

THEMATIC SECTION:  
RESISTANCES AND REEXISTENCES  
IN EDUCATIONAL SOCIAL SPACES IN  
TIMES OF NEO-CONSERVATISM

**Educação**  
& realidade

## **Autonomy and Curricula *Policiespractices* an equation of roots and choices**

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**ABSTRACT – Autonomy and Curricula *Policiespractices*: an equation of roots and choices.** This article seeks to bring to the debate some paths that I have been pursued to understand, through encounters and conversation with teachers, the *policiespractices* relations of *thoughtpracticed* curricula woven daily, and how they contribute to understand that there are distinct situations, although controversial and of regulation, in which different curricular productions are enabled. From a conversation on teaching autonomy and daily practice, we start from the idea that the curricular *policiespractices* are intertwined to the daily life of each teacher, to their political positions of understanding what is the school and how they weave their curricula every day.

**Keywords: Curriculum. Teaching Autonomy. School daily life.**

**RESUMO – Autonomia e Políticaspráticas de Currículos: uma equação entre raízes e opções.** Este artigo busca trazer para o debate alguns caminhos que tenho percorrido na busca de compreender, por meio dos encontros e das conversas com professoras, as relações *políticaspráticas* de currículos *pensadospraticados* tecidos cotidianamente e como estes contribuem para entender que existem diferentes situações, mesmo que sejam controversas e de regulação, em que diferentes produções curriculares são viabilizadas. A partir de uma conversa sobre autonomia docente e prática cotidiana partimos da ideia de que as *políticaspráticas* de currículos estão entrelaçadas aos cotidianos de cada uma das docentes, às suas posições políticas de compreensão do que é a escola e de como tecem seus currículos cotidianamente.

**Palavras-chave: Currículo. Autonomia Docente. Cotidiano Escolar.**

## ***Explanatory/Unexplanatory Introduction***

*Writing neither one thing nor the other – In order to say all  
– Or, at least none. Thus, it does well to the poet. Unexplain  
– As much as the darkening lights up the fireflies (Manoel  
de Barros).*

The present work is the result of an encounter with teachers willing to narrate their practices, *practicing/thinking* subjects who proposed to share their experiences and reflections woven collectively during the doctoral research. In these encounters, a knowledge network was shared, in which voices were not merely heard or anchored in a certain theoretical and/or political landmark, but understood, making it possible to perceive that they carried, inherently to their daily lives, contexts of influences, of texts and of practices of curricular policies, entangling one to the other and to their daily *doingknowing* at school.

It was chosen to resort to encounters, their narratives and dialogues as *spacetime* for understanding *thoughtpracticed* curricula. This is a possible movement as an element of sharing distinct narratives that made of our encounters a powerful element in comprehending the relations between the production of experiences, narratives and dialogues involving pedagogical practices. It should be noted that the content of this text comprises a universe of two research encounters that were held in May 2016.

Maturana (2001, p. 34) understands the encounter as a type of organization of subjects, especially when they are willing to join, as in the case of the teachers' group in the research. It can be understood, thus, that organization is more than a space generated by explicit limits in which we have been gathered: it is also a space in which we can nourish a certain culture and bet on a "[...] space in which people share a past, a collective way of doing things in the present and a common sense of direction for the future".

In this regard, through *encounters and conversations* (Gonçalves et al., 2018), I have developed a doctoral research<sup>1</sup> with a group of teachers from the Municipal Education Network of a city in the interior of the state of Rio de Janeiro. The goal of the research was to bring to the field of curriculum policies the practices and conversations of teachers in their exchange of experiences and knowledge from their daily practices, as well as the curricular guidelines of the municipality where the school is located, its theoretical assumptions and the ways in which this curricular orientation was worked out in the school daily life. In this way, the different possibilities of *uses* of the curricular orientation that can create *tactics* (Certeau, 1994) and trajectories of/to problematize and improve the officially proposed/prescribed curriculum are understood and re-signified.

## In the Equation of Roots and Choices Search for The Mouse!

*I had a girlfriend who saw inaccurately. What she saw was not a heron on the riverbank. What she saw was a river on the edge of a heron. She unpracticed rules. She used to say that her underside was more visible than a lamppost. Things had to change their behavior with her (Manoel de Barros).*

The paths that we have been followed in understanding conversations – such as the narratives of relationships between *policiespractices* of *thoughtpracticed* curricula woven by teachers – have helped us to understand that there are different situations in which different curricular productions are enabled. These productions are always intertwined with the daily life of each teacher and their political positions of understanding what school is and how we, can weave curricula in the daily life.

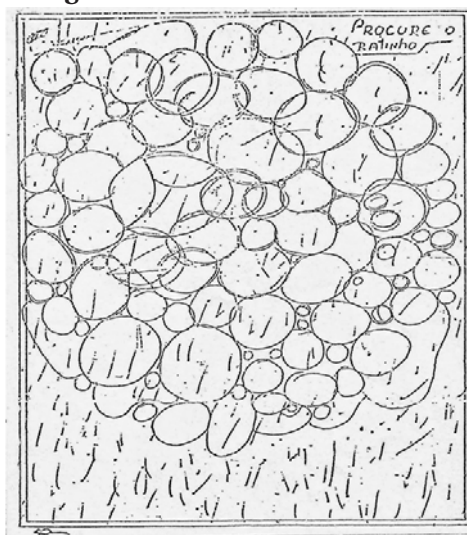
The formulation and reformulation of prescriptive policies and their influences on the school daily life intersect with the teachers' lives, producing effects on them. It is only by listening to these narratives that we will be able to understand and “[...] write a history of the Brazilian school in which what matters is the daily experience of their *practitioners*, in and out<sup>2</sup> of it, in all *the networks of knowledge and meanings* in which we *teach/learn*” (Alves, 2008, p. 133, emphasis added). Thereby, now it follows our listening to the conversations ...

Teacher Simone – Rafael, do you mind if before we start, I make a dynamic that we did in school?

Rafael: Not at all, I don't mind! It's up to you!

Teacher Simone – Then folks, I'm going to give this sheet of paper to you and I'll ask each of you to look for the mouse in these drawings:

**Figure 1 – Search for the Mouse!**



Source: Personal collection.

Upon request, everyone began to look for the mouse in the picture delivered by Simone. Some were astonished because they could not *see* the mouse. Others, after a couple of tries, could find it. After a few minutes, Simone finishes the dynamic and begins to talk about the activity.

Teacher Simone – Did you find the mouse? What did you think of the activity? What difficulties did you had?

Teacher Rita: Gosh, it was quite difficult, but at the same time it made me think a lot! Can I say where the mouse is?

Teacher Simone – Yes, you can!

Teacher Rita – It's not in the middle of the drawing, it's out of the square, down here!

Some teachers, who had not been able to find the mouse, were surprised and we have answers like: *We were too focused on the square! We didn't know that we could search outside the lines, etc. Guys, we need to go beyond what we seem to see!*

Teacher Rita: I keep thinking that we are so afraid of making mistakes, at least that is the way we have been taught, and we still do it with our students, that we are afraid to risk, we seldom get doomed to self-indulgence, not wanting to leave our comfort zone due to the known, or even for making us think, that we cannot do something different...

Teacher Simone – I'll tell you more, Rita, sometimes we are imposed many models and guidelines, almost prescriptions, that we must follow to ensure the student's success. These templates and guidelines are part of our routine and we talked about it the past. However, what I feel is as if there is something that pulls me down, not in the sense of discouragement, it is not that. They're quite inflexible actions and projects that come to school and we end up being shaped not to think very different from that ...

Teacher Débora – I see that we are so used to do things, and we are led to think in the same way, that we end up being restricted, even when we don't agree with something, it's almost imposed a way of thinking.

Teacher Simone – It's as if we were a plant that receives the nutrition that comes from the root, however, even though we stay in this single movement, sometimes we can grow and burst wires, other branches and even sidewalks... it turns out that somehow we grow and we produce, but the root is always there ... feeding us in the same way ...

Teacher Débora – That is our challenge ... to break down the barriers and get results in different ways, but without disengaging of our guidelines. Is this possible? I think we'll only get different results if we change or widen our vision. There is not always another way, but we have to try ... Do we have autonomy?!

The above conversation fragment urges us to think once again about how modernity, with its ways of imposing itself and plastering transgressive modes of (re)existence, makes the teachers feel trapped in a certain model/method in their practices. As a result, it is fostered a sense of impotence to understand the world or, in this case, the activity's drawing, beyond its rules. Santos (2007) argues that we live, somehow, a double crisis: the crisis of regulation and the crisis of emancipation. This is due to the promises of modernity – freedom, equality and solidarity – remaining to be an aspiration for the world population. We have modern problems for which we do not have modern solutions, and

it is from this problem situation that a transition character is recognized in our time. In addition, we need to reinvent social emancipation, we must reinvent social sciences, because they are a precious tool and, after working them epistemologically, we must make them part of the solution, not of the problem. Thus, we agree with the author:

We think that we must continue with the idea of social emancipation. However, the problem is that we cannot continue to think it in modern terms, since the instruments that regulate the discrepancy between reform and revolution, between experiences and expectations, between regulation and emancipation, these modern forms, are now in crisis (Santos, 2007, p. 18).

The teachers' talk regarding the difficulty in searching the mouse at the moment of the proposed dynamics is related with certain models of thought that are (im)posed and make it hard to live and explore the epistemological richness of the world. The proposed dynamics stimulated us to think about the need to review our concepts about how we perceive and construct the world, on the possibility of understanding that there is in it a huge and inexhaustible epistemological diversity, full of several other possible meanings, regarded as invisible by the prevailing indolent reasons.

Still regarding the current times, Santos (2008) points out that we experience a confusing time, of crisis and transition, being in the equation of roots – understood as the thought of everything that is deep, permanent, unique and singular – and choices – thoughts of everything that is variable, ephemeral and replaceable. For Boaventura, the effectiveness of this equation is based on double cunning and the need to reinvent the past, live the present in order to glimpse the future. About this, we take the words of Santos when he states that:

First and foremost, the cunning of balance between the past and the future. The thought of the roots presents itself as a thought of the past opposed to the thought of the choices, the thought of the future. It is cunning because, in fact, both the thinking of the roots and the choices are future thoughts, future oriented. The past is, in this equation, only a specific way of building the future (Santos, 2008, p. 55).

Therefore, in the current times, especially in the Brazilian political scene, of deep political instability, the options are inscribed as possibilities/alternatives within the limits given by the roots – structures that transcend us and restrain the choices. As cunning, the overcoming of what already exists is manifested in the scenario of the equation of roots and choices that shows us alternatives and possibilities, but also limits. We need to seek balance, symmetry, knowing that, just as in the conflict between regulation and emancipation, it is far from overcoming one or the other, because “[...] while certain types of choices presuppose the discursive predominance of roots, others forms presuppose

their second-class [...] the game is always from the roots to the choices and from the choices to the roots "(Santos, 2008, p. 55).

The teachers' statements about the difficulty or the impossibility of finding the mouse on the drawing beyond the lines presented remind us of the way in which knowledge and its forms of weaving have been elaborated and understood in the historical process of society. We have the transition from a way of conceiving and understanding the world that flows and takes place between roots and choices.

Santos (2008) tells us that this game of movement and opposition between roots and choices was developed with the Enlightenment, when the roots clearly took over another type of existence: as options. The roots, in their vast cultural and political field, impose prescriptive reasons and forms of understanding the world, but when they are placed in society for consumption and use, they are transformed through the choices inscribed in them, which create from there a huge field of possibilities. We identify, in the words of the teachers throughout the research and we find it quite evident that the State, as a regulating and committed body, therefore, with the roots, leads the social course and, in this case, education from the proposition of materials and methods according to the *status quo*. However, the orientations and the curricular proposals centered in the roots, in reflexive processes of concretization, are modified, are (re)viewed and this depends on the possible choices inscribed in the different realities that the roots-based proposals find. After all, they allow the teachers to provide or propose new directions for their practices.

We understand that, in the emerging paradigm, knowledge and curriculum are no longer consisted only around subjects, assuming their fragmentation, plurality and reversibility through the use of different and cunning forms. As a consequence of this, we can understand that it lies in the weaving movement of the teachers' daily schoolwork, the search for expansion and exercise of the choices beyond the imposed roots. Therefore, it lies in this movement the necessary review of the equation and, with it, the balance between the roots and the choices, because they are the ones that boost the system into the future. The teachers themselves do this and use different methods, or they comprise different strands, without breaking the roots – because they aim to make use of known and acknowledged methods to find and weave new options for the future, creating, astutely, within their limits, new *thoughtpracticed* curricula.

The conversations with the teachers remind to us evidences that, in their practices, the equation of roots and choices is present. An equation that seeks to go beyond the perspective of a break with the roots that are placed, creating distinct uses with them, of enabled, ingenious choices. The aforementioned uses have reminded and brought to the surface an important notion, quite present in the school daily life, which in a certain way transits in the equation proposed by Boaventura and is present in the speech of Débora: "[...] that is our challenge ... do we have autonomy?!".

## Between Roots and Choices: teacher autonomy

We follow an opposite direction to the hegemonic interpretation of school daily life as a place of routine common-sense practices and devoid of creation and reflection. After all, by feeling it and perceiving it in this conventional way, we fail to consider a series of aspects that interfere decisively in the lives of people who are part of this daily life.

This multifaceted *spacetime* involves a network of subjects with distinct subjectivities and who practice their actions in different ways too, interfering with their effects on social processes. It is not different in schools. Teachers make choices, they *practice/think*, create and modify the curricula, and it is difficult to understand the elements that comprise and form those choices. Oliveira (2012, n. p.) points out “[...] that because of so many entanglements, beyond – or in spite of – unpredictability, we also have limits”. Limits coming from what Boaventura identifies as roots, what binds us to the past, but not only to a past time, it entangles us with our origins, with our ancestry, with our most structural and deep elements, with which it is difficult to break. Santos (2006) has already alerted us to the need to understand that in the school *spacetime*, actions are inscribed in a field of (im)possibilities, as the practices are operationalized among the roots and the mobility of choices. In other words, actions occur between what constitutes us most deeply and the possibilities and alternatives that it entails, beyond what has already been known and done.

In this sense, and taking into account the conversations with the teachers, we believe we need to understand the curricula as documents woven into networks of knowledge and complex subjectivities, marked by constant unpredictability and transience, avoiding the understanding that everything is possible or, more than that, everything would be acceptable. Such thinking brings only the understanding that it is possible to create, not repeat, to subscribe in day-to-day reality beyond what it leads, choosing to go beyond what enroots us. Regarding this, we bring the statements of the teachers Valéria, Rita and Ariele:

Teacher Valeria – Guys, I’s like to vent with you ... Today, this week I had a difficult situation at school! I have taught since I was 16 years old, that is, a long time ago ... But that does not mean that I don’t want to update myself, this is not what I mean. I studied *Proletramento*, *PACTO* and I do every course that is offered, I like to update myself and this is important. But we had the visit of the Supervisor of the school ... You know ... and I’m not going to mention names, but sometimes they just daydream ...

Teacher Rita – That’s right! I agree ... I hate it when they go to school ... but finish your story ... (laughs)

Teacher Valéria – So, I do everything I believe in and that I know that could work. I don’t have one single method for literacy, I use them all and each complements the other. I mix them all! Well, I think they complement each other and that is where it goes ... The little lady went to school, in my room, she took a student’s notebook and asked for my planning, that flipped me out ... Then she started to question what I did and telling me how I should work, because she asked a reading from a student and

she did not read much. It is obvious that she read a little! The student she chose has a tremendous difficulty, out of all the problems at home that everyone knows and end up falling for school to solve.

Teacher Ariele – Look, I am a Supervisor and a Teacher, I believe we have to separate the things ... I see that some colleagues do not have a lot of experience and they end up confusing a little that inside the classroom, after closing the door, whatever the Pope has said, it is up to each one to do what she believes! This doesn't mean that the way a particular practice has been *taught* has no meaning. However, you must understand, it's how and when and why we do things. Each one here believes in the capacity shaped with years, or not, of experience.

Teacher Valéria – You know, I'm a TEACHER! I like and believe in what I do! I believe that education can change the future of a child. But in my experience, I don't feel good when someone, whoever it is, tells me how to do this or that. Not that I did not hear it, or do not like criticisms, but sometimes our classroom autonomy is totally hurt.

Teacher Ariele – Now some people are asking for a School without a Party ... Quite clueless!

Teacher Valéria – Wow! Don't mention that! These people don't know what it is to live in a dictatorship! When I was in teachers training, it was the time of the dictatorship! God forbid it! I understand that sometimes we need to follow this or that orientation, even because the school, the principal and ourselves are seriously asked for results. Everyone is demanding from the school, thinking a lot of things for the school ... but, I repeat what I said the other day here: *too many silly people who don't know anything about school.*

Teacher Ariele – Common National Core, School without a Party and everything that resembles this will finish the little *autonomy* that we have ... We already have so much and direction to follow that, if we have to literally police ourselves about what we say or present in our classes... so many people, even other colleagues taking care of what we do... It scrambled everything!

Teacher Valéria's outburst on vigilance and the imposition of curricular and political perspectives encourages us to think about how internal and external agents influence school, that is, they try to direct in one direction the practices that operate in the context of the equation of roots and choices. Valéria and the other teachers bring in this conversation the adoption of a opposing, active and political attitude, which in a way is permeated by the relationships that are established *in/outside* the school, a position that evidences their commitment to the role and social function of teaching. There is rightfulness in the performance of their actions, just as it is possible to note concern about how and when decisions could be made, asserting what they understand by their autonomy to make choices (options) within the context of what is imposed on them or what hegemonically constitutes the school, its roots.

Freire (2005) points out that autonomy, democracy and freedom, albeit in a utopian way, are crucial elements from which different groups that make up a society negotiate their diverse interests, both private and social. In the school daily life, we will understand that autonomy presupposes, in addition to the capacity to act by itself, a relationship of interlocution and cooperative and supportive learning situations, in



which democracy and freedom are present. In this process, the role of teachers is to act as mediators of teaching-learning, to give aesthetic and ethical shape to the act of teaching. We understand that teachers, when referring to their autonomies, even if they are hurt by disrespectful decrees, involve the idea of social responsibility, remember the commitment that should guide the participants in the decision-making process, going beyond their own interests, and remind us of what is central for them. Therefore, far from weaving practices related to an individual autonomy, they clarify in their statements that this needs to be linked to a sensitivity capable of understanding the other and the willingness to fight for the education in which they believe. Contreras (2012), on the other hand, claims that we cannot analyze the teacher autonomy from an individualist perspective, since autonomy, as well as moral values, is the result of a social practice. Therefore, it would not make sense to say that the teachers are autonomous, but rather they operate with their own options and movements, acting in an autonomous way.

An important aspect to emphasize is that, in the process of constitution of what is now our roots, modernity and its nuances of rationalization influence the teaching profession and, with this, the role of teachers and their teaching roles. Regarding school curricula, Silva (2007) clarifies that the Taylorism and Fordist models – applied in industries aiming at the homogenization of work in order to reduce costs and increase productivity – transcended their industrial application and conditioned the curricular reflection and proposals, and even the teaching practices, in a perspective of understanding the role of teachers, practitioners of daily life, as consumers and not as creators. Amid these roots and the many options entailed by them, but not necessarily of recognized validity, teachers see their professional role reduced to merely applying programs and curricular packages, steeped in charges.

Regarding this aspect, Contreras (2012) seeks to separate the meaning of professionalization from the professionalism of the teacher. The former is conceived in the perspective of socioeconomic changes related to the process of proletarianization of the teacher, who has his/her functions and attributions reduced to those of a mere reproducer of pre-established formulas. The latter, the professionalism, is related to the way the teacher seeks to weave and assign a meaning to his/her teaching practices and purposes.

Contreras (2012) works on teacher autonomy based on three aspects that, for him, characterize the teaching profession, considering the demands of the educational work that, to a certain level, emerge from the teachers' statements: moral obligation, commitment with the community and professional competence. The moral obligation denotes the ethical and political commitment of the teachers. The author points out that this aspect refers to the idea of the subject formation, not only with regard to the cognitive aspects, but also to the citizens' education of the students. Valéria and the other teachers, in their statements, bring nuances of their involvement with a fuller and more complete conception of education, that can be perceived in Contreras' perspective.

When we perceive this characteristic of teacher professionalism in the teachers' statements, we can tacitly point out that they *thinkdo* their practices regardless of the of contractual clauses or formally established commitments. Thus, above specific knowledge and intellectual training, teaching images and practices are closely related to the idea of someone who is, or should be, committed with the weaving of *thoughtpracticed* curricula aimed at re-signifying daily practices and social emancipation.

Through the complex equation of roots and choices and the possibilities of dealing with them as asserted by the teachers' ordinary and cunning practices, even though there is sometimes no conscious commitment with this dimension of their professionalism, actions within or outside the classroom contribute in the elaboration of their moral obligations as instructors, given also the emotional and affective bonds that they establish in the/with the individuals and school daily life.

Undoubtedly, the moral commitment implicitly assumed by the teacher is related to his/her vision of the world and personal identity, which often clash with institutional guidelines and demands. Here again, we can allude to the relationships that are established *in/outside* the schools, being the result of a professional commitment resulting from the networks of *doingknowing*, reflections and negotiations in the multiple conflicts that arise from the differences of perspectives, both from the teachers and the students and with the community/management team.

The daily *policiespractices*, results from the networks woven daily by the teachers in the schools, cannot be seen as isolated elements. They are part of the second aspect of teacher professionalism, which Contreras (2012) highlights as the commitment to the community. If moral commitment is combined with the will to do well, that is, to do the best for the weaving of *thoughtpracticed* curricula, the commitment to the community is attached to the dimension of sensitivity and understanding that school practices should not be applied in a tight way and certainly not practiced with machines, robotic subjects or things, but with subjects in training and who have their subjectivities and real need of emancipation.

For Freire (2005), autonomy is a cultural construction, not something natural, and it depends on the relation of men with the others and of these with knowledge. Therefore, in this process of understanding the teacher's role as inherent to life and the struggle for quality education, it is understandable to realize that for the teachers, teaching is the process of operating with existing choices, based on proposals and critical analysis, re-signifying them to the school role.

Consequently, in Contreras's view, moral and commitment to the community are not only personal or individual characteristics of the teachers, but elements that are socially woven and, therefore, with a political nature. This weaving leads the teachers to establish a constant relationship with society, so that they can share with them the construc-

tion of these other practices, ones that stimulate different uses of the choices that condition or not their professional practices.

Practicing the school daily life and teaching autonomy are not an easy task, since the daily organization of curricular practices does not take place in a linear way by the mere application of rules and norms. In fact, these processes are structured in a conflictive and even contradictory way, according to Ariele, who works as teacher and supervisor, because they involve interpretations and judgment of values by the different teachers and the subjects that compose the school *spacetime* school, besides the interference of the social environment in which the school is inserted.

Finally, the third and last aspect highlighted by Contreras (2012) refers to the professional competence. This dimension involves the scientific knowledge and the skills and techniques in general related to the resources of the didactic action, in other words, their knowledge proper of teaching. However, in view of the two previous aspects, the teaching profession requires a competence that goes beyond the intellectual and technical fields developed in the university, in the training courses or in other formal learning. There are political, pedagogical, technical, theoretical and epistemological challenges that we understand with the support of Garcia (2007, p. 23), who draws our attention “[...] to the fact that these need to be considered and problematized in their specificities, but permanently articulated, by their interdependence, in the process and trajectory that makes up the training of teachers”.

We need to emphasize that teacher autonomy is not an individual quality present in each subject. It is a process that gradually assures the ascension, on the part of the teachers, of their social responsibilities, by the weaving of practices and curricula in complex situations, historically constructed and ideologically compromised, as Valéria points out in her talk about having accomplished the teaching traineeship at the time of the dictatorship.

In Paulo Freire’s view (2005), the reading of the world goes deeper and expands from the possibility that the subjects, in their formative and practicing processes, can live with a wider world understanding, namely, the world’s interpretation is no more than the ability to better understand it. The question is: how can teachers work according to expectations and demands from their praxis contexts? This can only be done with a subject who feels and perceives him/herself as an actor in his/her history, an empowered subject, in the exercise of power that comes from his/her praxis. The question that the teachers’ conversation excerpts puts to us is: how teachers – most of them trained within the assumptions of a technical rationality – can re-signify the hegemonic epistemology that guide their practices to become critical subjects, able to adhere to a new conception of practice? Moreover, how the teachers, inserted in a social and political context that increasingly devalues their profession, immerse in a hegemonic model of liberal representative democracy (Santos, 2002), which disregards the role of social mobilization

and collective action, could break with such conditions and become historical subjects, committed to emancipatory political praxis?

### **Routes of Flight: Matilda's closet as an option to weave the school daily life**

*Uninventing objects. The comb, for instance. Give the comb no combing functions. Until it becomes available to be a begonia. Or a pine needle. Use some words that do not yet have a language* (Manoel de Barros).

Carvalho (2014) assumes that the quotidian and the weaving of practices slide along lines of flight in which the curricula and their weaving leave towards the new, that is, towards the unpredictable, the non-pre-existent. In this regard, drawing lines of flight is presented as rupture, division and preparation for new and other ways of weaving the school daily life, beyond the (im)posed norms. On this basis, we believe that there is a potentializing action that demonstrates how teachers mobilize the tools, presented here as the choices, in the arrangement of other networks of knowledge to escape, or circumvent, the prescription of proposals and guidelines. As an example of mobilization of tools, we take a fragment of the conversation between teachers Rita and Ariele:

Teacher Rita – Guys, have you seen the Matilda movie?! I always show it to my students... Matilda is a very inventive girl, she has magical powers, her parents sent her to a school where the teacher likes her and believes in her potential. However, there is a Principal who is quite strict, very conservative! In class, the teacher explores everything that Matilda brings, they discover other things and end up learning, in a totally non-standard and non-traditional way. But every time the Principal goes to the classroom, that colorful and entertaining world that is built has to be left out ...

Teacher Ariele – Guys ... THE MATILDA'S CLOSET!

Teacher Rita: That's right! I do this ... I plan my things, there will be textbook activity mixed with *PNAIC* things ... I also mix a lot of method (laughs) and when someone says they are going to the school to supervise, I put everything in Matilda's closet! And I let outside what they want to see ... It does not always work, but it works!

Teacher Ariele – I'll use that now! Having my *Matilda's closet* and inside it I'll keep all my productions and things I use to plan my classes. Guys, my closet will stay open and you can check it out! I want to check your closet Rita, I bet that I'll find there find plans that are more interesting and related to our reality than this core that they are making.

The metaphor used by the teachers – anchored in the picture of a closet of a children's movie, to demonstrate how they create lines of flight in the face of didactic determinisms – brings with it a potential element to understand the necessary social construction of rebellious and, therefore, autonomous subjectivities (Santos, 2006). Tensioning, subverting and problematizing the roots is part of the process of politicizing practices. Reinventing the past and foreseeing a compelling future, inscribed in the present context of its practices, is the way in which

powerful questions are built and passionate positions taken, capable of inexhaustible senses.

The time in which we live, of changes and crises produced by opposition and conflicts of knowledge – regulatory and emancipatory – and notions, as well as the very fast way information reaches us, is also an apparent *time of stagnation*, according to Santos (2007). The author points out that, while a time in which the possibility of *doingcreating* new alternatives is multiple, a number of factors are placed, creating a *spacetime* in which we would seem to be idle, unproductive, while regulating factors collide and enter into conflict with the factors that unshackle. Therefore, we live a time of intense searching for appropriate answers to the strong questions that are posed to us, that can define in a more precise way and help in understanding the time in which we live (Santos, 2009). The particularities of this time of strong questions and still weak answers lie in the idea that their approaches may vary from culture to culture and region of the world, against the ideal of rational totality preached by modern science, creating a discrepancy in the understanding of the strong and necessary answers to the questions. This means that we have and face modern problems for which the presented modern solutions are insufficient and/or incomplete, they are weak, inappropriate answers. Therefore, the conditions established for credibility in the discrepancy between the strong questions and their weak answers are based on the very movement of crisis and paradigmatic transition that we experience.

The asymmetries caused by the advance of the scientific and conceptual field set the nuances for the questioning of its own bases, making the questions posed today to take as an object of reflection some of the knowledge generated in modernity. The problem we face is that the answers are still weak, privileging their canons to the detriment of other concepts, which would be necessary to produce better, stronger answers.

Santos (2009) points out that, while contemporary codes can be used to resist oppression, they can also be used to intensify oppression. In this sense, in creating Matilda's closet as a space of ordinary practices, the teachers arouse passions and open new spaces for creativity and human initiative. What the teachers demonstrate in the conversations approached in this text is the identification of powerful questions that are placed in the confrontation of the dangerous moment that we cross in the educational policy scenario. However, by creating spaces for sharing knowledge, practices and curricula, or by accentuating the character of the autonomy of their practices, teachers pose powerful questions, which need to be widely shared, as they demonstrate that, in addition to individual character, on the collective, enabling a better understanding of what gathers and separates them. Santos (2009) also advises us of the necessary struggle for another conception of the past, in which it becomes an anticipated reason for our nonconformity; in other words, that we understand it as choices that we can and should question. Communication and complicity must take place in a sustained

way and at various levels – epistemological, methodological, political – in order to bring about a dynamic balance between the different theories, didactic proposals, daily plans and curricular practices.

In the social weaving of the rebellious subjectivities we have a lot of restlessness, understood as the starting point not only of our desires and requests, but also of our thinking, judgment, will and action. The routine, reproductive and repetitive practice, supposedly (im)posed on the teacher's autonomy, seeks to reduce the realism to what exists only because it exists. However, in different daily situations, inventiveness, lines of flight, and different methods of use of choices make it possible complex and creative networks between teachers and their *thought-practiced* curricula. Oliveira (2013) reminds us that understanding the way how daily practices, based on their rebellious subjectivities, are inserted in distinct school *spacetimes* is to strengthen the discussion about democracy.

### **(Im)Possible Elements to *End* the Conversation...**

In this article I have tried to bring to the debate some of the paths I have taken to understand, through encounters and conversations with teachers, the *policiespractices* relations of *thoughtpracticed* curricula woven daily. Also, to understand, in the teachers' conversations, the complex processes through which individual or collective subjectivities are formed and are inscribed in school daily life, creating networks of knowledge, incorporating in specific ways the knowledge with which they come into contact, understood in an extensive sense. In other words, such processes incorporate formal and daily *knowledge*, as well as values and beliefs present in the social environment in which they are inserted. Therefore, Oliveira (2013) highlights that these formation processes are what will define the possibilities of action of the subjects and social groups on and in the world:

Assuming from this premise, that our possible actions depend on what we know, believe and experience, making us what we are, we will understand the creation of more or less democratic subjectivities as processes of negotiation of meanings between the experiences lived by these subjects and the more or less democratic possibilities of action as a result of these negotiations that, although they carry and include a wide range of possibilities, due to the immense number of existing combinations, allow to suppose that certain types of practical and cognitive experiences tend to benefit the creation of more democratic subjectivities, while other types of experiences tend to make it more difficult (Oliveira, 2013, n. p).

To understand subjective, rebellious and democratic actions is to put oneself against the dominant thought and social structure in all spaces of social life, as well as its possible emancipatory character, as it was observed in the teachers' discourse. The better we can understand the logic of practices, in their different ways of doing, which govern the

social practices woven daily by the teachers, the more prepared we will be to develop forms of fight for the expansion of democratic practices.

Finally, for political-epistemological-pedagogical choice, the investigative emphasis of the research fragment here presented was in the place, in the part, in the fragment – which is never too late to remember – contains the whole (Morin, 2005). In this social and collective dimension, the empowerment of teachers as *artisans* (Sennet, 2012) emerged from ways of making *thoughtpracticed* curricula in the school daily life, as well as weavers of invisible curricular *policiespractices*.

Working with the conversations and school daily life, seeking to re-establish it as a privileged *spacetime* for the production of knowledge, beliefs and values, considering it in a complex way, was a task that involved critically addressing practices related to policies of homogenization and standardizing of *thoughtpracticed* curricula, mentioned in the conversations. In this understanding and in accordance with the conversations with the teachers, it is worth to say that we always have to suspect those policies that propose to standardize and homogenize our schools, teachers, students, always in search of the supposed possibility of control of the school reality and, in favor of the search for the *best quality* defined outside the school *spacetime*. The teachers, when they problematize their autonomy and create mechanisms to assert their ways of acting, begin to propose and experience a rebellious subjectivity, in other words, a subjectivity endowed with a special ability, energy and will to act, being this a poetic subjectivity and which necessarily implies experiencing eccentric or marginal forms of sociability or subjectivity<sup>3</sup>.

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- 1 This research was funded by CAPES/Proex.
- 2 Nowadays, both Nilda Alves and many other researchers in/from/with daily life have used the expression in/outside, evidencing the understanding that we do not believe in this separation.
- 3 This article is part of the Thematic Section, *Resistances and Reexistences in Educational Social Spaces in Times of Neo-Conservatism*, organized by Inês Barbosa de Oliveira (Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro) and Rafael Marques Gonçalves (Universidade Federal do Acre).

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