

Professional action Models of vocational school Physical Education teachers

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Abstract: The study reports some of the results of a study conducted with Physical Education teachers of a Vocational School. More specifically, it talks about the set of perceptions that Physical Education teachers from a Vocational School have about their teaching work in the school, from the structuring models of professional action, built inside a specific disciplinary field: the Physical Education. It concludes showing that the pedagogical practice in PE in school owns a singular nature, producer of a set of singular representations about the role of PE and of its teachers, representations which serve for defining, structuring and guiding the action of those teachers in situations of action.

Key-words: Physical Education. Teachers. Professional practice.

1 THE ORIGIN OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

This text reports the results of a research conducted with three Physical Education (PE) teachers of a vocational school.¹ This study aimed at understanding which models or professional² action would serve as a guide for the intervention of those teachers in the school. Through the analysis of PE teachers discourse, we tried to outline some of the educational specificities which would be defining for the pedagogical role of PE and of those educational professionals, in contrast with the rest of the teachers in the institution.

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² The action models are representations formulated and transmitted by the teachers about the nature of their practice, representations which serve to define, structure and guide it, in action situations (TARDIF, 2002).

Having this issue as the central interest of the research, two theoretical guidelines proved to be fundamental in the organization of our reflection: the first is that each school discipline bears its principle of intelligibility, its paradigm – its disciplinary matrix which organizes the totality of contents in a coherent set. The disciplinary paradigm is fundamental because it determines the tasks that will be developed with the students, the declarative knowledge to be taught and the corresponding procedural knowledge (DEVALY, 1995; SHULMAN, 1986; SHULMAN, 1987).

The second one is that the school disciplines are cultural entities endowed with *sui generis* characteristics, which, far from being a mere reflection of the scientific and academic disciplines, constitute action fields strongly marked by the constrictions of school time and space, by the explicit clauses of pedagogical and didactic contracts, by the strategies of teaching turned towards the students, by the demands of colleagues, by the immediate needs of institutional life by the evaluation and selection systems. To this end, the school discipline is presented as a set of knowledge, of competences, of physical and/or intellectual postures, of attitudes, of values, of codes and of practices which bring the marks of the school form (CHERVELL, 1998).

In this line of thought, some issues emerged as central for the conducting of our investigating path, namely:

♦ Would school disciplines constitute an informing and organizing element of the process of professional knowledge construction of teachers? If they are defined as a cultural entity not only destined for instruction, but also for the socialization of students, wouldn't they also be so for the teachers? How do they contribute for the wedging of the process of professional practice knowledge constitution of those teachers?

2 O TEACHER KNOWLEDGE AS A SOCIAL PRODUCTION: AN INTERACTIVE KNOWLEDGE

Although we noticed that in Brazil the studies about teachers' professional base knowledge still need to enlarge their investigation borders, in some parts of the world – especially in the USA and in Canada –, those studies are found in a more advanced stage. In the last 20 years, the research into basic education professional teachers' base knowledge is not only growing, but also being diversified in lines guided by the most diverse theoretical models.

The theoretical build up on the theme of teachers' expertise and knowledge ended up generating a large enough base of studies that enabled some authors to produce synthesis, with the objective of recruiting theoretical and methodological diversities of research, in order to establish, according to specific criteria, determined groups, classifications and typologies (BORGES, 2001).

In our study, we will use a typology produced by Tardif (2000). The author looked forward to building a synthesis that could group in blocks the differentiated visions of studies that try to characterize the subjectivity of teachers.

According to the typology created by this author, the studies that take into account the subjectivity of teachers would be developed based on three great theoretical guidelines. The first one of them to define the researches in the scope of teachers' cognition or thought; those researches, from psychological inspiration, are part of the chain of cognitive sciences, especially from cognitive psychology. In general, this first theoretical guideline is dominated by the cognitivist and psychologizing vision of the subjectivity of teachers. It, often, tries to define the cognitive characteristics of the expert teacher, of the efficient teacher and it poses a very rationalist vision of the teacher, reducing the teacher's subjectivity to the teacher's cognition, cognition which is conceived according to an intellectualist and instrumental vision.

The second theoretical guideline defines the researches by what can be called the *life of teachers*. Such researches are based on several theoretical chains, such as existential phenomenology, the personal and professional life history, the studies about the teachers' beliefs the narrative focus that study the teacher's voice. In this second guideline, the subjectivity of teachers is seen in a broader way than in the first one, as it is not limited to the cognition or the mental representations, but it covers all the life history of the teachers, their previous family and school experiences, their affectivity and emotions, their personal beliefs and values.

The third theoretical guideline is based on approaches which have been proposed in the field of sociology of actors and of sociology of action: symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology, study of the common or daily language, research about the social competences of the actors. In this third guideline, the subjectivity of teachers is not reduced to cognition or to their personal lives, but it refers to the categories, the rules and social languages which structure the experience of actors in the communication and daily interaction processes. The thought, the competences and the knowledge of teachers are not seen here as strictly subjective realities, because they are socially built and shared.

Taking this classification as the organizer of a theoretical framework which has been guiding a great part of research on current teacher knowledge throughout the world, we stress that the concept of teacher knowledge, with which we work in our study, is predominantly linked to the third theoretical guideline, without leaving aside, however, the other two guidelines, in what they can offer of subsidies for the investigation of knowledge production of investigated PE teachers.

According to this conception, saying that a teacher knows how to teach is not only evaluating a subjective expertise founded on professional competences, but it is, at the same time, to emit a social and ruling judgment regarding the

rules and norms, for language games which define the social nature of the competence of teachers inside the school and society (TARDIF, 2000; GAUTHIER et al., 1998).

Thinking of the teacher's knowledge as a social production of teachers requires remembering some fundamental premises: first, their knowledge is built inside a framework of constraints which guide and set the possibilities and the limits of professional action of teachers. It holds, therefore, a strong statutory and coded content, where the aspects of rules and institutionalization of work are shown as organizing assets of the teacher's activity. Second, the knowledge of teachers is made of constructions acquired through interactive and shared practices. They make present, shoulder to shoulder, a number of school agents (students, teachers, parents), demanding teachers to build their pedagogical abilities in full interaction with those actors, negotiating the mutual roles, according to mutual perspectives. Third, the teacher's knowledge is social because it is acquired, mainly, in the context of a professional socialization, which is incorporated, modified, adapted according to the moments and stages of a career, along a professional history where the teacher learns to teach doing his/her work. If a significant part of the constitution of teacher's knowledge is cast in the collective experiences lived by teachers in their path as basic education students, in graduate courses and in the development of professional actions in school, it should be considered that a significant part of those experiences are materialized inside a disciplinary field. As Borges (2002) stresses, the teacher's profession in Brazil suffered and suffers a strong disciplinary guidance, becoming constitution of professional knowledge, particularly in the identification with the subject, in the vision about teaching, in the way they define themselves as teachers of a discipline.

The analysis of collective work situations, the relationship established by the teachers as the social organization of the school, the teacher's work in classroom management and knowledge actions need, in our point of

view, to be updated according to the appropriate epistemological and pedagogical orders for each field and/or school disciplines. To that end, it seemed important for us to raise some of the characteristics that constitute the teachers' pedagogical models of action for Physical Education.

3 THE MERCADOLOGICAL PATH

With those and other issues, we plunge into the research field, with the aim of investigating the professional practice of three PE teachers, two men and one woman, belonging to the teaching staff of a vocational school from the federal educational network.³

The three investigated teachers were not randomly chosen. The choice was subject to the following criteria: having higher education, having more than ten years professional experience in the PE area, having more than five years professional experience in the researched school, being under a contractual regime of exclusive dedication and belonging to the school effective staff, i.e., having job stability.

We took into account here the classification developed by Huberman (1992) of the professional life cycle of teachers. As our object of study concentrates its focus of analysis in knowledge that is built by teachers according to the challenges placed by the professional practice, we understand that we should work with experienced teachers. In this direction, the researched teachers are in a framework of the stage in the professional cycle that Huberman calls *diversification*. At this stage, teachers would plunge into a series of professional experiences, diversifying the didactic material, the way of evaluating, the way of grouping the students and the program sequences.

³ The research was conducted during all the school year of 2002.

We also start from the understanding that the teacher's knowledge is an interactive production, built in a relationship with the other actors from the school and mediated by the set of institutional rules and regulations. Thus, it was necessary to use several sources of information, observation and analysis of reality. Associated to the techniques of direct observation of Physical Education classes, furthermore, the interviews and the analysis of document produced by the teachers were used. With such strategies, we aimed at comparing distinct reports, confronting different positions of subjects about the same theme and checking the contradictions between practices and discourses.

Hence, we tried to identify the set of pedagogical representations built by the PE teachers, i.e., the set of discourses, symbols, feelings and behavior, regulations, prescriptions which contributed to the reassurance of teacher's own capacity to teach.

4 THE SCHOOL EXPERIENCE OF PE TEACHERS AND SOME OF THEIR MODELS OF PROFESSIONAL ACTION

We will try to identify, through PE teachers' discourse, how they situate the educational specificities that would be defining of the PE pedagogical role and, as a consequence, of the role of those teaching professionals, in contrast with the other teachers from the institution. Which would be the models of professional action to guide the professional practice of those teachers in the school? On this issue it is important to stress that part of the pedagogical role attributed to PE by the school and by their teachers is connected to the singularities of the school where the investigation was conducted: a vocational school.

Among the different contexts that constitute the teaching practice of our teachers, we could see that, when they talk about the functions and the specificities of the pedagogical intervention which belong to PE, consistently correlate their

discipline to the potential that it would have of being able to interfere in building values, in socializing, i.e., in the general education of students. Those reports show a part of this trend:

For example, if the group has a relationship problem, I will use what I have to deal with this, because it is a space with which Physical Education has the privilege of working. It is not all, but there are teachers who have this concern out of their field, of the specific discipline, but most of them are there very much focused in their own discipline. I think that a great part, not all, there in the area copes with this broader view. (Teacher Márcia)

[...]

The issue of relationships, the issue of affectivity is very open, the closeness in the relationships; this I cannot give up, no way. (Prof. Leandro)

We can see that our teachers make an effort to say that the teaching practices that define the specificity of PE pedagogical intervention are not limited to the transmission of their contents. Teacher Márcia, when comparing the pedagogical practice of PE teachers and that of the teachers of other disciplines, stresses that the other teachers are restricted to and *focused on their own discipline*, whereas the PE teachers would cope with a *broader view*.

From our point of view, this broad view which teacher Márcia talks about, seems to be connected to some pedagogical potential or sensibility to know how to intervene in the education of students beyond their epistemic dimension. Due to the action territory that would belong to PE in school, i.e., that of intervening in the formation of knowing-to-be, the teachers understand that they would be more alert, for example, to the ways of building collective relationships operated by students. In a parallel way, this need to have a broader view seems to be connected to the capacity of

knowing how to see the students beyond the school results. It would be necessary to develop observation and communication channels and channels with the subjective order of students, i.e., with their emotions, their behavior and their way of giving meaning to the world.

Also, when reporting an experience built by a Math's teacher in the school, when he plunges into a teaching experience outside the traditional classroom, i.e., inside the school patio, it tries to show and underline which would be the differences between the role of PE and of the teachers facing the other disciplines:

A Math's teacher, once asked for a court, I even went there to watch his activity; he was teaching geometrical figures. It was very interesting, but he was not worried at any moment with the relationship of students, but with teaching the geometric figures and the relationship between base, height, and this and that and space, those things. (Teacher Márcia).

Under the same perspective, teacher Mauro shows us that PE would not fit in the field of disciplines seen as academic. His definition of academic disciplines seems to be linked to a more rational, intellectual learning through the contact as more abstract learning knowledge and distant from more concrete human relations:

Because it is clear for me that it is a discipline which helps in the academic context in the general education of this student. It breaks a bit the academic education and brings another angle which is as or more important than the other. I think this role is ours, I talked about this before the construction of relationships among them concerning the limit, of corporal expression, of being open to say dirty words, to speak bad words, and then you can talk, because you are dealing with that, then it is a role. It will be contributing to get out of the formal context. The formal I am talking about is

Portuguese, Math, that is the academic education, and the other is the education for life, of being polite, of having their limit, of respecting the colleague, of having a good relationship with him, because it helps in those classroom disciplines. (Teacher Mauro).

In those reports, it is again evident that what would divide the specificity of the pedagogic role of PE and of the teaching action in that discipline would be that of offering the learners learning practices, educative experiences and the transmission of contents capable of going beyond the education known as *academic*. The intensification of educating processes that would reach the content in human education necessary for the life in common would be proper of PE. It is worth, however, questioning if the other disciplines of the school wouldn't also fulfill this role. We understand that this is not a privilege of PE. Conversely, what the teachers seem to be trying to tell us is that, due to the knowledge they teach and to the pedagogical place occupied by PE in school, they would find a higher convenience to deal with issues involving more directly themes such as sociability and aesthetic education.

Beyond that, the report of Teacher Mauro seems to inform us that PE would be situated in the universe of activities more connected to the sectors that support learning, made available by school (educational supervision, psychological support, medical service and social service) or, as the institutional newspaper itself also stresses, a discipline that builds the "scenario for a good reception to learning". PE, from the point of view of this teacher, would offer the students educational experiences which would be meaningful for them to be able to have a better conduct in the classroom. To give the students moments of education coined in more *informal* situations, it would produce a break in the school routine, which would benefit the conduct of students when the learning becomes more *formal*.

The perspective pointed by teachers Mauro and Leandro seems to be complemented by teacher Márcia, when she stresses, all the time, that what would characterize the type of pedagogical relation in the specific PE teaching universe would be a more informal, affective and open relationship with students, the production of a pedagogical space where there would be the possibility of dialogue, of discussions and of a higher intimacy in inter-subjective relationships of students/students and teachers/students. In the following report, Márcia shows that this kind of conduct and opening of the teacher would be a pre-condition for the teaching practices in PE to have the expected effect:

It is the relation really, the more open thing, more fraternal, the touching. In a freer way, broader, open to discussions, the collective construction, the space more open for negotiations. It is exactly this detail of relations, of building together, of cooperating, that nobody does anything alone, that, no matter how small the contribution of an element is for the collective, for the group, it needs to be heard, to know how to listen. The issue of relationships, the issue of affectivity is very open, the proximity of relationships; and this I won't give up, no way. (Teacher Márcia)

This report may also reveal to us that, for the PE teachers, the presence of the affective dimension would become one of the differentiating elements not only of the educational practice in PE, but of its own capacity of teaching. This observation is in contrast with the conclusions of studies conducted by Lessard et al. (2003) about the constitution of differentiated teacher's cultures among teachers working in High School and in Basic Education. Although we are dealing with PE teachers who work in the high school level, they do not fit the description of teacher culture proper of teachers in this school level. The affective and maternal dimension that would be typical of the teacher culture of children and Basic

Education is present and founding for the pedagogical practice of PE teachers here researched.

Such vision is reinforced by teacher Mauro, when he describes the way he sees his students and the kind of relation established with them:

It is almost as if they were my kids. I cannot imagine dealing with them as people because it is my duty as a professional, I can't deal with them in this way and forget them. I am not paternalism, but it is of responsibility, as much as the father would have in this process, due to my world vision, to my life expectation, of social perception, violence and a series of other things, the interest, of how much this makes me feel well from the personal point of view to my relationship with the school, my work, of how they can also do well with that for treating the others with respect, with kindness, with politeness, of being kind, knowing how to say thank you, to say excuse me, to open a door. I am not saying that the parents don't do that, who am I to say this? But this is how I think that we may be helping. In all this context, I can only conceive them as kids really, with this responsibility in this construction. (Teacher Mauro).

It is interesting to notice that the teachers, although they are men and teaching high school level classes, they do not hesitate to manifest certain dimensions in presenting their work as central to the teaching practice that are not very valued in professional environments where men are dominant and professionalism seems to be noncompliant with the affective involvement. There is, in the discourse of our teachers, what Carvalho (1998) calls culture of care. This culture of care was many times taken as the reiteration of the roles and characteristics considered proper to female behavior or seen as intrinsic to teachers considered appropriate to initial grades.

What the teacher tries to show is that the presence of affectivity or of the culture of care is not found imprisoned in the universe of female teachers or even in Basic Education. Much more than a natural gift noticed as an inherent part of femininity, it is the teaching practice itself which makes them more sensitive, more caring and more affectionate. Regarding specifically our PE teachers, it is basic that the affective relation should be intense. Knowing how to teach in the presence of affectivity represents self-recognition of part of their professional competence.

Linked to the socializing function that would be specific of PE discipline and that is revealed to us as central for the recognition of pedagogical legitimacy not only of PE, but of the pedagogical competences and abilities of their teachers, it seems also, repeatedly in the discourses of those teachers, that this discipline would be endowed with determined characteristics which enable it for the development of students sociability. Let us see those reports:

I believe that the Physical Education discipline in the school context is one of the disciplines that are most able and that most contribute to this kind of activity. The profile which the job market demands today of people is very much involved with group work, very helpful in this sense. Another thing, of the close relations with each other, of living with the different, of living with the different idea, of respecting this different idea. Of understanding the actions and respecting those actions, the group work gives this possibility a lot, which I think is very rich in this part. (Teacher Mauro)

For example, if the group has a relationship problem, I will use what I have to deal with this, because it is the space with which Physical Education has the privilege of working. (Teacher Márcia).

When the teachers report that PE would promote a space for the concrete exercise of relational experiences, they

do it referring to what to hear, see and feel regarding what is presented as current and routine in school form. Or rather, they seem to put PE as opposed to a teaching in line with content based concerns, of verbal-intellectual teaching and of pedagogical relations marked by formal, cold, silent experiences. On this point, Borges (2002), in his study of the knowledge of teachers professional base from different discipline fields from 5th to 8th grades of Basic Education, shows that the knowledge regarding the interpersonal relations are seen, by PE teachers, as one of the most relevant ones for their work. In this line, they stress the acquired knowledge in psychology field, whether at the time of their initial education, or in studies or courses taken during the continued education path.

It is worth stressing that those representations built around PE have a close relation with the specificity of the teaching work environment of such discipline. The vision that PE would have better chances of interfering more directly in the process of general education of students cannot be detached from the materiality of their teaching practices. They are representations built according to their own environmental conditions, to the type of transmitted knowledge and according to the relationship of this teaching space with the totality of school life.

It seems important to remember that the understanding of PE teachers, as well as that of the other school agents about the roles to be fulfilled by this discipline, brings with it elements of professional socialization in the field of PE. This is because the modeling of a career is situated in the confluence between the action of individuals and the norms and roles that result from the institutionalization of occupations, roles which the individuals should internalize and dominate to be part of such occupations (TARDIF, 2002). And hence, we felt that the understanding that PE teachers have about the role to be fulfilled, i.e., of educating, is linked to the role historically accomplished by it in the project of modern school education.

To state the reasons for this reading operated by our interviewees, we understood that it is important to make a digression. Facing the challenges placed by a new civilization order, organized according to the principles of capitalist ways of production, it was necessary for the body to suffer actions and interventions with the aim of adapting to the demands of social ways of production organization and of the reproduction of life. The body is, hence, a target of productive needs (productive body), of health needs (healthy body), of moral needs (de-erotized body), from the needs for adapting and social control (docile body). It needs to be object of education (school), mainly because corporal education is the education of behavior, which, in turn, is not corporal but rather, human. For Grignon (1971), PE constitutes one of the bases of professional education because it is one of the bases for moral education; the imposing of a set of rules regarding the good use and the good conservation of the body and the practices connected to it effectively allow the preserving of moral and physical vitality of learners. Educating the corporal behavior is educating the human behavior (BRACHT, 1999).

Teachers, when they mark as a focus of their action in school the intervention in the behavioral processes of education of learners, they seem to have as a background of their discourse the understanding that it would be an exclusive attribution of PE, the role of corporal education and, consequently, that of education of values and of behavior. The idea that to PE is attributed a task which involves the activities of movement which can only be corporal, because it is human is central. However, the education of corporal behavior, because it is human, happens as well in other instances and in other school disciplines.

More than the PE potential of interfering in the improvement of inter-subjective relations of students, preparing them for collective life and for group work, we could observe in the reports another unfolding of its socializing function. In their discourses, the teachers point that one of the most important aspects of the pedagogical

intervention of PE in the school would be that of being able to offer a series of extra-curricular events and activities— sports competitions, contests, cross-country, inter-school games:

The educational process of Physical Education is not reduced to the class issue. The extra-curricular spaces, and they are looked for outside the classroom, give it a whole range of immense possibilities. The freshmen games which was the reception of new students, the issue of integration which effectively happened. For example, the school games among the Cefets could make people cry, at least it could make me, the volleyball students when I travelled with them at a certain moment it is something which can bring tears. I think that this is very broad and this is an action in the area today due to those problems they are depriving our students from that. (Teacher Mauro)

It becomes evident that those extra-curricular activities are highlighted not only due to the pleasant and collective involvement they provide, but also because they enable PE to obtain a larger institutional visibility for its pedagogical products. The sports events are taken as a fundamental element for the academic recognition of PE inside the school. In our observations of the PE coordination room, we could see the shelves full of trophies and plates conquered in school sports events promoted by this area. Among them, we stress the trophies acquired through CEFET-OP participation in the JIFETs (CEFETs Inter-school Games). They are the material symbols of an important part of the work developed by the PE coordination.

Besides, we may infer that, when they stress the organization of events, those teachers are able to convey in a broader way not only the socializing potential of PE, but also its own competences. They would thus be recognized as teachers with pedagogical abilities that enable them to mobilize groups, to involve collective subjects, to promote the

gathering and a larger participating and the solidarity among people.

It is interesting to notice that, in their reports, the PE teachers use the verb always in the past tense. Due to many of the internal problems in the PE coordination and in the institutional life itself, this type of activity was abandoned, which produced some professional emptiness. The reports about those events are full of nostalgia of a time when they would explore the most of those work possibilities and of how they felt happy to produce and take part in those activities. The next report shows us that the cancelling of those events made PE lose space and recognition inside the school:

And for us it is that issue of respectability really. Today if we commit any mistake... If they could they would dismiss Physical Education. Because if you do only the academic work. If I move the school, it is different, it is another weight. The interclass and intercourse games, even the cross-country run. (Teacher Leandro).

Besides showing that those activities produce important dividends in the sense of academic recognition in the curriculum for PE, the teachers explain that they have the power of making students be able to take part more intensely in school life:

I think that for the freedom we get to make our students more active, active in the school environment. I am not talking about active in the sense of doing activities, no, active in the school environment. Now, less than before, because before as we would have the competitions, we would do other activities, the students would be much more involved much more, and they would take this outside the Physical Education class, they would take this to other disciplines, they would really become more active. Even the school association would work in a much more effective way when we also worked more in the PE. It is possible to make a perfect

temporal relationship, between the action of the school association, the activities that we used to develop, and how the association activity is and activities that we don't develop today, and how the association is. Because before we moved, we used to put the association together with us and the students were involved. (Teacher Márcia).

In this report, we can observe that the task of trying to approach school actors and their multiple functional sectors is attributed to PE. To this end, we may infer that the PE teachers situate their discipline as a facilitating element of the *reception of a good learning*. Making students become more active in the school environment, making them learn in those events for the other disciplines, this would make them have a richer and more productive insertion inside school life.

When the teachers talk about students' positivity in living more intensely the school and the teachers, they refer to the socializing potential of PE. They show that the relational experiences are central objects to their pedagogical intervention in the school, occupying, hence, a prominent place in the hierarchy of their teaching contents.

Moreover, when they remember the positivity of the exercise of collective and group experience inside the school, those teachers would show to be alert to the totality of school life. Besides re-affirming that their pedagogical intervention is not limited to the teaching of contents, they seem to reveal to us that their pedagogical practice is thought according to the repercussion in school life. The learning experienced in PE has its cultural value measured according to the possibility of use by the students, still in the school universe itself. The learning experienced there should be consumed not only in the distant future, which will happen outside the school, but also in the immediate school life where rich human relation experiences are born, from feelings, from ways of seeing and feeling the world. The thought and the actions of our PE teachers may be, predominantly, referenced in the scope of the educational institution.

Such issues may be interpreted in the reports of teachers, when they are asked about the specificities of PE pedagogical practice. Their answers show that one of the roles of such a discipline would be that of offering learning experiences and activities which would produce the sensation of *forgetting* what would be present in the classroom, operating a compensation of the stress promoted by the activities seen as more *serious or academic*. Let us see what they tell us:

It is a free space for expressing corporally. Exactly, inside the school formality that it is more informal. Then there would be a counterbalance, we identified, there below the leisure, above work. (Teacher Leandro).

This is the freedom we can give the student that the other teachers haven't discovered yet that they can also give. Our freedom to the student is more explicit. Many teachers could also do that, but I think that they haven't discovered that yet. I don't know if I were in their place, if I would have discovered, and for us this was ready, which is a privilege. (Teacher Márcia).

There is a feeling from them that PE would have the function of offering the students experiences that are very similar to what is attributed to moments of leisure in our daily life. First, PE would be seen as a space to produce experiences of compensating character, as it would contribute for compensating the stress promoted by the intellectual work in the classroom. PE would then have a utilitarian character, because one of its functions would be of recovering and of preparing the students for the work, i.e., for the learning activities seen as more formal and serious.

Linked to this first function, it seems that the leisure universe would be the most appropriate place for free experiences of fruition and of cultural production. According to the reports of those teachers, those experiences do not seem to be very appropriate for disciplines that are considered more

academic. There seems to be the recognition that such disciplines would be marked by formality of relationships, by the standardizing of behavior, by the tension of charging school performance and by the inhibition of more aesthetic experiences.

In this perspective, it is interesting to notice that, when they build arguments to explain the paths through which PE is made legitimate in school, the teachers are doing so through a non academic view. They take hold of the possibilities that this discipline would have of offering the students learning experiences opposing or different from what would be present in school life. We infer from such conclusion that PE and, consequently, their teachers, are able to get professional recognition inside the school by conveying pedagogical practices and experiences marked by its own logics. The pedagogical legitimacy of PE and of Professional knowledge of their teachers happens according to the participation in common actions through diverging pacts.

Again, PE is placed in the list of academic disciplines for a field of activities that would be destined to the *reception of a good learning*. When the teachers report to us that one of PE's functions would be that of building a leisure space, maybe they would like to say that the educational experiences provided by it are presented as a support for the teaching activities that are typically *academic*. In this report, teacher Mauro makes it clearer:

The academic classroom time demands a huge amount of concentration time from the student, the need for attention is really great and this inhibits, inhibits them a lot from talking, from conversation, from expressing themselves, and our academic organization works this way, so I think that Physical Education completely breaks this, our classroom has no desk, it may have, but in its essence it doesn't, it breaks completely this, and I think that for the academic context this is fundamental. I understand PE as a great support, of help, not that it is apart, it is

contextualized, it is together, but for the student to be successful in the academic part too. (Teacher Mauro)

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the reports made available by the PE teachers, we could identify and interpret some of the characteristics of teaching object-conditions that are constitutive of the singularities which delimit the PE teaching practice inside CEFET-OP.

In an environment where the teaching practices are marked by the tension promoted by school performance demands, by the formality of teaching relations, the pedagogical individualism, by verbal-intellectual teaching, by the content concentrated teaching processes, by the need for education for the job world, by the propaedeutic character of teaching, of bringing the marks of a full time school, PE ends up absorbing very specific senses and meanings. It should be the discipline *to educate*, to enable experiences of sociability, which promotes the meeting and the mingling of a divided and fragmented school, which offers the opening for a life of catharsis through activities that are very close to those lived in the world of leisure. Besides that, though to a lesser extent, it should fulfill the role of instructing:

What can be noticed, therefore, is that there is no way of separating the process of construction of knowledge from the professional base of those educators from the school as a whole. The effect of the educational institution proved to be important, not only in the education process of students, but also in the education of teachers. The endogenous factors that is characteristic of the institution effect, where the individual stiles of pedagogical organization are processed, specific social regulation modes and of mobilization of their actors for using their own resources are significant for the process of professional identity constitution of those educators. Among

the characteristics that constitute this professional identity, the fact that the researched teachers had a very positive vision of PE called our attention, differently from what has been observed by research developed in this field (JEBER, 1996).

Hence, the reflections contained in our work point to a consideration of the school as an object of study, when it allows another *visibility* of the educational dimension present in the diversity of educational contexts and in the work situations that emerge in them. This vision of the educational institution (EI) as a *globally forming* context for the set of their inhabitants opens the possibility of theoretically overcoming the expected dissociation between the education of children and the education of adults. The processes of adult formation (teachers) and children (students) appear to be referred to, in the case of the educational institution, the same organizational space, at the same time (learning by reciprocated interactions), for the same principles (CANÁRIO, 1996).

Linked to this problem, we could observe some incongruence between what our research highlights and what the theory announces as the characteristics of what is the *modus operandi* of the action of High School. Some studies have been showing the existence of a teaching culture that is specific of these professionals, attributing to them a lack of interest for the issues outside the classroom and of the disciplinary field to which they belong (DEROUET, 1995; CANÁRIO, 1996). Our research comes to regard this statement. The researched PE teachers, notwithstanding that they work in a high school, look for other references to organize their pedagogical intervention. Among them, we can mention the temporal plot of school life, which they understand to be the immediate demands from students in the daily life of the institution and the support to the teaching activities. They try to promote learning which is not formalized in the real curriculum, namely: the integration among the students, the cooperation and the production of a feeling of “institutional body” inside the school.

This sensibility demonstrated by PE teachers of thinking their practice as articulated to the whole of school may be attributed, in part, to the pedagogical specificity of PE's teaching object and the multiples senses and meanings mobilized by the school, by the students and by the PE teachers themselves in the daily socio-cultural school life.

PE's teaching contents and the environmental conditions of the PE classroom seem to have the capacity of projecting and of connecting PE teaching to their teachers in the direction of proposals and problems more directly connected to the daily school world, to its culture or to a school which exists inside another school. This *other school* is understood not as only an institution which transmits disciplinary knowledge, but as a social mean of life. About this point, Perrenoud (2000) remembers that the notion of social practices of reference (professional practices, communication and sociability practices) would allow disciplines, such as PE, artistic education and the language education, to determine that what they refer to is not reduced to the *savoir savants*. For the referred author, all the disciplines may contribute for the general education of students, but some are oriented explicitly for this objective.

Linked to this issue, the analyses announced in our study, in a way, describe conclusions from other studies which stress that the "maternal" or affective character of teaching would be more present in Basic Education schools or restricted to the universe of female teachers' action (LESSARD et al., 2003). Our data revealed that, according to the representation produced in the school around PE, the specificity of its teaching object and of environment conditions where teaching is materialized, the *culture of care* is not shown as opposing the dimensions of instruction. Contrarily, it is an important component in the process of formulating the instruction practices of teachers. The notion of professionalism does not seem detached from the affective aspects of the teaching exercise, but it is placed in a high position compared to technical aspects. More than that, the *culture of care* appears

as a positive component which harmonizes the professional identity of those teachers.

Therefore, the pedagogical abilities demonstrated by our teachers and put into practice when facing the challenges of their work cannot be disconnected from the knowledge they have of the discipline they teach at the school. Their pedagogical knowledge has a close relation with everything which concerns this context of situated teaching. These kinds of knowledge are worked in the pedagogical relation that teachers establish with the teaching content and that teaching with and in this curriculum component enables measurements with the students, the school and education in general. They are kinds of knowledge which are built in the middle of this teaching context, but are not restricted to disciplinary knowledge.

These teachers are seen and see themselves as professionals endowed with abilities and pedagogical competences which would enable them for the differentiated work inside the school. Educating for life, educating for the world of work, interfering in the general education of students, improving the inter-subjective relationship of teachers, interfering in the improvement of human relations inside the institutional life and offering experiences which are close to those lived at the moments of leisure would be functions that would belong to PEF and to its professionals. They are expressions, therefore, of the singular teaching situations which demand the development of pedagogical kinds of knowledge which would be provided by PE teachers and the public expression of the teaching capacity itself.

Modelos de ação profissional de professores de Educação Física de uma escola profissionalizante

Resumo: O trabalho relata alguns dos resultados de um estudo realizado com professores de Educação Física de uma Escola Profissionalizante. Mais especificamente, versa sobre o conjunto das percepções que docentes de Educação Física de uma Escola Profissionalizante têm sobre o seu trabalho docente na escola, a partir de modelos de estruturação da ação profissional, edificados dentro de um campo disciplinar específico: a Educação Física. Conclui mostrando que a prática pedagógica em EF na escola é detentora de uma natureza singular, produtora de um conjunto de representações singulares acerca do papel da EF e de seus professores, representações essas que servem para definir, estruturar e orientar a atuação desses docentes em situações de ação.

Palavras-chave: Educação Física. Docentes. Prática profissional.

Modelos de la acción profesional de profesores de Educación Física de una escuela de la enseñanza profesional

Resúmen: El trabajo relata algunos de los resultados de un estudio ejecutado con profesores de Educación Física de una escuela de la enseñanza profesional. Más específicamente, versa acerca del sistema de las opiniones que los profesores de Educación Física de una escuela de la enseñanza profesional tienen en su trabajo de la enseñanza en la escuela, de los modelos de la acción profesional, contruidos dentro de un campo disciplinar específico: la educación física. Concluye, demostrando que la práctica pedagógica en EF en la escuela ostenta una naturaleza singular, produciendo la naturaleza de un sistema de representaciones singulares referentes al papel de la educación física y de sus profesores, las representaciones éstos que sirvan definir, estructurar y dirigir el funcionamiento de estos profesores en situaciones de la acción.

Palabras clave: Educación Física. Docentes. Práctica Profesional

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