonly associated with this area. Because these processes are longitudinal, we hope to analyze the impact of the Laje Collection on the developmental trajectories of visitors, as well as note new possibilities for intervention in other spaces that work with art and aesthetics.

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The Potential of the Globalization of Education in Japan: The Japanese Style of School Sports Activities (*Bukatsu*)

Yasuhiro Omi

A series of culturally shocking events have happened around me since I returned to Japan after a two-and-a-half year experience in the United States with my family. I have readjusted to the size of dishes and drinks, the driving lane, the punctuality, and the working styles. The school environment surrounding my children, however, is still frustrating me, although it appears that their education is proceeding well.

This chapter will introduce *bukatsu*, which is a unique school sport activity in Japan and one of the most frustrating things for me, along with a junior high school environment, to show an aspect of Japanese culture. It does not adopt a style of cross-cultural studies on physical education (e.g., Pühse and Gerber 2005) to avoid a superficial comparison of different societies. On the basis of an autoethnographic study (Ellis et al. 2012) on *bukatsu*, some tasks of the globalization of education in Japan will be discussed. Another study of educational settings in the United States from a parent's perspective (Omi 2012) will be reflected in the discussion.

Junior High School in Japan

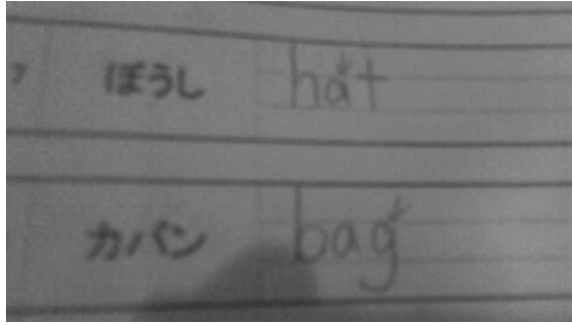
Prior to my introduction of *bukatsu*, explanations on the unique features of junior high school in Japan (7th to 9th grades) will be needed because *bukatsu* is first introduced as an extracurricular activity of junior high school and is strongly linked with the cultural settings of junior high school.

First of all, school uniforms are required in most junior high schools, although they are not required in many elementary schools, particularly public ones. Second, dress codes are very strictly enforced, and teachers can check out students' outfits and appearances, such as their ways of wearing school uniforms, length of skirts, color of shirts and socks, and hairstyles, in front of the school gates at some schools. I will show a notice from a junior high school that my son attends as an example. The notice says "...you can wear a sweater or a sweatshirt of solid color in black,

Y. Omi (✉)

University of Yamanashi, 4-4-37 Takeda, Yamanashi, Kofu 400-8510, Japan
e-mail: omiyasjp@gmail.com

Fig. 1 “Wrong” spellings
(photo by the author)



navy, brown, gray, beige or white.” Loud colored or patterned clothes are generally disliked by school teachers because they believe that such clothes could be a symbol of misbehavior. Third, hierarchical relationships are built on the basis of grade level, and underclassmen’s way of addressing upperclassmen changes from a friendly way to a “respectful” one that is completely different from that used during the elementary school days. *Bukatsu* is not provided for elementary school students but to junior high school and high school students.

Junior high school teachers often give tests, and they are busy grading them because they are required to help each student obtain a better score on the high school entrance examination and to go to good high schools. Teachers often find students’ trivial mistakes and let them correct the answers so that students will not give the wrong answers again. Figure 1 shows that two words were scored as wrong answers (spellings) on an English test at my son’s school because the curved and straight lines in the upper right parts (indicated by arrows) of “a” in the word *hat* and “g” in the word *bag* must not be separate, according to his teacher. Furthermore, they do not often or aptly praise students, and they try to improve each student’s weak subjects or areas rather than to develop his or her strong ones (Usui 2001). In other words, one of the teachers’ most important roles is to teach students how to give correct answers with correct processes. Even language arts classes are no exception, although language arts teachers sometimes say to students that there is not always one correct answer. In additional schools—*juku*—which many students attend to further enhance their academic performance, test-taking skills are efficiently taught. All instruction is focused on success for entrance examinations to the next level of education.

Bukatsu

Bukatsu generally refers to school club activities and to the clubs themselves, which are devoted not only to sports but also to music, art, science, and others. Most Japanese people, however, typically think of both school sports clubs and a brass band club as *bukatsu*, both of which are commonly very competitive among schools

and/or individuals. In this chapter, *bukatsu* will be used to refer to school sports clubs.

Each student usually has to decide whether to join a club just after starting his or her new school life. This means that every student can become a member of any clubs he or she wants to join without entrance trials or tryouts. The student basically remains a member of the club he or she chooses and does not change to other clubs during the junior high school years.¹ Many schools recommend that students choose one of many types of *bukatsu* clubs; some schools actually force them to do so. *Bukatsu* practices are generally held after school and on weekends. Some *bukatsu* have morning practices before school. Summer vacation is regarded as the best time for improving individual or teamwork skills. Japanese summer vacation is basically from mid-July to the end of August, and there are breaks between the first and second trimesters of the school year. Students are given a substantial amount of homework to do during the long holidays; thus, many students who join *bukatsu* spend busy summer “holidays” doing *bukatsu* and homework. The roles of *bukatsu* coaches are typically played by school teachers with no fees, and it is possible that some coaches do not have the coaching skills and/or knowledge of the sport that they coach. *Bukatsu* is seen as a part of school education, although it is formally an extracurricular activity.

Institutional and Conventional Background that Supports a Way of *Bukatsu*

Kimochism You often hear words such as “She won the game in *kimochi* (motivationally) in spite of complete exhaustion” or “He pitches with *kimochi* (with all his heart)” in sports programs on television in Japan. *Kimochi*² means heart, spirit, motivation, or the combination of these in competitive contexts. Coaches in *bukatsu* also like to use this word when they coach and advise students on their plays. Their coaching or advising with the word *kimochi* can be efficient, of course, but they often use the word, even unreasonably, without giving any practical advice, such as “Don’t lose with *kimochi*!” I call this Japanese idea *kimochism*.³ This *kimochism* emerges when coaches or teachers want students to be patient in conditions that are often severe. Many students in Japan, for example, take classes in facilities without air conditioners, and their classrooms and gyms can exceed 30 °C (86 °F) with high humidity! Almost all school gyms used for indoor sports have no air conditioners.

¹This is the typical case. Some schools that have fewer students, for example, could allow students to join several clubs.

²*Kiai* is also often used in the almost same situations in a slightly more accentuated sense.

³I relate *kimochi*-centrism to Azuma (1994)’s *kimochi-shugi* here, which can be also called *kimochism*. *Kimochi*-centrism is a unique Japanese characteristic that is related to being more willing than Western people to understand and read others’ minds (*kimochi*).

The television news sometimes discusses a player (student) suffering from heat exhaustion during *bukatsu* practice in the summer, not only in outdoor sports but also in indoor ones.

Many Japanese people are unsurprised to hear about a leak in a ceiling in a classroom or hallway of a school building or to see a very dusty intake duct and a never-cleaned air outlet of a heating boiler on school walls. All of these examples of poor infrastructure were true in a school my children attended. I was, however, surprised, and I shared the problem with other members of the parent-teacher organization (PTO). After the PTO pressured and petitioned the local authorities, the conditions were improved. I guess that it was sooner improved in this case because the pressures and petitions were more reasonable on the basis of data and were much more aggressive than typical PTO efforts. The problem is that such a poor infrastructure would have not been repaired unless the PTO placed strong pressure on the local authorities; almost all teachers and parents do not seem to expect any improvement in the environment surrounding students.

Kimochism may have been significant in the age when all citizens, including children, were overcoming economically poor situations all over the country after World War II, but times have changed. Men and women in Japan today use air conditioners and immediately fix leaking ceilings and clean dusty intakes in office buildings, public transportation, and private houses. Only schools have not changed, and only students have been forced to stay in severe situations in Japan. Some conservative adults, even teachers, have convenient words for such miserable conditions for students:

To make students (children) endure is also education!

In addition, concentration on one thing is regarded as important in *kimochi*. This idea, however, sometimes leads to a single-track mind by placing too much stress on “one” thing. As a result, students are unlikely to think that they can take any practice time off or change to another *bukatsu* before graduating, although there are no written rules on that. Typically, coaches do not like it when students take practice off for private reasons, such as family vacations; if a student does so, they may make them stay on the bench during games or scrimmages as a punishment.

Japanese-style tournament

There are two ways to decide on the winners in sports competitions in Japan—the “tournament” and the “league”—and both terms are used with meanings that are different from the original English ones. Official games for *bukatsu* usually adopt a “tournament” style, which means an only knockout tournament in two competitor games in Japan.⁴ The most historical and popular “tournaments” are two types of national tournaments for high school⁵ baseball. One is held in March, and another is

⁴This is why Japanese psychologists wonder why Axelrod’s (1980) tournament for the prisoner’s dilemma, which is a round-robin system and should be called “league” in Japan, is called “tournament”.

⁵High school in Japan covers 10th through 12th grades.

in August. Every game is nationally broadcast live in both tournaments. Other high school sports are also more popular than the college level. The “tournament” style is also adopted in junior high school sports and even in elementary school sports. I guess that the “tournament” format would lead coaches and players to think that they must win every game and must play perfectly, with no mistakes. At the same time, it can produce emotional drama and stories whether teams win or lose. Moving documentaries, comics, and animations have been made even on the basis of losing games (Kobayashi 2011). The Japanese demerit system, which is said to have prevailed in various areas in Japan, may have been developed in this way in even a school sports area.

Kimochism places a biased value on winning and easily justifies the discrimination between good players and bad players in the “tournament.” Coaches and parents think that players play games because of their influence, with no time for some other players to play them. This way of thinking can bring the omnipotent to some coaches and lead to a miserable event, such as the following example.

Japanese people were shocked by the news of the suicide of a high school basketball player who suffered frequent corporal punishment from the basketball team’s (*bukatsu*) coach (Koh 2013). Surprisingly, the news of corporal punishment from coaches or teachers of *bukatsu* was repeatedly reported even after this player’s suicide. Moreover, corporal punishment scandals have been reported concerning the Judo national team and some college sports. This means that the serious problem must cover the entire sports world in Japan beyond *bukatsu*.

Nonetheless, *bukatsu* plays a critical role in the development of athletes in Japan, and it shapes a style of doing sports for them because other local sports clubs are much less inclusive of junior and senior high school students than in other countries.

Globalization of Education in Japan

Japanese people who have been abroad often say that they were disappointed with their English skills, which they had learned at schools in Japan. Japanese students who attend English school for non-natives in the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, or other countries often feel that grammar and reading are much easier than listening and speaking, and they often look with envy at the students who also come from non-English countries and actively speak English even if the grammar and/or the accent are far from native speakers. As a result, learning much more practical English for oral communication in everyday situations has been required at schools in Japan, and the Japanese government and many universities have announced policies to improve English learning.

The first English class was introduced in the 5th year of elementary school in 2011, and some of the classes are taught by native English speakers.⁶ Second, some

⁶Mandatory education in Japan is from grade 1 to grade 9. The first six years are in elementary school, and the other three are in junior high schools.

high schools introduced or are introducing the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. The Japanese government has a policy to increase the number of schools that adopt the program to 200 in total by 2018. Third, the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan (LDP), which has held power for the majority of the time since 1955 and is leading the current ruling coalition, made recommendations to the Prime Minister that all colleges should adopt the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) as the English tests for entrance examinations (Yoshida 2013). TOEFL is a test for non-native speakers of English to use in applying to colleges in the United States and other English-speaking countries, and colleges in Japan have not adopted TOEFL as criteria to measure students' English abilities. Fourth, some colleges introduced a curriculum in which all classes are conducted in English, and others are moving toward that. Moreover, some private companies have adopted English as the official language at any meeting, even if all members who join a meeting are native Japanese speakers.

These examples are connected with the common slogan of the globalization of education. It is thought that English skills are the most important aspect of globalizing because other non-English countries may be in similar situations.

Is Globalization Leading to Imperialism?

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's Cabinet (from December 2012 to the present, as of August 2015) insists on the importance of disseminating Japanese culture with a strong national identity, which is related to enforcing moral education, in the discussion on the globalization of education in Japan (Education Rebuilding and Acting Council 2013). This idea seems to come from the notion of the "ideal" Japan for not only the current regime but also some nationalistic people. The ideal country for them would be full of native-born Japanese who fluently speak English, along with the landscape of the period just before the World War II in Japan. In this sense, globalism in Japan, at least for some people, may mean that Japanese people can speak both English and Japanese in the country and that Japanese culture can be much more popular outside of the country. I am afraid that this idea of globalism could lead to a modern type of imperialism in the name of globalization because it seems to imply one type of cultural invasion with English. Certainly, English would be a useful tool to accomplish the purpose of the imperialism today.

I believe that the imperialistic idea would basically conflict with the globalization of education and other types of globalization, but it does not seem to be so simple. The Japanese government may be motivated to rediscover and export their own culture as a way to counter the rule of the language, promoting globalization.

Historically, Western sports were indigenized in Japan in the Meiji era (1868–1912), and the sports were developed primarily as physical education in school with militaristic disciplines (Kurusu 2000). In fact, *kimochism*, which supports a system of *bukatsu*, is seen as a type of moral education, and it can help children learn to be patient. In this sense, the globalization of education in the current regime may need

kimochism as a core mentality more than anything to culturally invade other countries. That suggests that *bukatsu* might implicitly develop a spirit of imperialism or, in a more moderate way, the introverted and nationalistic spirit in each child in the context of the globalization of education in Japan.

Globalism Has no Specific Direction

The globalism, however, might just bring English or American culture into the country despite the intentions of nationalistic people, including the current regime. It would be difficult to imagine that native English speakers could teach English without bringing up any other cultural aspects. They would nonverbally communicate with students in a different way from the Japanese one, and they would “reasonably” require yes-or-no answers without considering the ambiguous Japanese way of answering because that is the English way of doing things. Japanese students could adjust to the English style of communication and gradually change not only their communication style in their classrooms but also their way of thinking in their everyday lives. Ironically, this “way” of learning—that is, learning from native English speakers—would be exactly what promoters of globalization of education, including the current regime, would desire.

In this sense, globalism does not have a specific direction in terms of importing or exporting; rather, it will have an effect on each citizen, more in importing than in exporting. Only thinking about exporting would be like a local and a nominal “globalism.”

Can *Bukatsu* and Japanese Sports Change? Possible Unexpected Effects of the Globalization of Education

Bukatsu has many moral characteristics as described above, and some of them are clearly concerned with human rights abuses. A sense of morality that could be connected with human rights issues can force students to work hard even under severe weather conditions and force some students to stay benched during games. When students cannot endure such a situation, their mentality is regarded as less strong. This mentality is called *kimochi* or *kiai*, as described above, and the strength of the mentality is thought of as one of the most important factors in winning or losing and even in better or worse performance. Accordingly, students must focus on acquiring strong mentalities, which is chimeric. Coaches tend to fix starters and not to let others replace them during games to keep winning in “tournaments.” Starters are prioritized over others, even in practice. Others simply watch the

practice for starters.⁷ In this sense, you could say that a type of elite education is realized in *bukatsu*. Much richer education is provided to better performers, and poorer education is provided to poor performers. Excessive favorable treatment of better performers at a specific point, however, has the effect of eliminating opportunities for poorer performers. The timing and speed of physical development varies considerably from person to person during the adolescent period. Sakakibara and Omi (2005) demonstrated that students who were born earlier in the school calendar have a greater chance to become professional sports player in Japan and suggested that coaches were implicitly influenced by the performances and body sizes of children.

A question that arises here is why inequality is commonly accepted only in *bukatsu* by many teachers, coaches, and parents who otherwise value equality, particularly in school contexts in Japan. Japanese education is even labeled as false egalitarianism. Trials of ability grouping in teaching do not seem to work well in many cases, and grade-skipping is rare in Japan.

Another aspect of *bukatsu* may be a key to understanding the paradox. “Elite education” and respect for others is highlighted in *bukatsu* as if it were a class of moral education. It is said that students learn to give others a proper greeting, to appreciate others, and to pay respect to their elders through *bukatsu*. All *bukatsu* members are actually equal in this aspect. In sum, what is taught to all members is not sports but politeness. In this sense, it might be said that both unequal elitism to win every game and equal education on politeness might be finely balanced in *bukatsu*. Teachers can, however, teach politeness to students in classrooms if they want. Why do they teach it in sports activities?

Bukatsu plays a role in nipping juvenile delinquency in the bud in junior high schools in Japan (Morikawa 1987), likely because students are less likely to do bad things if they are tired and hardly have free time because of difficult daily *bukatsu* practice. As a result, coaches evaluate each student’s politeness without hesitation and use the evaluation as a requirement to be starter or to receive other better treatment. Students desperately try to be polite to be starters and/or receive better treatment. The cyclic pattern is a core of the artful moral education system that uses students’ competitive spirits in sports activity.

⁷Additionally, boys sometimes watch girls’ practice and vice versa in the case of basketball *bukatsu* at my son’s junior high school. This appears to be unreasonable and a waste of time, but I do not think it is rare in Japan.

***Bukatsu* Reformation Plan**

The style of *bukatsu* will no longer have any effects because globalism is progressing more in the sports world, and it will not be accepted in foreign countries, particularly Western countries. Rather, the progress of globalization might totally change *bukatsu* to the Western styles in many ways.

It would be difficult for Western people to understand *kimochism*. Unreasonable patience with regard to hardships, such as no air conditioners in high-temperature conditions and no playing time in any formal games for three years, could be human rights violations in Western countries and maybe other countries. If a student suffered heat exhaustion without air conditioners, a school principal and a coach would be held responsible for the accident and could be sued for poor management. Western people would issue a complaint against de facto coercion to join every practice only with a few days off even in summer holidays because it is seemingly more important for them to spend time with their family. In contrast, it does not seem that coaches (teachers) in Japan care about their family. Many coaches sacrifice their families for *bukatsu* (Hayama 1987). A friend of mine who is a mother of three children and a wife of a high school teacher of physical education told me that she had asked her husband not to coach students in *bukatsu* hard when she married him. Her request seems to have been reasonable, although I did not understand it at the time.

I will therefore try to propose a reformation plan of *bukatsu* by referencing the Western style. The plan is composed of three parts: (1) to adopt the ability of grouping coaching, (2) to abolish “tournaments” for youth sports, and (3) to reduce practice time or restricting hours.

The introduction of practical English education could actually trigger the adoption of ability grouping teaching and coaching and could cause a major structural change in Japanese education, including *bukatsu*, even though the reformation would not begin in *bukatsu* itself. *Juku* (extra school) for practical English would be likely much more popular among elementary school students because Japanese people understand that almost no current English teachers in Japan can teach “practical” English or fluently speak English. This would bring much larger gap in English performance skills among junior high school students. Native English teachers would think that they should adopt ability grouping teaching. If this scenario could become realized, *bukatsu* and other subjects would be inevitably influenced by this way of coaching/teaching.

All students could learn any sport at a level appropriate for their skills in the way of coaching. It would be important for worse performers to enjoy sports even after finishing school instead of staying away from sports.

However, many more coaches would be needed to implement ability grouping coaching in *bukatsu*. Many adults have a long commute in large urban areas in Japan and stay at work late, so adults who are potential coaching candidates do not

have the time to coach students on weekdays.⁸ Moreover, sports players do not have enough gyms and fields to play on in Japan because of the high population density. It would not be easy to fix this situation unless the work environment were fundamentally improved, but seasonalizing sports and reducing practice time would improve the situation. Seasonalization could also enable students to experience multiple sports each year and develop a variety of sports skills that may be covered in the current *bukatsu* system.

The abolishment of the Japanese-style “tournament,” which turns every game into a must-win game, could be easily realized only with the decision of each sport organization. The “tournament” should be replaced with a group tournament or others, particularly for elementary and junior high school students (grades 1–9). The replacement would also make each student enjoy doing sports at his or her own skill level because coaches and players could focus more on the games themselves, not on winning. It would also lead to respect for individuality in education, which is often used by teachers and the government in Japan (e.g., Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan 2000).

Shorter practice time could make it possible for both students and coaches to spend more time with their families. Limited time with family might encourage Japanese children to be independent from their parents earlier, but it represses another aspect of independency, or independency itself, in the original meaning (Omi 2012), which would become more important in Japan under globalization.

These three suggestions could make many more citizens enjoy sports during their lives and could attribute to the construction of a cultural system for lifelong sports in Japan. Unfortunately, sports based on *kimochism* through *bukatsu* make many people feel less enjoyment, although *bukatsu* is not the only one reason, of course. The creation of an enjoyable environment for everyone, including less skillful players, could increase the number of potential coaches. *Bukatsu* might be no longer called *bukatsu* at that time.

Beyond the *Bukatsu* Reformation

Both the globalization of education and the *bukatsu* reformation might impose responsibilities to change the traditional ways of other school activities—and maybe even Japanese culture itself—because *bukatsu* is obviously one of the school activities that should reflect Japanese culture (Kobayashi 2011). I think that we are living in the norm, which makes us value being patient and accept physical punishment. Deeply rooted are the ideas that politeness is the most important thing as a member of society, that you cannot develop your skill with relish, and that children

⁸In this sense, it may be said that the style of working in Japan is cultivated in *bukatsu*. The moral education through *bukatsu* experiences would develop *kimochism* and consequently too much loyalty to the companies and other organizations.

develop well within a severe environment. The unreasonable coaching/teaching in *bukatsu*, as described above, would not be accepted in Western countries, although a strict way of teaching may be seen as a better one (Poplin et al. 2011).

Both the good and bad aspects of Japanese-ness would be lost with the globalization of education. It is virtually assured that more Japanese people will work in foreign countries and more foreign people will work in Japan in the near future unless Japanese people choose a way to isolate themselves. They must be prepared to lose some Japanese customs or traditions with the globalization. Some nationalistic people and others do not want to lose any Japanese customs, but this stance could easily be connected with anti-foreignism and “honorable isolation.” It is much better to allow much more time to share with families and increase the number of coach candidates by improving the bad working environment, even if possibly valuable Japanese customs must be cast aside. Globalism would end up being a pie in the sky if Japanese people stick to Japanese customs and traditions or Japanese identity too rigidly.

Nationalistic moral reformers sometimes insist that mothers should stay at home and not work to communicate well with their children, but actually, children who join *bukatsu* do not often stay at home. The *bukatsu* reformation would improve this situation. I hope that Japan could adjust well to the globalization of education without imperialistic thinking and Japanese local morality.

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Parental Proxy Talk in Japanese Parents How Does a Parent Express Oneself Through a Baby's Voice?

Yoriko Omi-Okamoto

Introduction

“ITAKU-NAI, ITAKU-NAI... [No, it doesn't hurt. It doesn't hurt].”

This is a mother's utterance, which means “I'm okay,” when her child fell down or bumped into a wall. She repeats this phrase in a high tone and then the child, who was close to tears, gradually turns to smile. It is a familiar scene between parents and their infants in Japan.

Whose voice was this “it doesn't hurt”? Although this was surely the mother's, she uttered it from the child's perspective. This was a proxy talk for the child. Interestingly, it does hurt for the child. She says “it doesn't hurt.” while even knowing it does hurt. Parental Proxy Talk is not as simple as parents' utterances from their children's perspectives.

This chapter examines Parental Proxy Talk, which parents use for their preverbal infants, and discusses a process of enculturation by focusing on Parental Proxy Talk. How do parents with their own social identities and sociohistorical representations build their child-rearing practices? Here, child-rearing practices are considered as a “border” or “membrane” between the parents' and children's generations that Parental Proxy Talk and explore how parents can pass their cultural voices and dialogical cultural selves through Parental Proxy Talk to their infants, who create a new generation.

Y. Omi-Okamoto (✉)
Shohoku College, Atsugi, Japan
e-mail: yoriko@shohoku.ac.jp

Asymmetry of Communication Between Parents and Preverbal Infants

How can parents communicate with their infants before the infants learn to talk? Even adult–adult communication requires effort. We manage to communicate with others by hearing what is said, asking about the person’s thoughts and feelings, and guessing what the other person thinks, feels, and wants. We communicate using verbal clues as well as cultural-historical nonverbal ones. Nevertheless, we can still end up misunderstanding each other. It is even more difficult to communicate if the partner in communication is a preverbal infant who does not speak and use common gestures yet. Fundamentally, infants and parent make asymmetric contributions to their communication (Adamson et al. 1987). Not only are the infant’s communication skills undeveloped, but the parent may make an effort to complement his or her skills in ways that are particular to caregivers. Early ontogeny of parent–infant communication involves encounters between parents who have acquired verbal communication skills and cultural, nonverbal skills and infants who have not acquired them—that is, a border between culture and pre-culture.

However, there is generally a widespread belief that a parent, especially a mother, can understand and read her or his infant’s mind, know what the infant feels and wants, and therefore can care for the infant properly. This belief is quite pervasive in Japan. However, at the same time, many parents realize that this is not the case, and they feel that it is difficult to know why their babies are crying or what their babies are thinking. Thus, this belief makes some parents feel a lot of pressure, and some of them experience aversive feelings as a result of this parenting stress (Deater-Deckard 1998; Sugano et al. 2009; Crnic et al. 2005). We need to notice that parents also are developing a process of a transition to parenthood through the relationship with their children.

Here, an important question is why it looks like some parents can communicate easily with their infants, even though they do not believe that they can do so easily. Carefully observing communication between Japanese parents and their infants reveals that parents keep talking to their infants, who never answer in words, in a way that is unique to parents.

Example 1) Communication between a 0-month-old boy and his mother
 A scene where the infant named Y wakes up in the bed.

ID	Utterance	Act
35	OHAYOU DANE, Y-KUN. [Good morning, Y.]	lifting him out of the bed.
36	YU-KUNN, MADA NEMUTAI NEE. [You are still sleepy, aren't you?]	
37	MADA NEMUTAI. [(I'm) still sleepy.]	
38	MOTTO NERUNO. [(I'm) gonna sleep.]	
39	MOTTO NERUNO. [(I'm) gonna sleep.]	
40	N? Y-KUN, MOTTO NERUNO? [Umm? Are you gonna sleep, Y?]	
41	UN, JAA, MADA NOMITAKUNAINE. [Yes, all right, you don't want to suckle yet, right?]	looking into his eyes.

note: The children's age and the communication context are provided. // Japanese utterances are in capitals, translations in parentheses in the left column, and descriptions of actions are in the right column.

All the utterances in this example were those of the mother. Not only was she talking to her infant from her own perspective, but she was also talking as a proxy for her infant (e.g., #37, #38, and #39 in Example 1). The result of her actions makes these utterances look like communication between her and her infant based on turn-taking. Indeed, it is commonly observed that Japanese parents, especially mothers, talk to their infants using proxy talk as if the parents verbalize infants' thoughts and feelings. Here are some other examples: While changing a diaper, a mother may say as if in her baby's voice, "Ah, kimochi-ii! [Oh, (it makes me) feel so good!]." When an infant points a picture of a dog on a book, she may say for the infants, "Wan-wan [It's a doggy]."

Fundamentally, proxy talk in the original context is assumed to consist of a tripartite relationship that includes a sender, a proxy, and a receiver of a message (e.g., shaded area in Fig. 1). However, proxy talk observed in parent-infant communication does not necessarily imply this tripartite relationship. It can be actually observed in a bipartite relationship (e.g., "parent" and "infant" in Fig. 1). Although parents can be considered as *proxies* in this figure, can infants be considered as message-senders or message-receivers? If infants are message-senders, how could parents take a message from nonspeaking infants? There are many studies on parents' interpretation of their infants' immature and undifferentiated acts, and these studies show the importance of parents' interpretation in early communication with their infants (Adamson and Bakeman 1987; Snow 1979; Kaye 1979; Marcos et al. 2003). If parents can interpret what their infants think and feel, and if infants are message-receivers, why did parents say out loud what their infants think and feel to the infants?

Okamoto (2001, 2008) and Okamoto et al. (2014) defined Parental Proxy Talk as these parents' utterances from infants' perspectives, which has a form of utterances as if the infants themselves are talking. In other words, Parental Proxy Talk is a form of talk in which parents, caregivers, and other adults produce utterances as if the talk happened in infants' voices. Here, the *voice* is a term derived from Bakhtin and

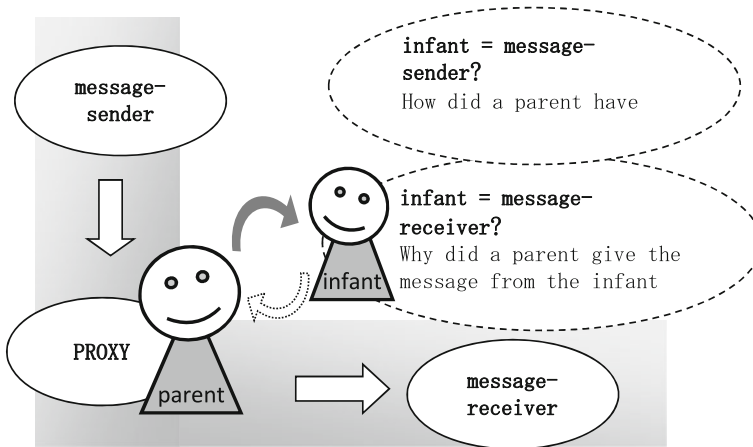


Fig. 1 Difference between processes of original proxy talk and parental proxy talk

involves the much more general phenomenon of “the speaking personality, the speaking consciousness” (Wertsch 1991; Holquist and Emerson 1981). Children’s mental functioning can be guided by the internalization of voices that originate from social communication. In addition, the concept of the dialogical self proposed by Hermans and colleagues (e.g. Hermans 2001; Hermans and Hermans-Jansen 2003) defines the self in terms of the dynamic multiplicity of relatively autonomous I-positions. The “I” can endow each position with a voice, and a dialogical relationship between positions can be established (Hermans 2001). An internal dialogue is closely connected with an external dialogue (Hermans and Hermans-Jansen 2003; Wertsch 1991). Parental Proxy Talk can be considered as a process where parents give voices to their children and guide the children to construct their dialogical selves.

Early Communication

A number of studies about early communication development have suggested that preverbal infants can be involved in complex interactions with adults, like their parents. These studies show phenomena such as interactional synchrony (Condon and Sander 1974), imitation in infancy (Meltzoff and Moore 1977; Field et al. 1982), infants’ preference to face-like stimuli (Fantz 1961; Simon et al. 2003), and development of intersubjectivity (Trevarthen 1979; Newson 1977), suggesting that infants are from the beginning oriented towards other human beings. Similarly, adults are fine-tuned to infants. In addition, several observational studies of adult–infant interactions clearly show that adults can interpret infants’ acts in a manner that is finely tuned to developmental changes (Tronick 1982).

Systematic and careful observations in these studies have revealed how competently infants can participate in early communication with adults, like their parents. This early communication can make infants learn each meaning of their environment around themselves and socialize infants as enculturated members in their own community. However, it is still being discussed how infants can inherit the meanings of environment from early communication with their parents. Surely, it is not a simple one-way transmission from parents to infants. Examining Parental Proxy Talk could be one of attempts to reconsider the dialogue between infants and their parents as a way to construct and reconstruct the meanings.

Infant-Directed Speech

Parental Proxy Talk can be considered as a kind of infant-directed speech (Jacobson et al. 1983; Kitamura and Lam 2009; Fernald et al. 1989; Kitamura and Burnham 2003). Adults often speak differently to infants than to adults. When adults talk to infants, they frequently exaggerate prosodic cues normally used for conveying intentions in adult-directed (AD) speech. Thus, adults' utterances with this pattern of exaggerated prosody are classified as infant-directed (ID) speech (Bryant and Barrett 2007). ID speech has distinctive features, such as higher overall pitch, expanded pitch range, characteristic intonational contours, shorter utterances, longer pauses, and increased repetition (Kitamura and Lam 2009). Although these features are more restrained in some cultures than others, the evidence suggests that ID speech constitutes a universal caretaking behavior (Fernald 1985; Fernald et al. 1989).

This area of research first explored the differences between ID and AD speech through acoustic analyses; recently, the focus of studies on ID speech has shifted to function analyses, including the acquisition of language (e.g., Fernald and Mazzie 1991; Thiessen et al. 2005; Werker et al. 2006), infants' preferences for ID speech compared to AD speech (Fernald 1985), preference for affective tone in ID speech (Kitamura and Lam 2009), how ID speech regulates infants' emotion (Trainor et al. 2000), and how ID speech guide infants' attention (Kaplan et al. 1995).

Parents' ID speech in these studies can be assumed as linguistic input and an emotional regulator for infants. In other words, parents' utterances can be considered as those from external others who is isolated from infants. However, in fact, parents not only talk to their infants as external others, but they also use virtual internal utterances, Parental Proxy Talk. Here, we may be able to find a process where external dialogue internalizes internal dialogue and a process of development and enculturation of children's selves.

This chapter focuses on the addressivity (Wertsch 1991) of parents' utterances to their preverbal infants in order to examine what could be Parental Proxy Talk and discusses a process of enculturation by focusing on Parental Proxy Talk on the border between parents' and infants' generations.

Parental Proxy Talk

As mentioned, Parental Proxy Talk is a form of talk in which parents produce utterances as if the talk happened in infants' voices. The author and her colleagues analyzed Japanese mothers' utterances to their preverbal infants qualitatively in terms of the addressivity and agency of each utterance (Okamoto 2008; Okamoto et al. 2014a, b).

Procedure

Two pairs of Japanese mothers and their infants (at ages 0, 3, and 6 months old) from our longitudinal project on early communication were analyzed. The infants (a boy and a girl) were born in 1997, respectively, were both first-born children, and lived in Tokyo, Japan with their families. Both mothers spoke Japanese as their primary language.

The participants provided consent, and were visited at their houses and observed in their dyadic interactions for 15–20 min on three occasions when the infants was at 0, 3, and 6 months old. The mother–infant pairs were videotaped during play sessions at home. Mothers were instructed to play with their infants as usual.

The videotaped verbal and nonverbal mother–infant interactions were transcribed. The mothers' utterances from the transcriptions were categorized according to the addressivity of each utterance and each type of Parental Proxy Talk was analyzed qualitatively. Here, the addressivity of utterances, which was the analysis perspective, was based on whose voice the utterance should have or from whose position it should have been issued. In addition, the focus was not on whether the utterance represented the infant's feeling or thought correctly, but whose voice the utterance should have based on the formal and virtual agent of the given utterance.

Four Types of Parental Proxy Talk

The results of the qualitative analysis for the mothers' utterances showed four types of Parental Proxy Talk: (1) proxy talk from the child's position, (2) proxy talk from the child's and parent's position, (3) proxy talk from an ambiguous position, and (4) proxy talk from a transitional position. Non-proxy talk is an utterance from the position of the mother or someone other than the child (Table 1).

Representative examples of communicative sequences in each type of Parental Proxy Talk are provided below and the functions of Parental Proxy Talk were examined.

- (1) **Proxy Talk from the Child's Position:** The utterances in this category were proxy talk that involved only the infant's perspective.

Example 2) Communication between a 0-month-old girl and her mother

A short break during breast-feeding her infant named N.

ID	Uttrance	Act
13	M. MOU ONAKA IPPAI? [Are you full?]	
14	M. MOU IKKAI IKU? [Do you want more?]	
15	M. N, HAI. [Hey, N.]	putting her nipple close to the infant's mouth.
-	I.	The infant doesn't suck the nipple.
16	M. <u>MOU IRANAI. [(I) don't want any more.]</u>	
17	M. MOU IRANAI? [Don't you want any more?]	
18	M. YOUSHI. [All right.]	

note: The children's age and the communication context are provided. The infants' contributions are marked with "I", and the mothers' are marked with "M". All Japanese utterances are in capitals, translations in parentheses in the left column, and descriptions of actions are in the right column. The utterances categorized as Parental Proxy Talk are underlined.

As Example 2 illustrates, although utterance #16 is issued by the mother, it is from her infant's position, as if the infant is talking to the mother. That is, the utterance form had the infant's voice. If the mother talked as her own voice, she should have asked or confirmed, for instance, "Mou iranai(no)? [Don't you want any more?]" or "Mou iranaine? [You don't want any more, do you?]"

Like utterance #16 in Example 2, the mothers issued some utterances from (only) the infants' position. If this Parental Proxy Talk is considered in the context

Table 1 Four types of parental proxy talk

(1) Proxy Talk from the Child's position;

the utterances which involve only child's perspective

Example; Looking at her baby reaching a toy, "(I) wanna have it!"

(If not proxy talk, a mother might say from her own position, "Do you want to have it?", or "You wanna have it, don't you?")

(2) Proxy Talk from Position from Parent and Child;

the utterances which involve both parent's and child's perspective

Example; *putting on her baby's hands*, "Let's put on mittens"

(If not proxy talk, a mother might say, "Put on mittens". If an utterances from child's position, "I put on mittens!")

(3) Proxy Talk from Ambiguous Position;

the utterances which involve either/both parent's or/and child's perspective that cannot be discriminated

Example; Opening a toy box with her child, "What's in it?" (looking both her child and the toy mutually in high-pitched voice)

(Is this utterance interpreted as a mother's question to her child, or a proxy talk for her child's question?)

(4) Proxy Talk form Transitional Position;

the utterances which start with child's perspective but ended up with parent's perspective, or vise versa

Example; when the other person gives a candy to her child, "Thank you, you say!"

("Thank you" is from the child's position, and "you say" is from the mother's position.)

of the dialogical self, it could be that the mother verbalized from the infant’s I-position.

Interestingly, the mothers not only issued proxy talk with the meanings oriented to the mothers’ interpretation about the infants’ intent, like in Example 2, but also with the opposite meanings to their interpretation or the infant’s state, as in the following example.

Example 3) Communication between a 3-month-old girl and her mother
 A scene where the infant got into a bad mood and almost cried.

ID	Uttrance	Act
	I. NNN... [Mmm...]	(whine)
18	M. <u>KATERU, KATERU. [I can win, I can win*.]</u>	rubbing the infant's leg.
	I. NNN... [Mmm...]	(whine)
19	M. <u>KATERU, KATERU. [I can win, I can win.]</u>	interrupting the whine and keep rubbing her leg.
	I. NNN... [Mmm...]	(whine)
20	M. <u>KATERU, KATERU. [I can win, I can win.]</u>	interrupting the whine and keep rubbing her leg.
	I. NNN... [Mmm...]	The whine gets louder.
21	M. HAI HAI, HAI HAI. [All right, all right.]	

(*) It means that it infant can win against her own bad mood.

In this example, the mother obviously noticed that her infant got cranky. Nonetheless, she said, “Kateru [I can win],” meaning “I can win against my own bad mood.” Notice that the mother did not say “Katenai [I can’t win],” which could be closer to the infant’s state at the moment. Why did she say “I can win” when she knew the infant almost “did not win”?

As shown in utterances #18, #19, and #20, some Parental Proxy Talk issued with the infant’s voice reflects the opposite meaning of the parent’s interpretation about the infant’s state, especially in a situation that parents would likely wish that their infants’ emotion would be regulated to be more positive. Parents might incorporate their expectations for their infants in their Parental Proxy Talk. By using utterances from their infants’ position, parents do not control their infants externally, but they might show their infants a way to challenge spontaneously in a culture-proper direction.

The introductory example, “Itaku-Nai, Itaku-Nai... [No, it doesn’t hurt. It doesn’t hurt].” can be also proxy talk with an opposite meaning. Interestingly, some children can regulate their bad emotions, overcome the pain without crying, and return to their activities while the adult is repeating this phrase, as if it were a magic spell. The goal of these utterances might be to help the child regulate her or his own emotion by issuing proxy talk with the child’s voice. The parents’ attempt is not to try to regulate the infants as others do, but to construct virtual self-regulation by giving inner voices that infants should have. Although the infant in Example 3 is surely too young to regulate her emotions through proxy talk, this does not prevent parents from trying to influence their infants using the infant’s own voice. The

mother seemed to try to flow into the infant's self. In these examples, the parents tried to regulate the infant's bad emotions by sharing it, as if the bad emotion was theirs. At the same time, the parents might try to let their infants share an emotional state based on their expectations, like "I can win." and "It doesn't hurt." The process is not like regulation by others, such as "You can win!" or "Think it doesn't hurt." It is like self-regulation.

On the other hand, as soon as the parents realized that they could not regulate the infants' emotion, they quickly changed to receive the emotion as it was and conveyed it as non-proxy talk, "Hai hai hai [all right, all right] (#21)." This means that the mother was ready to receive her infant's negative emotion, but she first tried to regulate it with proxy talk. In other words, Parental Proxy Talk is not a strategy for forcing the parents' expectations on their infants, but it could be a way for parents to ensure their interpretations and expectations and try to negotiate with their infants.

- (2) **Proxy Talk from Position of Mother and Child:** The utterances that were put into this category, Proxy Talk from Position of Mother and Child, were proxy talk that involved the position of both the mother and infant.

<i>Example 4) Communication between a 3-month-old boy and his mother</i>		
A scene where the mother burps her infant after bottle-feeding.		
ID	Uttrance	Act
	I.	burps.
27	M. O-, DETA DETA DETA DETA. [a burp is coming, coming.]	
28	M. <u>OISHIKATTA NEE. [(The milk we had was) yummy.**]</u>	
29	M. <u>OISHIKATTA NEE. [(The milk we had was) yummy.]</u>	

(**) Although English sentence can be odd, Japanese "OISHIKATTA NEE" means that both "I" and "you" had the same food and both of us felt it tasted good.

In Example 4, utterances #28 and #29 were put into this category. Although this English translation may seem odd, it was translated literally to make clear the meaning of the utterances. The Japanese phrase "Oishikatta nee" consists of three parts: "oishi(i)" means "delicious" or tasty," "katta" shows past tense, and "nee" is a termination word meaning "you" and "I" share something. Therefore, "Oishikatta nee" can mean "The milk we had was yummy" or "Yummy for us," and differs from "Yummy!!" or "Yummy?" In fact, if it were just "Ohishii! (Yummy!)" or "Oishikatta (It was yummy)," it would be categorized as Proxy Talk from the Child's Position. If it were "Oishikatta? (Was it yummy?)," it would be categorized as non-proxy talk.

In this example, the mother did not have any milk herself. Nonetheless, she said, "Oishikatta nee [(The milk we had was) yummy]." Utterances #28 and #29 might reflect that the mother wanted to share the taste (or anything happening to her

infant) with him. Thus, parents make proxy talk from the perspective of both parent and child, even if something only happens to their infants and they cannot have the same experience as their infants.

Here is another example of proxy talk from the position of both parent and child:

<i>Example 5) Communication between a 0-month-old girl and her mother</i>		
A scene where the mother burps her infant after breast-feeding.		
ID	Uttrance	Act
42	M. <u>GEPPU SHIYOUKA. [Let's burp.]</u>	
43	M. GEPPU SURU? (Do you burp?)	
44	M. <u>MOCHIAGE YOUNE, CHOTTO. [Let's bring you up a little]</u>	
45	M. YOISHO. [Oof!/Alley-oop.]	holding up the infant.

The utterance #42 in Example 5 is also from the position of parent and child, where the mother tried to share the experience of the infant burping. Another utterance that should be focused on in Example 5 is #44. This utterance, “Mochiageyoune, choto [Let’s bring you up a little]” implies that the mother is using proxy talk to let her infant share her own experience (holding her infant up).

Thus, mothers express a desire to share the experience of either infant or mother with their infants using proxy talk from the views of both the mother and child. In other words, the viewpoint used here is “we” or “us.” This type of proxy talk can also be internalized in the infant’s dialogical self. That is, while the plural I-positions might from a sense of “we,” the we-position might be derived from “we-voices” and lead to a coexisting sense of “we.”

- (3) **Proxy Talk from Ambiguous Views:** The utterances in this category were proxy talk where the view (mother or child) could not be discriminated and which view the utterance has—mother or child—is ambiguous.

<i>Example 6) Communication between a 6-month-old girl and her mother</i>		
A scene where the infant gazes at the observer and freeze.		
ID	Uttrance	Act
6	M. <u>FUSIGIDA NEE. [We are wondering...]</u>	notices what the infant gazes at.
7	M. <u>NANI ARE? [What is that?]</u>	in a whisper
8	M. <u>NANI, NANI? [What? What?]</u>	in a whisper
9	M. <u>BIDEO, BIDEO. [Video camera, video camera.]</u>	in a whisper

In this example, utterance #6 is from the mother and child views, as described in the previous section. Utterances #7, #8, and #9 are examples of another type of proxy talk, described below.

In Example 6, the mother was checking what her infant was looking at, brought her face close to her infant, and whispered the utterances as if promoting for an actor. The series of utterances #7, #8, and #9 form an adjacent pair, such as question-response (Schgloff and Sacks 1973). This is, #7 and #8 are a question, and #9 is response to this question. Thus, either #7/8 are Proxy Talk, and #9 is non-Proxy Talk, or vice versa. However, these utterances were ambiguous—in other words, either or both of them could be Proxy Talk.

In psychological data analysis, ambiguous data are either put in another category or are treated as errors. However, it might be important and meaningful that these utterances are ambiguous. What meaning can ambiguous proxy talk have? Ambiguity of the utterance agent could help both the parent and infant share an experience, since it was “my” voice as well as “your” voice. Furthermore, it might mean that parents did not choose the agent of the utterance and the child could have the choice later in development. When the child is old enough, in a similar situation he or she can repeat “What?” (like #7/8) to a parent’s utterance, or he or she can respond “It’s a video camera” (like #9).

Parents do not believe that infants can choose their own utterances in these situations at this age. However, this type of proxy talk might show that parents believe that their children are developing and will be able to choose their own voices later, even though they cannot do so now.

- (4) **Proxy Talk from Transitional Views:** The utterances that were put in this category were proxy talk that started with the child’s view but ended with the mother’s view, or vice versa.

Example 7) Communication between a 3-month-old boy and his mother

A scene where the mother holds her infant and turns him to face the observer.

ID	Uttrance	Act
32	M. HAI, OKYAKU-SAMA DESUYO. (Hey, she is your guest.)	
33	M. KONNICHWA. [Hello.]	
34	M. KONNNICHWA, TTE. [<u>Say, hello.</u>]	
35	M. KONNICHWA. [Hello.]	

The agent of utterance #34 transitioned from the infant (“Konnichiwa,” means “hello”) to the mother (“TTE,” is an abbreviated form of “say”). Thus, utterances like #34 have a transitional view.

Proxy talk from transitional views might be considered non-proxy talk because it implies a transition from proxy talk to non-proxy talk or vice versa in an utterance. However, these utterances might function to emphasize that it should have been the child’s voice by adding the parent’s view.

In addition, #33 and #35 in Example 7 are proxy talk from the child’s view.

Discussion

Japanese parents often use proxy talk to communicate with their preverbal infants. Our qualitative analysis, through identifying the agent of each utterance, revealed that Japanese mothers use four types of parental proxy talk: (1) from the child's view, (2) from the views of both the mother and child, (3) from an ambiguous view, and (4) from a transitional view.

When parents try to make conversation with their infants, they not only play the role of a parent, but they also play the role of the infant through proxy talk. Thus, parents might help their infants participate in “verbal” communication and infants might internalize dialogues with multiple voices before they begin to speak. Although many studies suggest the importance of verbal stimulus in early development, few focused on addressivity of parents' utterances and in many studies, parents' utterances are considered as collectivity of autonomous utterances. What should be emphasized here is that infants are not input to isolated utterances from parents, but rather exposed to dialogue between multiple voices embedded in context. In the results, infants may appropriate the first voices as a tool to construct the self dialogically. As Hermans and Hermans-Jansen (2003) mentioned, dialogues between voices are pervasive in the development of the self through the life course. It is worth noting that dialogue involving infants early in their life includes proxy talk, which could be one of the most pervasive forms of early dialogue and could lead to dynamic development of the infant's self.

For example, Wertch (1991) discussed collaborative remembering on an intermental plane, quoting a conversation between 6-year-old boy and his father from Thrap and Gallimore (1988): a father helped his son recall where he lost a toy by asking, “In your room? Outside? Next door?, In the car?” By internalizing these external dialogues, the child may have incorporated the father's voice as part of his own voice. Children are already exposed to external dialogues, including Parental Proxy Talk, before they can internalize external dialogues in which they participate.

In addition, Parental Proxy Talk reflects a diversity of agents including not only the “I” of an infant, but also “we” of an infant and a mother, ambiguous “I” and “you” (e.g. parent), and agents that transition between “I” and “you.” Surely, voices of an infant's “I” would construct an I-position, as well as the internalized voices of “we” and “you” would form different I-positions. In that sense, infants internalize dynamic dialogues that are diverse and changeable from an early age. Furthermore, the dynamics of voices in the dialogue could change the relative dominance of the voices. That is, some voices are stronger than others. As the dominance of an I-position in the dialogical self was mentioned in terms of catalytic regulation in Valsiner and Cabell (2012), this dominance is included in external dialogue and developmentally the instability of dominance could require reconstruction of the dialogical self. In this sense, infants may internalize the cultural content of utterances and dialogical forms early in development.

It means that Parental Proxy Talk could function to create a field of a “border” between the generations of parents and children, which have different cultures. On

the “border,” parents convey cultural meanings to their children through Parental Proxy Talk. In other words, Parental Proxy Talk could actualize encounters between parents and children as culturally meaningful ones.

This study also raised the question of where the voices that parents give their infants come from. The parents have not heard the infants’ own utterances yet, but they make proxy talk as if the utterance were the infants’ voices. Given that voices originate in social, communicative processes (Wertch 1991), a voice that parents generate as proxy for their infant might emerge from communication with “a cultural infant”—that is, the voices could be viewed as what the parents believe an infant should/could/might want, feel, or think. Thus, these voices are sociocultural, and the belief is a result that the parents were guided socioculturally in their life. Parental Proxy Talk might be a mark that the parents try to treat as a member of the same cultural community and, hence, guide infants to participate in the same cultural community as their parents. In this sense, Parental Proxy Talk could be what Rogoff (2003) called cultural endeavors to guide infants to participate in their community, and could make the encounter between the generations a “border” that can function as an interface.

On the other hand, this does not mean that Proxy Talk is a simple reproduction of a given culture, nor that parents give voices to their infants unidirectionally. Parents engage in dialogue with their (real) infants, as well as with the cultural infants they have acquired over the course of their life. Parents then attempt to interpret what the infant thinks or feels through these dialogues. The interpretation, however, might not be enough to convince parents that these are the infant’s exact thoughts or feelings. It is ambiguous and unclear for parents, and could be considered under interpretation.

If parents believe that their interpretation is the correct representation of the infant’s thoughts and feelings, they would not need to say the infants’ thoughts and feelings as proxy talk out loud to the infant, and there would be the diversity in proxy talk. Furthermore, considering the addressivity of Parental Proxy Talk, while an utterance with an infant’s voice should be directed to the parent as a communicative partner, the proxy talk, which the parent has already known, would not need to be issued out loud. Indeed, parents issue proxy talk out loud to infants. This might be because they need to verify their interpretation by showing it audibly to the infant. In some cases, like Example 3, the parent tried to bring the infant back in a good mood but the infant’s emotion could not be regulated. Then, the parent might finally give up proxy talk. In other cases, like Example 6, proxy talk can be considered to provide choices for the child later in development as the child can have any utterance, “What is this?” or “Video camera, video camera,” when he or she is old enough to understand the situation. This border between the generations can have flexibility, which is its nature to be modified as mentioned below.

As Valsiner (2007) suggested, any interpretation prompts the “as-if” nature—that is, leaps in inference and meaningful organization of the given situations. This “as-if” needs to be constantly modified because it includes different positions. Thus, the communication discrepancy between these different positions could be more important than the “shared” basis for mutual sense-making. Proxy talk could be the

embodied “as-if” in the dyadic relationship between a parent and infant that allow coordination of different positions through dialogue. In other words, parents might need proxy talk to express ambiguous under interpretations. Parents may not issue proxy talk because they understand what their infants think and feel, but rather they do because they wish to understand the infant’s thoughts and feelings.

Furthermore, the asymmetry between children’s and parents’ communication skills could not make the infants copy the same cultural meanings as the parents’ ones from Parental Proxy Talk, which expresses the interpretation of their parents. In addition, the cultural meanings that the children have once internalized could change through new dialogue over their development. For example, even if a mother says “yummy” as proxy talk repeatedly at each mealtime to her child, the child does not necessarily keep the cultural meanings of “yummy.” He or she might begin to say “I want yummy” because of misunderstanding what the proxy talk means (it means the taste of something to eat, but the child could take it as the food itself). The child may extract some negative meanings while in a bad mood because the mother might say “yummy” even when it does not taste good to the child. The cultural meanings of “yummy” could be sorted and organized and new meanings for the next generation, which are close not but the same as the parent’s one, could be constructed. From the standpoint of parents, proxy talk is an opportunity to externalize their own culture and modify it. In other words, on the border, the parents attempt to internalize their own cultural meanings to their children through Parental Proxy Talk and, at the same time, put it on the border between different generations for the next generation (and the given generation itself) to modify them.

This chapter discussed Parental Proxy Talk as a tool to pass cultural voices from parents to infants. In addition, parents’ cultural representations could be modified for new generations. In this sense, parents and infants are interacting with each other on the generation borders. Infants might inherit voices with cultural meanings, then maintain the culture and/or generate new culture meanings.

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The Handcrafting Activity of Goldsmiths and Conceptual Thinking

Elizabeth Tunes, Ingrid Lilian Fuhr Raad
and Roberto Ribeiro da Silva

In this chapter, we carry out a critical examination of the idea that the responsibility of offering students the basis of scientific thinking, or at least scientific initiation, belongs exclusively to the school. In order to do so, we initially examine the way schools transmit scientific knowledge by describing the characteristics and function of this process. By analyzing goldsmithing activity, we then seek to show that daily human social life is full of other activities that allow thinking through scientific concepts.

Contemporary society overvalues scientific knowledge. Being in the central axis of society, a place formerly occupied by the Church, modern science has the power to govern and set ideologically desired parameters to human life. It perpetuates the image of an ethically neutral science, in which all is explained and proved empirically. It also spreads the idea that science is able to guide people through the conflicts and tragedies of life, promoting their dependence on the canons that dictate their ways of living.

The social practice of serving to standards required by science is not by chance. Flusser alerted us to the fact that “an ethically and ideologically neutral attitude of the scientist is pure pretension, product of the alienation of the concrete being-in-world” (1979, p. 166). In social institutions and governmental programs, the ideological link between science and government policies is remarkable, as pointed out by Bartholo (1992, p. 29):

E. Tunes (✉) · I.L.F. Raad
Centro Universitário de Brasília, Brasília, Brazil
e-mail: bethtunes@gmail.com

I.L.F. Raad
e-mail: ingridlfra@gmail.com

E. Tunes · R.R. da Silva
Universidade de Brasília, Brasília, Brazil
e-mail: bobsilva@unb.br

In the industrialized modernity, the relations between scientific-technology praxis and the State have been through major redefinitions. The modern State does not seek a contemplative thinker, but the connection between scientific thought and the political action carried out by their government agencies. Thus, a new kind of relation between State and citizen is engendered, and a scientized political practice emerges as a mediator. Science and politics merge into a new orienting synthesis of social cohesion, in which policies are justified by science, and science conveys its view of the world by means of policies.

By providing research results, scientifically treated data, and subsidies to promote government programs, as well as to meet market requirements, science has the power to control people's lives. This practice sustains the ideology that exists in speeches full of scientific terms whose purpose is to validate information and ideas that, despite being devoid of sense, acquire the social status of scientifically based information and, therefore, seem valid. Treated in this way—as the holder of absolute truth—science becomes a myth. Its historical, provisional, and relative aspects fade in the air (Lopes 1999).

One of the social institutions that perpetuate this ideology is the school, with the promise of preparing children and youth for life, making them critical citizens, adapted to social standards. It serves governmental programs and market logic, and it is regulated and protected by law. Under the yoke of the law, people are required to fulfill years of schooling, having as a goal the acquiring of certificates that work as a guarantee of the fulfillment of market requirements (Illich 1986). This way, as it perpetuates the ideological values of the State-science-market alliance, the school undertakes the responsibility to convey scientific knowledge.

There is no doubt, therefore, that contemporary society treats the schooling process as the main condition for achieving a promising future and a dignified life. Being schooled, society took the decisive step to make years of attending school be mistaken as good training, teaching as learning, obtaining degrees as education, diplomas as competence, and fluency in speaking with the ability to say something new, as Ivan Illich denounced in 1970.

However, that is not all. Mainly because of its commitment to the alliance of science-State-market, school is chosen as the most important, and often even the only, source of minds that know how to think scientifically. Any other context of human activities is seen in this regard with distrust and perceived as incapable and unfit for scientific training. It is from that fact that the two issues that are examined in this text emerge: The first issue is whether school activities, as they are carried out, effectively develop scientific thinking. This is the same as asking what the school teaches. The other issue, linked to the first one, asks whether it is appropriate to say that school is the only competent institution to teach what it teaches.

Scientific Knowledge or School Knowledge?

The first issue will be examined starting from the way transmission of scientific knowledge takes place in school. First of all, scientific knowledge is organized and restructured in disciplines, according to an officially established minimum

curriculum. It is then presented to the student as something ready, unquestionable, that must be memorized and repeated. This is quite different from the investigative attitude that science requires when seeking answers to proposed questions (Lopes 1999). Here lies the first mistake: thinking scientifically is mistaken as verbalizing and repeating definitions of concepts.

Then, in order to be assimilated, scientific knowledge is didactically transformed, going through a decoding process, in order to simplify it for the student. Teaching strategies that establish direct relations between science and everyday life are commonly adopted in order to achieve that goal. In this process, usually called contextualization, students relate scientific knowledge to everyday life (Lopes 1999).

At this point, an interesting clarification is necessary. This mode of contextualization of scientific knowledge, very present today in teachers' pedagogic practices, regardless of the subject taught, seems to be anchored in 19th century pestalozzian thought, which marked the methodological approach of German school system, as pointed by Zanatta (2005). According to this thought, teaching requires gradualism of knowledge—that is, the teacher should proceed gradually from particular cases to general ideas, from the concrete experience to rational thoughts, reaching abstract concepts. In order to do so, he or she should look for the study material in the context of the student's life.

The knowledge resulting from this translation, made with didactic transposition—which consists of a process of restructuring and reorganization of content through didactic mechanisms, pedagogical techniques, and strategies—is different from its origin, i.e., scientific knowledge (Mortimer 1997). The transposition changes the textual structure of scientific language to make it accessible to the student—that is, transforming it into a textbook, with its own language in which scientific concepts are rearranged in their systems (Lopes 1999). They are transformed into school content products to be consumed by students via their textbooks.

Mortimer (1997, 2010) argued that the didactic transposition seeks to establish a relation between scientific concepts, content, and the context of students' lives. The teacher displays everyday conceptions about the focused content, linking scientific concepts to it. A conceptual profile is then originated in order to demonstrate a way of seeing and representing the world, as well as using it in different contexts. Thus, reality can be understood from other perspectives. Says the author:

Being aware of a concept involves applying the scientific idea in contexts where it is appropriate, whether in practice or intellectual activity, and at the same time preserving ways of thinking and speaking which differ from scientific ways in situations that may be pragmatically appropriate. This is a coexistence between different ways of thinking and speaking (Mortimer 2010, p. 184).

School knowledge, therefore, results from the encounter of scientific knowledge and everyday life. It has another conceptual configuration. It is substantially different from reference science. One of the striking features of scientific knowledge lies in its systematization, in the logical relations between concepts and in their development through a methodical research activity (Dominguini 2008). Another peculiarity is that it is based on observation and experimentation, and it may lose its

validity when it is challenged (Sousa et al. 2008). This is where the second misconception lies: considering school knowledge as if it had the same origin, the same structure, and the same function of scientific knowledge.

During the schooling process, the concepts originating from scientific knowledge become the object of teaching. Therefore, there is a high risk that the historical context of the activities of scientists, as well as the size of scientists' analysis, observations, and conceptual correlations, will be lost (Dominguini 2008). The concepts that were originally scientific turn into unarticulated content that the teacher tries to relate to the events of everyday life, giving them a utilitarian, pragmatic character, in order to fulfill the gap between that knowledge and science. Thus, investigative possibilities that scientific concepts offer, with their complexity and systemic structure, are lost, leaving only the exercise of memory function. The school knowledge, said Lopes (1999), presents a body of concepts that are related to daily life and approach scientific knowledge, although scantily. Therefore, school knowledge is not a type of knowledge that accurately portrays science. The transposition of scientific concepts for the school context does not always characterize a conceptual error, despite the gap between this type of knowledge—often distorted—and that produced by the scientific community. Lopes (1999) also pointed out that in scientific activity, we seek the unknown and rectification of what is already known, whereas in school activities, the focus is on making knowledge teachable, which implies the tacit acceptance of full validity of scientific knowledge, without questioning it. At best, the student is only able to state a scientific concept.

From the empirical point of view, what has been said so far is corroborated by a survey conducted by Araújo (1992) on the understanding of concepts in chemistry by high school students. The researcher chose the concepts of substance, material, mixture, and solution in order to identify conceptual systems presented by 374 students. She described how students coordinated, supraordinated, and subordinated concepts when answering questions directed to them. In doing so, she identified 34 different conceptual systems for the concepts of substance and material and 24 for mixture and solution, and also other formulations that escape from the focus of this work.

The researcher also found that most students organized the set of concepts of substance and material with some systematization, albeit rudimentary—treating them, in various ways, in the form of scientific concepts. Among the various possibilities that the researcher presents to interpret the results is the idea that, in school activities, there is a connection between scientific language and everyday language, which could explain the wide range of conceptual systems identified.

In short, what has been presented so far allows us to delineate the conclusion that the school teaches a type of knowledge that is distinct from scientific knowledge in its structure and function. School concepts are actually a hybrid form of knowledge, resulting from the encounter of two other ways to operate conceptual thinking: the scientific and the everyday. Therefore, it would not be appropriate to assign school the role of propitiating the development of scientific thinking. At best, school would merely perform a preparatory function for the students' scientific initiation. However, this is an issue that should be examined in some detail and rigor, from both theoretical and empirical points of view.

We shall now consider the second issue proposed here, namely: is it reasonable to say that school is the only institution that has competence to teach what it teaches—that is, a hybrid knowledge resulting from the encounter between scientific knowledge and daily life? To answer that question, we will briefly examine a craft activity that has not been schooled and that has existed for over five thousand years, namely jewelry. This activity began with the manufacture of utilitarian objects, weapons, and ornaments using copper, bronze, gold, and silver, associated with precious stones, according to the culture and time period.

A Look at the History of Jewelry

Archaeological artifacts indicate that, in the Neolithic period, there was the manufacture of weapons, tools, and ornaments with tougher materials, such as copper and gold. The age of metals was characterized by the manufacture of metal tools and weapons (Gola 2008).

As a casting technique arose, although still rudimentary, it was possible to create tools for agricultural cultivation, hunting, and manufacture of weapons. Initially, the raw materials were copper, tin, and, later, bronze (copper alloy with tin). In many civilizations such as the Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Etruscan, Persian, Scythian, Greek, and Roman, gold was associated with the sun and valued for its color and luster, and for the fact that it did not oxidize. Because of its softness and malleability, it was widely used in creating ornaments with or without gemstones associated (Gola 2008). Around 2000 B.C., the skills necessary to model gold by fusion or welding had already been developed. A fast growth of the granulation technique, which consists of forming a pattern with tiny metal balls, giving the piece a rustic and primitive appearance, took place:

The combination of colored stones with gold became popular in Egypt and Mesopotamia. [...] The Phoenician style put in evidence the granulation process and other decorative techniques, and spread around the Mediterranean, in the area that nowadays corresponds to the region from Syria to Spain. The Etruscan jewelry, best known for meticulous work and perfect granulation, owes much to the Phoenicians, who spread and aggregated other influences which they got to know in their travels. Among these influences, we should mention the motifs of animals from the Russian steppes (to where Scythians migrated), from Turkey and Persia, the ornaments such as bracelets with floral motifs, or even the Celtic style, which would be a source of inspiration for Art Nouveau more than 2000 years later (Gola 2008, pp. 32 and 33).

Over the centuries, ornamental pieces and jewelry were increasingly elaborate. Techniques such as filigree, the setting of colored stones—especially lapis lazuli, turquoise, carnelian, emeralds, sapphires, and pearls—were improved. There were rings, earrings, tiaras, necklaces, pins, bracelets, vases, and jugs created (Gola 2008).

The work of European goldsmiths, according to Gola (2008), had great oriental influence. The stoning technique went through transformations: the method of

carving gemstones was left behind and replaced by the technique of faceting stones. In the Middle Ages, the preferred stones in Europe were sapphires, rubies, emeralds, and diamonds. During the Renaissance, art pieces had religious motifs and were spiked with diamonds. The sixteenth century introduced an innovation in the techniques and in the aesthetic of jewelry: the shape of stones and the theme of creations, botany, and floriculture. In the 17th century, the art of jewelry focused on the improvement of techniques, which aimed at cutting the stones in a way that would promote light refraction. In the following centuries, there was not a well-defined trend in Europe, for jewelry followed intellectual, cultural, and religious tendencies.

With the Industrial Revolution and the consequent development of machines for mass production and techniques for gold plating in decorative pieces, assembly lines pushed the singularity of jewels into the background. As a consequence, goldsmithing went through some changes. Nevertheless, as a handcrafting activity, it resisted the industrial model, for some techniques and abilities cannot be replaced by machines. Besides crafting exclusive jewelry and customized replicas, and also fixing many types of jewels, goldsmiths could find work inside industries by means of outsourcing (Andrade 2008). At the same time, the schooling of goldsmithing led to a new occupation called “jewel designer,” who, by designing and crafting artistic works, provided the market with exclusive products.

Goldsmithing and Conceptual Thinking

To investigate the ways of thinking involved in goldsmithing, two goldsmiths were interviewed about their work. Also, their activities were observed *in loco*. According to the information they provided, neither of them finished basic school, and both learned the occupation as teenagers from an experienced goldsmith. They have worked as goldsmiths for approximately 34 years.

Many observations and interviews were carried out with each one, separately, amounting to 18 h and 50 min of conversation and observation (10 h and 40 min for goldsmith A and 8 h and 10 min for goldsmith B). The interviews were carried out in their workshops. There was not a pre-established question script. They worked in different workshops, so the researcher approached each of them, introduced herself, provided information on her intended work, and asked them if they wished to cooperate. Having their acceptance, the researcher scheduled an appointment with each one and presented questions that any person interested in goldsmithing would ask. The researcher tried to keep dialogue going on all the time and oriented the goldsmiths as to provide the most detailed information they could.

Both of them said that the goldsmith must study each piece of jewel to be created and plan his work strategies, for there is not any type of standardization or automation of the activity. They are oriented by the jewel design and not by the technique itself. While working, goldsmiths manipulate materials and substances

whose properties they are aware of. Besides that, they must decide which metal alloy will be necessary for crafting the desired jewel.

According to their speeches, the learning of goldsmithing takes place in a direct relationship between master and apprentice, while the activity is performed. There are no requirements for starting learning, nor a stipulated time period to determine whether the apprentice is apt to be an autonomous goldsmith. Goldsmith B mentioned that one of the criteria he uses to check whether the apprentice is ready to work on his own is to ask the apprentice to weld a chain as thin as a thread. If the welding is invisible, the apprentice is ready to be a goldsmith.

According to the interviewed goldsmiths, the relationship between master and apprentice occurs as following: after receiving an order, the master invites the apprentice to follow the work. In the workshop, they evaluate together each step of the crafting of the jewel. As the apprentice develops his skills, the master assigns him tasks related to the jewel being crafted. Those tasks are “for real”: welding, plating, purification, cleaning, burnishing, repairing, and eventual changes. If anything unexpected happens—that is, if one of them makes a mistake (which is more likely from the apprentice)—the work is undone and the step is repeated. In other words, the master does not fear the mistake to the point of making the learning process artificial by using simulations. The apprentice’s mistakes are seen as part of the activity and they can be corrected. A closer look at that aspect of the master–apprentice relation in goldsmithing is not the purpose of this text, but it is worth to point out that such an aspect is very interesting and certainly leads to important consequences in the learning process and in the relationship between the apprentice and his occupation.

After the interviews and the observations, the obtained information was organized in a conceptual map, so that the researcher could identify, with some precision, the links between the concepts used by the two goldsmiths.

Conceptual maps were developed by Novak in 1972 at Cornell University, USA, as a part of a research program based on Ausubel’s learning psychology.¹ They aimed at understanding the changes that occurred in the way children understand science. While they observed those children, Novak and his peers had difficulties in identifying some specific changes that had taken place in the children’s process of understanding scientific concepts. As the researchers examined transcribed interviews, they listed the concepts presented by the children. Because it was necessary to represent the children’s understanding, researchers decided to organize the concepts and draw a diagram to represent how those concepts were related. As it was tested in research, the conceptual map was changed so that it could be used by teachers and students in teaching and learning. It is a graphic tool that makes it possible to organize and represent knowledge using meaning. It emphasizes meanings that have been assigned to concepts, as well as the links between them in

¹David Ausubel, an American educational psychologist born in 1918. His theory of learning aims to facilitate student learning. For him, it is in the process of meaningful learning that the logical meaning of the learning material becomes psychologically meaningful to the learner (Moreira 1999).

the context of a body of knowledge. The most general concepts are placed on the top and the most specific are placed below, hierarchically. The displayed concepts are linked by sentences or words that demonstrate how they are related in that field of knowledge (Novak and Cañas 2010).

After the first version of the conceptual map was built, with all obtained information, it was verified by the two goldsmiths and adapted according to their suggestions. Having a final version, the researcher started evaluating it intensively, trying to identify how the goldsmiths' thinking operated.

The most evident aspect presented in the conceptual maps is the complexity of the goldsmithing activity. When performing it, goldsmiths must link, in various ways and using various criteria, a plethora of procedures, operations, concepts, and results. Also, the conceptual maps, although unique, do not present any contradictions as they are compared. On the contrary, there are many similarities, which indicate the precision of the goldsmiths' descriptions. Finally, we noticed clusters of conceptual organization systems, with logically coordinated, subordinated, and supraordinated concepts, although the criteria used for that organization were described by the goldsmiths only as a part of their occupation and not as a part of science. That is the case of the clusters presented in Figs. 1 and 2, which were extracted, respectively, from conceptual maps of goldsmiths A and B.

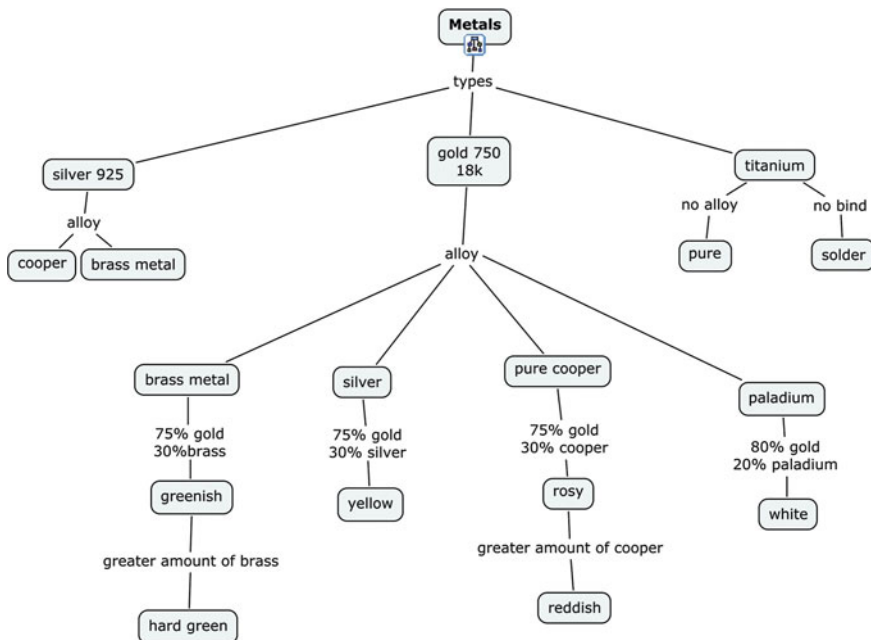


Fig. 1 Cluster extracted from the conceptual map of goldsmith A, related to the supraordered concept of “metal.”

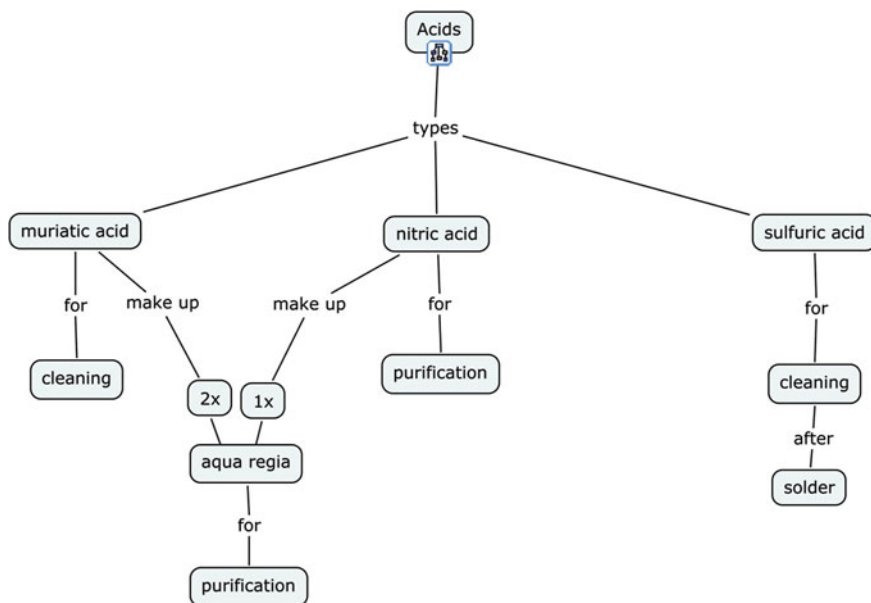


Fig. 2 Cluster extracted from the conceptual map of goldsmith B, related to the supraordered concept of “acid.”

In Fig. 1, there is the specification of silver, gold, and titanium as types of metals, but the criteria used for that specification is not presented. Then, the goldsmith narrows it down to the type of substance (silver, copper, or palladium) or material (brass)—without making a distinction—that can form an alloy with those three metals. Thus, they take into consideration the observable property that results from the mixture of those substances. In other words, the question “Is this a conceptual system?” should be answered affirmatively, for one can identify logical relationships of coordination and subordination between concepts. However, the question “Is this a conceptual system that belongs to Chemistry?” should be answered negatively, in spite of the fact that the system contains concepts that come from that science and the goldsmith did not say anything wrong about them. Why, then, it is not a scientific conceptual system? Because, when specifying the criteria, it does not demonstrate the universality that chemistry has. In a nutshell, it is a well-elaborated conceptual system that does not present mistakes from a scientific point of view; however, if it had the universality of chemistry, it would be useless for goldsmithing.

Figure 2 illustrates another cluster from a conceptual system, extracted from the map of goldsmith B. It presents, at the top, the concept of “acid.” Some acid types are immediately subordinated to that concept. Those acid types differ among themselves by their function in goldsmithing. The difference this cluster and the one presented in Fig. 1 is this third level. In Fig. 1, the criteria used in this level are observable properties, whereas in Fig. 2 the criteria are related to the function of the acid.

Conclusion

In contemporary society, the idea that the teaching of scientific knowledge belongs to school is tacitly accepted. This attitude seems to be related to the overvaluing of science and the consequent undervaluing of everything that comes from everyday life, which is characterized by pragmatism, automation, and alienation. Heller (1994, 2004), for example, considered that everyday thinking relates to fragmented ideas and socially oriented judgments, guided by probabilistic orientation and by stereotypes. To Heller, science and art would have the role of suspending everyday life.

However, as we sought to demonstrate herein, school does not seem to be the one and only source of the development of thinking through scientific concepts. School spreads, in fact, a hybrid knowledge that is originated, in part, from science, and in part from everyday experiences. Even in that case, the supremacy assigned to school for transmitting scientific knowledge would be justified only if school was the unique access a student could find to that type of knowledge.

However, we demonstrated that goldsmithing—and certainly there are many other activities with the same characteristic—puts forward something very similar to what schools do, creating conditions for the emerging of a hybrid knowledge that results from the merging of scientific knowledge with the specific knowledge that comes from goldsmithing itself.

In the 1970s, Illich (1973) already called our attention to the following:

School sells curriculum – a bundle of goods made according to the same process and having the same structure as other merchandise. Curriculum production for most schools begins with allegedly scientific research, on whose basis educational engineers predict future demand and tools for the assembly line, within the limits set by budgets and taboos. The distributor-teacher delivers the finished product to the consumer pupil, whose reactions are carefully studied and charted to provide research data for the preparation of the next model, which may be “ungraded,” “student-designed,” “team-taught,” “visually-aided,” or “issue-centered (p. 78).

Thus, school supremacy, even as a preparatory step for scientific thinking, seems to be justified only from an ideological point of view. Because it is a way of social control of learning, as Tunes and Bartholo (2006) pointed out, school is essential for the maintenance of the ideologies of consumption and progress. The most radical symptom of that fact is the marked schooling that takes place nowadays and is clearly noticeable in the mistaken idea that the longer a person stays at school, the better are their learning results.

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Learning at the Family–School Boundary: When New Roles and Identities Are Created

Ana Cecília de Sousa Bastos and Delma Barros Filho

How are educational processes defined at the family–school boundary, from the viewpoint of the family? It is cliché to claim that the family–school relationship mirrors more general social tendencies, originating far beyond that particular microcosm. Still, when it comes to educating new generations, there are certain particularities to be taken into account to better understand the obstacles to effective communication between the two more important partners.

This chapter analyzes the relationship between *family* and *school* from the standpoint of educational processes happening within the family context. We assume here a broader conception of educational processes, understanding that education is a kind of intervention not necessarily structured in an intentional way; on the contrary, it includes activities developed along diverse contexts: family, school, and neighborhood. This perspective is important in that, as far as human everyday life is organized through such distinct ways, in time and through diverse social groups, it is necessary to look at the different configurations that orient what can be called pedagogy. Better comprehension will come from approaches not limited to the mainstream thinking of educational processes, or as normally happens, to a set of goals and methodologies of a particular school.

In this sense, also diverse are the examples of informal learning. When a child follows his or her parent to work, in or outside the house, the child can acquire specific skills through observation and imitation; likewise, an adult can learn, through observation and just a few instructions, to perform quite complicated tasks, such as driving a car. Observation and imitation, usually related to working tasks, have been the most relevant strategies for illiterate persons (children, adolescents, and adults) to learn their jobs, in the everyday context of families living in poverty.

However, informal learning is not enough in the modern scenario. The increasing demands related to education and the labor market strongly require that

A.C. de Sousa Bastos (✉)

Federal University of Bahia/Catholic University of Salvador, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil

e-mail: anaceciliabastos@gmail.com

D.B. Filho

Federal University of Bahia, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil

e-mail: delmab@gmail.com

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imitation and observation strategies be replaced by structured and intentional instruction. The changes made in Brazilian laws on education are a well-settled example of the increasing influence of school on family—for instance, the recent law¹ obliging parents to register 4-year-old children (before the law, elementary school was mandatory from year 7 on). In the measure that the sphere of influence of school on family life is amplified, school affirms itself as the primary agent in the process of disseminating literate culture, entitled to formulate what is considered adequate and desired for human development at the early stages of the life course.

Brazilian society is strongly marked by differentiated degrees of development and by a strong inequality based on social class. Thus, Brazilian society experiences, on one hand, the centrality of formal schooling. On the other hand, mainly in the everyday context of families living in poverty, is the persistence of the principle of education through work; this, as argued later, has different meanings and goals, representing a strategy to increase chances of social insertion and, simultaneously, to prevent delinquency.

Brazilian illiterate and minimally literate adults who did not attend school are able to actively and efficiently arrange and guarantee formal schooling for their children, taking advantage of every opportunity offered at the formal level of the public educational system or that of the informal social network. To analyze the connections between these two aspects, we consider here the meanings constructed by parents living in poor neighborhoods of Salvador, Bahia, related to the goal of guaranteeing better education for their children. Our data come from different studies, carried out at various points in time, based on in-depth interviews (Bastos et al. 2003; Bastos and Rabinovich 2014) and focus groups (Abbey and Bastos 2014; Bastos et al. 2007). These studies have in common a focus on ideas and practices related to childrearing. This chapter considers transcripts that present narratives about schooling from the standpoint of the family.

Our main goal is to display a scene to better explore the thinking on the boundaries between education and development, focusing on school as seen by poor families in Salvador, Bahia. To the degree that important parts of educational processes happen in informal spaces—in the household, in particular—it is necessary to put the spotlight on the experience of families living in poverty and their efforts to overcome the gap preventing their children from enjoying full access to the range of educational tools available to humanity in contemporary times.

Even illiterate or quasi-illiterate parents have proved themselves capable of reading the demands of a complex society concerning the educational skills needed to live and work. They are very effective at drawing strategies to maximize their children's chances to overcome obstacles—crossing boundaries—which have been chronically and historically rigid and impermeable. The history of Brazil has witnessed a meaningful effort by the recent governments to make education accessible, at all levels, to more and more youngsters. For instance, affirmative action policies, which did not previously exist in Brazilian society, have been created in response to

¹Law n° 12.796, April, 4th, 2013.

a long struggle by minorities and social movements since the 1960s toward a more equalitarian society (Moehlecke 2002). From the parent's perspective, "reading" codes that belong to a literate world is made possible in the space between different, contrasting worlds and eras. Brazilian society encompasses very modern urban poles, between full access to science-based resources and sophisticated technology, and immense areas where the way of life can be compared to the end of the nineteenth century in the so-called first world.

In parallel to this blatant social inequality, Brazilian people have been able to create and develop cultural tools, dealing in a very resilient way with chronic adversity and taking advantage of opportunities when they appear. We propose, here, that the ability to read codes belonging to a literate, science-based, and technological world entails what Barros-Filho, following ideas developed by the authors of literacy studies (who have as their starting point Brian Street's 1985 book *Literacy in Theory and Practice*), analyzed as a standard that is literate in its orality—accomplished to the extent that these parents, even without completing the formal cycles of schooling, engage in everyday activities in a literate society whose rules and signs are pervasive and powerful (Marinho and Carvalho 2010; Barros-Filho 2012). This idea, presented here as a tentative analogy, is a useful tool to analyze phenomena occurring at the borders of family, school, and contemporary society.

The notion of border (Marsico 2013; Marsico and Iannaccone 2012) expands the analysis of what emerges in this in-between space, inviting one to go deeper in taking into account the heterogeneities and complexities of schooling trajectories drawn by parents and children in such a context. As Barros-Filho et al. (2013) pointed out, the notion of borders is appropriate to explain the forms of relations that people establish with their society's schooling process— and, for parents, with their children's schooling process:

On the one hand, we know that schooling institutions organize their activities aiming to modify, in a determined manner, the students that become immersed and continue in their progressive cycles. By this approach, homogeneity is indicated as a component of the process. On the other hand, when we focus on the personal modes of appropriation of the collective experience enabled by the schooling process, what is evident is the notion of heterogeneity (2013, p. 171).

The school as seen by Brazilian families living in poverty

To identify some of the culturally structured mechanisms through which the child increasingly participates in family life and becomes a co-responsible member, when developing activities connected with the collective organization of daily life, we carried out an ethnographical study over one year (Bastos et al. 2003; Bastos 2009). We analyzed not only the context of interactions in which this insertion is promoted but also parents' ideas on children's upbringing. The cultural values expressed by the parents' justifications that promote or restrain the child's participation in family life are important dimensions of the developmental context. The research participants were ten families, diverse according to family structure. This analysis focuses on the mothers' narratives on family expectations and experiences related to school.

We describe below complexes of meanings related to school as identified in the narratives. These findings reunite intriguing elements to discuss the fluid boundaries between diverse, heterogeneous, and parallel educational systems. Through each category of complexes of meanings, we stress, together with their own ideas and representations, the strategies created by parents.

The complexes of meanings to be discussed, always built from the parent's standpoint, and through the diverse studies considered here, are:

- (a) The school as a channel for social mobility
- (b) Schooling in-between family and work
- (c) Representations of school: an ally, a stranger (an outsider), a traitor?
- (d) Educational and occupational opportunities emerging for the parents themselves when creating strategies to guarantee school education for their children.

The School as a Channel for Social Mobility

For Rosa (52 years old at the time of the interview), the goal of guaranteeing all of her five children opportunities to complete elementary education was the impetus for many decisions made by the family over the years. At the time of the interview, all the children had completed high school, and the grandchildren attended private schools in the neighborhood (considered by Rosa to provide better education than the public ones). A better education is seen as being related to better job opportunities and better salaries; therefore, it is taken as a channel for social ascension/mobility.

The educational project arranged by Rosa and her husband, Gilberto, is developed for the projected future, and the entire family coordinates efforts to make it real. "We are together (*A gente é tudo junto*)" is how Rosa defines her family, very much in tune with the model of shared identity described by Nicolaci-da-Costa (1989) and with the metaphor of "family as a network" for poor families (Telles 1990). Here, only the fulfillment of obligations toward the family and the adhesion to reciprocity rules ascribe an identity to the individual.

The high valuation of children's education is part of the family project toward social ascension, is stressed as a central goal along family life, and was the reason for major changes, such as moving to a big city:

I wanted very, very much to see my children attending college and graduated. This dream made me crazy, to see my child getting prepared to enter college. (...) I came here [to Salvador] mostly because of their studies. I bought this house here because of my dream to move to Salvador so that my children could study. I wanted them at school.

Rosa is almost illiterate: she has very basic reading and writing skills. There were no schools in her hometown, and her parents believed that a woman did not need to study. She regrets this, and she actually made some plans to go to school when she moved to Salvador; however, the children did not encourage her, arguing she did not need to study any more, that her life was already settled. She complains:

“They would be embarrassed seeing me at the same schools with them—even if I would have attended classes at night, different from them.”

She can understand her parents’ attitude because of the limitations of their social context at the time she was a child, but she shows some resentment toward her children:

This is because I didn’t have [schooling], then I wanted for my children something I didn’t have. Yeah... because my mother was poor and lived in the countryside, we were brought up, born and brought up, in the countryside, do you see? There was a small school where I lived but people were illiterate, ignorant. They thought the boys were supposed to study, but not the girls, as they only would use the study to write letters to boyfriends.

“When I came here, I wanted like crazy to go to school. I think my children were afraid I would embarrass them. I said: ““Son, I’m going to attend school””, and He: ““No, mother, what for?!”” I didn’t study then because of the children, they saying no, no, no I. Now I say, ““Today I need, you didn’t let me to go to school.””

About her grandchildren, some of whom live with her, Rosa considers that education has changed very much, in part because of television, which works against good manners. School has changed as well, but *“the family continues”*:

We only see crimes on TV; only bad things. TV only shows bad things for children to learn. This is a big problem. However, there are people living their everyday life, this counts. There is that trust in family, this family experience when each one is there for the other. This good news you don’t see on TV.

She thinks that it is also more difficult to engage children in work, and she holds strong criticism toward the school, which is worse now:

The studies are not the same as they used to be. I’m not sure if the children learn more today, comparing to the old days. You see the books— we were careful to keep them in good shape, so that the younger brothers could use them again. Today is different. They are reckless from the beginning. If you send the boy to the school, the next year the younger boy can’t use the books any more. They are just thrown away; they aren’t of use to study anymore.

Schooling in-Between Family and Work

As much she participates strongly in her grandchildren’s education, like many grandparents from poor families in Brazil, Rosa tries to teach them her educational principles. Rosa makes them work in the house and in the small convenience store the family keeps next to the house, where all the family members work together. This is the dream of family for Rosa, a place where working and living define each other: to live is to work; in other words, for poor people, working is the only way to be integrated to the social system.

Rosa and her children are partners for life—in their small shop and in every household task, from building the house to chores. Rosa—*“to whom God gave wisdom, even being illiterate”*—planned family life and organization, based on

educational strategies where work is central. Working continuously and intensely, from the early years, is, for her, the safest way to instill responsibility in the children:

My children have always worked. Ah! Ever since they were small, each one had something to do; this was his or her responsibility. When I got married and had babies, my husband working and travelling a lot. It was a hard life. My children were brought up working. Everybody worked. I fought bravely, with my own nails and teeth, to bring my children up. Thank God nobody died starving.

Rosa's children, boys and girls, could do everything around the house, including cleaning and cooking. She approves of men sharing household chores, as much as it converges with the idea that everyone should know how to do things in general. She believes that it is necessary to be a winner. However, she defines a difference between boys and girls. For girls, household work is obligatory, while the boys are expected to begin earlier, helping in the family business (selling a variety of goods). The boys begin to work in the family business at 10 years old, at first offering the goods in the neighborhood, and later, in the small store.

While sharing household chores and selling, the children are taught to master the principles of work organization (they were like a team and the mother was the coach); they were trained in the basic skills of reasoning, reading, and calculating. According to Rosa, they also developed initiative, autonomy, and a sense of responsibility. So, even without compulsory education, Rosa was able to develop tasks that include calculating and reading. These kinds of behaviors reflect what we assume here as a standard that is literate in its orality, as Rosa has not mastered the symbolic writing system (Barros-Filho et al. 2013).

The logic of socialization through work, which has worked for the previous generation, seems to have broken down, somehow, in the last decade: new public policies have been implemented, oriented mainly to prevent early child labor, for the protection of children's and adolescents' rights. In parallel with some very important results—among which is the significantly increasing number of children at school—there is still much work to do concerning dialog with the family who may feel lost about how to raise children. Of course, cultural practices that entail work around the household—domestic chores, participation in family initiatives that generate income—continue to involve children's participation from early age. These practices by themselves, no doubt, have a relevant impact on the cognitive development of children; besides the above-mentioned basic skills of reasoning, reading and numeracy, the acquisition of concepts of family, family roles, and principles of distributive justice (Bastos et al. 2003). The representation of schooling as the central activity for children, however, has been strengthened (see Lordelo, this volume).

Last, but not least, parents intentionally promote the engagement of children in all these activities, having in mind their pedagogical meaning. This was demonstrated by Bastos (2001), when she found that the most expressive group of justifications (30.3 %) given by parents to promote (or restrict) children's engagement in work (in and outside the household) were pedagogical in nature. Besides that, the

parents consistently directed children’s skills and inclinations toward a utilitarian goal related to work. This tendency reflects the centrality of work as a criterion for organizing family routines in Brazil, as was already observed by some classic socioanthropological studies on family (Bilac 1978; Arroyo 1991). Thus, it is no wonder that value attributed to a skill displayed by the child depends on how much this skill can be adapted to generate resources for the family—a quite interdependent system. An example is when Lourdes (a 35-year-old mother), evaluated her son Lázaro’s (16 years old) skills in painting and sculpture:

He has those silly ideas about making art stuff... He makes a few things, paints pictures. I hope he at least does something useful... to use it to get employed in something, right?

Another example is Dilza (a 45-year-old mother), who, observing how skilled her daughter Tiane (9 years old) was in drawing, had her produce drawings to use in plaster models to be sold in the neighborhood.

These practices are developed at the frontiers between the house and the street, the private and public spaces, but also between learning and family subsistence needs. In any condition, children’s actions appear to be directly oriented by the adult’s action. The constraints around children’s participation, from the parents’ viewpoint, were seen, in the same study, more through a narrow dependence on available resources than on the complexity of the task itself. When material resources are scarce and hard to obtain, considering the time and work involved, it is up to the more competent person to manage them. In the same direction, money is primarily an adult issue.

Representations of School: An Ally, a Stranger (an Outsider), a Traitor?

The trends depicted in the sections above coexist with new ways of thinking regarding children’s education, which, in their turn, emerge to the degree that new educational and social policies offer new opportunities to families living in poverty. Through all the studies given here as examples, we can see, along the in-depth interviews and group discussions, how the parents (especially the mothers) optimize all the opportunities they find to guarantee their children’s school education. Of course, generalization to the whole demographic requires a complete set of diversified analysis; hardly would a family living below the poverty line participate in a focus group or receive the researcher in their house. However, the qualitative approach used in our studies facilitates seeing beyond a superficial characterization, making explicit the reasoning beyond a parent’s decisions concerning childrearing and schooling. More importantly, we can say that parents, even when illiterate or semi-illiterate, are very effective in thinking strategically to do whatever they can to guarantee that their children achieve the highest educational level possible. Contemporary Brazil watches, for the first time in its history, the entry into college of youngsters coming from poor families. This possibility is created by the

implementation of affirmative action, articulated to children and adolescents being able to spend more time at the elementary levels of education without dropping out. Social policies, like the *Bolsa-Familia*, contribute to improve the index of number of years in school (Campello and Neri 2013). *Bolsa-Familia (Family Grant)*, a conditional cash transfer program founded in 2003, has had a positive effect on the health and education of Brazil's poor children.²

Beside the family context, new characters accompany that sole book seen in many houses—placed with caring, important among other objects, but conveying a differentiated value: televisions, computers, cell phones. The internet is becoming common in poor neighborhoods. Given our still quasi-collectivist, interdependent societal style, children and adolescents have access to these resources: when they do not have them yet at home, they can go to neighbor's residences or to "Lan houses" (it is the English that is used) to navigate the internet, play games, join social networks such as Facebook (in Brazil, there are millions of members) and Twitter, and more. The parents, here, follow the children, who quickly master the skills to manage informatics tools and bridge their parent's access.

A very typical example comes from a case study still being carried out by Rabinovich and Bastos (2015): Maisa (40 years old) and Jorge (42 years old) carefully plan the education of their only child (Bruna, 13 years old), keeping in mind the distant future. They registered her in a private school and paid for her first five school years. Then, after her parents' decision, she moved to a public school so that she would be entitled to benefit from affirmative action when reaching college age. The money they would have spent on school was redirected to pay for English classes, as the parents know very well that mastering this language has become important in Brazil for higher educational courses and also to get better jobs later. The parents also invested in a computer and installed the internet in the house. Maisa and Jorge did not have many years at school in their childhood, as they started to work—dropping out of school—when adolescents. After getting married and having Bruna, they took turns going back to school, attending classes at night after work. After a decade, they completed the second elementary cycle, equivalent to US high school. For a while, the mother and daughter had the same educational level. When it comes to mastering the internet and computer, it is Bruna who teaches her parents. Similar strategies were used by parents with lower educational levels, who barely could write their name, yet could interpret the ongoing tendencies in the world where their children live.

²A World Bank report stated that "the chances of a 15 year old girl being in school have increased by 21 %. Children and families are better prepared to study and seize opportunities with more prenatal care visits, immunization coverage and reduced child mortality. Poverty invariably casts a long shadow on the next generation, but these results leave no doubt that BF has improved the prospects for generations of children". Wetzell, Deborah. *Bolsa Família: Brazil's Quiet Revolution*. Retrieved from <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/opinion/2013/11/04/bolsa-familia-Brazil-quiet-revolution>; March, 5, 2015.

Are these new trends changing the representation of school for the parents? The information level (if not quality) is improving, as is access to computers as educational tools. What is the school for the parents? An ally? A stranger? A traitor?

It can be said that the new cultural tools might have some impact in empowering the parents confronting school. Urie Bronfenbrenner already commented on research in the field of family–school interactions, stressing the changes in the balance of power between the two institutions, which depend mainly on the educational level of the parents (Goodnow 1996). More formally educated parents, with more access to information, are better able to understand and question the decisions made by the school staff. Brazilian parents living in poverty are learning more and more to dialog with the other world that school represents—and this other world is many times authoritarian, built according to middle-class standards and unable to listen and consider the cultural universe of poor families. Some examples to illustrate this point are presented by Bastos et al. (2003).

Throughout the interviews, problems such as teachers' frequent and unjustified absence, not sending homework, lack of interest in the student, and the excessive number of students in the room, were repeatedly identified by the parents. Eight-year-old Emerson's mother, Maria (30 years old), expressed her disappointment with the school as unable to properly evaluate her child's progress in reading—he was considered is not be able to read yet by the teacher, while he was able to read when at home (as the researcher herself witnessed):

At the time he's doing his homework with a tutor's help, he knows things (...), but at school the teacher says he doesn't know anything. I was even looking for another school for him, but with this salary ... and me unemployed, it is impossible. I can't even move him to another school. It has to stay the same. I went there (the school). Also, when I entered the classroom, the teacher with so many students there, I don't think she has a concern to give attention to one student in particular. She doesn't know Emerson.

Other parents (Paulo, Maria Lucia, Maria) were seen seeking explanations for the learning difficulties of children, following the trends present in the wider cultural context to resolve through medical treatment any deviant behavior of the children. When they cannot find answers to their concerns, after the school or the doctor, they resort to an informal support network (relatives, neighbors, religious groups and, circumstantially, the interviewers themselves). They could make very explicit the connection between childrearing ideas related to education and practices promoted at home. Thus, Nivaldo (8 years old) had the following arrangement, carefully supervised by Isabel (29 years old), his mother:

Isabel's ideas and practices:

Idea: Valuing the improvement of performance in mathematics and maintenance of good grades in school.

Practice: Attending tutoring program for assisted homework.

Idea: Education opportunities should be conquered by merit and dedication to the study.

Practices: Is repeatedly warned by her mother that he will go to public school if he fails on the current private school.

She encourages appropriate and regular study habits, in order to develop discipline and organization. So he is supposed to do homework at proper occasions, always in the same

place - the table where the family eats - before switching on the TV, and supervised by his mother.

Idea: Strong and early emphasis on independence and autonomy.

Practices: Fix school uniform and school backpack; dressing and bathing alone (this, since he was 2 years old); to pack and store personal effects after use.

Under all circumstances, our studies showed that schooling is a high priority compared with any other type of activity in the domestic sphere; this is evident from interviews and group discussions, and from field observation of everyday family interactions (Bastos et al. 2003, 2007). Only when the child continued school failures and help was not available in the family or at the school, or under severe economic hardness, did the parents consider sending the child to learn a craft as an alternative that, if successful, was equally valued.

We may consider that the school is mainly perceived as an ally, but also as a stranger whose universe requires substantial effort to decipher. Sometimes, the school seems to be perceived as a traitor, unable to empathically understand and contextualize the immense effort made by the parents to guarantee the best education possible to their children. The increase of urban violence has become a serious factor complicating the school–family relationship. The expression used by Neves (2014) to analyze this relationship is very appropriate: according to the parents, “the school has become dangerous.” It is not out of reach of urban conflicts. It can happen that the children have to deal with a shooting on their way to school. There is drug trafficking inside the school. The teachers, on their end, are scared of students’ aggressive behaviors.

Educational and Occupational Opportunities Emerging for the Parents Themselves When Creating Strategies to Guarantee School Education for Their Children

The last complex of meanings commented on here is quite interesting, documenting how the movement through boundaries effectively represents an opportunity for the emergence of psychological and social novelties (Marsico et al. 2013). The engagement in promoting school education to their children made the parents improve their own educational level. This was mentioned before in the example of Maisa and Jorge, who went back to school, were motivated by the desire to better follow their daughter’s school progress, and who are mastering internet skills with her help.

Abbey and Bastos (2014) reported the case of Maria José, whose son had a learning disability and there was no external support for him. He was unable to learn at school, and the teachers concluded that he could not be educated. Rather than accept this claim, Maria envisioned an alternate idea. Maria says, “*She* [the teacher] *doesn’t know how to teach him.*” Repositioning the difficulty with the teacher and not her son, Maria sought professional advice and participated in

professional programs in order to be able to promote her son’s development: “*Every speech I heard about, I was there.*” Maria, who eventually became a teacher to take care of her developmentally delayed son, became so skilled that she got a job in the same specialized school her son currently attends.

In an even broader sense, a very instructive example was found in the focus groups conducted over a year by Bastos et al. (2007)—not only regarding the episode itself, but for the potential of change in the quality of positioning and empowerment of the parents in the face of school. A painful episode of racism occurred against a 13-year-old girl by the teacher, as reported by her mother during one of the group sessions:

Elizabeth (around 35 years old) recounts a recent episode when her 13-year-old daughter was called by the teacher, from a public school in the neighborhood, “smelly” and a “nigger with hard hair.” When told about this fact by the daughter, Elizabeth went to the school to make a complaint to the principal. What she got as an answer from the principal was: “Has the teacher said some lie?” Elizabeth was very disappointed and felt helpless, thinking of giving up, feeling that she had no one standing up for her and her daughter.

As the group was discussing the theme of racism, she decided to share her story, after some hesitation. Listening to this story, several mothers told her to file a complaint and go to juvenile court. The researcher suggested the prosecutor. Others said, “*Don’t bother,*” as they felt also helpless. But, in general, the group as a whole encouraged her to not give up, informed her about her rights, and reaffirmed that racism is a crime. The episode generated a very good discussion, where the parents shared their perception about racism in their everyday lives, as perpetrated by both outsiders and insiders. Some participants talked about the values and richness of Black culture and Black people in Bahia (the most African state in Brazil). Finally, Elizabeth felt encouraged to share what her daughter had done: after watching a television show about racial discrimination and accusations of racism, she did some research and wrote a letter to the teacher talking about the value that the Negro has in the history of Brazil.

Final Remarks

How are educational processes defined at the boundary between family and school, from the viewpoint of the family? That question was formulated to direct and encompass the discussion presented in this chapter, which is based on studies carried out at different points in time, while keeping the focus on the everyday experience of Brazilian families in poor neighborhoods. The choice of cases and episodes for discussion was driven by the goal of demonstrating parents’ effective actions in arranging and supporting their children’s schooling processes; they do not represent the whole picture of the family–school relationship in Brazil, or even for the poor.

At the beginning, we assumed a broader definition of educational processes, understanding education as a kind of intervention that is not necessarily structured in an intentional, formal way; it entails diverse activities (e.g., family work in the domain of the household) developed throughout diverse contexts: family, school, and neighborhood. In accord with our perspective, this approach permits an

examination of the different configurations that orient a whole system, which can be called pedagogy. Any conclusions we present here should be based on this comprehension.

The way by which the parents in this chapter have dealt with their children's schooling processes demonstrates that some of the parents, almost illiterate or illiterate, represent well the phenomenon of *illiterates in a literate society* (Oliveira 1992): people who live in schooled and industrialized cities without have completely mastered, themselves, the symbolic writing system.

The literacy-related issues introduced by the examples presented suggest that the parents create cultural tools to mediate their insertion in a literate society—not only through the development of their own labor activities (because they are economically active adults living in a literate society), but also, and above all, through the tasks related to the rearing of children (and grandchildren). The activity of raising children in a literate society entails specific challenges to which the parents must respond. Here, we have a quite interesting demonstration of the emergence of psychological and social novelties at the family–school boundary and, in particular, at the boundary between the illiterate person and literate society. The engagement in promoting school education to their children made the parents improve their own educational level—be it through a systematic return to school to complete one more levels of school education or by accessing more information and using such available devices as the internet—which requires mastery of, on some level, reading skills.

As a general conclusion, it can be said that the issues related to literacy, through their children, worked as a lever to the parents' own literacy. This impact is rather more differentiated than linear, and it is evident through different domains of everyday family life. The parents implemented effective strategies to support schooling and plan educational trajectories, maximizing their children's chances of crossing schooling processes in a system that only eventually is sensitive to their cultural reality.

For the parents themselves, besides the already-considered impact on their own education and access to information, a relevant consequence implies changes in the affective field, modifying their perspective on their own life course and amplifying their potential for empowerment. In both examples, psychology novelty emerges. Rosa reflects and reconfigures her feelings and perceptions related to her children's objection to her chances to have returned to school in the past. A parent searches for specialized information about the difficulties and dilemmas experienced by children in the school context—learning problems, special needs. In the episode of racial discrimination, new possibilities of a political positioning emerge for Elizabeth and her daughter.

Learning at the family–school boundary thus implies new roles and identities, which potentially generate new relational dynamics, modifying parents' and children's trajectories in the contexts of family, school, and community.

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Part V

Betweenness

Parental Involvement: Possibilities and Tensions

Felicity Wikeley and Joanna Apps

Introduction

Because of their genetic and social relationships with their children, parents are inherently involved in their children's lives. However, the terms *parental involvement* and *parental engagement*,—when related to involvement and interest in children's education, are highly nuanced, contended, and can mean different things to parents, professionals, and policymakers.

Set within the context of education policy development in England, this chapter will explore the concept of parental involvement. It will consider how different players within the child's life—parents, teachers, politicians, and even the children themselves—operationalize the term *parental involvement*. In doing so, we identify some of the areas of tension and misunderstanding.

In the United Kingdom, confidence in parenting is low. This is not a new position: the philosopher, John Stuart Mill, advocated the introduction of formal education in the mid-nineteenth century because parents could not be trusted to take responsibility for the socialization of their children (Furedi 2011); however, current political discourses present a deficit model of parenting. It is argued that specialist skills are needed to be a “good” parent. The current government is piloting the provision of universal parenting classes to ensure parents are trained. They argue that:

Parenting classes can be life-changing because they give parents the skills to manage challenging situations, give their children clear and firm boundaries and help them learn the consequences of their actions. This strengthens families and means children are better behaved, more respectful and can achieve more at school.

(<http://www.nurseryworld.co.uk/news/1093665/Government-considers-parenting-classes> September 2011)

F. Wikeley · J. Apps (✉)

Research Centre for Children, Families and Communities, Canterbury Christ Church University, Canterbury, UK
e-mail: joanna.apps@canterbury.ac.uk

F. Wikeley

e-mail: felicity.wikeley@btinternet.com

Paradoxically, concern over parental involvement is occurring at a time when parents appear to be spending more time engaging with their children than ever before. For example, Hunt (2009) provided statistics showing that UK working mothers now spend more time with their children and are more involved in their education than during the 1970s. In 1974, working mothers spent on average fewer than 40 mins per day engaged in activities with their children; by 1999, this had risen to more than 90 mins per day. For fathers, whose involvement with children's education has been shown to have an important impact on educational outcomes, separate from that of mothers (Goldman 2005), there was a 200 % increase in the time spent actively engaging with children between 1974 and 2000. In addition, national surveys conducted annually during the early to mid-2000s for the UK's Department for Education and Skills showed continuous increases in the number of parents who felt involved with their children's school and education (Peters et al. 2007). This is all the more remarkable in that time spent children must now, increasingly, compete with other demands on family time; for example, there are a growing number of families where both parents work full-time.

Although there is often a passing acknowledgement of the complexities of modern family life, government rhetoric positions the "bad parent"—whose children are badly behaved, not respectful of adult authority, and performing poorly in national standardized tests, conducted in England throughout their school lives—against the "good parent," who prepares his or her preschool children for school at the age of 5 and ensures that their school-age children are fully engaged, highly successful students who will become economic contributors to society.

The activities that parents do with their children before they start formal schooling and parental attitudes to education are now well established as key influences on children's educational outcomes. This applies to school readiness, academic progress throughout school, and compulsory and postcompulsory qualifications (Kelly 2011; Gutman and Feinstein 2010; Sylva et al. 2004; Desforges and Abouchaar 2003). Desforges and Abouchaar claimed that parental engagement with their children's learning at home can make more than 10 % difference to the children's outcomes in school through shaping the child's self-image as a learner and fostering high expectations. Although primarily an indirect influence, parental involvement also appears to stimulate certain attitudes, values, and aspirations, which can function as "pro-social" and "pro-learning" influences. Parental involvement has also been found to be particularly significant in breaking the cycle of disadvantage and children's underachievement (Feinstein 2003; Feinstein et al. 2004), as well as being a factor in raising attainments of ethnic minorities and "at-risk" groups (Coleman 1987; Edwards and Garcia 1991).

Enhancing the early home learning environment of children living in disadvantaged circumstances has therefore become the primary focus of early interventions to improve the educational and life chances of children in England. It is central to policy initiatives and policy frameworks, such as *Every Child Matters* (DfES 2004), *The Children's Plan* (DCSF 2007) *Every Parent Matters*

(DfES 2007), and the *Early Years Foundation Stage* (DCSF 2008). It also forms the cornerstone of a dominant policy, practice, and research narrative that highlights the power of parents and the impact of parenting in almost all areas of children's lives.

However, such policies tend to ignore the basic tenets of parenting—caring, nurturing, and cherishing (Hewlett and West 1998)—and present family life as being motivated purely by the desire for attainment of higher goals rather than a need to create a harmonious atmosphere focused on the well-being of all. It repositions parents from being involved and engaged in their children's lives because it is part of their identity as parents to that of paraprofessional, with the child as a passive recipient of their actions. In other words, it presents a production model of parenting and family life.

Parental Involvement as a Professional Activity

It cannot be denied that children who do best in educational systems tend to have stable family backgrounds and parents who are relatively successful in their professional lives. Measurements of cognitive and language ability at age 3 also correlate positively with how often parents look at books or read stories with their child; how many children's books (for children under 5 and including library books) are in the home; how often the child participates in activities involving painting or drawing; how often parents recite nursery rhymes or sing songs with their child; and how often the child plays at recognizing letters, words, shapes, or numbers (Melhuish 2010).

A composite measure of a child's home learning environment, the Home Learning Index (Melhuish et al. 2008), is seen as a good predictor of a child's future school success. The resulting score is relatively independent of parental socioeconomic status and educational status and would indicate that it is what parents do, rather than who they are, that is important. For their children to be "ready" for school, parents need to adopt a teaching role and operate in a "learning environment." It is a model that positions childhood as purely a process of becoming rather than one of being and parenting as an adjunct to school teaching rather than an activity in itself. It creates a paraprofessional model of parental involvement based on a "*moral geography of mothering*" (and in most societies, it is mainly mothers who are deemed to be responsible for raising children) constituted in "*localised discourse concerned with what is considered right and wrong in raising of children*" (Holloway 1998).

For teachers, parental involvement is defined as support for the professional role of teachers. Their relationship with parents is through their involvement in children's school-based learning and is merely part of the teaching process—a tool teachers can use to achieve desired outcomes. What involvement means in practice

varies from system to system, phase to phase, and school to school. In many countries,¹ parents can, or are even expected to be, involved in school governance; in most countries, parents raise extra funds for schools. However, research (Hughes and Greenhough 2006) has shown that apart from involvement in specific projects (e.g. the Home-School Knowledge Exchange), delivering the curriculum and the pressures of the school year give most teachers little opportunity to engage with their pupils' home lives in any meaningful way. For many, parental involvement is little more than the expectation that they get children to school on time and equipped to participate fully in the school day; check that homework has been done; and turn up to parent meetings to discuss their child's progress or lack of it. There is an implicit assumption that no important learning, or not the right sort of learning, takes place outside school; the validity of the learning is judged by the assessment-led curriculum.

In the same way that "good" parents of preschool children focus activities at home on cognitive learning activities, it positions parents of school-age children as paraprofessionals whose role is to support the "expert" teacher. It neglects the role that parents play in scaffolding children's progress through life in a way that involves knowledge of the individual (McCaslin 2004) and their history, often making explicit connections (Bullock and Wikeley 2004) between past and present experiences through the use of shared memories. The dynamic nature of parent-child interactions and the importance of child, family, and other influences in positioning the relationship firmly in the present is ignored.

Parent Involvement as a Negotiated Activity

It could be argued that the paraprofessional model of parental involvement ignores the structural factors impinging on families. Certainly, there is an evidence gap in the "levers and variables" associated with family-based early learning (Brodie 2010). For example, poverty affects the early home learning environment in a number of ways. Families living in poverty are not only likely to have reduced resources but also are likely to be families with lower levels of parental education. Wachs and Camli (1991) found that higher levels of crowding and "traffic patterns" (i.e., movement and activity) within homes were associated with lower levels of involvement, verbal stimulation, and responsiveness. Evans et al. (1999) found less verbal responsiveness and less diverse use of language by parents in more crowded housing conditions; similarly, Corapci and Wachs (2002) found that middle-class mothers in crowded housing talked less to their infants and also gave or showed them objects less frequently. Families often have to balance competing priorities, and the paraprofessional model often suggests a level of selflessness that is perhaps unattainable (Aitkin 2000). Time spent reading to one child may have to compete

¹For example, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Finland, Taiwan, and Nicaragua.

with time spent on a different activity with another child or time needed to bring in an income to support the whole family or look after an elderly relative.

There is also the contribution of the children themselves. A child not only “becomes” through the influence of his or her cultural, social, and political environment but also brings something of her or his self into “*creative living and into the whole* (of cultural life)” (Winnicot 1971). Winnicot showed how an infant was able to experiment with culture and his or her environment and concluded that the nature of childhood and culture change as the objects around the child (social relations and family structures) change. However, a “*child’s ‘being’ maybe at odds with adult-focused and institutional conceptions of what a child should be ‘becoming’*” (James et al. 1998). Although popular culture, particularly in the West, stresses a child’s sense of self and lauds independence of action, and adult policy rhetoric formulates a democracy where standing up for one’s opinion, being confident, and showing leadership is valued, the paraprofessional model suggests that “good” parenting is about teaching children compliance with institutional rules and expectations.

Research on the role children play in their own development argues that “*whilst children may remain by and large subordinate to adults, this does not imply that children are passive beings*” (Scott et al. 1998). James and Prout (1997) argued that “*children are and must be seen as active in the construction and determination of their own social lives, the lives of those around them and of the societies in which they live. Children are not just the passive subjects of social structures and processes*” but more generally active participants and co-constructionists of the society in which they live (Uprichard 2009).

Rather than being passive recipients of parental input, children are in a dialogical relationships with other people and the world. Mayall (2002) argued that “*just as gender emerged as a crucial concept for analysing relationships between sexes so generation is coming to be seen as key to understanding child-adult relationships.*” Children may influence parenting styles and behaviors, including parental involvement in education. For example, Skaliotis (2010), in a large quantitative study of parental involvement in the lives of their secondary-age (high school) children, found that parental involvement changes across time and is associated with changes in a child’s behavior and achievement, suggesting its dynamic and dyadic nature. This would suggest that parental involvement should be viewed much more as a relational process influenced by space and time, rather than one of production.

Although learning spaces are beginning to be researched (Holloway and Valentine 2000), little is known about the influence of the learner’s relationship with that space. The concept of territory is vested with a sense of ownership which takes the idea of space beyond that of being purely a context for learning. For example, a school classroom is very clearly the teacher’s territory. The teacher controls the learning agenda and how it is focused within the classroom. Small children often assume that their teachers live in the classroom and will ask where they sleep and express surprise when meeting them in the supermarket. Teenagers will talk of learning as a school-dictated activity (Bullock and Wikeley 2004).

Parents often say how alien they feel when entering the classroom and how they feel this disadvantages them in discussions about their child held in the classroom. Home is a much more shared space: “*The space of the home and the time of family members are contested grounds and locuses of power relations that go beyond individual family members*” (Sibley 1995). Even the concept of home (in terms of a sense of belonging) is debatable, but as a learning context it is clearly a shared space between parents and children.

Another element that is even more crucial to parental involvement as a negotiated activity is the longevity and continuity of the parent–child relationship. Life is about participating “*in continually changing cultural communities. Individuals and generations shape practices, traditions and institutions at the same time as they build on what they inherit in their moment in history*” (Weisner, Gallimore and Jordan 1988 in Super and Harkness 1997, p. 62). Parental involvement is about much more than creating “school-ready” children; it is about an investment in one’s own future. It is an intense relationship, but one that also acknowledges the separateness of the individuals. Viewed as an activity system (Daniels et al. 2013), the object for the parent is not always their child’s learning, even though that may be the outcome, but the social interaction itself—creating a shared history relating to family life. The activities in the Early Home Learning Environment Index (Melhuish et al. 2008)—such as reading books, singing nursery rhymes, and counting—are those that many parents share with their small children because they are enjoyable and fun things to do, not because they will make the children “school ready.” Similarly, linking experiences across generations by sharing experiences that are remembered from the parent’s own childhood (favorite stories, building sandcastles on a beach) can, in a very personal way, create a sense of continuity in family learning. By connecting children into a wider learning community through sharing their own specific enthusiasms, parents give those activities (from which children learn) an authenticity not found in school or even in home learning activities.

The duality within the parent–child relationship makes the power base within any learning situation more ambiguous than it is in the classroom. Because the power base is more fluid, it allows the learning to be more negotiated, with each contributing as well as receiving. Tizard and Hughes (2002) described a scene where a mother and daughter were talking in the kitchen. Joyce was having sandwich for her lunch while her mother made a cup of tea and prepared the evening meal:

J: Mum, it was good to have something to eat while you was at the seaside, wasn't it

M: Was good, I agree

J: Well some people don't have something to eat at the seaside

M: What do they do then? Go without?

J: Mm

M: I think you would have to have something to eat

J: Yeah, otherwise you'd be (unclear) won't you?

M: Mmmm. When we go to David's school we'll have to take something to eat. We go on a coach that time

- J: Mm. To the seaside?*
M: Mmm. Probably go for a little stroll to the seaside
J: Mmm Yes, I still hungry?
M: When?
J: When we was at the seaside, wasn't I?
M: We weren't. We had sandwiches, we had apples
J: But we... but when we was there we were still hungry wasn't we?
M: No, you had your breakfast didn't you?
J: But, we were thirsty when we got there
M: Yes, suppose so, yeah we were
J: What happened? We wasn't thirsty or hungry?
M: Why weren't we? What happened?
J: Well all that thirsty went away
M: Did it?
J: Mmmm

(Tizard and Hughes 2002)

The mother and child explore the concepts of both hunger and thirst, but what they are really doing is reliving a shared memory of a family picnic. Parents are in a unique position to take full advantage of shared experiences when supporting their child's learning, either making connections between current episodes and past experiences or in confirming those connections when they are made by the child. They are also in a position to explore such connections when they are not fully articulated by the child, such as when Joyce's mother realizes about halfway through the conversation that Joyce is not saying she is hungry now but is still talking about the previously enjoyed picnic. Because the relationship is ongoing, it can be picked up and put down over a longer period of time with "*purposive conversations*" (McCurdy in Meighan 2001) being developed at the most appropriate time for the individual child rather than when timetabled. Additionally, at home it is not always obvious who the expert is; parents often defer to their children in matters of new technology, for example. A perception of themselves and adults as co-learners is a key element in the young people developing a sense of their own agency (Bullock and Wikeley 2004). The involvement is therefore more negotiated for, although the adults have some positional power, the need to maintain the emotional relationship whilst allowing the children to develop into autonomous independent adults is highly influential.

Tensions

The two models of parental involvement are in tension with each other. For many professionals and policy makers, parental involvement is only valid in terms of how parents can support the school and school-based activities—to help their children engage better with school and in doing so maximise their potential. For them, the home-school relationship is set within the parameters of the school rather than

those of the home, and relationships between parents and teachers are always approached from this perspective. School–home communication is clearly focused on school issues and the responsibility to initiate and maintain the relationship lies with the parents (Crozier and Davies 2007). This is epitomized in the (possibly mythical) teachers' stereotype of the overinvolved “pushy” parent (a label parents want to avoid), suggesting that teachers want parents to be involved but only in as far as it does not challenge their own professional status. This creates a power imbalance, offering no space for negotiation.

Families, however, define themselves in terms of relationships. Roles are negotiated and although parents have positional power, considering the needs of all family members involves compromise. The paraprofessional model of parental involvement adopted by teachers and policy makers assumes that parents have to engineer learning by providing the right kinds of opportunities. But for parents, involvement is about sharing the world with their children; sharing attitudes, values and aspirations that incidentally function as pro-social and pro-learning influences; sharing their own experiences and enthusiasms in order to empower their children to discover who they are; and become confident, persistent, and resilient adults with a strong sense of well-being. Parents are not solely concerned with producing an economically contributing successful adult but also in making the child an autonomous independent individual.

In their work on identity agents, Schachter and Ventura (2008) described the process of identity formation as the child finding uniqueness; separate from parents, peers, and teachers: “*The essence of parenting (is) being involved. Not wanting to control or influence but just be there, to be present.*” They argued that parents do not want to make their children follow some predetermined success route (as may be suggested by the paraprofessional model of parenting) but to support them in what they want to do. But only supporting children in what they want to do obviously runs the risk of coming into conflict with teachers who have a set curriculum to deliver—and in the United Kingdom, targets to meet.

However, learning involves challenging the status quo—what is already known and can be done—and upsetting the current comfortable stable state of the learner. This is not always a positive process and can often involve stress when the learning becomes “too hard.” But in order to move forward, the state of uncertainty between what has already been accomplished and what is the potential achievement has to be reached (this is the basis of many learning theories). This obviously involves an element of risk for the learner. How high the stakes are in terms of accommodating failure will influence how readily they take on the learning process. However, it also involves risk on behalf of those supporting that learning. Knowing when to offer support, when to raise the expectations of the learner, and when to let them struggle on their own and make mistakes is a skill recognized in the best teachers. The risk is the effect intervention may have on the learner's motivation. Challenge at the wrong time and motivation can be destroyed. For parents, this risk is amplified by the emotional relationship they have with their children. Too much pressure or challenge at difficult times and the emotional relationship is also at risk. The basic dilemma for parents in their involvement with their children is how to navigate between

providing structure and offering flexibility, between living by the particular ideals they value themselves and the desire not to coerce their child into adopting them blindly; between creating family boundaries while staying open to the “other.” To meet all these criteria successfully means parental involvement has to be carefully negotiated rather than imposed: “*Parental involvement is not solely out of concern for child’s well-being, success, or even for their morality, although it could touch on any of these - it is a concern for their identity*” (Schachter and Ventura 2008, p. 462).

The negotiated reality of parental involvement in the lives of their children is at odds with that of teachers, for whom aims and objectives are very clear. A tension is reflected in some teachers’ angst in discussing with parents the grey area where education meets parenting:

I think for me the main problem is all those grey areas where you do get just a feeling that there’s something wrong but you’ve got no real evidence other than maybe a child who seems miserable in school, isn’t very sociable, or is overly aggressive and you feel well there must be some reason for this and that can be very tricky because I suppose in a way you feel is it my right to query the parent when I don’t really have any evidence. (Teacher, Kellett and Apps 2009, p. 17)

Overstepping the boundaries may risk the ongoing relationship they have with the parents.

Unlike other professionals who are involved with parents (e.g. doctors, health visitors/community nurses), the roles for parents and teachers are mediated by the child:

I don’t judge parenting, you cannot judge parenting because ... how children behave in a set establishment is completely different sometimes to how they behave at home. (Teacher, Kellett and Apps 2009, p. 20)

This can lead to tension when each steps into the other’s domain. For example, teachers will often feel that they are supporting parents and families in compensating for lack of resources in the home but will expect parental support in terms of children arriving at school on time and ready to learn. Similarly, parents will defer to teachers in terms what their children need to learn but will become defensive if they feel that teachers are judging them and their parenting skills from their child’s response. The delineation of roles is made clear in the child’s daily transition from home to classroom. The handing over of the child at the school gate or the classroom door marks a physical boundary between two different activity systems—that of the home and that of the school. The parent and the teacher are always peripheral but present in the other’s system through their relationship with the child.

Conclusion

The tensions described in this chapter have arisen over time with the formalization of education into schooling. Both parents and teachers are concerned with the development of children into independent autonomous adults. Schooling plays a

large part in that process, but there is a danger in seeing it as the only part. Teachers have clear structures and processes related to their professional roles, which need parental support but can exist without parental involvement. They are focused on outcomes—their own success is judged in those terms and their relationship with the child is similarly defined. For parents, the structures and processes are less clear or formalized, and consequently involvement in their children's education is more complex. They see their child's future as part of a greater whole, more continuous and going beyond childhood.

Central to this relationship, of course, is the child. He or she has separate relationships with both teachers and parents but also mediates the relationship between the two. The child carries the information between the two, and this information often defines the parent's image of the teacher and the teacher's image of their parents. It is tempting to say that to reduce the tensions in the parent–teacher relationship both should take more account of the child; however, there is little research as to the child's perspective on their role, and consequently there is little understanding of the influence the child brings to bear. If the child is to have a good school–life balance, where academic success is clearly part of a broader sense of well-being, then parents and teachers need to understand and respect each other's positions and roles within the context of the child's world and be willing to truly share the responsibility for his or her future.

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Negotiation in the School Context: The Meanings Ascribed by Teachers

Demóstenes Neves da Silva and Marilena Ristum

Introduction

This chapter—part of a broader study on family–school relationships—addresses violence in schools by studying the parents and teachers of students in the 5th to 9th grades of a public elementary school in the state of Bahia, Brazil. In this chapter, the research focus is to identify the meanings attributed to the negotiation on the part of basic education teachers in the family–school relationship.

The conflicts in the relationship between family and school that are manifested in the school environment are constituted, as observed by Marques and Cunha (2004), in inevitable conflicting dynamics of order and disorder, as well as of change and resistance to change. Understanding school conflicts and different actors' adopted styles of managing these conflicts is necessary for identifying more cooperative and constructive rather than destructive and competitive approaches (Marques and Cunha 2004).

Negotiation

Negotiation as a conflict management tool in social relations has proved to be an ample and complex topic (Cunha 2006), and an in-depth theoretical study of the topic is beyond the scope of this work. However, synthetic considerations will be

D.N. da Silva (✉) · M. Ristum
Universidade Federal Da Bahia, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil
e-mail: demostenesneves@gmail.com

M. Ristum
e-mail: ristum.ufba@gmail.com

D.N. da Silva
Faculdade Adventista da Bahia, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil

presented to achieve the goal of identifying conflicts and ways of managing parents' and teachers' meanings in the context of family–school relationships.

Negotiation implies some degree of conflict in social relations and will eventually incorporate psychosocial phenomena regardless of the nature of these relationships (Cunha and Lopes 2011), hence the need to manage the inevitable differences between people and groups. Thus, negotiating conflicts (Monteiro 2010) is grounded in recognizing people's similarities and differences as increasingly important elements in psychosocial processes (Cunha 2006) that involve potential conflict marked by incompatibility, the lack of reconciliation, obstruction of goals, or reduced effectiveness (Dimas and Lawrence 2011).

Different models of conflict management have been discussed by Cunha (2006). The model by Putnam and Wilson (1982) proposes three styles of conflict management: nonconfrontational, problem solving, and controlling. Deutsch (1973, 1990, 1994) proposed a theory of the dichotomy between cooperation and competition. Along a similar bidimensional line is Pruitt and Rubin's (1986) proposal, which suggests actors' graduated interests in achieving results through four styles: problem solving, rivalry, servility, and inaction; meanwhile, Thomas (1992) highlighted assertiveness and cooperation. If we combine these dimensions, we arrive at five styles: competition, avoidance, collaboration, commitment, and servility. A complex model was proposed by Van de Vliert and Euwema (1994), which attempted to integrate various models by proposing degrees of conduct (open, direct, spontaneous) and pleasantness (relaxed, not stressed, and youthful) that include avoidance, servility, commitment, problem solving, and domination (Cunha 2006).

The reference point for this work was to investigate how teachers understand their negotiations of family–school relationships, choosing the bidimensional model presented by Rahim and Bonoma (1979, 1983) from among the various conflict management typologies. Rahim and Bonoma's model was chosen for this study because of its simplicity in indicating the degree of importance that people give to their own interests and others' during negotiation, meeting the objectives of this study to understand how teachers understand negotiation in the family–school relationship.

In the bidimensional conflict management model, one dimension is individual satisfaction of self-interest in the negotiation and the other entails satisfying the other actor's interests; both dimensions can be either high or low. These two dimensions are reflected in the conflict management styles described by Cunha and Silva (2010): integration (high self-interest and high concern for others), servility (low self-interest and high concern for the other), domination (high self-interest and low concern for the other), avoidance (very low self-interest and low concern for the other), and tendency to commit (moderate self-interest and moderate concern for the other) (Cunha and Silva 2010). Of course, the same actors can use combinations of these styles during negotiations, depending on the contexts involved.

In the context of negotiation in school, Marsico and Iannaccone (2012), in a study conducted with parents and teachers in Italy, describe schools as an intermediary place of exchange with other social contexts. Using the metaphor of the balcony, the authors evoke the idea of interactions between the worlds inside and

outside of the school; the school itself; and the boundaries crossed by the various interests, whether from inside to outside or outside-in. As an example in the school context, the authors highlight parent–teacher meetings (PTM) as negotiation spaces (or events) in which two different cultures—the school and the family—meet with a focus on discussing the student’s value and his or her best interests in terms of education. In this context, conflicts arise between the parents’ and the school’s pedagogical concepts and practices related to the student’s education, generating tense relationships when the parties do not achieve their goals (Lewin 1979; Marsico and Iannaccone 2012).

With the goal of resolving these tensions in schools and in other social contexts, research has developed in the field of negotiation and conflict management (Marques and Cunha 2004; Cunha 2006), which has contributed other theoretical models that are also suitable for analyzing the family–school relationship.

Meanings

Determining teachers’ meanings of negotiation in the family–school relationship was the focus of this work, and we used the historical–cultural approach of Lev Vygotsky (1896–1934), which considers humans as being constituted historically and socially (Vygotsky 1978). In this sense, the individual does not interact with the world around him directly but by mediating the signs in the language, which comprise both collectively held (shared) and individual meanings (Vygotsky 1995). Through language, the human being becomes active in social change and at the same time is transformed by the changing external world (Vygotsky 1978).

Additionally, and building on the statement above, language reflects the structure of the mind and the social structure as well. Through words, which are intertwined with thoughts, it is possible to determine how individuals describe or signify social structures. The collective social structure, which everyone shares, shapes individual consciousness, which in turn contributes to shaping the collective structure. Words blend individual consciousness and social structure, sense, and meaning (Vygotsky 1978, 1995); that is, the significance and meanings of words are connected to a person’s individual understanding and connected by the relationship between individual thought and the collective context. Thus, the units of meaning in the teachers’ speech were investigated with the particular aim of understanding how these school actors interpret the negotiation between actors in the school space.

The Aims of the Study

As we stated earlier, the study sought to examine how teachers understand negotiation in the school space—in particular, the family–school relationship. Specifically, it aimed to (1) identify the actors involved and the convergences or divergences in

their feelings, beliefs, opinions, and practices; (2) identify and analyze the spaces and situations in which negotiations occur; and (3) identify and analyze family–school relationship conflict management styles (i.e., integration, servility, avoidance, domination, and tendency to commit; Rahim and Bonoma 1979, 1983), related to the meanings the actors attribute to the negotiations.

From the methodological point of view, Vygotsky (1978) considered human speech an expression of consciousness that is collectively shared and constituted and a singular phenomenon of human ontogenetic development (Vygotsky 1978). External language reflects inner thoughts; thus, as an element that constitutes both the society and the individual, speech becomes raw material for the scientific investigation of human consciousness and social practices. Understood in this way, speech is presented not only in grammatical units but in the understanding of these units, represented in contextualized sentences and their psychological logic. Speech comprises units of analysis that lend themselves to the scientific study of the meanings social actors ascribe to negotiation (Vygotsky 1978). Thus, although speech does not fully capture or express our thoughts, human language, especially speech, presents the opportunity to study the functional and structural characteristics of consciousness and, using appropriate methods and techniques, gain access to the thoughts themselves (Vygotsky 1978).

To clarify how teachers understand negotiation in family–school relationships, the study used two procedures. First, we observed the school and its daily activities and relationships to familiarize ourselves with the research context, which would assist in the subsequent interpretation of the data. The second procedure, from which we obtained the primary research data, was semi-structured interviews with five teachers of students in the fifth to ninth years of elementary school.

The observations took place mostly over the course of three months, after we received written authorization from the administration. The school was visited once or twice per week, and we observed the routines in two-day shifts, including observing teachers' relationships with the other school actors; the observations were recorded in a field journal. The interviews were conducted based on the teachers' availability, after they were presented with and signed the consent form.

The analysis focused on units of meaning that related to negotiation and conflict management. Using the management styles proposed by Rahim and Bonoma (1979, 1983) as a reference, we aimed to identify units of analysis related to the meanings the actors ascribed to negotiation, including the spaces and situations in which the negotiations occurred and the relevant actors' conflict management styles. The data are presented in the following sections.

Actors and Conflicts in the Family–School Relationship

The main actors in the family–school relationship are the teachers and the school. It was observed in their speech that the teachers considered contempt, abandonment, threats, and the devaluation of the school to be directed at them. When the family–

school conflict involved students, teachers tended to identify themselves as “school.” Frequently, actors outside of the school also identify managers, staff, and faculty as “school.”

In addition to the teachers and the school, parents, students, and the government can be actors in family–school relationship conflicts. Conflicts for the teachers were related to their feeling that educational activity was socially devalued; to fear of parents; and to a lack of authority that sometimes translated into feelings of powerlessness to control the students. This powerlessness stemmed from the fear of using discipline because of the potential reactions of students and parents who were known to be or were considered to be aggressive.

In Brazil, the need to align parents and teachers on the same side (that of the teachers) faces both internal barriers and others that are rooted in the characteristics of the larger society. One barrier is the conservativeness of schools, and another is the rapid societal changes since the last century.

The first barrier refers to the traditional school model, which is still in effect today. There is no incompatibility between teachers’ past and current work because teachers work in the context of incorporating the past into the present; however, that does not entail retrogression to the past, if for no other reason than because the conditions of today are not the same as those of the past (Arendt 1961). Schools, however, appear to have chosen to remain rooted in the past, exerting their authority as heirs to the disciplinary institutions of the eighteenth century; in their control practices, schools resemble the prisons, barracks, and factories of the past (Foucault 1995; Ariès 1962). In these contexts, and in schools today, controlling time, space, and bodies aims to produce docile beings (Foucault 1995).

Even in the West, in many civilized countries, social relations have undergone a process of democratization, with changes such as those experienced by Brazilian society. These changes left behind the model of authoritative military dictatorship in which the school’s success was often linked often to the threat of punishment (Aquino 1998). Families themselves can have difficulties in their relationships with their children, reflecting a society marked by controversy, dialogue, and desire. Parents find themselves in a world they can no longer control—a world that is no longer predictable and that has stripped parents of their authority by dividing their duties between the schools and the government. These same parents, according to the interviews, cannot and do not seem willing to give the school what the teachers called “carte blanche” (Teacher 4) so that they (the teachers) can legitimately exercise the authority they had in the past, even when the parents themselves cannot and, according to the teachers, do not adequately exercise their authority because they lack preparation and involvement.

Paradoxically, teachers ask for and expect help from families, even as they characterize these families as being “unprepared” (Teacher 1), not having knowledge (Teachers 2 and 3), “needing help” (Teacher 7), and being violent or causing violence, as well as being unwilling to help because they are “absent” (Teachers 1, 3 and 7) and being indifferent about or not caring what happens at school (Teacher 4). It was also stated that families fail to monitor their children’s studies at home (Teachers 5 and 7) and parents just want to have children’s approval at the end of

the year. It would seem that any one of these conditions would be sufficient to make parents ineffective aids to the schools willing families are not prepared, and prepared families are not willing but these teachers described parents as being neither willing nor prepared.

Thus, based on the teachers' descriptions of their students' parents, there are two reasons to consider parents as one of the problems rather than one of the solutions. In the interviews, the teachers identified some parents as problems and some as solutions. However, even if parents choose to partner with the teachers as school actors, the process is difficult owing to the differences in the roots, objectives, and purposes between the family and school contexts (Aquino 1998).

From the point of view of the conflicts between the school's and the parents' interests, the way the school addresses the issue seems clear: its interest is gaining the parents' support for the traditional school management style. Apparently, this school does not negotiate; it charges, invites, co-opts, or attempts to co-opt parents to its side, but it cannot yield because yielding means change, and it does not appear to be the school's intention to change. Thus, the school, by its very nature as a traditional institution, cannot appear to give in; in terms of conflict management styles, this school appears to have high self-interest and little concern for the parents—that is, it tends to adopt the domination style of conflict management between itself and parents.

The teachers interpreted parents' unwillingness to assist with school problems as stemming from their inability or lack of interest. A school that the literature describes as traditional and out of step with democratization and parents whom the teachers consider unwilling and unable to help appear to have created barriers to closer relationships between parents and the school. Even with attempts to break through these barriers, there are no assurances that the parents' help would be truly effective and long-lasting. Thus, it appears that for the time being, there are no solutions to the school's problems—at least not until the current school model changes to a more appropriate contemporary one that could integrate the schools' interests with society's.

Separate from the nature of the school's authority, the issue also appears to be the focus of the school's activities. Changing this would require using authority appropriately in a contemporary democratic spirit and also taking a citizen-centered approach to preparing students for a changing world. Without changes, the school appears to be preparing citizens of the past who will no longer have a place in society, even within the school.

Situations that Lead to Opportunities for Negotiation

According to the interviewees, the possibilities for negotiation between parents and teachers occur in four main situations: (1) visiting the home, which one teacher felt "would be the solution" (Teacher 4); (2) encounters on the street, exemplified by a mother who said that when she met teachers outside of the school, she always asked about her child's "behavior and academic performance" (Mother 4) and, on the other

side, by a teacher who reported: “I am one of those who when I meet parents outside of school whom I know, then I suggest that they visit the school” (Teacher 1); (3) daily life at school, such as when the school “calls the parents, when the student rebels and fights, when things happen...that can lead to suspension and the parents must talk with school administrators in order to allow the student to come back to class” (Mother 3). Additionally, few parents visit the school voluntarily and regularly, and those who do are usually the parents of students who have no problems at school; and (4) meetings that include parents and teachers, such as PTMs. As with the daily life of the school, only a few parents come to PTMs, and they are normally parents “whose children do not have problems” (Teacher 4). “The majority, however, do not come to the scheduled meetings” (Teacher 4).

Home visits are not part of the school activities and are not practiced by teachers. However, in the interviews, they appeared to be an opportunity that could be exploited, especially if visits are conducted by qualified professionals such as social workers and psychologists. The teachers felt that both the family–school relationship and the problematic student would receive effective help if the school offered professional visitation. Parents could become more willing to participate and more prepared if they were visited.

Teachers’ desire for school psychologists to help parents, as Ristum (2013) noted, is related only to the problems teachers want solved through professional aid and is not about the institutional work of education. Behind the teachers’ concerns for parents, there was also the negative perception of parents as being unprepared and unstructured and lacking interest in the school; this perception reflects prejudice in the family–school relationship that functions as a barrier (Akiyama 2001; Marcondes and Sigolo 2012).

For better and more effective family–school relationships, it is necessary for both parents and teachers to be better prepared in order to increase the similarities between the family and school environments (Cozer 2003; Colaço 2007; Ribeiro 2009; Villas-Boas 2009). This outcome does not mean equality between family and school because they are different, with distinct and important knowledge and functions (Vigotski 1995). In addition, working together to complement one another is possible and necessary (Hernandez 1995; Lollato 2000) for children’s development and requires mutual understanding and respect between these two important contexts (Oliveira and Marinho-Araújo 2010; Barbosa 2007).

Regarding eventual encounters on the street, these are rare and quick, with little information about children’s behavior and performance in school activities; only some teachers take any initiative. Generally, some family members greet and interrogate the teachers, asking, “How is my student doing in school” (Mother 2), and, in response, they receive summary information, with advice for students to study more or behave better because typically the question comes from parents who do not make themselves available at the school or whose children have “problems”. These unplanned interactions indicate teachers’ efforts to supply a need that is not satisfied by the PTMs and other school strategies in the family–school relationship, which requires better-organized efforts in order to avoid the improvisation that is commonly present in the relationship, as indicated by Colaço (2007).

As an initiative of the teachers, stopping and speaking with parents on the street is preceded by determining that the parent is not aggressive and using necessary caution to only address parents who do not have a history of violence, ones who are familiar and friendly. This approach to encounters on the streets, because it is a small town, highlights the lack of opportunity to manage family–school relationship conflicts because the other events and opportunities for dialogue are insufficient or are not properly utilized.

At this point, we can say that the desire to visit families and the occasional encounters on the street appear to demonstrate the teachers' desire to gain the parents' support, to compensate for what everyday school life and PTMs have not achieved in terms of family participation in the students' discipline and academic performance. For the teachers, it would be up to the school to hire a more specialized professional to address parents; failing this, contact on the street can sometimes help fill this need and occasionally improve family–school relations.

The teachers' view on the question of visiting families raises the issue of whether it is the school's task to give orientation to families at home. The central role of the teacher, as well as the contemporary school, is not to discipline and be silent, as in the past (Aquino 1998), much less to orient families—a task that is not part of the school's purpose. Ultimately, a school's function is to teach students about the world, not to instruct them in how to live (Arendt 1961).

With regard to the school routine, the teachers observed that a minority of parents attend PTMs; those who do are the parents of students who have no problems or, if at the school's requested convocation, the parents of students who have been suspended or fighting. However, once these parents meet the school's request, they disappear from everyday school life again.

The parents' presence, motivated by the occurrence of a problem, establishes an atmosphere of fear or at least discomfort among teachers and administrators. In general, the teachers reported that the parents are hostile regarding school when the issue is conflict between their children and other students or the teacher, even the parents of children who have no problems.

Finally, as a negotiation event, the parent–teacher meetings mark a high point among the possibilities of meeting between teachers and parents. Although they are considered throughout the school system as potentially integrating events, PTMs demonstrate low effectiveness in integrating the family with the school. This is the case because, according to teachers, only the parents of children “without problems” attend the meetings and even then, only a minority of them. It is interesting that none of the interviewees or even the board of directors could report either the percentage or the number of parents who participate; the teachers estimate the rate to be between 5 and 20 % of the parents. Although the teachers presented PTMs as important for the family–school relationship and as opportunities to address all parties' interests in the students, their rudimentary form was surprising. The fact that no interviewees or administrators could report either absolute numbers of percentages of parents who attend PTMs; the lack of a study on the causes of parental absenteeism or even surveys of the parents about available dates and subjects that interest them; and the multiple PTM cancellations and postponements

throughout the school year indicate that the current “theory” of the importance of PTMs is not reflected in everyday school practice.

Regarding meeting content, PTMs are intended to be partially informative, focusing on discipline issues and delivering notes, but there is no time to respond appropriately to all parents. For the few parents of students with problems, the teachers gave parents diagnoses for their students and advice on remedies and prevention with the hope that parents would approve. However, most parents who attend have students without problems; thus, the agenda is to discuss not the school and its aims but how the children are doing, which, in general, these parents already know.

However, even though PTMs may be the best option a public school can offer because they are attended by parents of students who have no problems, the teachers still find the meetings to be “tense” (Teacher 6), perhaps because of the persistent conflict between the past and present models and the seeming hopelessness of resolving it. Thus, the PTM model does not appear to meet the objective of gaining parents’ participation in school activities, except for a small number of parents, and meetings with them leave much to be desired. This situation reflects that, collectively, most parents do not participate in PTMs as negotiation events; generally, only the same parents come (Teacher 7), and they do not represent the majority.

Individually, PTMs have little or no impact on student life, and according to the interviewees, the meetings have minimal influence on students’ performance (Teacher 3). This situation is perhaps why the teachers interviewed described PTMs as opportunities to meet with the parents (Teacher 2) and through parents threaten children in order to behave and study (Teacher 3), “because without the parents, they would be worse” (Teacher 2). However, even as a means of threat, PTMs’ utility is reduced or invalidated because, as we have said, the participants are the minority of parents of students who have no problems. In summary, for the teachers, PTMs serve to warn parents who do not need the warning; therefore, they do not resolve any issues (Teacher 3), although they are at least “something.” Indeed, the teachers made very simplistic analyses of PTMs and their effectiveness without even approaching the essential issues.

Conflict Management Styles

Based on the interview data, it can be observed that the parents’ and teachers’ (the actors) conflict management styles follow the hierarchy of positions of power, which confirms the results of studies cited by McIntyre (2007). This same researcher called attention to studies that indicate that the domination style of conflict management causes subordinates to react with avoidance, characterized, among other aspects, by withdrawing from the conflict and negotiating postponement because disagreements can be costly; when neither party obtains his or her desired outcome, the reason for the conflict remains (McIntyre 2007).

Data from the interviews also indicate that the predominant conflict management styles in family–school relationships, in addition to following the hierarchy, tend to

be government domination over the school and the school's and teachers' domination over parents and students, just as fathers dominate over their children. As has been observed, this style is characterized by high self-interest and low concern for others, leading to avoidance by parents, who perceive little chance that their interests will be addressed in the conflict with the school; these parents show low self-interest and low interest in the teachers and the school, which limits the opportunities for negotiation. The third style, which also appeared in the interviews, is concession or tendency to commit, in which the parents show moderate self-interest and moderate interest in the other parties, generating low satisfaction for both. Although the teachers spoke of the need and desire for united efforts between families and the school, this unity relates to what families can do to meet the school's interests, which is to help to improve students' behavior and achievement, following what the school considers to be desirable standards.

Finally, in the family-school relationship, neither servility nor integration was reported by the teachers as ways of resolving conflicts.

Final Considerations

The significance of how negotiation and conflict management take place in the family-school relationship, from the interviews with teachers, indicates that this relationship is characterized by hierarchical domination and the actors' positions of power. The relationships involve parents and teachers in regard to the pupil, but the pupil is rarely heard from or considered to be an important part of the discussion; in a broader context, the relationship involves society and the government as well.

The family-school relationship is regarded as one in which the causes of conflicts tend to remain because the dominator's interests prevail and the interests of the dominated are not considered or even fully revealed. In this unequal relationship, the dominated give up through avoidance or accept less than what they truly need through accommodation or a tendency to commit. Possibly, family-school relationships should be revisited by the actors, especially those who are higher up in the hierarchy or who are in the privileged position of having knowledge, as is the case with public authorities in relation to the schools and teachers and with these parties in relation to the parents.

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School as Work or Work as School: Meanings in-Between for Children from Different Cultural Contexts

Lia Lordelo

Children and Work: A Theoretical Framework Within Cultural Psychology

Initially, the main focus of this research was childhood—more specifically, the different childhoods that arise when we dedicate ourselves to studying working children and teenagers. The central research object was children's (up to 14 years old) discourse on work and other significant daily activities for them. We are assuming here that it is highly relevant, from psychology's point of view, to understand how children and teenagers make sense of their experiences. As Bruner (1998) stated, more important than establishing the ontological status of our psychological processes' products is understanding how human beings construct their worlds (Bruner 1998, p. 49).

Experiencing childhood as a special period of human development is something largely built from a series of practices inscribed in culture throughout history, and the same assumption could be applied to the social function of work. We believe, in this sense, that human development and the cultural environment are intrinsically linked and, for that matter, culture is a constitutive element of psychological phenomena (Chaves 2000). The set of theoretical, methodological, and empirical investigations of semiotically oriented cultural psychology is the framework adopted for the research; it relocates culture to the center of psychological investigations, and it is used to understand the problem of child work. Some specific aspects of this framework therefore must be explored here.

The first theoretical aspect is the one that establishes culture as a way of life or a practical activity, which associates it more with the notion of process than of content. We draw particular attention to a processual, semiotic view of culture stated by

L. Lordelo (✉)

Federal University of Recôncavo of Bahia, Santo Amaro da Purificação, Brazil
e-mail: lialordelo@gmail.com

Valsiner (2012), who positioned it as belonging to the relationship between person and environment. Valsiner and Rosa (2007, p. 694) claimed that culture is a mode of humankind's transformation of nature; they stated that sociocultural psychology is interested in studying human actions and experiences, precisely in the sense that they are culturally organized (2007, p. 702). Instead of viewing culture as being something ("culture is X"), we must think of it as a *becoming* process ("culture conducts to X") (Valsiner 2007, p. 20). In empirical research, this viewpoint leads us to approach the way children work and perform other activities—not only to distinguish working from nonworking children, nor presupposing that working children are affected by the variable "work," for example.

The second issue concerns the fact that, if we position culture theoretically as belonging to the relationship between person and environment, we will understand children's work as another kind of culturally organized human activity, whose meanings are actively created by them in order to give shape, goals, and direction to their lives. The third issue is about the degree of sharing meanings among people, which leads us to the distinction between personal culture and collective culture. Valsiner (2012, p. 55) referred to personal culture as subjectively built personal meanings, or yet an active personal version of any cultural phenomenon (Lawrence and Valsiner 2003, p. 730). The collective culture would be the living field of the suggested meanings, feelings, and actions with which the person interacts over the life course (Lawrence and Valsiner 2003, p. 726). It is possible to draw a parallel between these concepts and the definition of social representations, especially the approach that organizes the existence of a core (more shared meanings) and peripheral elements, with more varied meanings. Another conceptual parallel is the distinction between cultural practices and cultural worldviews made by Matsumoto (2006); although the author claimed that cultural worldviews are more socially shared than cultural practices (which links these concepts to the notions of personal and collective cultures), he suggested, within this distinction, a contrast between making (the practices) and speaking/thinking (the worldviews), which we don't address in our investigation.

If, as it has already been stated, we understand personal culture as an active personal version of any cultural phenomenon, we believe that this can mean, in terms of empirical analysis, that personal culture could be expressed in "core meanings" elaborated from each individual case—and, in this article, we will focus on these cores. Collective culture, in our point of view, is a concept that demands a more complex empirical translation because of its features: if it is considered by Valsiner as a relatively stable entity of collective origin (Valsiner 2007, p. 63), it is, at the same time, also unstable and heterogeneous; one could say that collective culture is an interpersonal *bricolage* of externalizations by a varied set of persons (Valsiner 2007, p. 63).

The fourth and last theoretical aspect is the importance of listening to the people directly involved in the phenomenon in question—children, in the case of child work. This implies that each child will be actively responsible for the construction of meanings from his or her personal culture. In that way, we are specifically interested in the child's conception of work.

Contextualization: An Abridged History of Working Children

The use of children as a workforce—what we have come to call *child labor*—is a phenomenon with deep historical roots. This seems to be connected to the foundation of the modern concept of childhood. In a classic and well-debated historical study on childhood's iconographic representations in medieval France, Ariès (1981) claimed that the “childhood feeling” is a typically modern sentiment and, up to this period, it would be considered normal for a child to work, for there were not any special concerns in preserving his or her first years. Childhood was not yet considered a special stage of development in people's lives. Although Ariès' arguments were extremely debated and criticized (Heywood 2004), they still stand as a contribution to unfolding the history of childhood and a theme of great interest, particularly in psychology.

Situating the problem in Brazil, Carvalho (2008) reminded us that our country has a history of exploiting child labor rooted in colonial times, when slavery was the main social relation of production. When slavery was abolished in 1888 and Brazil became a republic (approximately one year later), a new project of construction of national identity was imposed by the country's political elite, based on great European nations' development and civilization models (Dourado et al. 1999). Nonetheless, one of the serious issues that emerged from this was that all the individuals released from the slave system found themselves completely destitute from public care. That fact originated a large contingent of extremely poor and helpless people, without work or any conditions of development or mere survival.

Within the republican nation project, a specific discussion on childhood concerned finding alternatives to poor children's education and professionalization, in order to make them become productive citizens and useful to the nation (Dourado et al. 1999). There are studies in Brazil reporting the situation of abandoned children and adolescents and describing, for example, the role of *Santas Casas de Misericórdia*, which were founded in the country's colonial times. At these institutions, abandoned children were raised, received some instruction, and were usually sent (as teenagers or even younger) to dealers and artisans in order to learn a craft or occupation, where they earned no money at all as apprentices (Chaves 1998; Marcílio 1997, 1998; Rizzini 1999). It is interesting to note a distinct social and economic profile that indicates that, throughout history, it has been the poor children and teenagers who have needed care and protection by the public sphere. Since then and up to the twentieth century, Brazil has had both slave children and children working in factories, who were subject to extremely long work shifts and out of range from any protecting legislation that assured them basic labor rights. It was not until the 1850s that the concern with making children's rights more visible grew stronger. In Brazil, a fundamental mark was the social and political mobilization that culminated, in 1990, with the promulgation of the Statute of the Child and Adolescent (ECA), which finally banned the work of children and adolescents up to 14 years old, and also regulated the apprentice adolescents' situation.

This long battle for children's and teenagers' rights—particularly in what concerns their protection against work—has obstacles. In Qvortrup's (1995, quoted in Montandon 2001, p. 48) words, children have always had an economic role in society. If they were once useful as a workforce, their utility lies, nowadays, in the work they perform in schools. This is sociology from a childhood perspective, which argues that children at school are important and useful in two ways: first, because in that context, they are being prepared to be part of their society's productive force; second, because at school, they demand the occupation and employment of a large adult contingent—teachers, pedagogues, and other education professionals.

This contextualization of child labor is made to remind us that this is also a historically built phenomenon, and that, in order to investigate it and apprehend it in its many dimensions, one must be aware of this history. This means that the studies and research that have explored children and adolescent workers, work determinant conditions, and impacts on these youngsters' lives need to consider, to some extent, this theoretical assumption: the very notion that child work is not exactly a problem, but that it *became* a problem from a specific time on and under certain conditions.

That assumption indicates that we need to think of new ways of looking at the relationship between children and different types of work activities. In order to achieve this, we must delineate an appropriate theoretical framework, which will be found in the contributions of semiotically oriented cultural psychology.

Methods

This study initially aimed to investigate the meanings of work for children from different cultural contexts, including working and nonworking children, as well as children living in rural or urban contexts of different socioeconomic status. The investigation is characterized as a study of multiple cases (Yin 2004), in which we focus more profoundly on a few selected cases.

Originally, ten children and their parents were interviewed. Because we were interested in interviewing children both from urban and rural contexts, we made contact with a public school in the countryside of a city near Salvador (the capital of the our state) and also with an urban private school to find children willing to participate; we also had colleagues refer children who could participate in the research. Semi-structured interviews, characterized by childhood sociology as "conversation-interviews" (Saramago 2001) were used, investigating themes such as childhood, school, work, family, and future. The children were also asked to describe their daily activities in detail so that we could get acquainted with their routines. For this chapter, we focused on meanings that concerned *work* and *school* in childhood. These meanings belong to the participants' personal cultures because they are actively constructed by each person—and also by their parents, whose interviews, along with the children's, constituted the individual cases—in relation to more general and shared meanings from the collective culture.

Meanings in Between: Work, School, and Childhood

It is a well-debated assumption in the scientific literature exploring child labor that working children are usually deprived of basic children's rights, such as enough time and decent conditions to play, study, learn, etc.—activities that define a safe and healthy childhood. Naturally, these rights violations would be harmful to children, and social and health policies explicitly state that education is the most important thing in childhood—children must go to and stay in school, and they should be as far from the working world as possible.

Our specific interest in this chapter is to explore how meanings constructed around school (which would represent education as a whole) and work relate to each other. We refer to these as *core meanings*. They are categories of analysis built not only from the direct appearance of words and expressions related to work in the participant's speech, but also from indirect or less explicit information extracted from the researcher's interpretation effort, as stated by Gonzalez Rey (2005), concerning the interview itself or the child's account of his or her daily activities and opinions on other related matters. Gonzalez Rey (2005) claimed that the core meanings are created through the researcher's interpretative effort, in dynamic relation to the ideas and concepts that he or she builds within the theoretical approach that was chosen.

For each of the ten participants, four or five core meanings were produced concerning *childhood* and *work*. Along these many other distinct meanings that appear in the participants' speech, there are specifically three core meanings that draw our attention and make us rethink, in our point of view, the traditional position of educational context and also the status of childhood. These meanings were constructed by nonworking children, which already indicates that work is somehow present in their lives. They are described in the following sections.

Core meaning 1: Child work

The core meaning of *child work* was constructed by Claudio B. He is eleven years old and attends a private school in Salvador. He lives with his older sister, who is fourteen years old, and his parents Leila (44 years old) and Carlos (age not known). Carlos and Leila are both architects—she works in an architecture firm, in which she is one of the partners, and he is a professor at the state's Federal University. The family lives in an affluent area of the city. Claudio goes to school in the mornings and, in the afternoons, has soccer and English lessons.

This core meaning was constructed from the perception in Claudio's speech, which contained references to many activities performed by him: homework from school, domestic tasks (which he may do alone, such as tidying up the bedroom), and family activities (e.g., fixing the Christmas tree, baking a cake together). Some of these activities are closely linked to the acquisition of desirable behavior in the developmental process and stimulate children's socialization (Goodnow 1989).

However, the aspect that stands out in the report of these different kinds of work is that, for Claudio, there is work for a child, even if it is a more simple kind: “It depends on the type of work, because, if it is something too heavy that tires him/her too much, it’s not recommended.” He even says that one of the good things about being a kid is that he does not have the same obligations as an adult. Therefore, a child can work—but not in the same way or intensity that an adult does.

Core meaning 2: A job for each age

This core meaning was constructed through interviews with Claudio S., as well as his parents. Claudio S. (11 years old) attends the fifth grade of a private school located in an affluent area of the city of Salvador. Outside of school, he has soccer practice and tutoring. Apart from these activities during weekdays, Claudio S. performs a series of tasks and activities linked to the rural world (taking care of horses, manufacturing small objects, apiculture) on the rural property that his parents own outside the city. Claudio, who’s Claudio S.’s father, is a 65-year-old accountant who owns his own company; his wife, Silvia, is 47 years old and has the same profession, but at the moment she is looking for another kind of work. They both have older children from their previous marriages.

Here, work is seen as something that can be valuable in childhood for the boy. Once it is performed by a child or teenager by his or her own free will, it can be something fun. Even when Claudio S. refers to working children, he does not think of them in a generalized way: he says that there can be children who work and are happy or satisfied, if they are working because they feel like it in some way. Similarly, children who do not work are not necessarily happy. He considers himself as having fun when performing some jobs, particularly at the farm:

Claudio S. – cause, most of the times, that I’m not working, I don’t, they don’t tell me to work, I like it...

Lia – I see.

Claudio S. – get it? Then, most of the times you see me helping someone, for example, they were building a dam at the farm.

Lia – Yes.

Claudio S. – A new dam. Then, I was helping, when I’m helping, usually it’s not because they ask me, they put me there. It is because I want. Because I have fun in that.

Especially for Claudio S.’s father, it is important to work from an early age; because of that, he insists on “initiating” his son in a series of activities linked to life in the country, as we observed in Claudio S.’s description of his daily activities. If, for the boy, it is possible for a child to work, his parents add to that thinking, then this is something to be stimulated—as long as it is not “aggressive” for the child, reminds Claudio, meaning that it must be *compatible* with his age:

Claudio—It’s nice that the child works, and he should stimulate, encourage it... to work... if he has a study schedule, he has the time to study and some time to spare, why not help a little at that time, helping the family, if needed, or even for himself, his own achievement; to earn money to conquer something, to buy something...

To work under these situations, for Claudio S.’s father—who claims he also worked hard as child—is something considered to be healthy in childhood and makes the child learn a lot, no matter what the family’s financial situation might be.

Core meaning 3: School work

Isabela is a ten-year-old nonworking child. She lives in a well-located high/middle-class neighborhood of the city and attends, in the mornings, a respectable private school. She lives with her mother, Graça, who is 49 years old, and her father, João, 65. She is a therapist and he is retired from the work in a bank. João has an adult daughter from a previous marriage.

The first thing we must address for this core meaning built by Isabela is that there is, in her testimony, a diversity in the comprehension and definition of work. We claim that, as stated by Alves-Mazotti (2002), it is necessary not to view work as a homogeneous phenomenon—which could simplify causes or motivations, or even standardize the ways of intervention, when it comes to children and adolescent workers.

That said, despite not considering herself to be a working child, Isabela talks about activities that express meanings close to the ones that surround work. When the talk explicitly approaches this topic, the first evaluations are that work is not something suited for kids. This statement comes when Isabela looks at a drawing of a child sweeping the house floor. She completes her line of thought with the following, referring to the girl in the picture: “She should not be working because work is not something for kids. Our job is to study; and in order to have fun, she plays.” Therefore, in Isabela’s speech, there is a specific work for the child—and that is to study. At one point of the interview, she refers to work as having a job, and that studying is the child’s job.

Schools arises as the main institution that organizes her daily “scripts.” When Isabela describes her week, one can see her describing her school subjects in detail and how homework is done, as well as a “routine feeling” that is similar to the relationship some adults establish with their jobs:

Isabela – on Monday, I think this day is, sometimes very good, sometimes very bad. Very bad, because it is the beginning of the week, you can get lazy, but it’s good because at least you will see people that will be there for you, play with you (...).

Isabela – on Friday, that’s the coolest day of the week for us, (...) us students, because it is the last day of the week at school, you know; (...)

What is seen in these sentences is that the beginning and the end of the school week are marked with specific affective evaluations in Isabela's speech, while the other days of the week were described through the subjects she studies, and assessing these different subjects individually. During our talk, she referred to school in an always positive way. When asked about why Friday was the best day of the week, she explained that she preferred it not exactly because it was the last one with classes, but because it was the day of her favorite subject—art.

Final Considerations

The three core meanings analyzed in this article indicate that work is present, somehow, in the lives of children, even if they do not consider themselves to be working people. To conceive of notions such as “child work” or of jobs “appropriate” for specific ages orientates us towards another reflection: the fact that much of the research about child work considers the situations of paid work or serious exploitation of child labor—which leads social scientists to condemn the more visible kinds of work. Some situations reported in the literature include artistic child work in television and advertising (Melro 2010), children who take care of sick parents (Aldridge 2008), and other situations considered to be atypical work (Crafter et al. 2009); these may be invisible to society and to health and social policies, when, on the contrary, they equally demand our efforts toward understanding them.

The appearance of the core meaning of “school work” (which, in the broader context of investigation, emerged in the speech of three more children) shows, in Isabela's testimony, a complex (but not necessarily paradoxical) affective relation with school that is sometimes viewed with pleasure; other times, it is seen as an obligation or burden. In general, we observed, through contact with the participants, that children link school or homework to the notion of work itself. These data alert us to the assertion of child school work as one more kind of work (Qvortrup 2001), and lead us to sociological reflections that point at the school child as the new working child.

Studying children's school conditions in a state in India, Behera and Pramanik (2001, p. 155) reminded us that “the educational system represents a fundamental structural force in modern childhood”—an institution that “gives structure to the child's life, through the time he or she spends daily at school.” To compare the school child with the working child, as Qvortrup (1987) suggested, is a comparison of economical nature. This sociologist dedicated himself to understanding the economical importance of children's activities. He argued that, from a historical point of view, only the shape and content of what we call child work have changed: if up to the nineteenth century, children were occupied mostly with manual labor, today work encompasses the intellectual school work in which symbols, letters, numbers, and other abstract information are the “tools” with which boys and girls must deal on a daily basis (Qvortrup 2001). The author claims, then, that even children's mandatory school activities, as well as the cost of their presence in school, must be considered part of the economy (Qvortrup 2001);

Wintersberger (2001, p. 96) complemented this discussion, suggesting that the concept of work may be modified in a way that encompasses children as part of society's economically significant workforce. Thus, the core meaning *school work* refers to an institutionalized load to which children, whether considering themselves workers or not, are submitted; it is important to realize that it is a load they are aware of, and more, a load on which they can reflect. Moreover, Castro (1998) reminds us that childhood is naturalized through the practices that circumscribe it in modern days; from that, we understand—without questioning ourselves – that being a child means to play, go to school, live with one's family, be free from any responsibilities, etc. (1998, p. 36).

For that reason, it is necessary to study subjectivation modes in childhood or the meanings they give to their own experiences: if children are capable of thinking about their own lives, they are also responsible for operating changes in our society's political and cultural dynamics, reframing these changes from their own subjectivities (Castro 2001, p. 16). During this reframing process, it is possible that education and other contexts usually considered to be central to children's and adolescents' development and well-being might have to push their borders in another direction—and it is precisely because of these changing borders that we can talk about “in-between” meanings.

It becomes evident that microcontexts of development, such as family and school, are not only in close relation but have overlapping semiotic dimensions. For instance, if a boy believes that there is a job for each age, that belief is strictly linked to his father's understanding of the importance of work in a person's life—or even to the fact that he has worked hard as a child. It also concerns the highly organized routine of school activities, which may resemble the basic features of a job in the adult, “real” world. That is also why “real” is not an appropriate term here: when the developmental contexts overlap physically and semiotically, the child can build, for himself or herself, personal ways of dealing with and making sense of the surrounding environment—that is development, from cultural psychology's point of view (Zittoun et al. 2013). Ultimately, a meaning “in-between” becomes something as true as it can be.

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School Between Work and Family: A Study with Young People in the PROJOVEM Program

Olivia Maria Costa Silveira, Delma Barros Filho
and Ana Clara Bastos

Introduction

The general idea guiding this chapter is the notion of boundary as a privileged heuristic resource to think about and discuss issues related to intraschool and extraschool spaces. The school—a historically and socially relevant institution—has the property of housing interinfluences in its processes, in the sense that it responds simultaneously to its internal aspects, as well as with its practices, speeches, and different voices, and to the factors that are external to it, like the broader socio-cultural context, for example.

This way of putting the question—giving it spatiality—as it postulates a transition space between the school and its outside, comes from the idea of boundary zones, as defined by Marsico (2011) and Marsico and Iannacone (2012). It is a zone that can be characterized from the description of the cell membrane, offered in biology: with its characteristics of selective fluidity and permeability. Marsico (2011) quoted Rayner's (2011) work, emphasizing the interest in observing situations that happen in transition conditions. We consider that the adoption of this model enables the analysis that considers the school institution as a closed territory.

From that perspective, the study of psychological processes has as its focus the comprehension of the dynamics of the relationships established between people and their different contexts. Valsiner (2012) characterized human beings as eternal migrants, given our condition of continuous movement through boundaries—of

O.M.C. Silveira (✉) · D.B. Filho · A.C. Bastos
Federal University of Bahia, Salvador, Brazil
e-mail: oliviasilveira@ig.com.br

D.B. Filho
e-mail: delmab@gmail.com

A.C. Bastos
e-mail: anaclarasbastos@gmail.com

labyrinths of meaning that are created by ourselves and through social rules. Thus, the concept of boundary is presented as relevant to analyzing psychosocial processes because it enables us to explore the dynamics and the exchanges within the several life contexts in which human development occurs (Marsico 2011).

The experiences lived in school and in the family usually figure among the most significant in people's lives. Consequently, the crucial role of educational experiences in the self construction is highlighted. Each educational institution is the expression of a given culture and will tend to pass on, cultivate, and reproduce knowledges, beliefs, emotions, norms, and conducts according to the subjects' interpretations on the natural and social worlds (Iannaccone et al. 2012).

The self formation is polyphonic and dialogic in its origin, and it is related to collective meanings and social judgements of the culture the individual is inserted. The self organizes the different identities produced in the relationship with the other in several contexts: family, school, groups. This self's regulatory function also emerges in the educational context (Iannaccone et al. 2012). For that reason, we introduce the concept of educational self, which constitutes a specific dimension of the self—a process emerging from the I-Other relationship in the educational context.

Education is ultimately responsible for putting citizens in equal conditions of rights and opportunities, offering support to those who are disadvantaged in terms of their social and economic positions. In Brazil's social and economic context, the steps given towards school's universalization, or yet, towards the accessibility by the poor to school, were initiated during the military dictatorship with the invention of *1º grau* (result of the fusion between old *primary* and *gymnasium*); this intensified from the 1990s on, when it started to have the status of an action policy from the Brazilian State, with programs of accelerated learning and distortion grade/age correction (Silveira 2013).

Data from the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira–Inep, related to the access to basic education in Brazil, show that only 53.8 % of students conclude their education (Unesco 2008). Historically, in courses or programs dedicated to youth and adult education, withdrawal rates are even higher and the problem becomes more visible. Studies show that less than 30 % of the students of this teaching modality conclude the courses in which they enroll (Haddad and Pierro 2000; Freitas 2007; Oliveira 2007).

Before such an alarming framework, permanence in formal education cannot be considered a problem restricted to a few school units or emergency policies. Thus, it becomes an issue that has been motivating discussions and research in the Brazilian scenario. It is one of the main challenges of contemporary educational systems, affecting mainly basic education students from lower classes with a record of withdrawal, grade repetition and, consequently, a significant age/distortion. Emergency, remedial public policies are implemented with the purpose of raising these students' school levels, in an attempt to reduce the inequalities observed among Brazilian youngsters.

The National Policy of Young People's Inclusion (PROJOVEM) constitutes one strategy for reducing these inequalities. This policy is presented as a program that

covers young people from 18 to 29 years old, helping them raise their schooling level and conclude basic education, as well as supporting their professional qualification with initial formation certification, and planning and execution of public interest community actions.

Against that public policy's dimension and the complex social context in which it rises, this chapter seeks to identify what influences the permanence and conclusion of activities within PROJOVEM by these youngsters from the pedagogic alternative offered by the program in its peculiar condition of being a boundary between family and work.

The National Policy of Young People's Inclusion

In 2005, PROJOVEM—a program that sets the youth national policy with the slogan “Aprendizado e oportunidade para todos”—presented as its main principals the reinsercion of young people through basic education, professional qualification and community action with the purpose of promoting equality.

The program was initially designed for young people from ages 18 to 24 (at the time of registration) who had not finished basic education, had no formal employment relationship, and resided in one of the cities of the program. The program was modified in 2007 in terms of its extension and target population, with the implementation of Integrated PROJOVEM.¹

With a curricular structure focused on youth-related issues, the program started by dealing with more generic issues that encompass integrated formation. PROJOVEM educators go through a specific formation before (initial formation) and during (continued formation) their participation, and beneficiaries point to them as the great positive influence of the program.

According to Silveira (2013), until 2012 (when the coordination responsibility was transferred to the National Secretaria of Youth on the Ministry of Education), 491.500 young people were enrolled in 118 federated units, among 96 municipalities and 22 states. The gross rate of approval was approximately 36 % of the people enrolled and evasion rates were higher than 50 %. Thus, the program faced a serious evasion problem—a phenomenon faced by other programs focused on youth and adult education.

This study focused on young people who stayed in the program and concluded their activities, setting off against the majority of their peers and changing their own school trajectories. These youth deserve special attention to determine the possible influences that might have defined a new positioning of these subjects in relation to their educational formation.

¹The program integrated six youth national policies: Program Knowledges of the Earth (Rural PROJOVEM); Program Young Agents (Adolescent PROJOVEM); Programs Fabric Schools, Youth Consortium and Citizen Youth (Worker PROJOVEM) and Program PROJOVEM (Urban PROJOVEM).

Study Steps

The study took a qualitative methodological perspective, seeking to comprehend the phenomenon from the singularities already mentioned. Besides the documental analysis used for obtaining information on PROJOVEM, primary data were collected through semistructured interviews and focus groups made with participants of the program in three cities of Bahia: Juazeiro, Salvador, and Vitória da Conquista. The cities were chosen for two strategic reasons: (a) feasibility of access to the youngsters and (b) having groups of beneficiaries who had concluded the program in 2010, which was 12–18 months prior to the study.

The selection of participants was made according to the established criteria for research: young people who (a) had obtained basic education certification and professional qualifications after taking part in the program; (b) proceeded with their school trajectory, having enrolled in high school; and (c) were students of the program in one of the three mentioned cities. Twenty-six individuals who met those criteria were identified.

For each city, the methodology identified a collective event (focus group) and an individual one (semistructured interview) with the participants. However, not all subjects could participate in both events. From the total of 21 participants, 19 were interviewed and 19 participated in the focus groups, with the majority of them being present for both.

The focus groups enabled researchers to observe interactions within peer groups, encouraging discussions and reflections on their participation in the program and their impressions of it. In the individual semistructured interview, information about the school trajectories was sought, in particular the evolutions, difficulties, and coping strategies used by students to stay in formal education. Data from their families, expectations and ambitions, social and support networks were also collected.

Interviews and focus groups were recorded and transcribed. Later, answers were categorized and charted, as researchers looked for patterns in responses among participants. Another possibility of use of the collected data was the search for connections made by students themselves between their lives and the choices they made when they decided to keep on studying.

Analysis of the Forms of Relationships

Through the analysis of the information obtained from the participants, many differences were identified between those youngsters and others from contexts with similar difficulties. However, when we focus on issues related to their schooling processes, the singularity of their trajectories is soon apparent.

We acknowledge that there is a certain type of school organized for an ideal student, which is an abstraction made from a large number of students. Due to consequences related to particular life events, the study participants constituted a group of young people who left school at some point. This withdrawal from school

occurred for several reasons. The public policy exemplified by PROJÓVEM offers a pedagogical alternative that considers some of the peculiarities presented by the students within that profile. However, withdrawal from the program is still significant. As the young participants of the present study not only remained in school but also kept on studying, an understanding of their positions can be fundamental for comprehending the factors contributing to program adherence. With that purpose, we present an analysis of the data produced by the young participants.

In general, participants were young people from Bahia who lived in the state since childhood; they had an irregular educational trajectory, were of low socio-economic status, and had parents with little or no formal education. These factors produced, for these participants, a great age/grade distortion and early insertion in work activities, with fragile or nonexistent employment relationships. The majority of participants were female and older than 25 years. People with more than one child, who are married or in a stable relationship, were also common in the group.

In normativity terms, none of the participant had a life or school trajectory that aligned with the social expectations for developmental stages. Life and school stages were intertwined, constituting “adulthood during childhood/adolescence” and the occurrence of transitions that are normally expected during childhood or adolescence at later ages.

Male participants reported trajectories with less obstacles when compared to females, in the sense that they were single, did not have children of their own, and did not need to stop studying in order to help support their families. Despite that fact, the men also reported more failures at school than women, and they also link their failures to their late entrance in the educational system. To women, teenage pregnancy was viewed as the rupture within an expected course, provoking feelings of shame caused by the exposure of their sexuality when they were still teenagers and the consequent deviation from school:

[...] cause at that time I was 15... so I got ashamed of going to school. I was embarrassed, 15, pregnant... I got embarrassed, and after that, I lost interest in going. (Carla, Vitória da Conquista)

The reasons identified by females for interrupting their school trajectories are in line with the results of other research in the field. Besides teenage pregnancy, reasons connected to the need to work to help support families and constant address changes were also mentioned (Campos 2003; PROJÓVEM 2007, 2008; Mileto 2009). Practically all the youngsters performed paid activities since the beginning of adolescence; even the participants who did not receive money for their work were performing strenuous responsibilities in domestic chores and helped their parents in work activities.

I woke up in the morning, and had to do things at home, washing clothes, cooking [...] Yeah, cause she (the mother) was working, I stayed home, I had to. So that at 1 p.m. I went to school. Then, sometimes she also sold acarajé,² then I had to go to school and when I

²Acarajé is a typical food of African origin, sold throughout the city in bars and open-air-stands.

came back, I was supposed to have all the everything from the sale to take my brother to the bus stop, and then mom would arrive and start sailing. By then, I had no time to study at all. And everyday was the same thing. (Flávia, Salvador)

These data reinforce the idea that considers work during childhood to be a harmful activity. In addition to pushing the child away from school during the period in which he or she is supposed to get educational formation, it later increases the difficulty children have to be included in more valued levels of the productive process (Ferraro 1999; Marin 2004; Novaes 2006; Silveira 2009).

Most of the participants' parents were illiterate or had very little education—usually small farmers who tried their luck in bigger urban centers. When they had some education, participants' fathers completed more schooling than their mothers, and some of them did not approve of their daughters' education. This position illustrates an example of a sexist culture, according to which women should restrict themselves to their homes and caring about domestic chores, leaving external activities—school included—to the men.

When it comes to family sizes, most of them were large. Divorce cases were common, and the complete absence of the father figure was often reported—leaving the mother responsible for the whole family's financial support and education. This situation was echoed in the lives of the participants, increasing their need to enter the work world sooner than expected. Carvalho (2000), when reflecting on the kind of expectation presented by regular school regarding the students' families, claims that not only educational policy, but also the curriculum and pedagogical practices, subject family to school—assuming that students can count on parents at home who have free time and the ability to monitor their kids' schoolwork.

Therefore, facing these general considerations about the conditions of these students and their original families, and also the need for early productive engagement, leaving school seemed to be a necessary solution for these students. This necessity grows in its explanatory force when we examine the expectations presented by regular school. With the purpose of continuing this analysis, we will move on the next topic, in which we focus on the aspects related to the ways our participants dealt with the conditions fostered by the program.

How PROJOVEM Impacted Permanence

The PROJOVEM program has as its central axis the social inclusion of young people through education, in three dimensions: increasing the schooling level, with the conclusion of basic education; professional qualification at a basic level; and citizenship actions. Developing these dimensions, we believed that the beneficiary, then more prepared, would have more opportunities to be included in the work world, even through autonomous activities or those that demanded little qualification.

Among all the problems faced by the program, implementation of professional qualification was the most impaired and also most criticized by participants in all research on the program, as well as computer activities (Silveira 2009; Silveira and Barros-Filho 2010; Silveira et al. 2012). On the other hand, pedagogical actions toward the conclusion of basic education was the dimension that was closest to the program's original design. Participants' evaluation of their learning and the schooling dimension development oscillates between good (in the sense that this dimension met their expectations and made them learn) and weak (the participant thought that he or she did not learn enough). Here, we must keep in mind that the program accepts participants from all levels of basic education (from first to eighth/incomplete grades).

Structural aspects of the program, like the age limitation and the existence of specific coursework, were pointed out by the participants as important to their permanence. It was common to hear that, should they be offered that system as a public policy, they would chose the high school designed by PROJOVEM—that is, with a more limited age range, integrating schooling and professional qualification dimensions, with coursework focusing on youth-related themes, flexibility regarding their children's presence at school, and tolerance to the workers' schedule. The following excerpt illustrates that preference:

Look, I'll tell you something, before PROJOVEM, I used to think in a certain way, today I think different, you know why? During those Citizen Participation classes, I learned to exert citizenship, things I didn't do before. If I went into the market and looked at the price, and there was even a 10-cent difference, I wouldn't go for it. After I go into PROJOVEM, I learned this notion, there's a Law for everything... (Ana Paula, Salvador)

Another feature that was considered important to the permanence of these young people in the program was the financial aid. The R\$100,00 (one hundred *reais*³) received by frequent participants was not a decisive factor when they enrolled in the Program, but it helped with domestic expenses and, in some cases, enabled the participant to go from home to school or to eat something during their time out of the house.

As an inclusion policy, the program fulfills its role, in the sense that it enables the recapturing of these youngsters' school trajectories. Considering some of the numbers, high withdrawal rates are presented as a negative aspect of a PROJOVEM evaluation; however, a closer look at students who remain in the program allows us to observe an expanded effect, which reaches subjects other than the ones who are part of the initiative:

It is very important, I see the importance in the enthusiasm, because the mother or the father retakes their studies after a certain period away from school; it is very good, because you don't encourage only your children, but your relatives as well, you encourage your father, your mother. My father, mother and stepmother came to study at TOPA after my interest, because I encouraged them. (Graça, Vitória da Conquista).

³This amount represents approximately thirty-five dollars (\$35).

These mothers already think of their children's schooling process differently from their own mothers. In general, the female students' children had a regular school trajectory without age/grade distortions. Even mothers of teenagers did not report stories of interruption in their children's school trajectories, despite some repetition or learning difficulties, especially in the case of boys. The testimony of the participant above and next one also exemplify influences between family and school contexts, as highlighted in some research (Marsico and Iannaccone 2012).

Therefore, influences on participation in the Program and the transformation in these youngsters' educational self construction also extend to other generations through interaction within the family context, as the next case shows.

And the boy in the middle, who is nine years old, will go to the third year now. The little one is four years old, so he will be in the first period. They are at school (the children). The oldest, which is 10 years old, will enter sixth grade. Yes... me, I feel proud, it is something that, for me... when I was 10 years, I was in the first or second grade... (Carmelita, Juazeiro).

Although the structural aspects of the program have been often mentioned in a positive way by the participants, living with educators and colleagues was indicated to be the aspect of greatest importance to permanence and conclusion of this stage, as well as encouragement to keep on studying through high school and college. Students think educators make a big difference in PROJOVEM, as shown in this interview excerpt:

Then, at the Program, teachers... well, there's me and another colleague of mine, who is studying to be a teacher. Teachers say, the Portuguese teacher, Sóstenes. He used to say "Carmelita, why don't study to be a teacher?" I only say "I'll think about it, who knows? (Carmelita, Juazeiro).

Previous research has already pointed out this closed relationship between educators and students, as well as the positive influence exerted by teachers in the students' schooling process. In this case, the educator tries to ensure as much participation as possible:

[...] but I actually gave up at one point, I went to talk to a History teacher, and she: "Mari, don't give up, don't do that". Then, I said: "Oh, teacher, it is hard for me because where I live there's shooting, these things..." She: "Nonetheless, come whenever you can". Then, I: "no, I won't give up". Then, I ended up not giving up, I had that perseverance, I was afraid, but I kept coming. (Marineide, Salvador)

The school space has specific rules and structures which that to be understood and assimilated by students so that they can move smoothly throughout that ground. Considering school as a transition space, permeable to the influence of other contexts, allows psychological research to understand that, in the case of these youngsters, this understanding and assimilation process becomes more difficult with the long period away from school or because the youth accumulate negative experiences in the schooling process. That is, it is important to focus on the relationship established between students and the context, instead of considering the context as something that is simply there, apart from the subject that participates in

its processes. The fear reported by the participant in the following interview excerpt illustrates that reciprocal influence:

“Yeah, I thought I wouldn’t make it, I had this, “you will never make it, you have no education”. But I had this thing inside me, a willpower, you can. I would only miss a class if I was sick, because I arrived there at school before everybody else. PROJOVEM was like, I was supposed to start class at 7pm, and at 4pm I was already there! I helped the lady at the canteen, the cleaning lady, everything there. I helped make the food. “You are a good student”. (Suzana, Salvador)

Aspects linked to the space organization and some environmental stability were also mentioned by the program participants as encouraging and stimulating features, supporting the educational process and contributing to their permanence in formal education. The existence of “modules,”⁴ uniforms, a basic program to be fulfilled, the educators’ constant presence, and their commitment to the process were noted.

Conclusion

The main goal of this study was to identify aspects that influenced the permanence and conclusion of PROJOVEM activities, which is considered to be a boundary zone between family and work.

As approached by Marsico and Iannaccone (2012), the idea of a boundary zone enables an in-depth examination of that phenomenon when the researcher puts himself or herself in a position where it is possible to focus simultaneously on internal aspects (in this case, the PROJOVEM program—a pedagogical alternative) and on external aspects (the broader social-economic context, involving family and work). To illustrate this aspect, we cited some examples of reciprocal influence between these contexts.

First, we identified that the participants’ parents had not attended school or had attended only for a very short period. However, especially mothers stimulated their children to search for formal education. This information illustrates one of the ways through which family context influenced directly the educational self formation of these participants. Even though there may have been some positive influence from the primary family nucleus, the influence does not seem to have been strong enough to keep those students in school during their childhood and adolescence. In the studied cases, there seems to be an inverse relationship that affected the return of these students to the formal educational process, with a positive impact on their parents’ school life—leading them back to studying.

Another example that shows the feature of an interlacement zone is when conflicts among the three analyzed contexts were identified: school, work, and family. Due to the families’ financial difficulties and to the social-economic context characteristics, the children’s employment was needed to help support the family, and

⁴Way as the youngster refer to PROJOVEM’s courseware.

this was often a reason for interrupting studies. In this case, we observed tension in the relationship between the possibility to study, maintenance of the family's life conditions, and the need to work. Later on, school starts to be seen as an opportunity to improve work conditions and, consequently, families' lives. Therefore, there are reciprocal influences, because the work activity acts as a "fuel" to keep on studying and these studies enable the improvement of the families' life conditions.

Another form of expression of these reciprocal influences is when family context aspects, mainly pregnancy and motherhood, at first became reasons for interrupting studies and, later on, turn into incentive factors for trying to keep on studying. With that return, these mothers stand as examples for their children, who will be the sons and daughters of mothers who study. In addition, through their own learning, these mothers will be able to offer better conditions to their children.

Through the analysis of the data on the ways of interacting with these possibilities—be they offered by the program or specific to other domains of their lives—we have identified elements that we consider to be capable of contributing to the participants' educational self construction. Once we observe their trajectories, we progressively follow the youngsters' educational self construction, always interacting with work and family contexts. Regarding the notion of context, Mattos (2013) outlined a criticism to understanding context in a "traditional" way, externally located in relation to the developing person. We do not consider it necessary to summon other conceptualizations to refer to that notion. As we understand it, from a properly psychological point of view, the research participant relating to the resources at their disposal, or with the "external" conditions, in very personal ways, always guided by subjective interpretations.

Finally, we conclude with the idea that thinking about public policies on the education of poor youth in Brazil implies the need to consider a group of elements that encircle their realities. These are features of a present, contemporary time, but they also bring each person's singularity. Contemporary demands, globalized discourse, and the work world's new requirements trigger a resignification of the schooling process.

NOTES

1. Part of the arguments and data of this chapter were extracted from the dissertation of the first author: "O jardim dos caminhos que se bifurcam: um estudo sobre permanência e progressão de jovens egressos do PROJOVEM/PROJOVEM Urbano," Faculty of Education, Federal University of Bahia, 2013.

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Part VI

Conclusion

Borders in Education: Examining Contexts

Giuseppina Marsico, Virgínia Dazzani, Marilena Ristum
and Ana Cecília de Sousa Bastos

To take a cultural view of education does not really require constant cultural comparison. Rather, it requires that one consider education and school learning in their situated cultural context.

(Jerome Bruner 1996, p. X)

The research in educational psychology has often challenged the concept of educational context. According to the different theoretical frameworks, the construct of context, its borders, and the aspects to be taken into account have been defined in different ways. The objective of this book is to provide a context of discussion in order to rethink the relationship between actors, practices, and borders within the educational settings in the various currently thriving perspectives of cultural psychology (Valsiner 2014). The main idea is to focus on how teachers, parents, students, educators, and professionals, with their own identity and social representations, build their educational practices, share cultural spaces where knowledge is generated, and define the borders of the educational contexts (Marsico et al. 2013b).

Scholars coming from different parts of the world contributed to this volume with their own perspective to depict educational processes as complex phenomena, taking place both *inside* and *outside* the educational setting, but also *in between* them. In this direction, the notion of educational context acquires different

G. Marsico (✉)

Department of Human, Philosophic and Education Sciences (DISUFF),
University of Salerno, Fisciano, Italy
e-mail: pina.marsico@gmail.com

V. Dazzani

Federal University of Bahia, Salvador, Brazil
e-mail: dazzani@superig.com.br; dazzani@ufba.br

M. Ristum

Institute of Psychology, Federal University of Bahia, Salvador, Brazil
e-mail: ristum.ufba@gmail.com

A.C. de Sousa Bastos

Universidade Católica do Salvador/Universidade Federal da Bahia, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil
e-mail: anaceciliabastos@gmail.com

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proportions that are definitively wider than just the formal school setting (Dazzani and Marsico 2013).

This book stems from contemporary cultural psychology and represents an attempt to reflect upon the educational contexts as characterized by the inherent unity of both situatedness and generalizability in their relationship with other life spaces or microcultures.

Context: A Once and Future Concept

Borrowing the title of Cole's well-known work on cultural psychology (1996), we can say that the concept of context is an *evergreen* notion in the psychological field. The study of the entanglements between culture, context, and mind has been accounted for in very many different ways, having an impact also on how the educational contexts and the goals of the educational processes are perceived.

Looking back at the history of psychology, the context has been conceptualized as the stage on which the actor perform. In this line, the "contextual variable" might be understood as disturbing (like a noise) or as something to take into account for better understanding human action. Nevertheless, in any case it seems outside the individual thought somehow related to it.

This is the case of watsonian behaviorism's early proposal, which was clearly mechanistic. Later on, Skinner (1974) advanced the proposal to study the behavior-environment relationship and the notion of triple contingency, where there is a mutual influence between human behavior and environment. Therefore, it is a little progress toward a contextual behaviorism (Morris 1993) because it is guided by the stimulation produced by the nearest environment.

Because the person-context relationship has been always the very core of developmental and educational psychology, we cannot avoid jumping on the giants' shoulders. Both Piaget and Vygotsky took it for granted that development is based on the relationship between the individual and environment, but the way in which this interaction happens is totally different in the two models. Roughly speaking, in the Piagetian stages model, the specific developmental phase, based on neurobiological maturation, implies the activation of certain kind of individual process and activities (Piaget 1964). In this way, the context is adapted to the achieved mental level and, in general terms, to the rhythm of the development. The individual, in passing from one stage to another, interacts with the environment through a process of adaptation and accommodation. For Vygotsky (1994), instead, the context is part of the ongoing developmental process, pushing the border between where the developing person currently is and where he or she is not yet (but is likely to be) (Valsiner and van der Veer 2014). The much-discussed Vygotskian notion of the "zone of proximal development" well illustrates the crucial role played by the macro-social context (with all the constraints and the affordances) and by the Social Others, together with the person's own goals-oriented actions, in the making of a horizon of future possible knowledge.

Piaget and Vygotsky proposed two different conceptualizations of the context: the former was more focused on the mathematical and logical dimensions of the environments, while the latter was more centered on the social-cultural aspects. They consequentially led to different conceptualizations of the person–context relationship. As Bruner (1996) pointed out, emphasizing the physical context would encourage the logical-scientific thinking and its deductive and generalizable explanations of the reality. Considering the sociocultural milieu as the real promoter for any developmental process means, instead, highlighting the role of narrative as a way of thinking, which is a structure for organizing and making meaning in our lives in the concrete circumstances of a sociocultural context. According to Bruner (1990), context is the place where people, by interacting with others and participating in culturally organized social activities, construct their meaning of the world. Educational contexts at large, and school in particular, play a crucial role in the meaning-making process. They are institutionally entrusted to transmit knowledge, but also to provide young generations with concepts and tools for an active meaning-making process. Thus, education plays a central role in constructing the culture, having a strategic function in re-elaborating, reformulating, and transforming the actual system of knowledge in new *possible* worlds (Bruner 1986).

In this vein, the interwoven exploration of *culture and mind in context* is very central for any analysis of the cultural psychology of education.

Educational Contexts in Contemporary Cultural Psychology

Despite the wide consensus among scholars regarding the role of the context in shaping the human psychological functioning and the developmental processes, there are very few studies that have made the effort to define the context in itself (Dedios-Sanguineti 2015). The specific contribution of contemporary cultural psychology can be traced to the definition of the context as a medium for human development, where artifacts and practices mediate our experience and participation in the world (Miller 2008).

Yet, according to Valsiner (1987), context is a theoretical troublemaker. Any human action is context-bound, but the context is a whole and it is not easily and entirely available to the individual in a specific condition. The difficulties in defining the notion of context, overcoming its description in discrete terms, become even more theoretically urgent for those social institutions culturally devoted to guide the human development on the basis of specific goals' orientation. This is the case of the educational contexts—kindergartens, schools, churches, workplaces, football fields, local communities, etc.—which can promote various ways of social suggestions. As Tateo (this volume) pointed out, they prescribe how specific social settings have to be structured; what social discourses, practices and values are acceptable or not; and what people are expected to do at certain points of their life. In addition, the institutions frame our social lives in contiguous segments that are

distributed over time. They establish temporal bounded stages whose entrance and exit are rather rigidly fixed. For instance, it is expected to access the college at certain time and not at another, and it is expected to be out at certain point and not at another (Marsico 2015). So, the cultural framing of the human development is set up by institutions at large and by educational contexts in particular. The general directionality of these frames is quite easily specifiable, but the process and the concrete mechanism of such a social guidance remains to be explained.

According to the British sociologist Bernstein (2000), it would be possible to analyze the social suggestions within a school context by looking at the social structures of meaning, where the explicit-implicit-tacit encoding of suggested knowledge occurs (Daniels, this volume). In this line, the basic structure of the constraints in the educational setting can be seen in what is the (only apparently) ordinary stuff in the school entrance or the decoration of the school walls (Fig. 1), or in other objects that are part of the daily activity (Fig. 2). The psychological and symbolic organization of the school environment is one of the basic ways in which formal education works to guide the child's thinking and affect in expected directions (Valsiner 1989). School contexts are of primary importance to the reproduction of dominant social values (Branco and Lopes de Oliveira, this volume). The poster in the school entrance (Fig. 1) acts like a semiotic device and sets the stage for both social presentation of the institution to the others and the realities of insider practices. This form of semiotic mediation links together the school activities and the progressive internalization of the values promoted by the educational contexts.

This is even more evident in the collective school rituals through which the standardization and the homogenization of the children's socialization process take



Fig. 1 Primary school entrance wall's decoration (Salvador da Bahia, Brazil)



Fig. 2 Children in the collective morning prayer wearing uniforms and identity badges (Early Childhood Centre, New Delhi, India)

place. Daily activities, like early morning assembly for the collective prayer or for singing the national hymn, promote the sense of collective togetherness of the school while keeping the distinctions among the members (by sex, age, or social role) (Valsiner 1989). Figure 2 shows the dynamic of unification and differentiation in a collective morning ritual where the feeling of togetherness is emphasized by the daily action of praying and wearing uniforms (which, however, are different for boys and girls), while the personal identification of the student’s subjectivity is encoded in the identity badge.

These examples illustrate both some very basic mechanisms through which the educational context guides the development and the extension of the context as a whole (from the concrete to the generalized and hypergeneralized domain (Valsiner 2007).

Educational Context and Borders

Looking at the educational context through a cultural lens makes it evident how cultural meanings are embedded in the school environments, in their practices, and in their discourses (Ristum; Gomes and Dazzani; this volume). Even the children’s



Fig. 3 Children walking along the Moselle River (Remich, Luxembourg)

conduct outside the classroom is institutionally organized by the school. Figure 3 exemplifies the highly structured “walking along the riverside” of a group of young students, who must walk holding a rope and wearing fluorescent coats in the middle of a sunny day on a wide and empty sidewalk. The form of such organization eliminates even the illusion of being adventurously “out there”.

This extension, and the superimposition of the school rules’ system outside the formal institutional setting, raise the critical issue of the borders in the school–nonschool domain and between educational contexts (Marsico and Iannaccone 2012).

Moving the focus to the border: According to Herbst’s co-genetic logic (1995), the phenomenon and its context cannot be separated. They emerge, exist, and vanish together. When we draw a circle on a piece of paper, we create a triplet {outside↔border↔inside} and not one single thing (what we commonly label *circle* by focusing only on the inside of the figure). In this triplet, all of the parts come into being at the same time and disappear simultaneously if we eliminate the border. The “outside” is the inevitable context for the “inside,” and the border is what both separates and unifies them (Valsiner 2014). Borders create discontinuity and connection between two related fields, which acquire their signification through their relationships. This double function of borders is a crucial feature for treating the notion of “context-boundedness” in the cultural psychology of education (Marsico et al. 2013b).

At the most abstract level, we can assert the possibility of various conceptualizations of the borders between different discernible educational contexts, from a complete separation to permeable contact (in analogy with the cell membrane) to the existence of a zone in between co-existence and co-development in time—while sharing significant mutualities (Marsico et al. 2013a).

By looking inside and viewing outside the educational contexts, this volume offers a complementary understanding of the situatedness of the educational processes, overcoming the classical dichotomy of formal–informal education. School–nonschool domain is the cultural arena for analyzing phenomena occurring at the borders of family, school, workplace, and sports fields in contemporary society (Bastos and Barros; Omi; Lordelo; Wikeley and Apps, this volume), or the emergence of alternative spaces for education and intervention (Ferreira Santos, this volume).

Exploring the space in between educational contexts—the interstitial loci in our human experience—is the new frontier for the cultural psychology of education. The notion of borders will be heuristically even more central in future research because it is the concrete and symbolic place where the negotiation of institutional and personal goals occurs.

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