

THE ROLE OF HOMEWORK IN THE PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The present theoretical-conceptual study is based on the assumptions of Historical-Cultural Theory (HCT) and Historical-Critical Pedagogy (HCP) and aims to present the role of homework (HW) in the psychic development of students. It is understood that this needs to be a study action, as these are the actions that make up the study activity (SA), an activity that guides development during the school age period. Although HW is a teaching tool frequently used by teachers, it is still a topic little explored by scholars and researchers. Based on liberal ideas, it is seen only as an extension of the content given in the classroom that needs to be fixed and/or memorized. Due to this understanding, it contributes little or nothing to the psychological development of students. However, there are theoretical-conceptual elements that make it possible to highlight its importance for students' cultural readaptation. It is concluded that there is a need to modify or transform the practice of using HW, so that its purposes can be consistent with the reasons for SA, in the sense of forming theoretical thinking.

Keywords: homework; study activity; cultural-historical psychology

El Papel de la Tarea Escolar en el Desarrollo Psíquico de los Estudiantes

RESUMEN

El presente estudio teórico-conceptual se fundamenta en los presupuestos de la Teoría Histórico-Cultural (THC) y de la Pedagogía Histórico-Crítica (PHC) y tiene como objetivo presentar el papel de las tareas (TE) en el desarrollo psíquico de los estudiantes. Se entiende que esta debe ser una acción de estudio, pues son las acciones que conforman la actividad de estudio (AE), actividad que orienta el desarrollo durante el período de la edad escolar. Aunque la TE es una herramienta didáctica utilizada frecuentemente por los profesores, sigue siendo un tema poco explorado por académicos e investigadores. Basado en ideas liberales, se ve sólo como una extensión del contenido dado en el aula que necesita ser fijado y/o memorizado. Debido a esta comprensión, poco o nada aporta al desarrollo psíquico de los estudiantes. Sin embargo, existen elementos teórico-conceptuales que permiten resaltar su importancia para la readaptación cultural de los estudiantes. Se concluye que existe la necesidad de modificar o transformar la práctica de uso de la TE, de modo que sus propósitos puedan ser consistentes con los motivos de la AE, en el sentido de formar pensamiento teórico.

Palabras clave: tarea; actividad de estudio; psicología histórico-cultural

O papel da tarefa de casa no desenvolvimento psíquico dos estudantes

RESUMO

O presente estudo, teórico-conceitual, fundamenta-se nos pressupostos da Teoria Histórico-Cultural (THC) e da Pedagogia Histórico-Crítica (PHC) e tem por objetivo apresentar o papel da tarefa de casa (TC) no desenvolvimento psíquico dos estudantes. Entende-se que esta precisa se constituir em uma ação de estudo, pois são as ações que compõem a atividade de estudo (AE), atividade guia do desenvolvimento no período da idade escolar. Embora a TC seja um instrumento didático frequentemente usado pelos professores, ainda é um tema pouco explorado por estudiosos e pesquisadores. Alicerçada no ideário liberal, é vista apenas como extensão do conteúdo dado em sala de aula que necessita ser fixado e/ou memorizado. Por essa compreensão, ela pouco ou nada contribui com o desenvolvimento psíquico dos estudantes. Contudo, há elementos teóricos-conceituais que permitem evidenciar sua importância para o reequipamento cultural dos estudantes. Conclui-se que há necessidade de se modificar ou transformar a prática do uso da TC, de modo que seus fins possam ser condizentes com os motivos da AE, no sentido da formação do pensamento teórico.

Palavras-chave: tarefa de casa; atividade de estudo; psicologia histórico-cultural

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INTRODUCTION

The present theoretical article, leaning towards psychology or Cultural Historical Theory (CHT) and Historical Critical Pedagogy (HCP), has the objective to introduce the role of Homework (HW) in the psychological development of students, by constituting itself as an action of the Study Activity (SA). It is discussed that, by constituting itself as a Study Action, Homework hints at possibilities of transformation regarding the students' learning, contributing thus to their psychological development because the actions are part of the general structure of the activity consolidate human action (Leontiev, 1983).

According to Nogueira (2002, p.17) "In Brazil, the homework practice is commonplace in regular education, whether public or private. However, most scholars never approach the matter". It is possible to observe that there is a relative scarcity of research works and discussions on the homework theme in the realm of educational research as well as in the psychology field.

In the area of psychology, in its interface with education, its discussion is incipient, according to the literature review realized from October to November 2018, for the elaboration of a research developed from 2017 to 2019, in the Amazon region, entitled "Homework: a study in the light of activity theory"¹. It is important to highlight the fact that this theoretical essay is the result of this research, and in this period, it was possible to find only one work, by Vans and Grando (2016), entitled "The sense of homework in the process of learning Math". The aforementioned study has a correlation with the words of L. S. Vygotsky (1896-1934) and A. N. Leontiev (1903-1979), though without the conceptual depths of the CHT, when it does not reveal the possibility that homework is an element that contributes to the psychological development of students.

According to the CHT, "learning by itself is not development, it is rather a correct organization of a child's learning that leads to mental development, while activating a whole set of developmental process and this activation could not happen without learning" (Vygotsky, 1991, p. 47). Thus, it is possible to understand that school education, by making students appropriate systematized information on different areas of knowledge, fuels the development of psyche.

In this same direction, according to the HCP, "school exists in order to benefit the acquisition of instruments that lead to elaborate knowledge (science), as well as the access to the rudiments of this knowledge. The activities of basic school must be organized around this question" (Saviani, 2011, p. 14). After all, education is a

phenomenon that is typically human. Education is the means for us to appropriate knowledge that is historically produced by the previous generations, which presupposes conditions for development. However, the objective conditions of access to such knowledge are the factors that can promote development or not.

The CHT and the CHP are convergent because they assume the same epistemological matrix, that is, the one of dialectical-historical materialism. Furthermore, such perspectives "are not indifferent to analysis of objective conditions that, in a class society, set aside unequal humanization conditions for different individuals." (Martins, 2013, p. 272). They are not only indifferent to this analysis, the CHP and the CHT are opposed to unequal forms of development that capitalist society imposes on individuals.

Based on this comprehension of the relevance of school education, when it assumes its most classic responsibility – teaching (Saviani, 2011), it is possible to understand that the homework that is commonly employed in the classroom can be redesigned as a pedagogical instrument that provides the possibility for access to elaborate knowledge, and must be at the service of an educational proposal that fuels development and acts in a perspective of humanization and emancipation, and not only as an exercise on memorization to be done as an imposition.

In this sense, Nogueira (2002) points at the fact that it would be really good if all students had satisfactory experiences with homework, but very few have that privilege because, for many students, homework is a burden, an obligation. In this sense, homework translates a conception of traditional liberal education, whose purpose consists of memorizing and/or recollecting content transmitted in the classroom. Therefore, it is possible to say that homework was not created with the objective to contribute to the promotion of the students' psychological development, indicating possibilities of transformation regarding learning.

However, it can be a successful educational practice if it is regarded as an action of SA that benefits the development of autonomy, of self-organization for studies, and of a sense of responsibility. In this sense, it is what we will discuss in this theoretical study, by presenting a brief historical of homework and its contribution to the psychological development of students by constituting itself as an action of the study activity.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF HOMEWORK

In our region, the term homework is commonplace at schools, but there are different expressions from the same action²; in this study we chose the term "Homework" or HW. Nogueira (2002, p. 23) explains:

¹ The research was oriented by Doctor Professor Ana Maria de Lima Souza (*in memoriam*), in the Psychology mastering course of the Federal University of Rondônia.

² We considered homework as an action, based on the theory of activity presented by A. N. Leontiev (1983), which we will approach later.

'Homework', 'assignment', 'home lesson', 'home theme', 'Home task', or 'Tarefa de casa', 'exercício de casa', 'lição de casa', 'tema para casa' and 'dever de casa' are other expressions in use at Brazilian schools and indicate an activity that students take home to do during their free time [author's highlight].

To Libâneo (1994, p. 195), HW is defined as "an important pedagogical complement for consolidation that is closely connected to the development of classes. Homework consists of learning activities realized by students when they are not at school". Therefore, it is an activity assigned as an extension of the school content taught in the classroom and commonly used in school everyday life.

Thus, it is important to highlight the fact that Homework was created as a means to keep middle-class students busy and became associated with academic success. It became part of the lifestyle of those who believed that schooling would be a form of social ascension (Carvalho, 2006). The ones who obtained school success, that is, the ones who memorized the taught contents, while homework played a fundamental role. That is a conception that is typical of traditional pedagogy, in which memory is one of the most stimulated, superior, psychological functions.

In Brazil, until 1920, there was the predominance of traditional school pedagogy. In this perspective, the teacher had to present the cultural items to the students and these were supposed to assimilate the knowledge. In this period, there was a predominance of the agricultural exporting model and most of the population had no access to school. Education was exclusive to a small clientele from an elite that had the economic and political power (Facci, 2004, p.101). This pedagogy became hegemonic when the liberal system started guiding and sustaining the production means for life and society.

The liberal system is naturally excluding because it recognized the defense of individual interests as fundamental and legitimate. In its logic, society is considered open to the ascension of individuals, who are able to move among social classes for their own merit and efforts or for the lack of those. Such logic instituted itself without taking into consideration the given conditions and establishing a direct relation: if someone does not ascend or does not prosper that is because they have not learned things and it happened because they did not put on enough effort to memorize content or because they have presented some organic problem.

According to Nogueira (2002), there are indicatives that the first theorists to mention Homework were Jan Amos Comenius (1592-1670) and Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841). The first one is regarded as the father of didactics for writing many works on education. His best-known work is *Didática Magna* (1649/2001), which deals with the art of teaching people. Comenius believed that the models of repetition were efficient in

the learning process and that the teacher played the role of supreme inspector. On the other hand, Herbart understood that the voice and the action belonged to the teacher. His view of education and the teachers' role situate him as an exponent of traditional school.

In this sense, both Comenius and Herbart, in their identification with liberal traditional pedagogy, reveal the reason why homework has its origins in models pre-established by memorization and repetition. However, the practice of taking assignments to be accomplished at home is older than the pedagogical propositions of the aforementioned authors. Homework was already present in the pedagogical methods of Jesuits *Ratio Studiorum*³ (Soares, 2011).

The marks of the Jesuits' traditional education are present, among other aspects, in the psychological behavior model based on stimulus and response: that teacher asked, inquired, I understood ants were supposed to respond promptly. There is evidence that for this pedagogy centered on the teacher and on content memory should be continuous and widely stimulated. That was the first moment of homework, instituted at a time when traditional pedagogy predominated. Later on, in the New School or Escola Nova period (1930 to 1960), it fell into a secondary position at schools. The Escola Nova had John Dewey as an exponent (1859-1952) and aimed at reviewing the traditional education model (Facci, 2004). It is possible to observe then that "before the Second World War, many local education systems avowedly abolished homework to discourage memorization and promote a more creative use of time by students and families" (Carvalho, 2004, p. 97). Here we can highlight an idea that is a consequence of it, and that does not sustain itself before the fundamentals of CHT: creativity can be related to spontaneity and the exercise for memorization as well as the later command and automatization of content as something harmful to free creation. According to the CHT and especially to Vygotsky (1991), it is my appropriation of what has already been created that we obtain the raw material for new elaborations. While this Soviet author theorized about Russia, at the same time in Brazil the Escola Nova spread opposing ideas.

In the period of predominance of the Brazilian Escola Nova, Homework lost its importance, because to the defenders of Homework "if school was not serving that purpose, which was due to the fact that school that was implanted - traditional school - proves inadequate" (Saviani, 2008, p. 6). Therefore, everything that was part of the traditional education model needed to be banned and homework was one of these things because it did not lead to better school performance and certainly

³ The organization and study plan elaborated by the Jesuit model was equipped with 467 rules for activities where the agents connected to their system (Saviani, 2005).

would do the children no good because the children were supposed to be free to do activities other than the ones prescribed by school (Carvalho, 2004). With the education centered on the student everything that was not for the sake of the learning should be disposed of. However, banning homework from classrooms did not lead to great contributions, after all, what contributes to the success of school education is not the set of given conditions for access to systematizing instruments and elaboration of knowledge.

The effort put on by the Escola Nova movement to change the routes of education did not yield much success because their ideals as well as the ideals of traditional liberal education were also at the service of the interests of the ruling classes, and in this perspective school served a double purpose: keeping the expansion of school under manageable limits for the ruling classes and they developed a type of teaching that suits these interests (Saviani, 2008, p.9). To this group it would be much better to have a good school for few students than a bad school for many as a corroboration of the interests it served.

Furthermore, it did not take into consideration that historical basis of society and placed on the school the responsibility to solve political and economic problems (Facci, 2004).

History reveals that educational ideas are connected to some political and economic ideology and they insert themselves into the struggle for keeping or changing society. Recognizing the historical movement of society and education according to Saviani (2011, p. 80), "includes the possibility of understanding school education as it is in the present, and this present manifestation is understood as the result of a long process of historical transformation".

Thus, school and all its teaching artefacts are included in this process of struggle for permanence or for change and transformation. Thus, if Homework was previously conceived mechanically, and routinely while aiming at memorization and becoming a tool for compensatory education and, later, becomes denied in the Escola Nova period. In the current educational reality, it becomes commonly used, which demands that it is thought under the two theoretical perspectives defended here, because "the fact that it has its origins in the traditional proposal does not stop it from adjusting to the new times" (Nogueira, 2002, p.46).

Recovering this trajectory implies efforts not to dismiss this practice, which was instituted for certain finalities, but that has importance when we intend to keep interest for knowledge alive and produce an impact in the formation of positive self-concepts in students – cognizing individuals. It is up to school to overcome both challenges. In this sense, can Homework really contribute to self-organization and, consequently, to the development of student autonomy? If yes, how?

In the sense, it is necessary to break up with conceptions of homework as savior or villain and subsidize reflections that lead scholars and researchers, both in the field of school psychology and the field of education, to consider Homework from the point of view of a transforming education in the perspective of humanization and emancipation of those who "very often have at school their only means of access to elaborate knowledge" (Saviani, 2008, p. 9).

Homework assigned to be done at home may constitute a study action when its purpose is in agreement with the reasons of the study action. Thus, Homework is regarded as a study action by means of the contribution of the CHT and the CHP.

HOMework AS A STUDY ACTION: CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS

In the course of the changes and transformations that education, school and its artefacts have gone through in the historical context, Homework was not immune to such changes. It has followed predominant pedagogical trends of every period according to what could be observed, seen as a redeemer, a means to rise in school knowledge, or as a villain. Whatever the truth is, it is still in use nowadays, "but it has usually been adopted pointlessly and for that reason it has contributed very little to the students' learning" (Soares, 2017, p. 185). That is the reason why it is relevant to presents critical reflections on this practice that is so present in the everyday lives of schools, by means of an epistemological matrix that comprehends that humanity is historically and collectively produced by men, directly and intentionally by means of activities that connect them to nature and to themselves.

Thus, in order to promote Homework as an action that might contribute to the psychological development of students, it is necessary, no matter how briefly, to discuss the human activity proposed by Leontiev (1983), and such brevity is justified by the limits of what is possible to approach in the space of this article.

Human activity is the work that man exerts over nature, and by realizing that work, man does not only change nature while adapting it to his needs. Man also changes himself and this activity does not happen individually. It is collective. Such work is therefore a mediator of social relations, of culture, and of psychological development.

Human activity consolidates by means of actions that humans realize, and such actions are intrinsically related to some need, which interconnects an objective. An objective connects with a motivation. According to Leontiev (1983, p.83), "just like the concept of motivation connects with the concept of activity, the concept of objective connects with the concept of action". Action, motivation, and necessity are part of the general structure of activity (Leontiev, 1983).

Based on such premises, Elkonin (1987) established the periodization of psychological development, which is determined by the predominant activity that man realizes throughout his life, characterized by eras and periods. It is possible to observe that in the periodization of psychological development, that the study activity is located at the time of childhood, the period of school education. It is important to emphasize that “such configuration of eras constituted by periods is not random, but aims at capturing the internal logic of the development process” (Pasqualini & Eidt, 2016, p. 108). However, this periodization is not random, because these periods often go through influenced by the historical and social context, depending on the form of organization and on the reality of each society (Elkonin, 1987).

It is important to emphasize that it is in the study action that we find the object of analysis of this article: homework by constituting an action of this activity, contributes to the students' development of self-organization and the will to study. According to Asbahr (2016, p. 196), “The study activity refers to the activity that guides development at school, and its characteristic is to produce the constitution of a psychological reformation that is essential to the humanization process, the formation of theoretical thought”. Thus, it is in the study activity that students are guided towards the appropriation of theoretical knowledge, aiming at the formation of theoretical thought (Davidov, 1988).

On the other hand, actions as part of the structure of the activity are responsible for the concretization of the study activity, that is, actions are the means by which students appropriate theoretical knowledge. Asbahr (2016, p. 96) mentions some actions that are realized by students in and out of school: “reading of texts, realization of exercises for memorizing content, assessments, copying, etc.”.

Although homework has been initially established as a pedagogical instrument whose objective was memorization of school content, there is evidence that it is an element that might contribute to the promotion of the psychological development of students by constituting a study action. Appropriation by theoretical knowledge by students at school age obtained in the process of accomplishment of learning tasks, by means of appropriate actions, requires that the tasks be directed towards the promotion of the study action (Davidov, 1988).

When the purposes of homework are in agreement with the motivation of the study activity as an attempt at formation of theoretical thought, it can constitute a study action and the means by which students have the possibility to learn. All action is subordinated to an end that must be reached, that is, a conscious objective (Leontiev, 1983). Whatever the objective of homework, the appropriation of systematized knowledge that school offers depends on motivations and interests so that it can be realized as a means to contribute to the formation of

theoretical thought.

On the other hand, “human motivations and interests are not given *a priori* since birth. They are historical and social, that is, they are developed in the children by society by means of living conditions and education” (Eidt & Duarte, 2007, p. 58). The motivation to study, organize activities and execute referring actions is not inherent to students, it needs to be formed and developed.

The need to appropriate systematized knowledge on the world and the necessary capacities to do it do not constitute break requisites for learning school content in basic education. They must be produced by the schooling process itself, that is, the formation of the study activity is a product of pedagogical activity (Pasqualini & Abrantes, 2016).

Thus, the guiding teaching activity by the teachers is the creative element for motivations for the study activity, and students develop a stable desire to learn and execute study actions, in this case, homework. Therefore, “when the result of these guiding actions by the teacher surprises the children, there is the possibility of formation of motivations for the study activity” (Pasqualini & Abrantes, 2016, p.90). Consequently, before students feel compelled to realize the study actions, they must create a relation of meaning with the activity they are realizing.

Based on the studies by Leontiev (1983), Asbahr (2014, p. 268) evidenced that “the meaning is created by the objective relation between the thing that provokes action by the individual (activity motivation) and the thing towards which the action orients itself as an immediate result (finality of the action)”. Leading students to find meaning in the learning of school content, isn't that one of the great challenges of contemporaneous school education? (Duarte, 2004).

The meaning of this theoretical proposal does concern a dichotomic element between individuals and society. In order to consolidate human activity, man in his action realizes an activity that is external and internal, and both become permeated by social significations that are historically produced. By appropriating these significations, man modifies himself creating a relation of meaning. “Social significations must be understood as synthesis of the collective social practices, the ideal form of existence in an object world” (Asbahr, 2014, p. 267). In this sense, these are the significations that permeate the subjective dimension of individuals establishing meaning to what consolidates activity and actions. Thus, the city actions make the study activity effective.

What guarantees awareness of what has been studied is the meaning attributed to the study actions by the students, when knowledge starts to occupy a real place in their life, and it is not a mere response given to the external condition imposed by others (Asbahr, 2014, p. 271).

When homework finds a real place in the life of these

students, they will feel they are doing something important for their lives, with a personal meaning. According to Asbahr (2014), that will also amplify the comprehension of the learning process of the students and will introduce elements that lead them to see themselves not only as individuals that learn but also as individuals who are capable of thinking, acting, and feeling. Actions, beyond the intentional character - the appropriation of theoretical knowledge, with the objective to form theoretical thought - also have the means by which they realize themselves, operations.

Concerning that matter, we take as an example the following situation: when student needs to learn school content about measures of length and masses, one of the actions to consolidate the study activity can be homework. However, for this action to be executed, teachers assign a list of exercises for students as homework on this content and this list requires students to measure things and objects of their everyday life (shoes, notebooks, body mass, books, their own height). By taking these measures, students will be using the means (operations) by which they do homework but the action to be realized will be homework itself, the content is theoretical knowledge, that is, measures of length and mass.

In addition to its intentional aspect, what is desired to reach, action also presents its operational aspect, the means by which the object can be reached, which is determined not by the objective in itself but by the conditions given (Leontiev, 1983, p. 86).

However, homework, by means of its operations, must be felt by students when they relate to a motivation like this, and this motivation relates to a necessity that not always coincides with the motivation, because the motivation has to do with the affection and social dimension, and can be divided into expressed or experienced motivations, according to Asbahr (2011).

The need to appropriate theoretical knowledge is not always something conscious for students and must be formed in the schooling process. Thus, according to the example, it is the motivation experienced that homework on measures of mass and length acquires meaning; "the process of search, and investigation to solve the study questions is the thing that predisposes the spirit of the student for meaningful learning because situations-problems are raised in order to stimulate reasoning" (Gasparin, 2003, p. 35).

It is important to remember that the teaching and learning process requires the existence of two individuals that play specific roles, the student and the teacher, while the latter has more experience and whose function is to teach and who will be the mediator of knowledge. In this sense, based on the guiding teaching basis, the mediating agent mobilizes the study activity, using different methodological resources, such as games, emerging situations of everyday life, the virtual history of concepts

etc. (Asbahr, 2016).

It is important to consider that the motivation for studies, to learn, does not develop naturally, in an evolution maturationist direction. It is created after motivations experienced and will transform into motivations for learning. Thus, it is in the teaching guiding basis that study actions will become producers of learning motivations. Because "the way teachers experience their row and deliberate their actions for teaching influences directly the way students can or cannot appropriate school knowledge" (Pessoa & Leonardo, 2020, p. 3), the homework can be a producer of learning motivations and constitute an action of the study activity.

If the school task is assigned to be done at home, and in this case, homework is only a means to memorize content, it will be a symbol operation that contributes very little to the formation of theoretical thought, that is, to the students' learning and the subsequent psychological development.

Thus, it is important to emphasize that the terms "learning" and "study activity" are not synonyms. Davidov (1988) postulated that learning can take place by means of the most diverse types of activities (games, professional activities, sports etc.), but the study activity (based at school) has special structure and content and targets strictly the appropriation of theoretical knowledge, by the rudiments of the knowledge that school offers. That means learning can be realized in several ways and not only in the study activity. However, it is in the study activity that students appropriate theoretical knowledge aiming at the formation of theoretical thought.

Nevertheless, "what matters for homework is to form habits of study and or reading, develop a formative attitude, develop research, synthesis, and elaboration skills" (Nogueira, 2002, p. 83). Thus, homework constitutes a study action and can contribute qualitatively to the psychological development of students, "all the systematization of the study capacity and habit that students must obtain with the school learning experience" (Davidov & Markova, 1987, p. 316).

When homework creates the opportunity for problematization of a certain content, the exciting spirit of discovery produce the result which is the promotion of the study activity. Thus, there will be a contribution to the development of the structures of thought that are increasingly complex and the formation of theoretical thought (Davidov, 1988). So there is the consolidation of homework as a study action for the psychological development of students indicating possibilities of transformation regarding their learning.

When students realize study actions that lead them to keep their attention directed at the proposed activity, conscious learning happens and it promotes in students the desire to study, self-organization in their studies, autonomy and the voluntary control of behavior. However, all this is not something that gets formed spontaneously,

children need to be prepared for this phase of their childhood, the school age period, and one of the roles to be played by school is the formation of the student attitude (Asbahr, 2016).

In view of what has been exposed, it is possible to reaffirm that the most important function of the school education is to provide individuals with conditions to appropriate elaborate knowledge (science) by means of different educational instruments, providing the opportunity for the process of humanization in individuals. Thus, everything that is taught at school and/or by means of its instruments needs to be thought beyond the school environment and needs to be at the service of formation of individuals that think, act, feel, and make decisions, that is, historical citizens.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Homework was created with the objective to be a pedagogical instrument only for memorization of school content that is given in the classroom and extends out of the school environment, which is common at school or in traditional pedagogy. However, with the advent of the Escola Nova movement it was banned from schools. It is considered that nowadays there are different positions on homework. However, it's still present in our school institutions whether public or private.

Based on the present study, homework can play an important role in the psychological development of students, by constituting a study action. However, it will only be considered a component of the study activity if its objective is connected with the motivations of the activity, towards the formation of theoretical thought. This is the first inference that we can make on the comprehension of homework as a study action.

The second inference is that, in order to make its objectives align with the motivations of the homework activity, homework must play a real role in the life of the students and have a personal meaning that is in agreement with the social signification that is attributed to it. This attribution of meaning, which expresses itself in the relation between motivation of the activity and the direct objective of the action, can be created by means of the guiding basis of the teachers' activity. This is because teachers, as mediating agents of knowledge, and given the objective conditions that they are given, will be able to propose study actions that surprise students and generate expressed and/or experienced motivations that will transform into learning motivations. On the other hand, homework must not be something mechanic, or memorized but must assume a creative and productive character, leading students to operate not only with abstractions of reality but with scientific concepts.

It is not our intention to exhaust this topic and, given the limits of this article, we recognize that the propositions presented can require greater depth and the study of other aspects of homework, which would also be relevant in this interface between psychology

and education, such as: the family-school relation; the formation of features regarding the use of this instrument; the place of homework as study action in pedagogical planning; the meaning and the social signification of homework; in addition to other matters that we could consider of great importance in accordance with the theoretical perspective that underlies this study.

A pedagogical proposal that is based on the CHP and on the CHT comprehends that a study action, in this case homework, according to what is discussed in this article, must provide students with the necessary conditions to appropriate knowledge that is historically produced and accumulated by previous generations – such as scientific, artistic, and philosophic knowledge, that is, systematized knowledge that is classically what school must teach.

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