

Personal sense, study activity and artistic education: a case study

Flávia da Silva Ferreira Asbahr¹; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7338-0003>

Abstract

The research had investigated the process of assigning personal meaning to the activity of study, specifically to the artistic activities developed in the artistic subject. The field survey had carried out in a 5th year of a municipal public school through classroom observations and interviews with students. The relationship between the motive of the study activity and the study actions had taken as a unit of analysis, categorizing the motives into pragmatics and linked to freedom of expression and the actions in actions of pedagogical organization, of aid, of valorization of the student and collective work. The children sought to establish relationships with learned knowledge and to take responsibility for their tasks. It had verified that there is a process of attribution of transforming personal meaning and that the pedagogical organization of the teachers produces scholastic success: they encouraged the collaboration among the colleagues, they fomented the collective work, and they organized study actions, which brings didactic principles for the organization of the developmental teaching.

Keywords: Historical-Cultural Psychology; art education; school learning.

Sentido personal, actividad de estudio y educación artística: un estudio de caso

Resumen

Se investigó el proceso de atribución de sentido personal a la actividad de estudio, específicamente a las actividades artísticas desarrolladas en la asignatura de artes. Se realizó una investigación de campo en un 5º curso de una escuela pública municipal por intermedio de observaciones de las clases y entrevistas con alumnos/as. Se tomó como unidad de análisis la relación entre el motivo de la actividad de estudio y las acciones de estudio, categorizándose los motivos en pragmáticos y vinculados a la libertad de expresión y las acciones en acciones de organización pedagógica, de ayuda, de valoración de la labor discente y colectivas. Los niños buscaban establecer relaciones con conocimientos aprendidos y se responsabilizaban por las tareas. Se constató que hay un proceso de atribución de sentido personal transformador y que la organización pedagógica de las profesoras produce éxito escolar: incentivaban la colaboración entre los compañeros, fomentaban la labor colectiva, organizaban acciones de estudio, lo que trae principios didácticos a la organización de la enseñanza y desarrollo.

Palabras clave: Psicología Histórico-Cultural; arte-educación; aprendizaje escolar.

Sentido pessoal, atividade de estudo e educação artística: um estudo de caso

Resumo

Investigou-se o processo de atribuição de sentido pessoal à atividade de estudo, especificamente às atividades artísticas desenvolvidas na disciplina de artes. Realizou-se uma pesquisa de campo em um 5º ano de uma escola pública municipal por meio de observações das aulas e entrevistas com alunos(as). Tomou-se como unidade de análise a relação entre o motivo da atividade de estudo e as ações de estudo, categorizando-se os motivos em pragmáticos e vinculados à liberdade de expressão e as ações em ações de organização pedagógica, de ajuda, de valorização do trabalho discente e coletivas. As crianças buscavam estabelecer relações com conhecimentos aprendidos e responsabilizavam-se pelas tarefas. Constatou-se que há um processo de atribuição de sentido pessoal transformador e que a organização pedagógica das professoras produz sucesso escolar: incentivavam a colaboração entre os colegas, fomentavam o trabalho coletivo, organizavam ações de estudo, o que traz princípios didáticos para a organização do ensino desenvolvimental.

Palavras-chave: Psicologia histórico-cultural; arte-educação; aprendizagem escolar.

1 Universidade Estadual Paulista Júlio de Mesquita Filho – Bauru – SP – Brasil; flavia.asbahr@unesp.br

Introduction

The aim of this paper is to investigate how the process of personal¹ meaning assignment to the study activity of public elementary school students, specifically the meaning attributed to the educational activities developed in the arts education discipline.

We take as reference the historical-cultural psychology, whose main representatives are Vigotski, Leontiev and Luria, but focusing on the concepts of activity theory (Leontiev, 1983; Davidov, 1988) as central to this work.² According to these conceptions, the school is one of the privileged spaces of humanization and its specificity is to ensure that students, from an early childhood, appropriate the foundations for the development of theoretical thinking (Davidov, 1988).

In this sense, school entry brings profound changes to child development. Davidov (1988) postulates that entering school education is a moment of great transformation in a child's life, starting with the fact that there is a change in their social place. We also highlight the profound internal transformations, as the child begins to assimilate the most developed forms of social consciousness. For this appropriation to occur, it is necessary for children to perform a specific type of activity, the study activity (Davidov, 1988), whose specificity is the constitution of psychological neoformations such as consciousness and theoretical thinking.

That way, the fundamental content of the study activity is theoretical knowledge: "... it is the assimilation of generalized action procedures in the sphere of scientific concepts and the qualitative changes in the child's psychic development that occur on this basis" (Davidov & Markova, 1987, p.324, our translation). That is, one of the essential functions of the school, according to the theoretical conception in focus, is to ensure the appropriation of theoretical knowledge by students and, through the appropriation of this type of knowledge, develop theoretical thinking. According to Davidov (1988), the content of theoretical thinking is the mediated, reflected, essential existence that reproduces the universal forms of things.³

Among the different types and areas of theoretical knowledge, our focus will be the development of aesthetic-

1 In the case of this work, we take as reference the concepts of personal sense and social meaning understood from the dialectical unity between human activity and consciousness (Leontiev, 1983). The personal sense expresses the subjective relationship that the subject establishes with social meanings and human activities. Thus, our starting point is the understanding that personal sense is produced in relation to human activity and, therefore, for personal senses to be analyzed it is essential to understand them from the structure of human activity. In a previous article (Mendonça & Asbahr, 2018); we analyzed the different conceptualizations of meaning within the historical-cultural theory.

2 We argue that although there are significant differences between the works of Vigotski and Leontiev, there is continuity and complementarity in the proposition of these authors (Asbahr, 2011). We agree with Zinckenko (2006) in his statement that we cannot speak of two psychological schools, but only of two investigative tendencies.

3 For further understanding of the development of theoretical thinking, see Rosa, Moraes and Cedro (2010).

-artistic thinking. The capabilities of abstraction and synthesis they develop in a specific way in artistic activity. In the process of artistic production, one starts from a concrete reality and creates a new reality, the artistic reality. In this movement, the development of theoretical thinking is fundamental since the synthesis achieved, that is, the artistic reality obtained, must contemplate the essential relation between the elements of the real and not simply a representation of the various characteristics perceived by the subject, in a fragmented way.

Vigotski (2001) compares the thought form provided by art with the knowledge coming from science. According to the author, art, like science, enables a greater knowledge of reality: "Art differs from science only in its method, that is, in the way of experiencing, that is, psychologically" (p. 34).

Davidov (1988), in an analysis of the formation of theoretical thinking produced in school subjects, names some of them as belonging to what he calls the "aesthetic cycle", including literature, music, the fine arts, as they are potentially focused on development of students' aesthetic awareness. The fundamental content of the teaching of these subjects is the assimilation by children of the general procedure of perception and creation of the artistic form. In other words, as Vigotski (2003) summarizes the constitution of creative activity.

Therefore, it is understood that art learning is essential to the formation of theoretical thinking and creative activity. However, on the other hand, we see in school reality a poorly valued artistic teaching, often based on the development of motor coordination or child spontaneity (Barbosa, 1989).

Method

A field research⁴ had carried out in a 5th grade class of a municipal elementary school one of a middle school in the interior of São Paulo. We followed the art classes taught by teacher Bianca⁵ during two months of the first semester and the beginning of second semester of 2015, through participant observations (Ezpeleta, 1989), totaling the observation of seven arts education classes in the first semester and two classes in the beginning of the second semester. We could also observe a class from the regular teacher in the class, Angela. Observations had recorded in a field diary and later resulted in expanded records.

We also interviewed ten students from the class with the purpose of deepening the subjects observed in the classroom and exploring each child's particular issues. The interviews included questions about the child's relationship with the arts discipline and with the school in general, seeking to elucidate the motives and actions of the study activity, as well as, how they relate to the school, the study, peers and teachers. The interviews recorded and later transcribed.

4 Approved by the Research Ethics Committee (REC) of the Faculty of Sciences (UNESP-Bauru), by Plataforma Brasil. Protocol in the CAAE: 45461115.1.0000.5398.

5 The names are fictitious.

During the fieldwork, two meetings were also held with the art teacher, Bianca, and the class teacher, Angela, so that we could discuss the research data and the progress of the pedagogical work. In these meetings, the teachers had access to the previous analysis of the research data and collaboratively participated in the discussions that will be presented here.

In the accompanied class there were 22 children enrolled, with an equivalent number of boys and girls, and an average age of 10 years. According to the class teacher, all the children were literate and following the contents of the 5th grade, which could be seen in the field observations: "it is a very good class," (says teacher Angela in excerpt from the Enlarged Record # 4).

Results and discussion

Consistent with the methodological principles adopted, we based on the method of unit analysis indicated by Vigotski (2000) as a necessary method for the analysis of psychological phenomena. Instead of the decomposition in elements, Vigotski (2000) postulates an analysis that decomposes the totality in units. It defines unity as the product of analysis that has all the properties inherent in the whole, the indecomposable part of the whole that explains it by representing its essence.

In the case of the object of this research, the process of assigning personal meaning to artistic activity, we will take as a unit of analysis **the relationship between the reason for the study activity and the action of study** (Asbahr, 2011). According to Leontiev (1983), meaning is created in the relationship between the motive of activity and that for which the subject's action is oriented as a possible result, that is, its end. In conscious action are integrated the genesis of activity (motive) and the object of action (end of action). In analyzing the process of assigning personal meaning to any activity, you need to find the reasons for that activity, as well as, what actions correspond to that activity. This unit of analysis is directly related to the structure of activity and consciousness.

The reasons expressed by the students were categorized into two large groups: pragmatic motives and motives linked to freedom of expression. Pragmatic motives are linked to practical utility; art is learned because it has some immediate purpose. Here is an excerpt from an interview with children that expresses this kind of motif that, in our analysis, comes close to what Leontiev (1988) calls only understandable motives:

Interviewer: *And for you, so in your life, how important is it to learn the arts? What do you think?*

Fernanda: *Because sometimes here at school there are these drawing competitions, now the guild, so it is important to learn, because there are these drawing and painting competitions, so we think and get the same as the teacher taught here.*

(Excerpt from interview with Fernanda⁶)

In this same perspective, an episode that occurs in the 5th class observed is striking. On this day, teacher Bianca leaves part of the time for the children to finish tasks from previous classes and the other part gives a dialogued lecture about sculptures. It was a different class from the usual routine, in which artistic productions occur from artistic concepts or themes. The children were agitated:

Rodrigo comments: *"There's nothing to do". It is the second child who complains about it. My hypothesis is that they understand the art class as a class of things to do ... At the end of the class, the teacher talks to me about today's class and says that children prefer practical activities, such as painting or drawing, but have difficulties in focus on more expository discussions or classes.* (Excerpt Extended Registration 5th remark)

This utilitarian conception of art can be understood historically, as we see in Barbosa (1989), which denounces the little space for the creation, appreciation and history of art in arts education classes. Sardelich (2001) also reveals the prevalence of a utilitarian view of the discipline, which would help to develop other disciplines or linked to the decorative function.

It is noteworthy that in none of the observed classes we could witness the teacher Bianca presenting or expressing this utilitarian conception of arts; on the contrary, we could see it spreading an artistic conception linked to the learning of fruition and aesthetic awareness. However, we know that there are no pure personal senses, detached from the activity and its social meanings, as analyzed by Leontiev (1983). Thus, children express these motives with reference to the social meanings that circulate about artistic activity in the school itself, in their families, in the hegemonic social discourse that devalues art, the artist and the human sciences in general. Moreover, these meanings certainly participate in the process of attributing personal meaning to the study activity developed in arts education.

On the other hand, children also presented motives related to freedom of expression. They refer to the art class as one of the few spaces in which they can express, create; produce, as we see in the excerpt below:

Francesca: *Arts I find a lot of fun. It is the coolest day of the week. We start laughing, like we spend time there and it is happy. **We become looser, we are freer, and we can express ourselves the way we are there.** I like it a lot ... I think studying arts is much more fun, because we learn, ah ... I'll talk ... live better sometimes, we learn a lot of good things, we get spontaneous, we think better, we do what we want. It is not that we want, we do what the teacher asks, but when we go to do it we are letting go, getting freer, right? And in other things we get closer and then in arts we get free, we*

6 The names are fictitious and in the case of children were chosen by them.

do, you know? It is very good. (Excerpt from interview with Francesca, emphasis added).

In the observed classes we could also witness the manifestation of these motives linked to freedom of expression: "Eloisa writes, in her self-assessment, that the arts class leaves us calm and relaxed" (Excerpt from the Extended Record of the 8th observation).

The teacher Bianca, in some classes, introduces students to an artistic conception linked to freedom of expression and possibility of creation:

Bianca explains to the students some concepts about sculpture: "*Who invented this technique was Amilcar de Castro, Brazilian artist. He uses metal plates. If you go to São Paulo, in Ibirapuera Park, there are the concrete sculptures of Hélio Oiticica, Amilcar de Castro and Lygia Clark*". She explains that these artists are part of the concrete movement that proposed simplicity of forms, use of geometric forms, and says: "*The beauty of art is not only in the reproduction of the perfection of reality, but in the creation*". (Excerpt from Extended Record of 5th Observation)

In these types of motives, which we are calling "linked to freedom of expression," the relationship that children establish between their production in art class and the possibility of expressing themselves freely draws attention.

Our defense of art as a school content articulates with the defense of the school as a privileged place for the integral formation of the human being (Saviani, 2000; Duarte & Ferreira, 2011) and the development of aesthetic sensibility and, therefore, the teaching of arts can relate closely with the formation of free and universal individuality.

When children mention that in art class, they can express themselves "the way we are" (Interview with Francesca); they reveal the transformative potentialities of arts education and its relation to the human-generic need for humanization. In other words, "... the general need that man feels to humanize everything he touches, to affirm its essence and to recognize himself in the objective world created by him". (Vazquez, 1968, p.71).

In the analysis of this kind of motifs, the contribution that art has to humanization through sensibility is highlighted, since insofar as it works on the senses, it has a direct effect on alienation. These motives are also articulated in our analysis with the emotional dimension of consciousness (Vigotski, 2001) and children directly relate art to positive emotions. According to Vigotski, art has the potential to generate emotions that broaden the formation of the individual's consciousness. The potentiality in art lies in generating non-everyday emotions, which can produce the development of new psychological formations: "That is, art could provoke a new, more elaborate psychic organization, as it is a cultural instrument, which aims, in its form and content, high human forces such as abstraction, creativity, perception, emotion and imagination". (Barroco & Superti, 2014, p. 26).

Highlighting imagination as a psychic function, Vigotski (2003) relates it to creative activity. In creative activity, man reworks and creates, with elements of experience, new forms that recreate and modify the present and constitute himself as a human being projected for the future. Imagination is precisely this human capacity to create and combine facts, which is developed through cultural mediations:

The creative activity of imagination is in direct relation to the richness and variety of experience accumulated by man, because this experience is the material with which fantasy erects its buildings. The richer the human experience, the greater the material available to the imagination. (Vigotski, 2003, p.17).

Although our understanding of these motives linked to freedom of expression is that they are potentially humanizing, it is important to highlight that the discourse of free expression in the case of arts education has generated, on the other hand, spontaneous pedagogical practices, predominantly playful and uncompromising with regard to the teaching of arts content. For example, Sardelich (2001) reports the prevalence of an art view as a personal expression of feelings and an artistic creation as a product of affection and emotion, which carries a conception of art as a natural gift.

We understand that arts education, linked to free human development, must guarantee the development of artistic sensibility, which cannot be taken dichotomously, disregarding intellectual and moral development (Duarte & Ferreira, 2011). That is, the development of emotions and creativity does not occur naturally, leaving only the child to express himself freely, without strings attached, in order to deny the intrinsic relationship between intellectual and affective development.

Such an understanding of the teaching of arts has the opposite effect of what we are proposing, since it empties the school of knowledge, carries an adaptation view of school education and replaces artistic experience with the mere experimentation of materials, colors, shapes, without the organization of this experience in a theoretical level. This warning is important if we do not want to defend a conception of school education that preaches a notion of freedom taken as a synonym of "doing what one wants" and that defends free expression without defending freedom as a universal concept (Duarte, 2004).

In this way, after having presented these two large groups of motives, pragmatic and linked to freedom of expression, it is important to remember that all human activity is motivated in many different ways and the classification made here corresponds only to the need for exposure of the research data analysis. The presented motives most probably act together in the constitution of the study activity of the children in focus, although they may have different hierarchical places for each subject.

We categorize the **actions of study** into actions of pedagogical organization, help actions, actions of valuing student work and collective actions. In the first group of ac-

tions, called actions of pedagogical organization, we highlight the actions of teachers and students that signal how the daily life of the classroom was organized, especially in the arts discipline, but also bringing elements of the 5th grade pedagogical daily life.

In our observations, it was highlighted how the organization of the pedagogical work was explicit and understood by the children, both with regard to the disciplinary rules, as well as, with regard to the organization of the study actions and the accomplishment of the tasks proposed by the teachers which brings us to the study by Souza (1999, p.122) on the relationship between school success and work agreements. The author's words materialized in our observations: "... I noticed a certain harmony in the communication established between teacher and students."

In art classes, teacher Bianca presented a clear work organization, understood and incorporated by the students: distribution of materials, resumption of contents from previous classes and articulation with the content of the day, systematic explanation of the task to be performed, help and guidance to children who were in difficulty, appreciation of the work of each student.

Regarding discipline, the arts teacher also presented clear rules of behavior, similar to what Souza (1999, p. 120) describes: "... the emphasis on cooperation; discipline understood as an organization for work and not just as maintenance of order". In rare moments, we witness the teacher trying to control the behavior of her students aggressively or authoritatively. On the contrary, the low and respectful tone of voice predominated in the communication between teacher and students.

In the class teacher Angela's class, we could also observe this organization of pedagogical actions. Angela demonstrated the clarity of her pedagogical goals and guided the students accordingly. Here is an example where the teacher signals students what they expect from an assessment activity:

Teacher Angela to the class: *"5th grade students have to know how to turn around to use the textbook and this will be charged on the exam. For example, on p. 28 is the map with the division of the regions"*. The children look at the book ... The teacher instructs the children about the use of the textbook. Then, in conversation with me, he explains that he has been working on this autonomous use of the textbook, which he thinks is fundamental for the child to learn to use the book, to seek the information he needs.

Teacher: *"A 5th grader should look for information in the book. It is important they develop this skill."* (Extended record excerpt from the 7th observation).

This teacher even created strategies for children to learn to organize themselves temporally, signaling at various times how much time they had left to perform a task and encouraging students to organize themselves accordingly.

This organization of the teachers' pedagogical actions generated corresponding actions in the children who demonstrated, as a rule, to be involved in the proposed tasks. They knew what was expected of them in each task. They discussed and socialized their productions during class. In terms of learning, all students of this fifth year were well literate and, according to the teachers, with a level of learning that is expected to be expected for a fifth year.

The analysis of the pedagogical organization actions is close to the discussion about work agreements held by Souza (1999). According to the author, these agreements produce the formation of attitudes compatible with the learning of children in school, which may lead to the production of school success observed in the class in question. In the case of the object of this research, the personal meaning attributed to the activity of study in arts, we can highlight the importance of the actions of pedagogical organization make sense for the students:

... It's not just school content that needs to be meaningful. Relationships and attitudes also need to be understood by students. The organizing role of working arrangements and their contribution to good pedagogical work has given us evidence of this. (Souza, 1999, p. 128, emphasis added by the author).

In the group of actions that we are calling help actions, we highlight the actions produced by teachers and incorporated by students, which show the collaboration between students in school tasks, valued and encouraged by teachers, as we see in the following excerpt:

The teacher asks if anyone is having difficulty. Some raise their hands and others offer to help: *"I help, mine is perfect."* This scene catches my attention; because these help situations seem to be commonplace in the class. (Extended record excerpt from 3rd observation).

We could even witness the children themselves offering to help their peers: *"Cristiano Ronaldo is not succeeding. He assembles and disassembles his sculpture and gives the impression that he wants to give up. Rodrigo says he will help him."* (Extended registration excerpt from the 6th observation).

The analysis of these actions referred us to the concept of Imminent Development Zone proposed by Vigotski (1996). This level of development refers to the psychological functions that are in the process of development. In this sense, it expresses the potential for learning, as it characterizes mental development prospectively: *"La esfera de los procesos inmaturos, pero em vía de maduración, configura la zona de desarrollo próximo del niño"* (p.269).

It is noteworthy that the help actions performed by the teachers and students seemed to produce the children's development in the tasks performed. They also engendered a climate of collaboration and cooperation among the students in the class.

In the same perspective, the actions of valuing student work are pointed out. The climate of collaboration described above is also produced by the actions of the art teacher and the actions among the children to value and praise the work of their peers, as we see in the following excerpt:

Bianca shows Juliana's drawing to everyone: "*She already has an artist trait*". She asks the student to show her drawing to everyone and the girl, in a mixture of shame and pride, shows her production to her classmates. (Extended registration excerpt from the 6th observation)

The actions of helping and valuing student work make up a pedagogical activity that, in our analysis, values the formation of the children's collective (Pistrak, 2011). From this perspective, what are called collective actions stand out. We witnessed, in different classes, tasks proposed as collective actions among children. The most emblematic example refers to the end-of-semester project that involved the production of short stories and plays in groups of children. This proposal generated great involvement of the children with the content they were working on and intense collective work. One of the students comments on this work:

Now, I'm having a good time, I'm there with my friends. I have an idea, like "let's do this", then the other one says "oh no, this idea is better", so we communicate a lot. In group we like to do more and everyone helps each other, sometimes have a fight, but even fighting and understanding, the other day we are all friends again, it's only temporary the fight. We have always been friends and will never stop being friends. (Excerpt from interview with Francesca)

Francesca's speech highlights the role of the group in its development and learning process. Therefore, the teachers, generating a class that seems to understand themselves as a collective work, intentionally work this: "The teacher Angela said that she works hard to form the group and the union between colleagues. For example, two new students in the class quickly joined the class." (Extended record excerpt from the 4th observation)

According to Bozhovich (1985), the teacher's social motivation decreases during schooling, but increases the role of the group of friends in the process of development and formation of motives, which may also be related to the change of main activity, from study to intimate communication.

The fact that children are engaged in school in an extraordinarily important common activity – the study – leads to the emergence of certain relationships: in children comes the desire to be together, to play together, to work, to fulfill one's commissioned social tasks. Inside the children arise the interest in the opinion of colleagues, want to enjoy their sympathy and recognize their merits ... Thus, the appreciation of peers, the opinion of the children's collective, and gradually becomes fundamental reasons for the conduct of the student. (Bozhovich, 1985, p.211, our translation).

It is understood that one of the teacher's roles in the organization of teaching is to guide the study actions collectively, as we see in the pedagogical work analyzed. The study activity developed from the interaction between children has shown better results regarding the process of knowledge assimilation, for example, in situations of discussion about the origin of a given concept (Rubtsov, 1996). The pedagogical experience accompanied by this research highlights these theoretical concepts: the role of the collective in the production of students' learning and development.

We emphasize the role of the teacher in the organization of collective activities from the understanding of the collective character of human learning. Bozhovich (1985) points out that the correct organization of the collective could create the conditions for the full formation of the psychic-moral particularities of the child's personality.

Returning to the study activity, in relation to the collective the student can create new reasons for the study, which find resonance in the group, since the social is the reference. It is in the unity between the motives of the study activity and the study actions that the personal sense develops and we can foresee, in the case of this research, two pedagogical developments: the production of school success (Souza, 1999) and the ongoing formation of a student posture (Bozhovich, 1985).

Even among the children who declared pragmatic motives the pedagogical actions developed seem to alter the general meaning they attach to the study of arts: they get involved with the proposed tasks; they want to learn.

In the data analysis, we can observe that there is a process of transforming personal meaning attribution underway. Children (and teachers) seek to establish relationships with knowledge previously learned and from other areas, which is an essential element for the formation of theoretical thinking. They are responsible for the proposed tasks in the classroom, which demonstrates the development of a student posture necessary to consolidate the study activity as the main activity. There is also the embryonic formation of a children's collective, mediated by the teachers' performance, which, as we have seen, is fundamental in the production of the students' learning in focus and in the constitution of a collective ethics.

Regarding the formation of theoretical thinking, the expected new formation in the study activity, the research only allows us to make hypotheses. The data obtained do not make it possible to state whether this formation occurred or not and formative experiments (Davidov, 1988) with this focus would be necessary.

One of the classes on sculpture brings elements to think about the development of the aesthetic-artistic thinking of the children in question:

On the blackboard, Bianca writes: Visual reading and reinterpretation of sculptures. He glues several sculptural images on the board, asks the children to observe, and begins a dialogue about the figures. Question for Daniel: *What do images have in common?*

Francesca: *I know they are sculptures.*

B: *What are sculptures?*

Unidentified student: It is a stone thing.

B: *Caio, how do you think a sculpture is made?*

Caio: *It is a pile of stone and someone is going to break.*

Madara: *It could be made by clay.*

B: *Martha, which one is the oldest?*

Martha points to Egyptian sculptures.

B: *Look at the style of the drawing.*

Bia calls David: *Which one is the most modern?*

Laura: *It's the weirdest.*

David analyzes, looks, and points to an image of Adélio Sarro.

B: *Juliana, which one is the most modern?*

Juliana also points to a sculpture by Adélio Sarro.

B. to Alice: *Which is the weirdest?*

Alice, eyes closed, says Michelangelo's David: *I do not even want to look* (referring to nudity).

Bianca to Francesca: *Which one did you like best?*

Alice: *It sure was that* (David points out ironic).

B. to Laura: *What do you understand about this image* (points out Vaccarini's sculpture image)?

Laura: *He had arrested and tried to break the bonds.*

B. says her questions are over and asks if anyone wants to comment on anything. Caio comments about the sculpture. The children are agitated; raise their hands to speak.

Martha shows Pharaoh: *It is golden, it is creative.*

I ask the teacher if I can ask questions. She allows; *what characterizes a sculpture?*

The students talk about various things that make up a sculpture, the materials that are made, for example, stone, clay, marble, about objects that can be carved, wood, stone, about what the sculpture represents symbols, memories, important people...

B: *I forgot to ask a question, what do sculptures have to do with what we are studying?*

Laura replies that sculpture is the art in 3D. (Extended record excerpt from the 5th observation).

In the excerpt, although limited to a particular class, it is noteworthy how the connections the children make are restricted to the empirical level of content and do not relate to the concepts they were previously learning, the three dimensions in art. They highlight external features of sculpture, such as the materials used in making the sculptures and what they have represented, but they do not come to a concept, a generalization. On the other hand, the teacher's questions do not lead to this conceptual generalization and only at the end of the class, she relates the images with the previous content, the artistic production in three dimensions: "What do sculptures have to do with what we are studying?". In addition, one of the students responds that sculpture is 3D art, approaching a conceptual formulation.

The excerpt allows raising only as a hypothesis the limits to the formation of theoretical thinking in the teaching organization in focus. However, we reiterate the need for formative experiments (Davidov, 1988) that specifically aim to propose didactic situations designed to produce and analyze the formation of theoretical thinking.

Final considerations

We seek to explain; taking as a unit of analysis the relationship between the reasons for the study activity and the study actions; how the process of attribution of personal meaning to the artistic activities developed in the artistic education discipline occurs, by students of a fifth year of a school public. We brought data and analysis that come from this singularity, but are not limited to it, because they bring elements to think about the organization of teaching in other school realities.

We could learn how the pedagogical organization of two teachers brings interesting results in the production of school success of a class of students, which has also developed a posture as students. Their ways of organizing pedagogical actions, encouraging collaboration among peers, and fostering class work as a collective bring didactic principles to the organization of teaching that promotes development (Davidov, 1988).

It is necessary to deepen the studies and research that establish relations between the historical-cultural psychology and its possible contributions to the organization of the teaching, focusing, for example, experiments on the formation of the theoretical thought.

References

- Asbahr, F. S. F. (2011). "Por que aprender isso, professora?" *Sentido pessoal e atividade de estudo na Psicologia Histórico-Cultural*. Tese de Doutorado, Instituto de Psicologia, Universidade de São Paulo. São Paulo.
- Barbosa, A. M. (1989). Arte-Educação no Brasil: realidade hoje e expectativas futuras. *Estudos Avançados*, 3(7), 170-182. doi: 10.1590/S0103-40141989000300010.
- Barroco, S. M. S.; Superti, T. (2014). Vigotski e o estudo da psicologia da arte: contribuições para o desenvolvimento humano. *Psicologia & Sociedade*, 26(1), 22-31. doi: 10.1590/S0102-71822014000100004.
- Bozhovich, L. I. (1985). *La personalidad y su formación en la edad infantil*. Habana: Pueblo y Educación.
- Davidov, V (1988). *La enseñanza escolar y el desarrollo psíquico: investigación teórica y experimental*. Moscu: Progreso.
- Davydov, V.; Márkova, A. (1987). La concepción de la actividad de estudio de los escolares. In Davydov, V.; Shuare, M. (Eds.), *La psicología evolutiva y pedagogia en la URSS: antología* (pp. 316-337). Moscu: Progreso.
- Duarte, N.; Ferreira, N. B. P. (2011). As artes na educação integral: uma apreciação histórico-crítica. *Revista Ibero-Americana de Estudos em Educação*, 6(3), 115-126, 2011.
- Duarte, N. (2004). A renição pós-moderna à individualidade alienada e a perspectiva marxista da individualidade livre e universal. In Duarte, N. (Ed.), *Crítica ao Fetichismo da Individualidade* (pp.197-217, 2ª ed.). Campinas: Autores Associados.
- Ezpeleta, J. (1989). *Pesquisa participante*. São Paulo: Cortez.
- Leontiev, A. (1983). *Actividad, conciencia e personalidad*. Habana: Pueblo y Educación.
- Leontiev, A. (1988). Uma contribuição à teoria do desenvolvimento da psique infantil. In Vigotskii, L. S.; Luria, A. R.; Leontiev, A. N. (Eds.), *Linguagem, desenvolvimento e aprendizagem* (5a ed., pp. 59-83). São Paulo: Ícone.
- Mendonça, A. B. J.; Asbahr, F. S. F. (2018). Atividade de Estudo e Sentido Pessoal: Uma revisão teórica. *Revista Obutchénie. Revista de Didática e Psicologia Pedagógica (UFU)*. 3(7), 780-800. doi:10.14393/OBv2n3a2018-10
- Pistrak, M. M. (2011). *Fundamentos da escola do trabalho*. São Paulo: Expressão Popular.
- Rosa, J. E.; Moraes, S. P. G.; Cedro, W. L. (2010). As particularidades do pensamento empírico e do pensamento teórico na organização do ensino. In Moura, M. O. (Org.), *A atividade pedagógica na teoria histórico-cultural* (pp. 67-71). Brasília: Liber livros.
- Rubtsov, V. V. (1996). A atividade de aprendizado e os problemas referentes à formação do pensamento teórico dos escolares. In Garnier, C.; Bernarz, N.; Ulanovskaya, I. (Eds.), *Após Vygotsky e Piaget: perspectivas social e construtivista – escolas russa e ocidental* (pp. 129-137). Porto Alegre, RS: Artes Médicas.
- Sardelich, M. E. (2001). Formação inicial e permanente do professor de arte na educação básica. *Cadernos de Pesquisa*, (114), 137-152. doi: 10.1590/S0100-15742001000300006.
- Saviani, D. (2000). *Pedagogia histórico-crítica: primeiras aproximações* (7a ed.). Campinas, SP: Autores Associados.
- Souza, D. T. R. (1999). Entendendo um pouco mais sobre o sucesso (e fracasso) escolar: ou sobre acordos de trabalho entre professores e alunos. In Aquino, J. G. (Ed.), *Autoridade e autonomia na escola: alternativas teóricas e práticas* (pp. 115-129). São Paulo: Summus.
- Vazquez, A. S. (1968). *As ideias estéticas de Marx*. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra.
- Vigotski, L. S. (2000). *A construção do pensamento e da linguagem*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes.
- Vigotski, L. S. (2001). *Psicologia da arte*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes.
- Vygotski, L. S. (1996) *Obras escogidas* (vol. 4). Madrid: Machado Libros.
- Vigotsky, L.S. (2003). *La imaginación y la arte en la infancia*. Madrid: Akal.
- Zinckenko, V. P. (2006). La psicología sociocultural y la teoría de la actividad: revisión y proyección hacia el futuro. In Wertsch, J.; Del Rio, P.; Álvarez, A. (Eds), *La mente sociocultural*. Aproximaciones teóricas y aplicadas. (pp.35-47). Madrid: Fundación Infancia y aprendizaje.

Received on: March 5, 2018

Approved on: November 7, 2018

Support: Dean of Research Unesp (PROPE-UNESP), Announcement First Projects.

This paper was translated from Portuguese by Ana Maria Pereira Dionísio.



License information: This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the License (type CC-BY), which permits unrestricted use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original article is properly cited.