

## The methodological dimension of class: revisiting the pedagogical organization of teaching<sup>1 2 3</sup>

### *A dimensão metodológica da aula: revisitando a organização pedagógica do trabalho docente*

Luana Costa Almeida<sup>①</sup>

<sup>①</sup> Universidade Federal de São Carlos, Centro de Educação e Ciências Humanas, Departamento de Teorias e Práticas Pedagógicas, São Carlos, SP, Brasil. <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0664-6796>, [luanaca@ufscar.br](mailto:luanaca@ufscar.br).

#### Abstract

This article proposes a reflection on the methodological dimension in the organization of pedagogical work, resuming the debate on the constitution of the class and the place of the teacher-student-knowledge triad in the process. Mobilized by the report of a 4th grade teacher, it seeks about the place and role of methodological choices in the organization of teaching pedagogical work, assuming them as constitutive of the dialectic pair content/form. Far from presenting proposals or extolling the reported experience, the text seeks to problematize the contours that shape the methodological decisions of the class as a necessary reflection for the delimitation of teaching action, within the potentiality of what is conventionally called the creative unfinished teacher, inspired by Freire (1996). It is argued that by assuming critical conceptions, the teacher is invited to lead, with his students, a construction process that requires the opening to the unexpected possible which, unaware of the way, must be clear of destiny, opening up by the dynamics of the event. the multiple learning in the constant experience of new ways of walking, firmly grounded in principles and contents.

**Keywords:** pedagogical work organization, teaching methodology, class

<sup>1</sup> Responsible Editor: Adriana Varani. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7480-4998>

<sup>2</sup> Text normalization, preparation and revision: Leda Maria de Souza Freitas Farah - [leda.farah@terra.com.br](mailto:leda.farah@terra.com.br)

<sup>3</sup> English version: Claudia Doppler (Tikinet) – [traducao@tikinet.com.br](mailto:traducao@tikinet.com.br)

## **Resumo**

*O presente ensaio propõe uma reflexão sobre a dimensão metodológica na organização do trabalho pedagógico, retomando o debate sobre a constituição da aula e do lugar da tríade professor-aluno-conhecimento no processo. Mobilizado pelo relato de uma professora do 4.º ano do ensino fundamental, indaga o lugar e o papel das escolhas metodológicas na organização do trabalho pedagógico docente, assumindo-as como constitutivas do par dialético conteúdo-forma. Distante de apresentar propostas ou enaltecer a experiência relatada, o texto busca problematizar os contornos que dão forma às decisões metodológicas da aula como reflexão necessária para delimitar a ação docente, dentro da potencialidade do que, inspirado em Freire (1996), convencionou-se chamar de “inacabamento criativo professoral”. Defende-se que, ao assumir concepções críticas, o professor é convidado a protagonizar, com seus estudantes, um processo de construção que exige a abertura para o inesperado possível, porém, desconhecendo o caminho, deve ter clareza do destino e abrir-se, pela dinâmica do acontecimento, a aprendizagens múltiplas na vivência constante de novos modos de caminhar, firmemente alicerçados em princípios e conteúdos.*

**Palavras-chave:** *organização do trabalho pedagógico, metodologia de ensino, aula*

## What is sunscreen for?

It was a Monday after the Easter holiday, and in my planning we would do the initial conversation circle that would probably be animated because of holiday reports. Day activities included the circle, production of a collective text in which we would work on punctuation marks, which many children could not use properly, and a math activity aimed at developing estimation understanding. The circle activity started. There were really a lot of stories. Almost at the end of the activity, Joakim <sup>4</sup> – a student who had not yet arrived – entered the room, put his backpack on his desk and sat down in the circle. I asked him the reason why his face presented redness for sun exposition, and the boy replied that he had traveled with his grandmother – he doesn't live with his parents – and there was a swimming pool where they have been, where he played all day long. Concerned, I said he should use sunscreen. Immediately he asked “What is sunscreen for?” From a practice inspired by Freinet, I put the question to the circle, from which the hypotheses were formulated and recorded by me in the book of life. Then, and because we couldn't find a consensus, we decided to conduct a research. The non-refuted hypotheses were recorded and the necessary elements to be researched were listed. After dividing the class between the different possibilities of investigation, the research started. In addition to the answer about the use of sunscreen per se, curiosity about the sun arose. I knew I would have to address the solar system, it was in the 4<sup>th</sup> year annual planning; then, we saw the content in advance. However, the surprising element was the unfolding that this reception had... From making the solar system, and while we were enjoying the collective work produced, another question arose: “Do the planets look exactly like this in the sky?!?” Talking about the question led us to new hypotheses and other questions... Suddenly, we were wrapped up in notions of cartography, content also planned for the 4<sup>th</sup> year, and the reason why the human body, for them, could also be mapped,... for the study of the location of the major organs in the human body... Research permeated by systematizations ...by me and texts produced collectively and in groups for the elaboration of the “albums” of our research. We worked for months with a lot of content on science, geography, Portuguese, mathematics and art... Because, even though there is a specialist teacher for this content in the state network, this is a dimension of human expression that cannot be missing in an activity inspired by Freinet.

---

<sup>4</sup>Fictitious name inspired by the character of the children's book *Ei! Tem alguém aí?*, by Jostein Gaarder, which help us understand the potentiality of questions.



**Figure 1. Collection of images and written report for a workshop on pedagogical practice – 4th year class of Elementary School, State School in Campinas-SP, 2009.**

Source: Teacher's personal collection

What does it mean to organize the class pedagogically? What are the factors involved in the adopted boundaries? What constraints constitute the process of building teaching work? What is at stake when we choose one path or another?

Reflection on the organization of pedagogical work is essential to think about the class and its implication in students' training and, consequently, in our teaching formation. The paths chosen, however, should not be detached from the desired objectives, from the contents and skills to be developed, and from constant action evaluation.

What to do when faced with a question posed by the student? Should we answer it from a well-known teacher place, ending the search for information, or open space for other possibilities, seeing the student as a protagonist partner in the process and ourselves as tireless revisitors to our actions and planning? What determines one or other option? What makes us choose one or another way of walking?

The narrated situation explains much more than a lived experience: it indicates conceptions that support teaching action. From the initial interaction with the students, the affection with which one looks and advises, to the reception of the question posed and the instrumental organization of the class, what is being configured is a scenario in which there is no space for fixed plans and ready answers. Action development is a process and opens up to different possibilities. However, would it be powerful enough to train students?

Believing in the potentiality of the event is what allows the action to take place, supported by a mastery of the curriculum expected for the school period and by the conviction in the horizontal and dialogic teacher-student relationship. Teaching competence and professionalism are non-negotiable.

The protagonist role played by the students, capable of researching and understanding, through inquiries and teacher's mediation, the contents already expected for their school year, among others, does not happen to the detriment of the teacher's role. Teacher's primary role is to organize the pedagogical work in the classroom towards the desired objectives. This teaching action, in general and particularly reported in the experience taken as a trigger for reflection in this article, is only carried out in one way or another because it is supported by specific conceptions of man, education and society – not always, however, clearly delimited.

Far from defending a spontaneous action, we seek to affirm the potentiality of there being room, in the organization of the pedagogical work, for a safe improvisation, which only occurs with the mastery of what is planned and the work support bases, without losing sight of its constituent elements: Objective/Assessment and Methodology/Content. An improvisation that, therefore, does not mean “dancing according to the music rhythm,” but perceiving in the

musical notes that the possibility of new steps arise, uniting what was foreseen with what was made possible by the unforeseen, by the event, without missing a beat.

The class, thought of as a process not necessarily of one day, but of a desired construction of knowledge that has variable and variant time, is not an event without roots, and its manifestation, even if not completely planned, should have a clear perspective of objective. As the paths that led the 4<sup>th</sup> year class to study cartography or the human body, contents already objectified by the curriculum, the methodological paths that lead us to achieve a certain pedagogical objective are varied. As long as we do not lose sight of where we intend to go and which elements are essential in this construction (objectives and contents), at the risk of never being able to arrive, the path possibilities (methodology/form) are countless, with the definition of the path delimited and marked by the concepts that support the action.

In this sense, far from presenting proposals or praising lived experiences, this article seeks to problematize the contours that shape the methodological decisions of the class as a necessary reflection to delimit teaching action. Within the potentiality of what we call creative teacher incompleteness, inspired by Freire (1996), we defend the need for the organization of pedagogical work to be analyzed from the elements and conceptions that give it contour and breadth, in a teaching practice that is constantly (re)built.

Resuming the debate on the constitution of the class and the place of the teacher-student-knowledge triad in the process, we hope to investigate the place and role of methodological choices in the organization of teaching pedagogical work, which should be directly related to the contents that give it meaning, at risk of their emptying. We defend that, when assuming critical conceptions, the teacher is invited to lead, with the students, a construction process that requires openness to the possible unexpected. However, although the teacher does not know the path, the destination and the inputs they needs to seek should be clear, and they should open themselves up, by the dynamics of the event, to multiple learning in the constant experience of new ways of walking.

## **1. Thinking about the constitution of the “class” process: conceptions that reveal and potentiate outlines**

Although places of multiple relationships, the school, in general, and the classroom, specifically, carry the undeniable mark of being spaces where teaching and learning take place, and the teacher has an essential role in the class dynamics. As in the report initially recorded, it is up to the teacher to choose the way in which they will conduct the process and, therefore the role that, in the class dynamics, students and themselves will play regarding knowledge.

When the teacher talks to the students and accepts the question: “What is sunscreen for?” there is the dynamic routing of several events in class: more than exemplifying a possibility of experiencing the teacher-student-knowledge relationship, she explains, in her choices, some conceptions that support her action. In this sense, asking about the place occupied by the different elements that participate in the teaching-learning process, how the different conceptions influence the relationship established between them, and how this process unfolds in the classroom, its conditioning and facilitators, is essential for reflecting on the organization of pedagogical work at school.

Teaching and learning, taken as the essence of what the class would be, do not happen in isolation or without their constitutive elements. Thinking about teaching and learning requires reflecting on the role of the teacher, student and knowledge, questioning, as Smolka (2008) resumes, both the subjects of action and the objective means and conditions they have to develop the teaching-learning process. As the aforementioned author rightly argues, questioning “Who/Teaches/What/To whom/How/Where” and, on the other hand, “Who/Learns/What/For what/How/Where” is an essential task to understand and intervene in the teaching-learning process, in the organization of pedagogical work in the classroom.

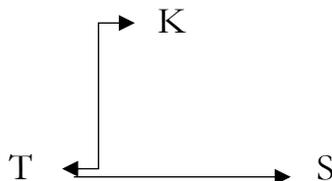
As discussed elsewhere (Almeida, 2017), the analysis of the place occupied by Teacher, Student and Knowledge in the teaching-learning process at school brings us closer to the questions posed by Smolka (2008), insofar as, depending on the conceptions that support the action, the nature of the process and that of the roles played will be very different. Starting from the schematizations proposed by Pino (2004) to think about teaching and using the typology

constructed by Saviani (2009) in relation to pedagogical theories, we infer that, even though constant in the different perspectives, the aforementioned triad is positioned and related in different ways, depending on the conceptions that underlie the process. If guided by a non-critical conception of education, would the 4<sup>th</sup> year teacher be open to the students' questions and hypotheses, concerned with resuming and constructing syntheses? Would the content to be worked be proposed based on the students' investigation process, but grounded on what is defined by the curriculum as important? Would the teacher be open to changes in the school program, addressing subjects in advance and postponing topics?

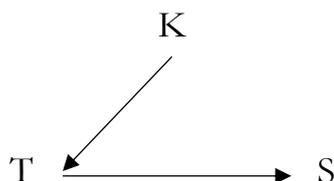
In general, in non-critical theories teacher and student do not establish a partnership relationship in the construction of knowledge. Although different, the partnership is limited also in the New Pedagogy proposal, even if by the attempt to make the students' autonomy possible. Briefly, we could say: in Traditional Pedagogy, Teachers take the role of transmitting content; in Technician Pedagogy, they transmit it, but with a focus on the rational organization of the media, and in New Pedagogy, they have a supporting role in the access to knowledge by Students.

Although the concepts that support Traditional, Technician and New Pedagogies present fundamental distinctions in the roles of Teacher (T), Student (S) and Knowledge (K) in the teaching-learning process in the classroom, as illustrated in Figure 2, we could say that they share the focus on the school interior. They do not consider external influences and relationships, and not even the classroom, to think about its organization.

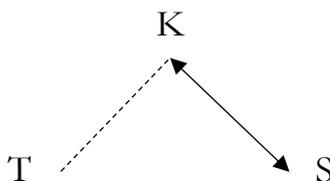
In Traditional Pedagogy, the Teacher accesses Knowledge and transmits it to the Student, without the latter accessing it directly.



In Technicist Pedagogy, the Teacher does not access Knowledge directly, which is already formatted by manuals, and transmits it to the Student, who does not access it directly either.



In New Pedagogy, the Student accesses Knowledge directly, without Teacher's directive action.



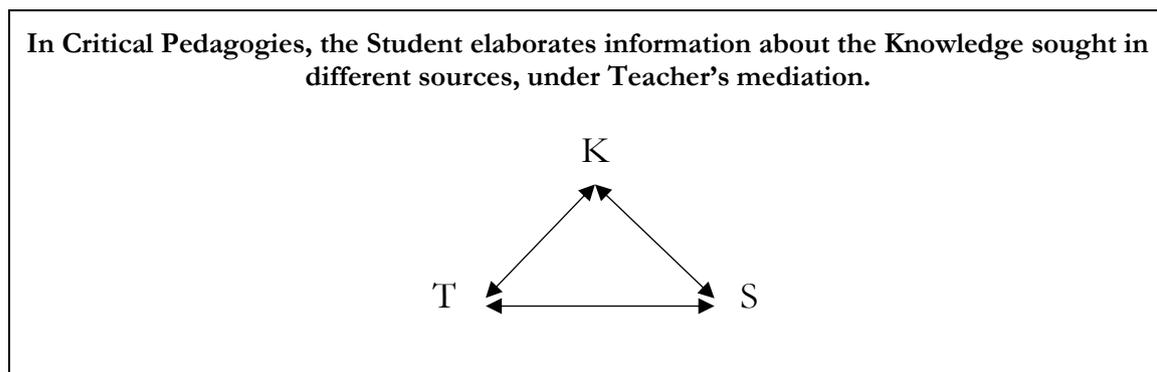
**Figure 2. Teacher-Student-Knowledge Relationship in Non-Critical Pedagogies.**

Source: Own organization from Pino (2004) and Saviani (2009), mentioned by Almeida (2017).

In Critical Theories, unlike the non-critical ones, Teacher-Student-Knowledge relationship gains a new configuration and refers to a relational look, as illustrated in Figure 2. The teacher becomes the student's partner in the construction of certain knowledge and seeks to understand and act beyond the specific context of the classroom and school, which, unfortunately, is not evident in the described report. Even though the teacher is concerned with the construction of syntheses and the observation of the objectives set, it is not evident whether

her action allows for a critical reflection on school-society relationships, made possible by the topics studied: Would sunscreen be accessible to all citizens? What were the dilemmas and clashes that delimited the process of cartographic definition of territories? Are Brazilian indigenous peoples satisfied with the proposed delimitation for the nation? How did/do political and commercial relations influence the delimitation of territories? Etc.

Questioning of relationships and problematization of what is apparently natural and without conflicts are part of a more autonomous and critical formation. Even with important differences in the propositions elaborated by different authors, depending on the theoretical approach and the methodological proposition admitted, critical tendencies assume the importance of the mediation of the Teacher (T) in the process of construction of Knowledge (K) by the Student (S), considering the school-society relationship, as illustrated in Figure 3.



**Figure 3. Teacher-Student-Knowledge Relationship in Critical Pedagogies.**

Source: Own organization from Pino (2004) and Saviani (2009), mentioned by Almeida (2017).

The relationship established in the different conceptions has a direct impact on the teacher's action, since they will organize their work depending on how they see their role and the meaning of learning and teaching. Thinking about pedagogical action with a view to the teaching-learning process implies, therefore, mobilizing conceptions that establish limits and possibilities of action, encompassing the conceptions of society, man, school and world, which are not always clearly stated but that impact the decisions taken, especially the way the teacher will plan their action.

Limited by the report and without the possibility of a better and deeper understanding of the topics and approaches given to them by the teacher and her students, the fact is that the beauty of the unfolding of narrated events seems to us undeniable, even if they raise the problematization of their limits in a fair way. Thinking about the organization of the pedagogical work revealed by the teacher in her report allows bringing out its potential and, at the same time, to ask about its limits, indicted in the narrated being silenced.

Rethinking the approach to content, as well as the dynamics proposed in class, seems essential. In the report, it is evident the understanding of the need both for horizontality in the relationship and for student's protagonist role in actions, at the same time that we can infer the need for a greater openness to social issues and reflection on the contents. It is not any topic or subject that immediately leads to the critical and broad educational formation of the human being. Being interesting and motivating is not enough; the didactic proposal needs to have a link with the present and future life of those who attend the school, at the risk of not allowing a lasting and enhancer learning of human beings with social action in their environment. It is not enough to give students space in the classroom; it is necessary to accompany them in the leading role in the paths of knowledge.

Certainly not being subject to isolation, teaching work is conditioned, even if not determined – as Paulo Freire (1996) beautifully reveals – by external factors and the objective conditions in which it develops. Reflection in action becomes an essential aspect for the development of new movements and openness to new actions. Mastery of content and political-pedagogical discussions by teachers is an essential aspect.

However, whether due to the conditions of professionalization, to the organization and structure of schools and systems, or to historical, social, economic and cultural issues of society and the population served by the school, teaching work is a highly complex activity, requiring meticulous planning to be coherent and powerful. However, it should not be confused with the immobilization of action, since the predisposition to the event does not occur to the detriment of what was planned and the mastery of historically produced knowledge, but it is possible in a safe and productive way precisely because of them.

Freitas (1995), when analyzing the organization of teaching work and considering all the complexity that shapes it, makes an analytical proposal to think about the constituent components of the process from a more dynamic point of view. The author highlights the

dialectical pairs “objective-evaluation” and “content-form,” proposing them as inseparably linked, in which they influence and determine each other. It is in the whole constituted in the planning put into action that one can potentially have a more productive class organization.

In this perspective, the methodological decisions within the planning are constituents of the teaching-learning process and are closely linked to the objectives and contents, and also inevitably to the forms of evaluation, present in teaching action. Guided by the concepts that underlie it, even if it is not always aware of this, its proposition will have the contours defined from those notions and the objective conditions for the development of the work (Smolka & Laplane, 1993). Hence the crucial need for teachers to reflect and elucidate their view of the world, man, society, school and teaching-learning process and to know the reality and objective conditions of their work, in order to be protagonists in action, knowing and defining where they want to arrive.

It is not appropriate here to return to the denunciation of the emphasis given, in Technician and New Pedagogies, to the methodological dimension of planning, for the adoption of methodological instruments, respectively, rationally efficient or more attractive and that increase students’ autonomy, but it is important to highlight that our reflection takes a critical perspective in approaching the issue. In this approach, although the methodological dimension is essential to the organization of the pedagogical work and we are very pleased with the development of the class narrated by the 4<sup>th</sup> year teacher, this dimension only makes sense in relation to educational objectives, to content choice and to the feedback of the evaluation processes, within an action focused on and committed to the social reality and the formation of critical subjects, with their own thinking.

The methodology of teaching work, without neglecting its constitutive dialectical pair “content,” is a strategic dimension to think about how to approach the contents within the teaching-learning process in the search for a fairer public school, with a social commitment of adopting the educational formation of each and every one, in their different characteristics and personalities. Would the students of the 4<sup>th</sup> year class who experienced the sequence of events reported by the teacher and another class that followed the textbook (and as a primary task performed exercises on the topics covered by the book) be similarly exposed and inclined to the construction of important knowledge for their formation? On the other hand, were the contents treated by the teacher adequately proposed and addressed in order to allow students

to appropriate the knowledge historically produced and essential for their instrumentalization as critical subjects of their own thinking? We think that as part, and not the end of the pedagogical work organization, methodology occupies an important place in the reflection on the class. Its coherent delimitation, thought of in the specificity of childhood and without neglecting the contents that give it shape and limits, seems to us to be an essential dimension to guarantee better school processes.

Paro (2007, p. 14) argues that learning is the result of an act of will that only the subject can have. “If the student does not want to, learning will not take place. Now, ‘wanting to learn’ [emphasis added] is also a value cultivated historically by man and, therefore, a cultural content that needs to be appropriated by the new generations, through the educational process.” We will not advance in our teaching methodologies without considering this premise: “students only learn if they want to,” and “want” is a cultivated value. Therefore, teachers should also be concerned with ways that encourage students to have this willingness to learn, thinking and proposing actions that make them want to learn or, with regard to children, that make them continue to want to learn.

“Wanting to learn” has a direct relationship with “what is learned,” and not only with “how it is learned,” as Snyders (1996) well postulates when defending joy at school, considering the centrality of historically produced knowledge essential. What one wants to learn will necessarily be linked to the scope and instrumentalization of action for life. Thus, content and methodology play an important role as inseparable parts in the organization of pedagogical work. And, as content, we do not limit our gaze only to the so-called disciplinary knowledge, but also to the skills at learning, to the values and issues that are of interest, when starting and ending each learning process and the important elements for students’ critical formation.

As “wanting to learn” is stimulate by the content, the choices of contents, as well as the way in which they will be proposed and transmitted, will need to be well defined and will help the teacher in their own formation as a professional... If the curriculum has this openness and the methodology favors working with these “differences in approach,” we enhance the formation of a teacher who gives rise to their students “wanting to learn.”

Shulman (2005) argues that teaching work implies a field of knowledge that can be systematized and communicated to others. For him, the teacher should have mastery of the content at three levels: knowledge of the content itself, curricular knowledge of the content, and

pedagogical knowledge of the content. These different levels imply decisions not only about what will make up the planning in terms of content for a particular purpose (objective), but also about the best ways to approach it. When assuming the different contents, there will be diversified strategies appropriate to the role they play in the culture and in the students' lives, and methodological decisions are essential for their appropriation to be effective.

Assuming that the conceptions that inform teaching action are elucidated, the objective clearly demarcated and the contents related to that objective seriously chosen, it is necessary to design an action plan methodologically so that the teaching-learning process takes place, having as a glimpse the most appropriate ways to favor learning by students, considering what Paro (2007) proposes – that it is the teacher's task to make the students want to learn. As there is not a single way to reach the same objective, nor a single way of walking, it is essential to analyze the concrete conditions that we have in relation both to the recognition of the group of students with whom we work and to the material resources and time and space that are available or capable of being operationalized. Many times, methodological paths are chosen in a wrong way, as choices do not take into account the characteristics of the group or the resources that are available to carry out what was planned.

Upper and middle-class urban children will be more predisposed to some knowledge and have some different skills from children from the cities' periphery, and they will also be different if they live in rural areas, from one or another social class. These constitutive differences, observed in one group and in another, will not be less important in the teaching-learning process.

Children necessarily need to be evaluated a priori in each school year, so that the teacher knows who they work with and how their students are in the development of their learning. We don't educate those we don't know. In this great complexity of human beings and their social relationships, it is essential to know the group with which we work in order to make possible links and desirable choices

Social classes imprint different skills and predispositions to school learning, neither more nor less important in relation to the others, but it becomes impossible to give rise to "wanting to learn" and effective learning for all if they are considered equal. Teachers are frustrated in their constant search for powerful tools that can be used by any students and in any situation: the infamous "recipe for success." Mistakenly and overcome by

the discouragement of the failures of standardized work and aimed at a specific model of student, they frequently end up convinced that children from the lower classes learn less and with greater difficulty than those from the middle and upper classes.

Accepting all this complexity when thinking about the organization of pedagogical work is essential. As highlighted by Veiga (2008, p. 269), “the class is made up of a complex system of meanings, relationships and exchanges that occur in a social scenario that defines learning demands.” Objective, content, methodology and evaluation, permeated by what was announced by Veiga (2008), have to be thought of articulately and, preferably, collectively.

Imbernón (2011) highlights that, although teaching has always been complex, considering the social, economic and technological changes nowadays, this task has become even more difficult. This is true, especially if we include, in the equation proposed by the author, the drama experienced by the teacher who is divided between planning their work based on the recognition of advances in educational discussion or based on the need to guarantee an increase in large scale external evaluation rates.

On the one hand, there is the analysis consolidated in the pedagogical field that the peculiarities of child development and the recognition of the school as a space for the various dimensions of the human being require an organization of teaching work that contemplates more than students’ cognitive development and encompasses other forms of work, with artistic expression being recurrently cited as an essential aspect. On the other hand, there is the demand for results measured mainly through standardized tests that focus on a specific and minimizing matrix of competences and abilities in relation to the school’s curriculum matrix.

Making decisions and, if it is the teacher’s option, facing the logic imposed by the managerial perspective, currently assumed by the State, requires courage and firm conceptions. As each school has a special and specific way of conducting its daily life and organization, as well as positioning itself and responding to the questions and challenges presented, it is essential that the teacher strengthen themselves in this collective body so that their decisions and actions are not isolated and, consequently, have a greater scope in the student training process. However, this also requires the search for partnership in the school collective body. It is not included in the report, but probably the school in which what is narrated takes place is open to the way the teacher organizes her class and, perhaps, could be a partner in the construction of this work.

Methodologically, proposals that are anchored in a pedagogical line adopted by the school have the advantage of sharing decisions, conceptions and actions, which greatly favors the work developed. Among others and with very different foundations, we could mention the so-called constructivist, Freinetian, Montessori, and historical-critical perspective schools, for example. This aspect, however, does not make collective work unfeasible in schools without a clearly defended perspective, but with a political-pedagogical project negotiated, built and adopted by the school collective body.

Such a political-pedagogical project, to be built collectively, should have a relationship of coherence among everyone who works, and it is the commitment of each teacher to maintain a dialogic and trusting relationship between their peers, so that there is formation of the collective body, which will influence the planning of classes and in students' training in a decisive way. It is not enough for us to close the door of our classrooms and work; it is essential that training be thought of in its different dimensions and taken on by the school as a whole.

Even though it is often unavoidable, the teacher's isolated work in the classroom brings a greater complexity to the action and makes several processes unfeasible. It does not allow collective exchanges or organizations of instruments and materials, nor mechanisms that facilitate the organization of work, such as spaces, actions outside the classroom and schedules. It does not allow shared reflection processes, essential in the daily work of teaching, and does not favor a more comprehensive training of those involved.

## **2. Thinking about the constitution of the “class” process: the methodological dimension of the class**

Present in the popular imagination, thinking about a class leads to the image of a classroom with a teacher, students and didactic resources for working with disciplinary content (Sanfelice, 2014). However, it could be better represented if we included movement in this mental image and diversified the possibilities of occupying the space. Understood as the unfolding of events involving these subjects, resources and contents, but manifesting in multiple organizational forms, the class does not have only one format.

In addition to observing the 4<sup>th</sup> year teacher's report brought to trigger our reflection, when analyzing the reports the Pedagogy course trainees at a public university in São Paulo in the years 2015 and 2016 in two internship disciplines, we observed different forms of class organizations. Even frequent, the infamous expository class, when students copy and develop activities and without evidence of a contextual planning that considers the subjects and the reality, gave room for other reports.

The description, by the trainee teachers, of diversified methodological manifestations in the classes they followed was recurrent. Sometimes more focused on form, other times too concerned with hierarchical disciplinary content; some visibly committed to the group and the specific reality, others reproducing models taken from manuals and/or websites – the truth is that we can no longer label the class so uniformly from a single organizational form.

Whether through the diversification of spaces and times, or through adoption of different and multiple didactic resources, the methodological dimension of the class, the most visible aspect to external observers, has been presented in different configurations and allowed the trainees to reflect on the potentialities and limits that it carries. The different activities, the different contents mobilized, the spatial-temporal organization in the classroom and in other spaces of the school, and the way of relating to the students, allow us to capture different ways of organizing the pedagogical work for the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process.

When we tried to elect some of the manifestations reported by the trainees as encouraging, we saw general traits emerge in the posture of the host teachers that, except for the absence of a report on an attempt at partnership, are interestingly also present in the report of the 4<sup>th</sup> year teacher:

- They made reference to planning (either in comments with the trainee, or in the links made with other activities and with planned or foreseen contents).
- They showed concern for the students, what they thought, how they felt and what they knew about the subject being dealt with (including, for some reports, the visible mediation of the teacher in moments of students' work and feedback about their learning process).
- They sought to make the students active (proposing activities with the students' performance).

- They opened space for dialogue, allowing exchanges between them and the students, but also between the students themselves.
- They related the disciplines in an interdisciplinary way (although sometimes just juxtaposing the contents).
- They sought partnership with other school professionals (recurrently the art teacher or teacher of the same school year).
- They proposed different ways of organizing the space: inside the room itself, changing the desk arrangement, or outside it, especially the patio, library and computer lab.

Recognizing the link between the methodological dimension of pedagogical work and the definition of ends in direct articulation with the teacher's conceptions, a powerful planning cannot neglect the means of effectuating what is objectified and the contents that give it organicity. The characteristics observed in the trainees' reports allow us to infer that the methodological dimension should include, in addition to the dialogic posture and the horizontal relationship between teachers and students, a serious treatment of the contents and the proposition of activities, considering the pertinence of a certain didactic sequence, which use diverse resources and spaces, focusing on the student's development process.

Form and content are parts of the same dimension, without which there will be no formation of a critical human being with their own thinking. Immediate and everyday knowledge should not be neglected, but knowledge historically constructed as constituents of the teacher's pedagogical planning is essential. Everyday knowledge can be the starting point for the work and should constitute the methodological choices of the class, but it should never be seen as a point of arrival. We should start from the particular, because it is concrete, without simplifying it, in order to uncover reality and understand it from different angles, going beyond the relationships immediately apprehended.

The enthusiasm of proposals that enchant the children and the teacher but that do not lead to an effective encounter with historically constructed knowledge should open space for proposals capable of enchanting, at the same time as effectively training, encompassing powerful and essential content for human formation. More than a beautiful and pleasant way of using class time, we should be able to professionally organize our work in a beautiful, pleasant, and formatively powerful way.

In the trainees' reports and reflections, the experiences of four students in classrooms where the teachers developed projects that encompassed several activities, at different times and spaces, were the most praised and positively evaluated, one of them including a visit to the zoo for observation and classification of animals according to the taxonomy studied in the class. However, the experiences with different work proposals, such as production of collective text, use and development of games, involving especially mathematics and language, and the elaboration of a "book" with the texts produced by the students in the retelling process of a children's story, also deserved to be highlighted.

In the different strategies adopted by the teachers from the place they occupy in the classroom, other ways of giving the class and allowing events to contaminate the planning seem to emerge without losing sight of the contents and the curricular organicity. I wish all ways were all within a well-constructed planning and with intentionality demarcated by informed reflection of practice, taking reality in the construction of connections with political-social issues and having clarity about the conceptions that support them.

We cannot be naive about this, but we should be able to feed our pedagogical optimism a little, thinking not only that there are powerful manifestations in schools, but also that the initial training that we seek to build with our future teachers will allow us to multiply such experiences. Even in difficult times like the one we are experiencing today, with managerialism in education and a conservative turn in society, let us be creative in the pedagogical construction of our action and resolute in the theoretical-political training of teachers.

And here it is inevitable to think about the potential of our creative teacher incompleteness. Guided by the understanding of human incompleteness of Freire (1996), we recognize the teacher as an unfinished professional who, dialectically, has in their incompleteness their greatest creative potential to truly become a teacher. Being a teacher is only fulfilled, and always provisionally, in the relationship with the students and in the experience of the ways of the class.

As recorded in the phrase attributed to Bertolt Brecht, "as regards obstacles, the shortest distance between two points can be a curve." It is from the "obstacles" on the way that we creatively build new ways of walking, which often require us to make curves. It is in the teacher's creative potential at school, the teachers' potential in training and ours potential as teacher educators that we can feed this pedagogical optimism which considers turning curves possible.

When talking about human incompleteness, Paulo Freire (1996) allows us to think of teacher incompleteness as the greatest potential we have to become fully professors. In our professorial incompleteness, seeking the utopian “finishing” to become fully teachers, we are creatively building new ways of being and relating at school and with students, creating new curves to avoid obstacles that are not possible to drop immediately.

In the relationship with the students, based on the objective conditions that we have and having a clear understanding of where we want to go, we build our action theoretically and methodologically. The methodological dimension of the class does not end its constitution in itself, because by its side and inseparable is the content that shapes it. Thinking about this dimension requires seeing it as constitutive of the organization of pedagogical work as a whole, which, in turn, should always be thought of in its relationship with the school and society.

## Last words

*“No, I have no new path. What I have new is the way of walking.” I learned (the path taught me) to walk singing as it suits me and those who go with me. Because I’m not going by myself anymore.*

(Thiago de Mello, 2009)

The 4<sup>th</sup> year teacher is not an example of how to conduct the class – she is, on the other hand, an example of how to open up to the unexpected, without losing sight of where you want to go. It is an example of unfinished and imperfect beauty, but creatively constitutive of the attempt at professorial completion. The epigraph reminds us that the essential thing is to walk differently. In the creative teacher incompleteness, we can re-signify forms and re-edit paths, provided that there is fundamental clarity regarding where we intend to arrive, from what principles, together with whom, with what instruments available, and what content historically produced we want to develop.

How? This really has to be built along the way and from the definition of what needs to be built. There is no planning really committed to reality and to the subjects participating in the process that does not reserve space for the event, the unpredictable, the unexpected, the unavoidable... We have several tools that help us, already created and used in different ways by

so many others before us. Knowing and sharing experiences and proposals is essential, not as a model, but as a tool.

On the other hand, it is also not possible to think about form without delimiting its constitutive content. It is in the safety of those who improvise, without falling into spontaneity, that we can make our planning alive and use productively the tools we have. Knowing where you want to go and having security based on a competent knowledge of the curricular and pedagogical knowledge involved in the action allows for this improvisation. Like the dancer who improvises because they master the steps and can dare with them, having the necessary knowledge not to get out of step, the teacher will be able to take advantage of the unexpected, the event, to build their own way of walking, shared with their students.

## References

- Almeida, L. C. (2017). A Didática na formação de professores: espaço e contribuição. In S. A. Siquelli, J. L. Sanfelice, & L. C. Almeida (Orgs.), *Fundamentos da educação: compreensões e contribuições* (vol. 1, pp. 177-194). Navegando Publicações.
- Freire, P. (1996). *Pedagogia da autonomia: saberes necessários à prática educativa* (23<sup>a</sup> ed.). Paz e Terra.
- Freitas, L. C. (1995). *Crítica da organização do trabalho pedagógico e da Didática* (7<sup>a</sup> ed.). Papirus.
- Imbernón, F. (2011). *Formação docente e profissional: formar-se para a mudança e a incerteza* (9.<sup>a</sup> ed.). Cortez.
- Mello, T. (2009) A vida verdadeira. In T. Mello, *Melhores poemas de Thiago de Mello* (Marcos Frederico Krüger, Sel.). Global.
- Paro, V. (2007). *Qualidade do ensino: a contribuição dos pais* (3.<sup>a</sup> ed.). Xamã.
- Pino, A. (2004, set./dez.). Ensinar-aprender em situação escolar: Perspectiva histórico-cultural. *Contrapontos*, 4(3), 439-460.
- Sanfelice, J. L. (2014). Sala de aula: intervenção no real. In R. Moraes (Org.), *Sala de aula: que espaço é esse?* (22.<sup>a</sup> ed.). Papirus.
- Saviani, D. (2009). *Escola e democracia: teorias da educação; curvatura da vara, onze teses sobre a educação política* (41<sup>a</sup> ed.). Editores Associados.

- Shulman, L. (2005). Conocimiento y enseñanza: fundamentos de la nueva reforma. *Revista de Currículum y Formación del Profesorado*, 9(2), 1-30.  
<http://www.ugr.es/local/recfpro/Rev92ART1.pdf>.
- Smolka, A. L. B. (2008). *A criança na fase inicial da escrita: a alfabetização como processo discursivo* (12.<sup>a</sup> ed.). Cortez.
- Smolka, A. L. B., & Laplane, A. L. F. (1993). O trabalho em sala de aula: Teorias para quê? *Cadernos ESSE*, 1(1), 79-82.
- Snyders, G. (1996). *Alunos felizes: reflexões sobre a alegria na escola a partir de textos iterários* (2.<sup>a</sup> ed.). Paz e Terra.
- Veiga, I. P. A. (2008). Organização didática da aula: um projeto colaborativo de ação imediata. In I. P. A. Veiga, *Aula: gênese, dimensões, princípios e práticas*. Papirus.

---

### **Submission data:**

*Submitted to evaluation on January 8th, 2020; accepted for publication on May 28th, 2020.*

**Corresponding author:** Universidade Federal de São Carlos, Centro de Educação e Ciências Humanas, Departamento de Teorias e Práticas Pedagógicas. Rodovia Washington Luis, km 235 - São Carlos – SP, 13565-905, Brasil