


NARRATIVES OF STAKEHOLDERS UNDER THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE STRATEGY AS SOCIAL PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The paper is driven by the following question: how do interest group narratives contribute to the dialogue between the perspective of strategy as a practice and the stakeholder theory? The objective is to analyze the changes, permanent and tensions in the narratives of the stakeholders, seen the strategic practices, in the context of mining.

Originality/value: Strategy as a social practice concerns the relationships between organizations, individuals and society in search of coexistence. This study establishes a dialogue between strategy as a social practice and the political perspective of the stakeholders, considering that they interact in networks, seeking the creation of value from mutuality.

Design/methodology/approach: Field research was conducted in a qualitative and longitudinal approach. Data collection used to document research techniques in notes and videos of public hearings, newspaper research and interviews.

Findings: The results show narrative interactions of six interest groups: entrepreneurial organizations, public authority, education, environment, residents of the area of implantation and the productive sector. The result suggests a relevant role of relational tensions as elements that restrict and enable changes and permanent and indicate the dynamic nature of intra and intergroup interactions of stakeholders. The proposed theoretical dialogue extends the field of strategic studies, in a postmodern dimension, by establishing a dialogue with the political side of stakeholder action as an alternative to the traditional functionalist perspective in the field.



KEYWORDS

Strategy as practice. Stakeholder Theory. Narrative research. Mining sector. Relational tension.

1. INTRODUCTION

The State of Minas Gerais is considered by the Brazilian Mining Institute (IBRAM) (2015) as the most relevant to the mining industry. Minas Gerais moves 53% of the mineral sector. Of the 100 largest mineral extraction mines, 40 are in that state. Of the ten largest mining cities of Brazil, seven are in Minas Gerais. Of the 853 municipalities of Minas Gerais (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics [IBGE], 2010), 400 have mineral extraction activities, being the largest producer of gold, iron and phosphate of the country, and the largest producer of niobium in the world (IBRAM, 2015).

This phenomenon also occurs with phosphate mining, a central component for the production of fertilizers, which in turn, is crucial and strategic for the increase of productivity in Brazilian agricultural activity and its economic support. According to the National Department of Mineral Production (DNPM) (2016), which was transformed into the National Mining Agency in 2017, the phosphate mining, the basis for fertilizer production, is insufficient to meet the internal demand of the country. The report highlights the deposits that may come into operation, among these, “one of the most promising is from Patrocínio in Minas Gerais” (DNPM, 2016, p. 71). Therefore, the theme of this research is relevant to the State of Minas Gerais and Brazil.

The process of deploying a mineral extraction company involves various social interactions between various individuals and interest groups. As an economic and social activity, mining enables the formation of enterprises that generate expectations, mobilize interests and meet the needs of various stakeholders: entrepreneurs, environmentalists, suppliers of goods and services, representatives of the Government, students and members of the productive sector. These groups are a fundamental dimension of the implementation of an enterprise in the mining sector.

This article is driven by the following question: How do the narratives of interest groups contribute to the dialogue between the perspective of strategy as a practice and the theory of stakeholders? The goal is to analyze the changes, the permanence and the tensions in narratives of the stakeholders, seen as strategic practices in the deployment process of a phosphate mining plant. Stakeholders are defined as those that influence or are influenced by a particular organization in the pursuit of their goals (Freeman, 1984; Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Clarkson, 1995). This study establishes a dialogue between strategy as a social practice and a political perspective of stakeholders, since strategy as a social practice, regards the



relations between organizations, individuals and society in search of their coexistence.

The stakeholders may be perceived differently by organizations, depending on how they interact, according to Bridoux and Stoelhorst (2014). In a socio-political approach of the stakeholders, Sachs and Rühli (2011) defend mutual value creation through network actions. Bonnafous-Boucher and Rendtorff (2016) establish a relationship between the business world and public life, making a civil society a stakeholder society, given the complexity of the environmental organizations, including the economic and legal, social, political, cultural and ecological aspects.

The concepts of strategy as a practice and strategic practices used in this article originate from the perspective of strategy as practice (ECP) (Jarzabkowsky, 2003, 2004; Whittington, 1996, 2003, 2006) and on the assumption that the dynamic interactions of interest groups and their practices can also exert influence on the results of a given phenomenon (Dias, Rossetto & Marinho, 2017).

The dialogue between these two perspectives – strategy as a social practice and stakeholders – is conducted as a narrative. For Jones and Wicks (1999), narratives relate to what organizations should do from an ethical perspective and the instruments they use to achieve their goals. The importance of language and narratives in organizations is analyzed by Oliveira and Bulgacov (2013). Brown and Thompson (2013) claim that there is a natural relationship between narrative and strategy as a practice. Barros and Carrieri (2015) claim that studies of narratives based on history are important, as these can enhance the visibility of practices based on the experiences of the practitioners. Vaara, Sonenshein, and Boje (2016) argue that the narrative is able to promote stability or change in organizations. From the epistemological and methodological point of view, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) show that the narrative is interested in the lives of people, the way lives interact with other lives and develop the experiences.

In three distinct sections below, each of the three themes will be addressed: strategy as a practice, interest groups (stakeholders) and narratives. The methodological procedures are described in their own section. The next section describes and analyzes the results of the research of the narratives of the stakeholder interactions in the process of deploying a phosphate mining plant, located in the municipality of Patrocínio, in Minas Gerais. The paper ends with a section of conclusions and implications of the research.



2. THE PERSPECTIVE OF STRATEGY AS A SOCIAL PRACTICE

In the early 2000s, studies that embraced and helped to spread the concept of SAP (Strategy-as-Practice), like Johnson, Melin and Whittington's (2003), proposed the need for research in strategy to dedicate more attention to the day-to-day activities of organizations, giving emphasis on details, which were called micro activities. For Wilson and Jarzabkowski (2004), the traditional perspective of strategy is insufficient and limited if what is desired is to understand how strategy arises and how it is put into practice by its practitioners in the organizational environment.

When the strategy is not widespread in the structure and people do not have access to it, that might promote contradictions whose mediation contributes to change, says Jarzabkowski (2003). These two aspects, permanences and changes, are important themes in the SAP universe, which Jarzabkowski (2004) referred to as recursion and adaptation, and assigned factors that favor permanences and changes (Figure 2.1).

(Figure 2.1)

FACTORS THAT FAVOR PERMANENCES AND CHANGES

Contexts	Recursive Factors that favor permanences	Adaptive Factors that favor changes
Macro Context	Completely institutionalized structures; Dominant social structures; Stable Economic and normative regulation; Stable competition.	Markets with rapid growth; Saturated or mature markets; Institutionalized social structures; Pluralism in social structures; Changes in economic and social regulation and standards; High competition.
Micro Context	Highly political; Fragmented and discrete subcultures; Homogeneous communities; Unique and strong culture; Dominant logic; Bureaucratic, specialized, hierarchical and structure; A strategy built on the top-down model; Strong operating routines; Low absorption capacity.	Several practice communities; Social interaction between communities; Entrepreneurship; Domestic investment initiatives; Peripheral involvement strategies; Distribution and transfer of knowledge; Non-hierarchical, cellular and networked structures; Structures based on flexibility and change codes (patch)

(continue)

(Figure 2.1 (conclusion))

FACTORS THAT FAVOR PERMANENCES AND CHANGES

Contexts	Recursive Factors that favor permanences	Adaptive Factors that favor changes
Actor perception	Assimilation narrow structures; Reflective capacity low; Accommodation zone of restricted interest; Skills, abilities and knowledge base low.	Wide assimilation structures; High reflective capacity; Accommodation area of broad interests; The basis of competencies, skills and vast knowledge.

Source: Adapted from Jarzabkowski (2004, p. 539).

SAP addresses the interactions between people in a given context and how the strategy is built. For Chia and MacKay (2007) and Chia and Rasche (2010), SAP is built as social activity and it reorients strategy for the practices developed by the actors, what they do, how they communicate, and how they use their competence in favor of the goals of the organization.

One of the key elements for understanding SAP is the integration between practice, praxis and practitioners. As presented by Whittington (2006), practitioners are strategists who “develop, shape and run” strategy, which may be inside or out of the Organization as external consultants, advisers and what the author calls strategy “gurus” (p. 619). According to Jarzabkowski and Spee (2009), praxis is defined as a flow of activity that interconnects the micro-actions of individuals and groups with broader institutions in which these actions are located and to which they contribute. The basis and references of the praxis are the organization’s practices, which are the routines that may or may not be institutionalized.

Key elements for SAP are strategizing and organizing. For Walter and Ahmed (2011), strategizing regards the activities of various actors and the way in which these activities are carried out. In different, dependent and independent ways (Light & Walter, 2015), strategizing refers to the action of building strategic practices, and organizing refers to the action of building the organization as a whole, its goals, interests and image. Strategizing and organizing emphasize movement.

Regarding pluralistic contexts, which mark the occurrence of SAP in complex environments, Denis, Langlely and Rouleau (2007), Jarzabkowski, Lê, and Van de Ven (2013), Pascucci and Meyer (2013) denounce the implications to strategy the moment intentions become actions. For these

authors, in complex and pluralistic environments, the cognitive elements of each of the practitioners are crucial to the construction of strategy, so ambiguity and difficulty of consensus press organizing and strategizing.

The open concept of strategy considers aspects comprehensively, which accommodates the experiences and interactions among these practitioners, and is called by Hautz, Seidl, and Whittington (2016) Open Strategy, defined as the open movement of strategy that promises to increase transparency and inclusion, involving stakeholders both internal and external to the organization.

3. THE STAKEHOLDERS PERSPECTIVE: FROM FUNCTIONALISM TO A POLITICAL CONCEPT

In the field of studies on stakeholders, a functionalist concept emerged in the early 1980s. According to Freeman (1984) and Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmar and De Colle (2010), this theory was designed to help organizations solve three problems: 1. The generation and exchange of values; 2. Better understand the relationship between ethics and capitalism in organizations; and 3. Help managers change their perceptions about the creation of value and ethics in changing environments. Savage, Nix, Whitehead and Blair (1991), Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997) and Macharia, Alves and Raposo (2012), in their time, classify stakeholders differently but regard them relevant to organizations and deserving their consideration.

The way in which interest groups may be perceived by the organizations is determined by how they interact, according to Bridoux and Stoelhorst (2014). Their interactions may be perceived as reciprocal or motivated by self-interest. The fair approach is the beacon used by the authors for this analysis of reciprocity, while the self-expansion approach is used in dealing with those stakeholders with high bargaining power.

In this respect, Bonnafous-Boucher and Rendtorff (2016) argue that the principle of the theory of stakeholders is the same as that of civil society, i.e., individuals seek primarily their own well-being and the satisfaction of their needs. According to these authors, the scope of these interests is in line with the common good and that is why they are mediated by the interests of the collective. The individual interest must coexist with the collective interest. This occurs through the institutionalization of interests, or through the formation of groups (of interest) that are governed by internal rules and legality (Bonnafous-Boucher & Rendtorff, 2016).



The prospect of generating value for organizations is latent in the traditional view of the theory of stakeholders, as formulated by Freeman (1984) and Freeman et al. (2010), putting the organization at the center of the activities. A contribution of this theory in the field of social and political philosophy has not been explored, as argue Bonnafous-Boucher and Rendtorff (2016), for whom “the construction of public life, the common good, the art of living together has no center and, if in fact there is such a center, it has no nothing to do with the economic life “(p. 53).

Organizations are not able to cater to all stakeholders, and so they need to negotiate, generating tension. Bonnafous-Boucher and Rendtorff (2016) argue that a spread of interests of the groups is difficult to identify, as well as their influence and needs in a global context; such aspect competes to maintain conflicts between stakeholders. This approach differs from the traditional functionalist approach, advocated by Freeman (1984) and Freeman et al. (2010).

A political perspective of the theory of stakeholders opposes a functionalist approach, strongly based on economic assumptions and the unique role of the stakeholders to the economic performance of the company. As advocate Sachs and Rühli (2011), a difference of the political perspective is the focus on mutuality which ensures that values are created with and for stakeholders, diverging from the position of value created solely on the basis of economic purposes, as a capital return.

In a social and political perspective of the theory of stakeholders, in contrast to an economic perspective, the groups and their representatives do not have as an exclusive focus the overcoming or elimination of barriers in their contexts of action for the achievement of their economic interests. The stakeholders mobilize other experiences, in addition to the economic one, considering the dynamism of goals, expectations and needs of the networks with whom they interface and act in different networks simultaneously. In this way, a network of stakeholders, rather than being perceived as, for example, competitors, can be assumed to be a contributor network, no longer perceived as restricting their practices to an extended position in the generation of value (Sachs & Rühli, 2011).

4. NARRATIVES SEEN AS STRATEGIC PRACTICES AND STAKEHOLDERS: A DIALOGUE

In a study of the narrative as an epistemological and methodological issue, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) examine the tensions, the confrontation



between the narrative thinking and the dominant narrative, and the border that exposes tension points as: 1. Temporality – everything has a past, a present and, implicitly, a future; 2. People – people are in a continuous process of change and are relevant to the phenomenon that is observed; 3. The action – seen here as a narrative symbol; and 4. The certainties – events in a narrative perspective can always have another meaning. All these elements of tension are interconnected and immersed in 5. Contexts that are crucial to giving meaning to each of the individuals or groups.

In organizational studies and in the field of strategy, the narrative is the means by which organizations can be understood, says Czarniawska (2007). The narratives allow “understanding of how humans build sense, building experience, knowledge and identity”, claim Fenton and Langley (2011, p. 1174). The strategy is a process of the relationship of power that is exercised “in an ambiguous and contradictory way; while it supports, it frustrates” (McCabe, 2009, p. 152). Ambiguity is inherent to the management process and contravenes clarity because when managers manifest themselves ambiguously, they avoid resistance giving more power of interpretation to their interlocutor, whereas if they are clearer, they become more responsible for the strategy (McCabe, 2009).

The existence of a natural relationship between narrative and strategy as practice is proposed and analyzed by Brown and Thompson (2013). The authors identify and analyze two reasons for this study: polyphony and equivocality. Polyphony refers to the dissonance in the understanding and dissemination of the key strategies of the organization; and equivocality, or ability to generate misunderstandings, is present in complex relationships generated by strategy as a social practice. The approach of the study of narrative allows those nuances to be identified. Brown and Thompson (2013) understand that strategies are reflections of power and are through the power that dominant strategies can be replicated.

Studies of narratives based on history can broaden the visibility of practices based on the experiences of practitioners, which Barros and Carrieri (2015) claim to be important and call ordinary management. The narrative is able to promote stability or change in organizations, argue Vaara et al. (2016, p. 17). These authors recognize that this concept connects to polyphony and multiple interpretations, proposed by Brown and Thompson (2013). Vaara et al. (2016) realize that, given the complexity of change, a single narrative would not be able to understand all of its nuances.

Human action unveils a strategy as a social practice and it is through the narratives that this happens, because they enable the understanding of polyphony, that the strategy in this approach brings out, claim Rese, Kuabara,



Villar and Ferreira (2017). These authors explore the issue of sensemaking (construction of meaning) and sensegiving (interpretation of the meaning) as the construction of meaning mediated by the narratives of the practitioners.

In Figure 4.1, we present a proposal for a set of attributes of the narratives (one to eight). In a given context (6), stakeholders/practitioners (1) spark the narratives (4) when interacting (5) in defense of their interests or in the fulfillment of their strategic practices. This interaction can generate tensions through ambiguity (3), polyphony and equivocality (7). The manifestations of power (2) can occur in an attempt to establish a dominant narrative, be it to promote change or permanence. The narratives are also generated in the relations between the groups/practitioners with society (8) from a political perspective.

In the political perspective of stakeholders, analyzed by Bonnafous-Boucher and Rendtorff (2016), the approach of the theory of stakeholders interfacing with strategy allows practitioners the recognition of those involved as well as their needs, their interests and their (pre)dispositions, facilitating the identification of opportunities for the generation of higher value, with the creation of interaction networks (Sachs & Rühli, 2011), which triggers the process of negotiation by means of licenses.

(Figure 4.1)

DIALOG BETWEEN STRATEGY AS PRACTICE AND A POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE OF STAKEHOLDERS

Items/ Identification	Narrative Attributes	Political perspective of stakeholders	Strategy as Practice
1	Narrative actors	<i>Stakeholders:</i> internal and external groups and individuals. Act in defense of their interests.	Practitioners: individuals and intra-organizational and non-organizational groups. Experience strategic practices.
2	Power to convince and be convinced	Influence. Enforce their prerogatives to achieve their interests. Motivations	Practice. Acts as a referential source that limits and enables. The diffusion of power contributes to ambiguity.
3	Ambiguity	Similarities and differences in motivations, resource property and perceptions (clear or ambiguous) of other groups.	Multidimensionality of practices: behavioral, cognitive, moral, cultural, political, economic, etc.

(continue)



(Figure 4.1 (conclusion))

DIALOG BETWEEN STRATEGY AS PRACTICE AND A POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE OF STAKEHOLDERS

Items/ Identification	Narrative Attributes	Political perspective of stakeholders	Strategy as Practice
4	Triggers the narrative	Multiple goals, interests and needs.	Relational interactions, praxis.
5	Interactions and conflicts	Unilateral vision: internal and external Risk management and benefits: to the extent that the range of interests can be affected.	Multidimensional vision: micro and macro. Relational tensions: the practices can change the dominant strategy.
6	Context	Specific, changeable. Each <i>stakeholder</i> acts in their universe, maybe varying according to the interests.	Pluralistic: uncertainty and ambiguity. The environment is complex and can be confrontational.
7	Polyphony and equivocality	Disturbing elements of the <i>status quo</i> generating permanences and changes.	Elements are inherent to social interactions that are at the origin of permanence and change.
8	Relation to other groups and society	Superior value generation, by means of participation in networks that lead to improved quality of life for humans and the environment	<i>Strategizing</i> , doing strategy daily, in a dynamic tension between micro, meso and macro. <i>Open strategy</i> with the participation of distinguished practitioners.

Source: Elaborated by the authors

The narratives are the means by which these interactions occur. They are both the form and the content by which intentions are expressed and trigger actions and practices aimed at the fulfillment of their needs, desires and goals (Rese et al., 2017). This relationship can put the narratives, seen as strategies, on a collision course within and between groups of interest, which generates stresses, changes and permanences. In this research, the scenario where this plot develops is the deployment of mineral activity, which is presented below.

5. METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

This research presents elements that might place it in the interface of the radical interpretative and structuralist paradigms, hinting that the complexity of social structures and practices cannot be limited to a single perspective. Gioia and Pitre (1990) defend the possibility of a multi-paradigmatic approach as a way to welcome theoretical differences and, through the recognition of these differences, better understand the organizational phenomena. From the perspective of the theory of strategy as practice, according to Rasche and Chia (2009), structuralism is based on the existence of codes that influence human action. These codes, which structure human action, are given objectively (by the dominant organization) and people do not even question their existence. In interpretivism, “subjects assign meaning to the world based on ambiguous experiences, pre-existing mental schemas that each individual has based on their previous experience” (Rasche & Chia, 2009, p. 718).

In relation to the data, this research is characterized by a qualitative approach, an activity that places the viewer in the world, according to Denzin and Lincoln (1994). The research was developed in the municipality of Patrocínio, Minas Gerais, where there are a phosphate deposit and a mining plant. For a mining enterprise to be implemented, participatory procedures exist that must occur to ensure that all stakeholders can express themselves freely on the subject and expose and defend their interests. In this step, there are public hearings, events that, in general, rely on the participation of the interested individuals and groups, especially those who have an interest in understanding the impacts of this process and the potential changes in the interaction with their needs, intentions, goals, values and beliefs. The Public Hearings in the deployment process of the mining activity in Patrocínio are presented in Figure 5.1.

The documentary research and analysis of the narratives found in this source of data made it possible to identify the interest groups treated in this research as follows: 1. Educational institutions; 2. Representatives of the entrepreneur; 3. Environmental organizations; 4. Representatives of the residents of the region of deployment; 5. Representatives of public authorities; and, 6. Representatives of the productive sector. These comprise the public researched in the field, by means of interviews. The documentary research was an essential step to identify these interest groups who worked and work in the deployment process of phosphate mining activity in the municipality of Patrocínio.

(Figure 5.1)**MINING PUBLIC HEARINGS IN PATROCÍNIO**

Event	Documents	Date
A public hearing for Mining Complex Installation Licensing	Written Record	October 31 st , 2001
Public hearing to discuss the implementation of the Industrial Complex of FOSFÉRTIL	Transcription and photos	November 18 th , 2009
Public hearing to change the Installation Licensing (IL)	Recording and transcription	September 30 th , 2015

Source: Research data elaborated by the authors

The document data were collected in the physical form in public bodies where they were deposited by relevant regulations (SUPRAM, CODEMA, Municipal Administration and Prosecutors of Patrocínio and Uberaba, City Council of Patrocínio). Documents were also collected with the entrepreneurial company, and at the head offices of the institutions representing the environment and the productive sector. Data collection were also carried out on press reports, in printed and electronic media, and in audio and video recordings of the hearings. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews were conducted with representatives of six groups of interests described in Figure 5.2.

(Figure 5.2)**INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS**

Interest Groups	Interviewee	Justification
Education Group	Interviewee EDU	Higher education institutions have excelled in the participation of the audience.
Entrepreneur Group	Interviewee EMP	The convenience of having the representative of the current entrepreneur (Mosaic, since 2016) present and acting in the area of the mine.
Environment Group	Interviewee MA1 Interviewee MA2	Respondents in this group are made up of representatives of the most active environmental organizations in the municipality of Patrocínio

(continue)

(Figure 5.2 (conclusion))
INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Interest Groups	Interviewee	Justification
Residents Group	Interviewee MO1 Interviewee MO2	Respondents were identified in the Public Civil investigation process monitoring the mining deployment which is available in the Public Ministry of the State of Minas Gerais
Public Authority Group	Interviewee PP1 Interviewee PP2	Respondents were selected according to the historic participation in the deployment process of mining activity
Productive Sector Group	Interviewee SP1 Interviewee SP2	Respondents selected are responsible for the institutions that represent the productive sector of Patrocínio

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

The interviews were conducted in January and February 2018. A topic guide was developed and used to direct the interviews with the respondents. The interviews were carried out face-to-face, according to the location indicated by the interviewees, which were their workplaces and residences. Due to the restriction of availability of some respondents, interviews with interviewee EMP and MO2 were conducted by phone. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed.

As for the documentary research, in total, 163 narratives were found and their rankings in this research are in Figure 5.3. The audios and videos refer to material produced by press agents or the stakeholders themselves, as a way to record their practices.

(Figure 5.3)
NARRATIVES ANALYZED IN THE RESEARCH

Sources for research of narrative elements	Quantity of narratives
Audio and videos	18 narratives
Digital and printed documents	39 narratives
Digital and printed media manifestations	93 narratives
Photos	13 narratives

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Regarding the procedures of analysis of the results, the procedure of analysis of narrative research is a specific process that concerns life stories, the narrative in discursive forms, such as social stories (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2002). Content and documents analysis have the same objectives (contribute to the understanding of a given phenomenon). In this way, the document analysis is inserted in the content analysis that “works with the message enabling inferences about this reality” (Bardin, 1977, p. 51).

(Figure 5.4)

SEARCH CATEGORIES: CHANGE, PERMANENCES AND TENSIONS

Research categories	Definitions
Changes	The changes are adaptations that, from the perspective of Jarzabkowski (2004), can go from small incremental changes to drastic changes in the strategic practices of organizations. To Vaara et al. (2016) the actors of organizations compete to establish a dominant narrative about the change, but these dominant narratives can also change the trajectory of the organization in the future and also of the people involved.
Permanences	The permanence and continuity of the strategic practices come from a balance between the social and collective structures of organizations, practitioners, and the activities that integrate them. From this relationship emerges the strategic practice. The permanents are connected to the inertial tendencies of strategic practices of the actors in interaction in micro and macro contexts (Jarzabkowski, 2003; 2004).
Relational tensions	For this research, tensions are the conflicts that can be generated from dialogue among the various groups when they interact, in defense of their interests, seeking the satisfaction of their needs in pluralistic contexts (Jarzabkowski et al., 2013; Hoon, 2007) and therefore need negotiation (Bonnafoos-Boucher & Rendtorff, 2016). The main tension points are: temporality, people, actions, certainties and contexts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Source: Research data elaborated by the authors

To Bardin (1977), it is necessary to create a ranking in categories of analysis that allows the classification of units of meaning that allow generating inferences and, if possible, applied to the set of information. In Figure 5.4, the categories of analysis and definitions of these categories are displayed according to the theoretical perspective of the research.

6. THE STAKEHOLDERS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS OF THE PHOSPHATE MINERAL EXTRACTION

As presented in the theoretical framework, stakeholders are defined as individuals or groups who can influence or be influenced in the interaction with the organization, extra and intra-organization while defending their goals and interests, according to Freeman (1984), Freeman et al. (2010), Savage et al. (1991) Mitchell et al. (1997) and Mainardes et al. (2012). Even the groups that don't recognize their influence in certain processes may suffer social, economic, environmental and cultural influences. The documented research identified the interest groups that were entered as subjects in each phase of the deployment process of phosphate mining in the town of Patrocínio, Minas Gerais.

According to Figure 6.1, these stakeholders acted with greater or lesser intensity along the stages of the deployment process of the mining activity, through their narratives, seen as strategic practices.

During the research, 55 institutions were identified with potential interests in relation to the implementation of mining activity in Patrocínio/MG. However, the participation of these institutions was not found in the researched narratives so as to compose the research data. From that relevance, 21 stakeholders were filtered, whose participation were more expressive and the classification took place according to the positions assumed or assigned to these 21 organizations, institutions and individuals (residents) in interaction with other groups and with the phenomenon of mining (Figure 6.1).

Research showed that not all 21 stakeholders participated in every stage, as can be seen from Figure 6.1, be it because of the discontinuation of their activities (1 and 20) or exit from the mining sector (5, 6 and 7). Stakeholders 8 and 9 shared control of the mineral extraction activity due to the moment of transition of ownership of mining rights, the sale of assets of Vale Fertilizantes to Mosaic (2016). Only two members classified as public authorities (DNPM) and entrepreneurs CVFT and CVRD participated in the research phase that took place from 1969 to 2003, in Figure 6.1. One can also observe that representatives of public authorities, residents and the environment had more consistent and permanent participation during the phases of planning, implementation and operation (2003 to 2017).

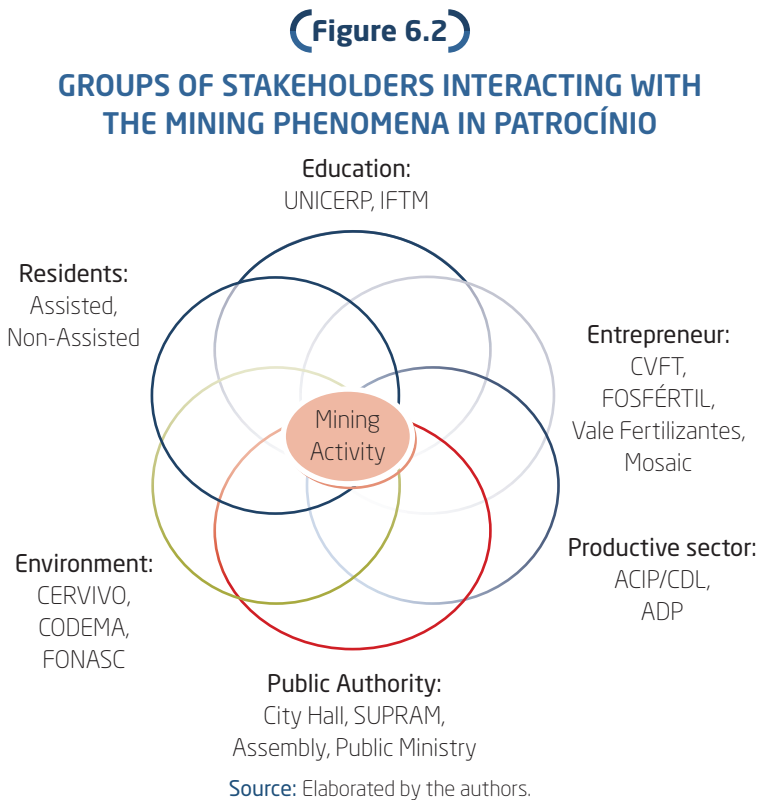
(Figure 6.1)

INTEREST GROUPS IN THE PHASES OF IMPLEMENTATION OF PHOSPHATE MINING ACTIVITIES IN PATROCÍNIO

No.	Institution - Organization - Individuals	Classification	Research phase	Planning phase	Implementation phase	Operation phase
1	IESP	Education				
2	IFTM	Education				
3	SENAI	Education				
4	UNICERP	Education				
5	CVFT	Entrepreneur				
6	CVRD	Entrepreneur				
7	FOSFÉRTIL	Entrepreneur				
8	Mosaic	Entrepreneur				
9	Vale Fertilizantes	Entrepreneur				
10	CERVIVO	Environment				
11	CODEMA	Environment				
12	FONASC	Environment				
13	Affected residents	Residents				
14	DNPM	Public Authority				
15	State Public Ministry	Public Authority				
16	Federal Public Ministry	Public Authority				
17	City Hall	Public Authority				
18	SUPRAM	Public Authority				
19	ACIP/CDL	Productive sector				
20	ADP	Productive sector				
21	Hospital Santa Casa	Productive sector				

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Figure 6.2 was compiled from the document research of the public hearings, which shows the *locus* of the formal interactions of these groups in defense of their interests. For the present research, public hearings were a formal platform for the narratives of groups and interests that allowed the identification of six groups of interest. Figure 1 represents the embedded network of groups in interest in interaction with others and with the phenomenon of mining. The phenomenon of mining occupies the central position from the interaction and intra and intergroup practices that unfold in actions sometimes in cooperation, in competition or in collaboration.



7. NARRATIVES SEEN AS STRATEGIC PRACTICES: STRESSES, CHANGES AND PERMANENCES

The analysis of the narratives of the interest groups, seen as strategic practices over the four phases of implementation of the phosphate mining activity in Patrocínio, allows the observation of the generation of tensions,

permanences and changes. The results lead to the identification of potential tension generators for each group of stakeholders, in a total of 21, as seen in Figure 7.1. These tension-generating potentials are mediated by the attributes of narratives: pluralistic contexts, power, conflict, ambiguity, polyphony and equivocality, networks, mutuality and open strategy (Figure 4.1). In this way, changes and permanency in the strategies as practices are identified for each group of stakeholders.

The pluralistic contexts that affect organizations, through the praxis of their practitioners, be it for strategizing or organizing, are recognized by Jarzabkowski and Fenton (2006), Denis et al. (2007), Jarzabkowski et al. (2013). In pluralistic contexts, organizations are exposed to a wide range of interests and objectives due to the coexistence of a large number of groups. In these contexts, the power is dispersed and the groups that exert most influence can achieve their goals more efficiently. Group diversity generates conflicts to establish dominant practices, with the prevalence of self-interest. Possible conflicts, in the form of tensions, in the context of research, spark change and permanence.

Ambiguity and clarity counterbalance each other in the field of strategy as practice, because they allow fluctuation of the levels of power and decision-making of the interlocutors (McCabe, 2009). However, neither clarity nor ambiguity is effective without their acceptance. To Pascucci and Meyer (2013), in pluralistic contexts, ambiguity and the difficulty of consensus press organizing and strategizing creating tensions that, in turn, lead to permanent or changes.

Polyphony and equivocality are dialogical attributes present in the narrative. Polyphony refers to the dissonance in the understanding and dissemination of the key strategies of the organization. Equivocality is considered as the ability to generate misunderstandings in complex relationships generated by strategy as practice in pluralistic environments (Brown & Thompson, 2013; Vaara et al., 2016).

Mutuality is a perspective supported by Sachs and Rühli (2011) for the stakeholders that operate in networks, potentializing the benefits for those involved and minimizing the risks of failure. Networks are perceived as the tissue in which the interested parties are related to the generation of higher values. The network perspective is also analyzed by Bonnafous-Boucher and Rendtorff (2016), who adopt a political approach of stakeholder theory interfacing with strategy, allowing the practitioners recognition of those involved as well as their needs. These positions are harmonized with the open perspective of a generation of strategy as practice, which accommodates the experiences and interactions between practitioners, seeking transparency

and inclusion, involving internal and external stakeholders, at micro and macro levels (Hautz et al., 2016).

The narratives identified, classified and analyzed were referenced to each group of stakeholders, as shown in Figure 7.1. These groups were assigned the narratives identified in the research.

(Figure 7.1)

TENSIONS, PERMANENCES AND CHANGES

	Potential Tension Generators	Narrative attributes Figure 4.1	Tensions allow and restrict		
			Criticality	Permanences	Changes
Item 6 – The pluralistic context exerts influence in the narratives seen as strategic practices of the stakeholders	Education Group	Discussion of alignment with the educational proposal			<i>Open strategy</i> Networks
		Opportunities for professional, technical and academic partnerships for students	Item 3 Item 4	Conflict Ambiguity	Networks, Mutuality, <i>Open strategy</i>
		Alignment of courses offered by institutions of higher education with the potential market demand considering a possible increase	Item 5 Item 8		Ambiguity Mutuality
	Entrepreneur Group	The transfer of ownership of mining rights that permeates all phases of the project			Ambiguity
		Macroeconomic conditions influencing decisions	Item 2 Item 3	Conflict Power Equivocality	
		Silence	Item 5	Power	
		Alteration of the original project	Item 7	Conflict	
		The approach in the treatment of the other groups alternating between approximation and distancing		Polyphony Equivocality Power	
	Environment Group	Mining as a threat and opportunity	Item 1		Networks, Mutuality
		The practice of social and environmental responsibility	Item 2 Item 4 Item 8		Mutuality
		The economic power		Power	

(continue)

(Figure 7.1 (conclusion))

TENSIONS, PERMANENCES AND CHANGES

		Potential Tension Generators	Narrative attributes Figure 4.1	Tensions allow and restrict	
		Criticality		Permanences	Changes
Item 6 - The pluralistic context exerts influence in the narratives seen as strategic practices of the stakeholders	Residents Group	Geographical dislocation		Power	Networks
		The stories, the culture and the affective ties	Item 2 Item 3 Item 4	Conflict	
		The emotional, mental and social health risks	Item 5 Item 8	Ambiguity	
		Economical vulnerability		Ambiguity	Networks
	Public Authority Group	Social well-being	Item 1	Conflict	
		Political power	Item 2 Item 4	Power	Mutuality
		The pressure on the public structures and activities	Item 5 Item 8	Conflict	
	Productive sector group	The modernization of enterprises and training of suppliers increasing competitiveness	Item 1 Item 4 Item 8		Networks, Mutuality, <i>Open strategy</i>
		The generation of business opportunities			
Labor contributing to the reduction of inequalities;					

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

These narratives show elements with the potential to generate tensions for each group to act and interact in the pursuit of achieving their own goals, fulfilling their needs and satisfying their interests.

8. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

This paper moved on towards a political perspective of stakeholders, which converses with strategy as practice, and generates opportunities for studies that give emphasis to networks of stakeholders and mutual and higher value creation from the idea of open strategy, considering the porosity of organizations and the role of a society of stakeholders. Both studies bring



freshness to the study of strategy, giving it a postmodern perspective and a political and social approach, providing a link between strategy as practice and a political perspective of stakeholders through narratives. This extends the complexity of research, because it ultimately puts the research on interfaces between interpretive and structuralist ontological and epistemological assumptions, which consider the point of view of the individuals, their interests, needs, goals and also the power relations that are built for those individuals, groups and institutions in their everyday intra and inter-organizational interactions.

The research of the narratives of the stakeholders showed the presence of twenty-one participants distributed in six groups, according to their interests, which showed similarities with regard to the phenomenon of mining. The design of the research considers the relationship of these stakeholders and practitioners with a phenomenon – the implementation process of a phosphate mining plant in the city of Patrocínio – and the results showed the proposed theoretical linkage. Field research showed that the groups alternate their interaction with other groups and with the phenomenon in case, sometimes adopting a reactive position, getting involved only when they are stimulated. Organizations and institutions also discontinued their activities or discontinued their interest, or simply were not present in relevant moments as in the case of public hearings about the implementation of the mining activities.

Field research showed a total of 163 narratives analyzed, seen as strategic practices of interest groups and practitioners along the phases of deployment. Narratives are social constructions capable of generating tensions, permanence or change in organizations, and these were synthesized at the end of the analysis of the results. The actors/practitioners compete for a dominant narrative that can change the future of organizations and of the phenomenon of mining, and also their future as individuals. This context raises tensions; more than the needs, goals or intentions of groups, it is the tensions that trigger the narratives of change and permanence. In this sense, the needs, goals and intentions seem to be in the background. They are subjugated by the risk that needs will not be satisfied or that the goals will not be achieved or intentions will not translate into actions, in the end, that strategic practices will not be carried out, if the interests of the other group offer risks of exclusion or competition for benefits.

The context in which the narratives are produced impacts the phenomenon by means of lobbying in interaction. The interaction of groups with the phenomenon of mining, researched from the narratives of these



practitioners, showed that the opening movement of strategy (open strategy), which encourages transparency and inclusion, requires the study of stakeholders and their performance at different levels (intra and interorganizations, micro and macro levels) in the construction of strategy.

The limitations of this research are reflected in: 1. Not all interest groups were included as research audience, since the inclusion of all stakeholders could allow greater understanding of the phenomenon researched; 2. Because it is a dynamic interaction process, the narratives should be presented to the reader, but at the same time, there was a need to limit the exposure of the ample material researched, this could help improve the understanding of the contextual scope.

For future research, we recommend the study of mining activities in other localities, as regionalism, or peculiarities of the mining sector that are distinct and studies in other regions that will broaden the understanding of narrative practices of stakeholders in this activity. Also, we recommend future studies on the dialogue between a political perspective of stakeholders and the perspective of strategy as practice. The study of the practices of those who practice strategy, in addition to their economic interests, can enlarge the knowledge in the field of organizational strategy, opening up new vistas.

AS NARRATIVAS DOS STAKEHOLDERS SOB A PERSPECTIVA DA ESTRATÉGIA COMO PRÁTICA SOCIAL

RESUMO

Objetivo: O artigo é conduzido pela seguinte questão: “Como as narrativas de grupos de interesses contribuem para o diálogo entre a perspectiva da estratégia como prática e a teoria dos *stakeholders*?”. O objetivo é analisar as mudanças, permanências e tensões nas narrativas dos *stakeholders*, vistas como práticas estratégicas, no contexto da mineração.

Originalidade/valor: A estratégia como uma prática social diz respeito às relações entre organizações, indivíduos e sociedade em busca de coexistência. Este estudo estabelece um diálogo entre a estratégia como prática social e uma perspectiva política dos *stakeholders*, considerando que interagem em redes, buscando a criação de valor a partir da mutualidade.

Design/metodologia/abordagem: A pesquisa de campo foi conduzida numa abordagem qualitativa e longitudinal. A coleta de dados utilizou técnicas de pesquisa documental em atas e vídeos de audiências públicas, pesquisa em jornal e realização de entrevistas.

Resultados: Os resultados mostram interações narrativas de seis grupos de interesse: organizações empreendedoras, Poder Público, educação, meio ambiente, moradores da área de implantação e setor produtivo. O resultado sugere um papel de relevância das tensões relacionais como elementos que restringem e possibilitam as mudanças e permanências e evidenciam a natureza dinâmica das interações intra e intergrupos de *stakeholders*. O diálogo teórico proposto amplia o campo dos estudos da estratégia, em uma vertente pós-moderna, ao estabelecer um diálogo com uma vertente política da ação dos *stakeholders*, como alternativa a uma perspectiva funcionalista tradicional no campo.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Estratégia como prática. Teoria dos *stakeholders*. Pesquisa narrativa. Setor de mineração. Tensão relacional.

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