

# The practices of pedagogical divestiture in school Physical Education

*Thiago da Silva Machado\**

*Valter Bracht\*\**

*Bruno de Almeida Faria\*\*\**

*Claudia Moraes\*\*\*\**

*Ueberson Almeida\*\*\*\*\**

*Felipe Quintão Almeida\*\*\*\*\**

**Abstract:** It investigates the divestiture of the Physical Education (PE) teacher regarding his pedagogical function, by using the methodology of life history and the study of ethnographic case. It also studies elements involved in the production of a school culture. The data produced is analyzed from three categories: a) PE as a curriculum component: does the school also divest? b) difficulty of operating the mediation between theory and practice; c) sports as content of Physical Education classes.

**Key-words:** Teachers. Conflict. Professional Role. Sports

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\* Undergraduate degree in Physical Education by the Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo (UFES). Member of the Laboratory of Studies in Physical Education (Lesef/CEFD/Ufes). Vitória, ES, Brazil. E-mail: thiago.m\_ef@hotmail.com

\*\* Professor of Physical Education. Full Professor of the Center of Physical Education and Sports (CEFD) at Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo (Ufes). Doctor by the Universidade de Oldenburg (Alemanha). Member of the Laboratory of Studies in Physical Education (Lesef/CEFD/Ufes). Vitória, ES, Brazil. E-mail: valter.bracht@pq.cnpq.br

\*\*\* Undergraduate degree in Physical Education by the Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo (UFES). Member of the Laboratory of Studies in Physical Education (Lesef/CEFD/Ufes). Vitória, ES, Brazil. E-mail: brunimfaria@hotmail.com

\*\*\*\* Undergraduate Degree in Physical Education by the Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo (UFES). Master's degree in Education by the Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (CED/UFSC). Member of the Laboratory of Studies in Physical Education (Lesef/CEFD/Ufes). Vitória, ES, Brazil. E-mail: cea\_moraes@hotmail.com

\*\*\*\*\* Undergraduate degree in Physical Education by the Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo (UFES). Master's degree in Physical Education by the Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo (Ufes). Member of the Laboratory of Studies in Physical Education (Lesef/CEFD/Ufes). Vitória, ES, Brazil. E-mail: uebersonribeiro@terra.com.br

\*\*\*\*\* Undergraduate degree in Physical Education by the Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo (UFES). Doctor in Education by the Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (CED-UFSC). Member of the Laboratory of Studies in Physical Education (Lesef/CEFD/Ufes) and of the Studies and Research Center in Education and Contemporary Society (CED/UFSC). Vitória, ES, Brazil. E-mail: fqalmeida@hotmail.com

## 1 INTRODUCTION

One of the phenomena which most calls the attention in the present panorama of the pedagogical practice in Physical Education (PE) in our schools is that many teachers reduce their action to observe their students in the field while they perform activities that they themselves have chosen or, then, those which are possible due to the type of equipment and existing material (almost always football or futsal, dodge ball or even volleyball). In some contexts, those teachers are known as *ball teachers* and, in others, as *roll-ball teachers*. They are pejorative expressions used to characterize (and cartoonize) the practice of PE teachers who, because of a series of factors, many times, are reduced to the act of distributing educational materials to students and sitting under the shade to, for example, read the papers. Although this character is very much present (maybe more and more), this phenomenon is still very little studied, attributing *the blame*, in a simple way, to the teachers themselves (lack of commitment; lazy/indolent; shameless etc.).

In an attempt to better understand this episode, we observed a field work (ethnographic case study) aiming at identifying/analyzing possible factors implied by this assumed posture from the teachers regarding their pedagogical practices. From the perspective of valuing the so called micro-structures and listening to what the school agents have to say, we elected, as a guiding principle, the qualitative investigation. Still from the methodological point of view, the history of life, in its sociological perspective (BOGDAN; BIKLEN, 1994), was used with the aim of reconstituting the professional *career* of the subjects, looking forward to emphasizing the role of organizations, of significant events and the presence of other people who may have significantly influenced in shaping their own definition of themselves and of their perspectives in life and in their work, drawing, so to speak, the several positions, the stages and the ways of thinking of individuals along their professional lives. It is worth highlighting that we use the term

*career*, with the objective of designating the several positions, the stages and the ways of thinking of individuals along their lives (HUGHES, apud BOGDAN; BIKLEN, 1994).

We tried, as well, to cross the information with the other elements involved in the production of *school culture* (FORQUIN, 1993) where the investigated teachers were inserted. This strategy proved to be very fruitful, because the reflection on the school culture consists on the understanding that school subjects “[...] carry to concrete time-space of school their history of life, the marks of their original culture, their interests, their dreams, their passions, their shortages [...]” (VAGO, 2003, p. 213).

The visits to schools happened twice a week and the work took eight months.<sup>1</sup> We used a field diary, participant observation and the thorough interviews as the main techniques of data production. After each visit, the observations were recorded in the field diary and the interviews (recorded in audio) were transcribed afterwards. In this text, we bring some conceptual elements and perspectives of analysis produced from the discussion of one of the cases we studied: the one of teacher José.<sup>2</sup>

## **2 THE PEDAGOGICAL DIVESTITURE: BETWEEN THE CLASS AND THE NON CLASS**

Establishing a definition of the term pedagogical divestiture, from the determinant elements of this process, is a difficult task and it demands care. During the studies of review of literature, we confronted a series of concepts which pointed

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<sup>1</sup> We made contact with the studied teachers thanks to the indication of a worker from the Secretaria Municipal de Educação da Serra/ES (also a Physical Education teacher), who suggested to us, the schools where we could find teachers with the characteristics that we call state of divestiture. The teachers, after knowing about the project of research, agreed to contribute with the investigation.

<sup>2</sup> The name is fictitious. It is worth highlighting that the case we showed makes, together with other case studies, a broader research, started in 2007, and it is still going on. Five research groups in PE belonging to different institutions, three from Brazil and two from Argentina, took part in this investigation.

to the phenomena. Such definitions always show it as a product resulting from tangled factors connected to each other, which allows us to classify it as a multifactorial character phenomenon.

The inspiration for the use of the term divestiture comes from the taxonomy by Huberman (1995). According to the model adopted by this author, the teacher is going through a *stage* of divestiture, present in the final periods of teaching career, in which their work loses centrality in their lives. We assume this model as a *tool* which helps us to think (an ideal type), without allowing it to make the professional and personal life of each teacher stuck in closed and regular categories. An expression of that is the fact that we, unlike Huberman (1995), face divestiture not as a *phase*, but as a *state*, which distances us from an understanding of the phenomenon as something endowed with a certain chronology or linearity. In the specific case of PE, the divestiture, that is qualified as pedagogical by us, would correspond to those cases where PE school teachers remain in their job posts but they abandon their commitment to the quality of teaching work.

Thus, the questions which we ask point to the direction of knowing to which extent it is possible to conceptualize the state of divestiture. Such issue becomes more pertinent, mainly, when we think that the establishment of a concept, with strict outlines, could lead us to make methodological mistakes, particularly concerning the field work. The idea assumed, then, was to establish a dialogue with the empirical world from a broad characterization of pedagogical divestiture, to be used with flexibility, rigor and confronted with the reality. We would avoid, then, any terminological limitation caused by the selectivity created by a theoretical *pre-concept*. Therefore, based on our studies and regarding the research field, it was possible to establish the first considerations about this phenomenon.

The teacher we have called in a *state of pedagogical divestiture* is the one whose practice receives denominations such as *roll ball and/or shade pedagogy*. Usually, this teacher is found in states where no great pretensions with his practices are presented; maybe the greatest pretension is of making their students busy with some activity. They are often, converted into simple managers of teaching material, activity which, in principle, does not require higher education. Other times, they assume a posture of compensating the students' boredom produced in other disciplines (such as Mathematics, Portuguese etc.). Another outstanding characteristic which we found during the observations is that, as a consequence of this *lack of dedication* or of this *lack of intention* with the pedagogical practice, what is noticed is the configuration of a phenomenon that we can call *no class*. In a rudimentary way, this *non class* may be characterized when: in the time-space designated/reserved for the pedagogical practice of the teacher to occur, that teacher does not interact in an objective-intentional way, depriving the students from the possibility of having access to learning the specific content and/or to the development of a determined ability. This space can usually be misunderstood with, still, some other moments when the students are simply having fun (break or free time), without any direction from the teacher with pedagogical intentions of learning.

In a study related to this one, González and Fensterseifer (2006, p. 739-740) tried to establish criteria which would allow us to identify/characterize the concept of class, which helps us in the definition of the opposite process (the *non class*). Hence, the authors define the class as: a) a live phenomenon; b) provided with intentionality; c) the learning and/or development sought are fundamentally for all students in the group; d) the class happens when it performs its role in a project that articulates the work in medium and long term; e) a class supposes, by the teacher, a mediation project of that knowledge which their students are intended to build and/or of the capacity that is intended for the students to develop.

Still according to the above mentioned authors, the class, as a live phenomenon, assumes that this moment is configured as plain with unexpected situations, capable of surprising the teacher. But this does not exempt the teacher from a previous planning. In what regards intentionality, the teaching action should be based on a reflection about what will be proposed, as well as the search for the whys. Hence, sought learning and/or the developments are fundamental for all the students in the group. Therefore, taking part or not in the class should not be simply the student's choice, which does not mean the interest of students should be ignored as an important factor to boost their participation.

A class happens when it plays its role in the project that articulates the work at medium and long term, i.e., the class cannot be understood as an isolated phenomenon, which does not demand continuity, aiming at an effective learning. A class supposes, by the teacher, a mediation project of that knowledge that is intended for the students to build and/or of the capacity that is expected for the students to develop. This is evidenced in the way the teacher favors students being involved with the “*object*” of work, aiming at boosting learning.

Finally, we highlight that our understanding of the *state of pedagogical divestiture* is guided by the assumption that the pedagogical practice should be understood as a construction that involves, among other things, the beliefs, the motivations, the tensions and the achievements that come from the human education of those teachers. To this end, understanding the phenomenon implies, also, evaluating how the projects of personal and professional life of those teachers and even the work environment are articulated.

### **3 THE CASE OF TEACHER JOSÉ: STRIKING ASPECTS OF HIS PEDAGÓGICAL PRACTICE IN A SPECIFIC SCHOOL CULTURE**

Teacher José was born in the countryside of Minas Gerais, where he lived until he was 15 years old. He always studied in public schools, having a degree in Physical Education by the Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo, in the year 1987, in a curriculum known, currently, as *traditional-sportive* (BETTI; BETTI, 1996). Since he graduated, he has acted as a school PE teacher, which, in his understanding, is very tiring. Currently, he divides his time between the work at the school (to be more exact, José works in two schools: the first one refers to the institution where we developed this study; the second concerns the school where he complements his work load), in the municipality of Serra/ ES, and as an instructor in a Municipal Program of Exercise Consultancy Service (SOE), in the neighboring city (Vitória/ES).

The school where the research was developed is situated in the municipality of Serra/ES. It is an old State school which went through the process of shifting to municipal administration and that, as some of the staff say, still suffers from some adaptations and problems due to this process. Currently, it looks after 242 students and counts on 17 teachers and 21 employees. Concerning the structure, it can be characterized as a small school: having a low number of classrooms, it does not have a multi-sports court (there is a patio in the school which was adapted to become a futsal court), the library is in an adapted space (which, to a certain extent, makes the work with the collection difficult) and the informatics room has not been installed yet, due to the lack of an appropriate room. On the other hand, there is some woodland which offers several possibilities for work. It is in this space where, usually, the volleyball net can be seen set up between two trees for the PE classes.

According to the school principal, the problem with violence has hit the neighborhood and, consequently, the institution. During some visits, this could be very clearly observed, mainly when some young boys would jump the school wall and resisted when requested to leave. Something which also affects the school is the existence of many prostitute houses in the neighborhood.

In general, we may also say that, during the study, it was not possible for us to notice the existence of large scope relationship conflicts between the pedagogical team and the school teachers or even among the teachers themselves, to the point of causing an unfavorable environment for work. This does not imply, necessarily, that they have a great affinity among themselves or, even, that they are satisfied with the work the colleagues have been accomplishing. After all, there is some dissatisfaction from the school with the work of teacher José.

When she learned about the research project, she was very much interested in the study and she said that it would be great if I chose her school, because the teacher does not teach (School PRINCIPAL – field diary).

Teacher José is kind of at the end of his career, but he is a great person. It is only that he is a bit tired, but you shouldn't take his classes as an example, not for someone who is starting like you, no (School COORDINATOR – field diary).

Are you training here? (I answered no, I said that it was research. She continued): Oh, yes. Because training with that teacher is of no help. He is hopeless (School SECRETARY – field diary).

We noticed, also, that it was very difficult to implement a group work in the school:

Look, it is something we have been trying to implement, but it is very difficult. We know that it is important, but, in a certain way, the



teacher's culture of wanting to work more individually is very ingrained. From the 1st to 4th grade we can even do something, there are always meetings, but from the 5th to the 8th grade it is more difficult. But there is, for example, a planning meeting at the beginning of the year where we sit to talk to the teachers about what we intend to do that year, to tell the new teachers how the school works (School PRINCIPAL – interview).

Regarding PE, a journey to the core of the daily school life made it clear how the discipline is discredited as compared to the others. This is because, despite the constant complains from the members of school about the way the teacher José conducts his classes, it can be noticed that the charging is not so emphatic. And moreover, the school intends to change the teacher, but it is not clear about which the pedagogical function of this curriculum component is. The pedagogue herself says that she has not been “closely” following the discipline, although she has received from the teacher his course plan:

Well... I have to watch José's class, I have to talk to him again. I have not talked much to him; the coordinator has talked to him more than me. But I am going to talk to him about this, because I don't know much about it. I know what he sent to me here in the project, but, sincerely, I am not very well informed. You know, you came here to ask me about this and I am a little... I don't know! I need, really, to be reviewing that thing (School PEDAGOGUE – interview).

Something which makes the situation worse is the fact that the PE teacher works in three different places (two schools and a module of exercise counseling), making difficult, therefore, his involvement with the weekly planning, the group meetings, the making of the Pedagogical Policy Project and the other activities which happen in the school. One has the impression that, for the school, PE teacher attendance and punctuality, besides the fulfillment of the

bureaucratic activities, and the filling of roll call for example, is enough. Teacher José himself highlights this:

It is natural for the management to charge. It is those punctual things: attendance, frequency and you have to be in front of the students to avoid something unexpected happening. What is required mainly is attendance really, to be present in the work place, which is mandatory, of course. Then, the rest is the rest (TEACHER JOSÉ – interview).

When observing his present teaching practice, we may say that José's PE *classes*, in the investigated institution, differ very little from the free activities undertaken by students in the break and free time spaces. The main difference is in the fact that the material is not available for students as most of the time it can only be accessed for PE classes. The class dynamics is always the same: the students come out of the classrooms and are free to do whatever activity is convenient for them. Many of them chose, even, not taking part in any activity, spending all the class time talking to other colleagues or doing homework for other disciplines. This situation also makes complex the task of checking if there is any type of planning, as, at no point, is any proposition or accomplishment of an activity observed that involves all the group of students. What is noticed, therefore, is that, at the time of the class, teacher José behaves just as a manager of the teaching material. For him, the PE function is “[...] to enable the students to have contact with the sports, as, more often than not, they don't have this opportunity in other spaces” (TEACHER JOSÉ – interview). He states, moreover, that PE may provide knowledge beyond the body know-how, but that he does not work with this perspective.

Finally, we stress, as a characteristic of his work, the absence of a coherent evaluation, because the teacher does not follow all the students during the classes (as they are spread throughout the school), besides not taking notes of absent students. According to our description in the field diary,

Suddenly, the PE teacher leaves the teacher's room and goes to a student from the 8th year to ask her for help regarding the filling of the roll call. The issue was to know which students, among those with a name on the roll call, were still coming to school. Afterwards, he talks to me to say he would go to the 6th ° grade to do the same.

## 4 UNDERSTANDING THE PEDAGOGICAL DIVESTITURE

From the empirical material confronted with the literature, we made an option here to contribute to the understanding of the do pedagogical divestiture phenomenon for Physical Education teachers with the construction of three great categories. The effort which follows is a first approach, given the complexity of the phenomenon under study.

### 4.1 PE AS A CURRICULUM COMPONENT: DOES THE SCHOOL ALSO DIVEST?

PE is, according to the National Law of Education Guideline and Basis (LDBEN), i.e., Law n° 9.394, from 20th December 1996, modified by the Law n° 10.328, from December 2001, a mandatory curriculum component. Despite the lawfulness, in effect for more than a decade, it is worth asking if PE school teachers, as well as the other school agents, know clearly about the pedagogical conditions of such component. What has our research evidenced?

We could observe, during our field work, that the school and the teachers themselves have a very diverse understanding of PE from that which the academic production in the area has been building. There is still a huge gap between the recent theoretical advances of PE as an area of knowledge and the pedagogical intervention in the school context (CAPARROZ; BRACHT, 2007). As it was already evidenced before, the practice with characteristics of pedagogical divestiture is the object of several complaints by the members of the school

pedagogical team. The problem, however, resides in the fact that, at no point was this charging turned towards the pedagogical function that the discipline (as a curriculum component with content/knowledge to be taught) should fulfill. At best, what was heard from the pedagogical team were phrases of the type: “PE is in the school to add up, to help the school work, be it in the discipline or the behavior issue” (field diary). I.e., we noticed that the school has a vision about the pedagogical function of PE that is very distant from the perspective which understands it as a curriculum component with knowledge to be thematically transmitted and which is configured into that which has been called the corporal culture of movement.

To this end, it may be possible to think that there is, from the part of the school, some difficulty in noticing that PE can offer another type of pedagogical contribution. We might, still, propose an inverse question: in case this *perception* exists, to which extent is the specific knowledge of the discipline valued by the school?

We would like, thus, to call the attention to the fact that the school, in some opportunities, when it does not give PE the status of school discipline mediator of knowledge, it may become difficult, due to this lack of knowledge, to produce quality pedagogical practices. It is based on what we have been describing that we understand the following reflection to be pertinent: it is common to hear that this or that PE teacher shows a practice with pedagogical divestiture characteristics (they receive the denomination of *roll-ball*), but which is the part the school plays (of a specific school culture) in this process? Wouldn't the school cultures be depriving from meaning this pedagogical practice and, with this, favoring the pedagogical divestiture? Which postures, attitudes and knowledge does the school demand from the PE teacher? What does the school seek to ensure that students will learn in PE classes? Or, simply, may we ask: does the school also divest?

#### 4.2 THE DIFFICULTY OF OPERATING THE MEDIATION BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE

During the observation work, a very pertinent question would be about the relationship established by the teacher taking part in the research with the academic production in the field. The notion we had was that the teacher had some difficulty and, sometimes, rejected dealing with the so called *theoretical* knowledge (present in more recent literature) built in the area. The interviews and the established dialogues, during the period of field work, showed that the reaction expressed by this teacher may find its origin, among other things, in the kind of initial education that he went through. The teacher in question had his university degree in 1987; his education can be thus characterized:

The *traditional-sportive* curriculum emphasizes the so called 'practical disciplines' (especially sportive). The concept of practice is based on the execution and demonstration, from graduate students; of technical abilities and physical capacities (an example is the 'practical' tests, where the student needs to have a minimum physical-technical performance). There is a division between theory and practice. *Theory* is the content presented in the classroom (whatever it is), *practice* is the activity in the swimming pool, court, track, etc. (BETTI; BETTI, 1996, p. 10. Emphasis added).

We can notice some difficulty for the teacher to conceive the relationship between theory and practice in a different way from what he experienced in his initial PE education. There seems to be, mainly, a large difficulty in promoting, in the intervention, the mediation between those aspects (theoretical and practical). For José, there is the understanding that, the moment he is in the court with his students, he primarily mobilizes the acquired knowledge through the practical disciplines with which he was in contact in his initial education, as well as the knowledge accumulated

along his career. Regarding the disciplines of pedagogical character studied in his initial education, José gives them a secondary character. According to him, the teaching of those disciplines was superficial, because there were no practical classes, which made learning difficult.

In some way, the dichotomy between theory and practice nourished by the teacher collaborator of the study and the difficulty in noticing contributions from different knowledge to his practice help us to understand his aversion to theoretical knowledge produced in the field in the last few years. An expression of this is the fact that teacher José and the school itself have difficulty in expressing clearly what the function of PE curriculum component is. There seems to be an understanding (from the school and from the teacher) that the theory, in Physical Education, corresponds to those teaching moments of the rules in the classroom, using the board or similar resources, reducing the PE conceptual knowledge to those aspects:

[...] PE is in the school to add up, to help the school work, be it in the issue of discipline or of behavior. and it is not only to play; it must have theory too. Teaching about the rules, I remember that when I did PE, I had the theory part too (School PRINCIPAL – interview).

I am not, particularly, very much in favor, I am not very theoretical no. I prefer to do really [...]. I think that it is a waste. The student already receives a lot of theory. They already live a lot in confinement. They live in a bench education all the time, and we spend our precious time bothering the other people with theory, with talk (TEACHER JOSÉ – interview).

We understand that the lack of understanding about the specificity of the PE curriculum component, together with the difficulty in operating the mediation between theory and practice, is directly reflected in the way the teacher guides his pedagogical practice. Thinking specifically about the question

of pedagogical divestiture, we could also evaluate to what extent such difficulties would not promote a feeling of helplessness in the teacher or even of disbelief in what he says about the open possibilities (in a contextualized way) of the theories/of pedagogical approaches.

With the difficulty in understanding what has been proposed by the Renewal Movement for the teaching of PE, teacher José is closed to any kind of dialogue or learning (for example, in the meetings of continued education) concerning the issue. We noticed, therefore, the creation of a kind of resistance by this teacher, a movement of self-defense. It is also worth mentioning the hypothesis that this teacher has a biased reading of some aspects contained in the pedagogical proposals that deal with the subject. This is the case, for example, with sports, a practice which, from his point of view, justifies the presence of PE in school. The teacher, when he does not develop his classes by teaching the techniques/of sportive skills, a practice which was spread in the 70's and 80's of the last century, ends up leaving the classes totally *lose*, leaving even, the work in the traditional perspective of teaching.

#### 4.3 THE SPORT AS CONTENT IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES

Teacher José attributes to sport a huge character of self-sufficiency, to the point of arguing that the sportive practice is the culture dimension that justifies PE in the school. After all, many PE teachers are seen as good by the school, when they are able to win championships. This seemed clear to us, both in the interviews and in the dialogues as well as in the observations during the period of research. We noticed, moreover, that teacher José treats both (PE and sports) as if they were equivalent, i.e., he does not promote any distinction between sports and PE.

Look here, I think that PE is at school to break the ice really, not to allow the school to be something, a dead place. [...] here

outside, in the PE classes, the student feels pleasure in taking part in the sports activity, that is why it (PE) is justified in itself (TEACHER JOSÉ – interview).

In fact, sports are shown, currently, as a phenomenon of great expression, endowed with social legitimacy in all societies. However, in the midst of all this sports explosion, “[...] some voices are raised, mainly in the academic environment, which express doubts about the human and social values of this phenomenon” (BRACHT, 2005, p. 10). Specifically in PE field, it is not only today that there are questions about the pertinence of this regulated sport for the PE school classes, as well as the proposal of a school in sport instead of a sport in school (CAPARRÓZ, 1997; VAGO, 1996). We understand that a PE based on sports (or on any other element of corporal culture of movement), without being pedagogically treated, remains in need of justification in the school environment. It is not a matter, then, of denying the sport as an element of PE teaching or of being contrary to its teaching in school, but of pointing to the need for it to receive a pedagogical treatment. Making sports an object of intentional pedagogical intervention allows its teaching to go beyond the development of situations where the students only live this element of body culture, also, with the objective, of a critical *understanding* of all that is embraced by it, as well as the other elements which involve the class moment. To this end, didactics in PE classes

[...] cannot be satisfied in fostering an economic, technical and rational way of learning, even not to fall in the constant risk of ‘blindness of modest knowledge’. A didactic thought should, well before, be oriented to the issue of how the relationship with the world of objects can be intensified and how, from there, more interesting issues may appear for the practice of movements (MARAUN, 2006, p. 200).

In the case of the investigated teacher, there is also difficulty and/ or some resistance regarding the pedagogical



treatment of the sports content. We understand that this, among other factors, may be a consequence of aspects such as the ones we discussed in the previous topics. Moreover, we thought it would be possible to link this resistance to the relationship established by teacher José with a determined sportive culture, i.e., to the group of dispositions relative to the sportive phenomenon incorporated by teacher José along his life path, be it through the experience of this corporal practice, be it through other means (media etc.). According to his reports, since his adolescence, he was always involved with sports, in school and outside it, through taking part in sports competitions in the region where he used to live. According to him, although he did not follow the career as an athlete, sports have always been one of his great passions, being even determinant in his choice for the PE course

For Vieira (2007) and Figueiredo (2004), it is not strange that experiences in life are determinant in their choices for a career; from this the sportive experiences are not excluded, as it happens, in many cases, with PE teachers. The problem, according to the authors, is when those previous experience/practices determine a professional identity to the point of putting the academic education in the area itself in jeopardy. Even having gone through a high education course, teachers reproduce that which they experienced throughout their (sports) path and thus, sometimes, discouraging the accomplishment of new practices.

We may say that José's case shows similarities to what Vieira (2007) and Figueiredo (2004) describe. We would like, however, to highlight that, in José's case, this sportive culture may have been very little questioned during his period of initial education, as was explained by the teacher himself, his education happened in a traditional-sportive curriculum, where practice was privileged. The teacher seems to be held hostage of a kind of common sense present in the area, which is that *sports educate*, i.e., the simple involvement with the sport would have a positive educational effect.

As a consequence of this belief, which is present also in the broader social imaginary, the teacher ends up being absent from his teaching function, which is of pedagogically mediating this content (it should be observed here that we are not making any judgment of value about the type of pedagogical mediation. We are referring only to its absence, at least in an intentional way). What we noticed, thus, is that the *overvaluing* of sports ends up promoting a *pseudo-valuing* of PE due to the *de-valuation* of the pedagogical practice of those teachers. The non-intervention seems to be justified, then, by this *almost magic* value of sports.

## 5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

As we have seen, it is possible to identify a series of factors which may be considered as determinant, conditioning, influencing the pedagogical divestiture. Particularly, in the presented case, the field work allowed us to point three factors likely to be connected to the phenomenon.

We understood that those identified and named factors or named and, consequently, identified factors, do not *act* in isolated manner, but they act in a network in a complex way. We opted, therefore, for approaching/sharing, in our *final considerations*, a theoretical difficulty faced in the research. This difficulty is connected to the complexity of the phenomena and to its characteristics. A complexity that seems to resist mono-causal and even multifactorial models, because, besides the infinity of possible variations, they seem to have different weights in different cases.

We should warn, then, of the problems or difficulties in establishing an explanatory theory which could be applied to distinct and varied concrete cases, to predict the phenomenon behavior. Maybe it is only possible to identify the processes related to the phenomenon and to recognize the singularity of their concrete expressions.

To this end, we understand that the theorizing should, maybe, continue to try to find regularities or characteristics common to the processes and phenomena, however, we should warn of the fact that, despite that, such theories do not have predictive force, as the (social and, therefore, human) practices are simultaneously singular. The theories are offered as tools to be updated in a situated way, a starting point for a particular and situated construction.

**As práticas de desinvestimento pedagógico na Educação Física escolar**

**Resumo:** Investiga o desinvestimento do professor de Educação Física (EF) em relação à sua função pedagógica, utilizando a metodologia da história de vida e o estudo de caso etnográfico. Estuda também elementos envolvidos na produção de uma cultura escolar. Os dados produzidos são analisados a partir de três categorias: a) a EF como componente curricular: a escola também desinveste? b) a dificuldade de operar a mediação entre a teoria e a prática; c) o esporte como conteúdo das aulas de Educação Física.

**Palavras-chave:** Docentes. Conflito. Papel profissional. Esportes

**Las prácticas de lá desinversión pedagógica en la Educación Física escolar**

**Resumen:** Investiga la no investidura del maestro de Educación Física (EF) en relación a su función pedagógica, utilizando la metodología historia de vida y el estudio de caso etnográfico. Para ello, estudia también, elementos involucrados en la producción de una cultura escolar. Los datos producidos son analizados valiéndose de cuatro categorías: a) La EF como componente curricular: la escuela también desinvierte? b) La dificultad de desarrollar la mediación entre la teoría y la práctica; c) El deporte como contenido de las clases de EF.

**Palabras clave:** Docentes. Conflito. Rol profesional. Deportes.

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