

Social trajectory, *habitus* and commitment at school work*

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Abstract

In this article we present research results about the organization of the pedagogical work in school focusing on the figure of the administrator, aiming to analyze how a principal and a pedagogical coordinator, in two schools, understand and execute their work, establishing relations with the other administrative team members, with the Education Office, school employees, teachers, parents and students, from *habitus* dispositions for the action. We investigated the causes of the differences present in the administrators' performance. For this reason, we mobilize the concepts of *habitus* and legitimate domination. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in two municipal schools of Primary Education, chosen because of their positive recognition by the community. In the interviews, data was collected concerning the subjects' values and beliefs, framed in their social trajectories and in the educational field. After the analysis, two forms of administrative conduction were evidenced: one marked by more technical rationality, and the other by a certain confrontation to this form of work. The bureaucratic domination was manifested either with traces of traditional domination or charismatic domination, in the relation with different forms of capital. To investigate the pedagogical work relating it to the subjects' beliefs and values, finding a path of expression in the educational field, helps to understand the social processes that constitute their daily reality.

Keywords

Pedagogical school work – Administration exercise – Primary education.

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Introduction

We take into consideration the pedagogical school work referred to the relationship of human beings among themselves when accomplishing certain task, socially and historically established, being necessary to inquire for what reason, why, when, how and with whom they do their administrative functions, investigating the meanings, processes, dynamics and relations of such activity. When considering the organization of the school work, Oliveira (2010) emphasizes the need to investigate, among other aspects, the relations established among the subjects. Here, we analyze the meanings attributed by the subjects to the work they execute, as well as the relations established, investigating the dispositions for the action framed in the performance of the administrators' function.

It is important to remember that the school, according to Tardif and Lessard (2005), in its constitution, is a space for the teaching of the content of school subjects and moral contents, from institutional dispositions. We understand here that the ways for instance learning is triggered at school are related with values in dispute in the educational field, assumed by the agents as a form of struggle to remain in the game.

It is also a space related to possibilities, either personal or social, answering to challenges and requests present in different social and political contexts (PIMENTA, 2002, p. 38).

As for the school administration, Motta (2003, p. 369) emphasizes the importance to consider the political meaning in the actions of the administrative team, and the power relations involved. We point out the different forms of exercising this power, with persuasion, manipulation, seduction, forms that permeate the social relations.

We present in this article research results about the pedagogical work in school focusing on the administrative team, inquiring from the initial considerations: which are the causes of the existent differences in the administrators' performance? Which are their demands? The objective is to investigate how a principal and a pedagogical coordinator, in two municipal Primary Education schools that offer Early Childhood and Elementary Education, understand and execute their work, establishing relations with the other members of the administrative team, with the Education Office, school employees, teachers, parents and students. We investigate how the agents understand and affirm executing their actions from the analysis of *habitus* dispositions for the action, framed in their social trajectories and in the educational field. We also mobilize Weber's concept of legitimate domination (2006).

The text is organized in two parts. The first brings the concepts that orientate the research. Following this part, we present the procedures and results of analysis about the forms of conduction of the pedagogical work in both investigated schools.

Social trajectories, *habitus* and educational field

School administrators act in bureaucratic structure, permeated by interests and power relations (SOUZA, 2012). To analyze how the subjects here investigated understand and execute the administration of the pedagogical work, practicing leadership intrinsic to their position, submerged in power relations, we trigger Weber's concept of legitimate

domination (2006). According to the author, a plethora of interests interferes in the possibility of establishing the legitimate domination, understood as the probability of finding obedience to a mandate, what could be funded in three types – which are mixed in a solid reality: the legal domination, or bureaucratic domination (obedience to the instituted rule); the traditional domination (based on belief and loyalty); charismatic domination (referred to an affective devotion towards the leader). We understand that the struggles involved in the accomplishment of the domination establish the content of the social relations, orientating the subjects' attitudes.

To investigate professional *habitus* dispositions related to the educational work at schools may help in the comprehension of the established practices, permeated by values and power relations. To understand what mobilizes the agents' actions, we activate the concept of *habitus* that, according to Bourdieu (2003a), is referred to the learning accomplished by the body in the socialization processes, and to the incorporation of dispositions for the action that compose a praxeological knowledge of the social world. *Habitus* is history incorporated in the agents, throughout their different social trajectories, initiating with the *habitus* acquired in the family, changed by the school action and by subsequent experiences. The agents experience certain social trajectory and acquire background knowledge related to it.

When discussing the meaning of social trajectories, Bourdieu (2003b) questions the idea of life project and its implementation. For the author, the agents, through their lives, experience shifts in the social space, and those shifts cannot be explained as a series of events related to a single trajectory but inserted in networks of social relations and meanings. The lasting dispositions, especially the ones concerning the primary *habitus* acquired in the family, compose the meaning of the social trajectory (BOURDIEU, 2001a).

To understand the subjects' *habitus*, besides the concept of social trajectory, two other concepts are important. The concept of field is relevant, particularly in this investigation, the educational field, space where the agents move and establish their practices. According to Bourdieu (2003c), the concept of field enables the analysis about how the agents involved in certain type of performance place themselves and establish disputes towards things that grant forms of capital in the field they act. The agents place themselves towards disputes for specific interests, discourses and practices understood as legitimate inside the universe where they move themselves. The educational field is a space marked by the symbolic universe of knowledge and world construction (BOURDIEU, 2003c). In this sense, it is important to point out considerations about the concept of capitals, especially the ones referring to the ownership of legitimate educational knowledge as a factor of distinction, the esteemed ownership of cultural capital (BOURDIEU, 2001b). Besides this capital, we must consider the social capital (BOURDIEU, 2001c), from the social relations through life and, moreover, clarify that in this administrative area, the political symbolic capital is essential to the movement required in the practice of several functions with social and power relationship recognized by the peers (CHAUVIRÉ; FONTAINE, 2003). We understand that the performance of the administrator's function is established in the confrontation to the educational discourse permeated by characteristics of those capitals.

This comprehension about what happens inside the educational field and its inner disputes demands questioning values related to this field. Pereira (1999) highlights the educational field permeated by values that are not minimized by the economic interest, but by its denial. The author also stresses the valorization of attributes such as duty, mission, priestly power, in which the censorship is always related to the moral dimension of the educator's job.

When debating discourses present in the educational field, Pereira and Andrade (2006) affirm that the pedagogical discourse is regarded under two basic modalities: the philosophy of conscience, that aims at the constitution of autonomous subjects, and the pedagogical consensus, that is related to attributes socially understood as desirable to the students. From these conceptions, a normative arbitrary is derived about the human formation, present in the school pedagogical practices.

Such values compose the game played in the schools, providing learning and dispositions for the action, expressed in the meanings attributed by the agents for their actions.

When manifested according to the values established in a field, the *habitus* allows the agent to operate acts of knowledge and strategies. The practical comprehension of the world allows its anticipation and the construction of answers, adapted or not. Generally, the action of the common sense expresses the feeling of harmony between the *habitus* and the field, when this adjustment occurs. When incorporating the structures of the game, the agent does the things as their preference, guiding their practice, either in more orthodoxic or heterodoxic actions. Even in distinct practices, when referred to the game, it is possible to evidence agreements related to the game, ruled by a belief or *illusio*. This happens because the agents share principle of vision and division constitutive of the referred field, that produces practices adjusted to this order, “[...] realized and appreciated, by the one who accomplished them, and also by the others, as just, direct, dexterous, adequate [...]” (BOURDIEU, 2001d, p. 175).

Manifestations of *habitus* in the administrators' performance: dispositions of conversion and heresy

For this research investigation, data were collected by means of semi-structured interviews, to obtain information about the agents' social trajectories and values related to them. Besides, we searched to obtain information about how they understood and established the function they performed in the schools, from the dispositions for the actions framed and understood in the educational field. Two interviews were accomplished with each subject, with approximately one hour of duration each, also identifying their beliefs and practices.

The research subjects were chosen considering the choice of the schools, well-recognized by their community. The school A serves children from Elementary Education, it is recognized in its surroundings as a traditional and organized school, and by its performance at Ideb³. It is in a well-located neighborhood with good infrastructure.

3- Índice de Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica (Development Rate of Basic Education), created by the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira (Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira – Inep).

It serves children from lower classes and low middle class. It is a small school, with approximately 350 students and fourteen teachers. The coordinator (Maria⁴) was identified as a central figure in the organization of the pedagogical work. The school B serves children from Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education, it is recognized as a good school because of its innovative and different pedagogical proposal. It is in a neighborhood deprived of minimal conditions of infrastructure, at the suburbs of the city. It is a big school, with approximately 1,300 students and forty teachers, and it serves children from low income families. The principal (Joaquim) was identified as the central figure in the organization of the pedagogical work.

The subjects investigated work in administrative positions in the schools. They have distinct trajectories and move themselves in the educational field from their convictions, framed in their social trajectories and in the school. They have defined positions in the hierarchy and the performance scope, for this reason the complicity of their dispositions is needed. This professional activity may vary from a strong acceptance and devotion in relation to the rules and hierarchies established in the field – what happens when the agents’ cultural capital acquired outside school is small –, to a questioning and more heretic performance – when the agents’ cultural capital acquired outside school is stronger– characteristic of agents that “[...] feel authorized and tended to remain distant from beliefs and internal hierarchies” (BOURDIEU, 2001d, p. 194).

Maria, the converted

Maria is an only child and has never got married. Her parents are Portuguese, both deceased, and had finished the Primary School Education. Her father was a foreman in a factory and her mother was a housewife. Maria’s trajectory is marked by a lot of struggle, dedication and persistence. She has always been a good student at school. Her parents were proud of her when she graduated and got a job as a teacher: “They were very proud! And I have always been a good daughter. I’m aware of it. In all the senses. [...]. And to be a teacher was a good thing, you know, out of this world! So he was really very proud”.

Concerning her formation, she attended the teacher education course, and does not hold an undergraduate diploma. When she started working as a teacher, and even when she tried the coordination position, there was no need of an undergraduate diploma. According to her, she started attending higher education courses twice, Languages and Biology, but she didn’t have the interest of continuing her studies: “I didn’t attend college, I took the entrance exams for two courses and I didn’t attend college. I took the teacher education course. I started working in the municipal school network and then I stayed there. I had the opportunity to attend college, but actually, ... At that time, I didn’t need to have a Pedagogy course”.

She started to work as a teacher when she was 23 years old. Before that, she worked in a vet clinic, when she was attending the teacher education course. She had been a teacher for sixteen years; twelve in the same school she is working currently. She has been

4 -The names are fictitious.

a pedagogical coordinator for fourteen years. She is already retired, but still working. She says she chose the teacher education area by vocation, and she prefers to work with the youngest students, easier to be molded: “So, at a certain extent, you will mold the student, won’t you? To build the child. You take a fifth grade, it has a previous history, isn’t it? Well, I wouldn’t say addictions, but some things that have been already acquired, right?”.

She took the public call to act as a coordinator because of the possibility of increasing her salary, and then abandon her job as a receptionist in the vet clinic, that was simultaneous with the teacher position. She was approved at the public call, but the absence of a higher education diploma brought insecurity, emphasizing low cultural capital in the educational field, generating resistance from some teachers who were her colleagues and couldn’t be approved at the call: “So, at the beginning, it was very difficult. [...]. But the biggest problem was not, how can I say?, what to do, what I’ll have to do. No. It was the relationship with people. Mainly the ones who took the public call with me and were from the same school. They couldn’t accept it.”.

However, the fact of taking the coordination in the same school she had worked as a teacher was also a facilitating aspect to establish leadership with the group: “but I had a positive point because I had already worked here and I had known everybody.[...] [...]so they helped me a lot, encouraging me, you know?”.

The leadership that she needs to establish over the team of teachers is really the aspect of her work that she feels more pressured and insecure about. The groups are small (five teachers in two periods and four teachers in the other period)⁵ and, according to her, groups are coherent, with teachers being acting for a long time who could influence the others: “It is a group, I mean, it is very strong, in all senses. They are well prepared, excellent teachers, they know their rights.... And then, they ask more from me, you know?”

Because of her low capital, Maria feels threatened by the teachers: “I think that’s the most difficult thing. And the group is too... Too critical, you know. They ask. [...]. You know, it’s like that, they question. So, everything must have a reason, must have a fundament, must have a law. I think this is very difficult, you try, you know. To mediate everything.”.

To assert her authority in the group, she prefers the establishment of individual relations, instead of facing them collectively. She uses personal relations that she establishes with the teachers, combining the bureaucratic domination referred to the position she has with traces of traditional domination (WEBER, 2006) in order to get the teachers’ adhesion, guiding herself through the loyalty of some teachers, playing an individual game of persuasion, avoiding the confrontation and mobilizing part of the small political capital she had acquired: “I think it’s easy for me because I know the group. And then I continue through the edges, you know? You keep eating by the edges. If I see four teachers in one period, in which one or two are pending to accept what I want, I think, both are getting their colleagues, got it?”.

She sees the employees as a family, once more evidencing traces of traditional domination in the forms she establishes the relations in the school (WEBER, 2006):

5- The schools of the city are open in three periods: morning, intermediary and evening. When the research was conducted, there were only female teachers working at school.

“Although there are some problems, here is like a family, you know? People who work here is very nice, from the access controller, the cook, we are very united. Because we have known each other for a long time”.

The bureaucratic domination is manifested, for example, when she described the performance of her tasks, as the organization of the Collective Work Hour⁶, the councils in the schools, the demands that come from the Education Office, in a very precise way, basing herself in the legality. An example of this is the description about the use of the Evaluation File⁷ by the teachers. Maria, in a practical way, establishes a routine and incorporates its use in the school daily routine: “For each semester, he signs, I sign and the principal signs, and it remains in the school. When the year is over, it remains in a folder, the following teacher takes the same folder, but with the part of the second year. There are divisions in the folder.”.

Or when she refers to the Participative Council⁸:

So, when the Council happens, we always send a previous note calling the parents to participate. [...]. They evaluate the meeting and give suggestions and themes they would like the school, for the next meeting, consider debating. So, we do a survey. Depending on what was most voted, or if there is a theme which is similar to another, we create something that the parent could participate and understand a little about that theme. But it can't be too long.

For her, the school where she works is traditional, and the work with the students needs to be based on rules: “The school is seen as a traditional school. Because they are from the ancient line. The children participate, but everything is in order”.

She evaluates the teachers' work as very good work, who are free to adopt the pedagogical concept they feel more adequate: “So, it doesn't matter if it is traditional, if it is constructivist, the important thing is to make students learn. If you take a little from each method, you go ahead”!

In the previous excerpt, it is evidenced that Maria understands the school pedagogical work in its technical dimension⁹, materialized from the division and delimitation of tasks, based on the established relations.

Concerning this aspect, it is important to consider that she accepts without questioning the bureaucratic hierarchy established in the school, that is, the functions are established and each one knows how to fulfill them. She evaluates that the work with the principal, whom she refers to as the captain of the ship, needs to be established as a marriage. The school supervision is taken as a daily monitoring, to verify if everything is happening accordingly, besides aiding in what it would be necessary. Concerning the Education Office, she emphasizes it standardizes the actions in the school by means of memos, which must be followed, frequently with a short period of time to do so. For her, the main problem is the frequency of the memos:

6- Collective work time in the school network.

7- Instrument used by the teachers in the school network to evaluate the students.

8- The name was altered to avoid identification in the investigated network.

9- Concerning the technical rationality, see Contreras (2012).

Then the memo arrives, not so frequently, and with plenty of time to be executed, let's say so. And then it could work better, because the teacher has also to do their things, they have to plan the lesson, they have to correct things, and they didn't have time. All the time was just to see the memo, you know, it was too difficult.

Maria, as already pointed out, attended the teacher education course, and affirms it was fundamental the continuous formation accomplished in the network. Currently, she takes the weekly formation, with the other coordinators of the network, and for her those are learning situations and, moreover, exchanging situations. They are important moments that, according to her, help her to understand how she must act when facing the demands from the Education Office, once more emphasizing the technical rationality present in her way of understanding the school pedagogical work. It is also important to consider that such formation courses give her some cultural capital, aiding her political capital and making her feel more confident in the power games she participates at school. Such aspects confirm the understanding of her strong adhesion to the field, in a dominated position.

Concerning the students' families, Maria feels more confident. When talking about how she understands the meetings with the families she is obliged to promote, she clearly indicates the idea that school has the correct form of teaching how to educate their children, expressing adhesion to values present in the educational field. (PEREIRA; ANDRADE, 2006):

So it was interesting that the Participative Council, while I was passing the video, the mother started to cry. [...]. And the mother said, I realized I'm doing everything wrong. The video was saying that the child must have a routine, must have their own space, must have responsibility, and that the mother doesn't have to do the activity, but orientates it... And she said: "but I was doing the opposite of that".

The same happens concerning the children, whose difficult lives need to be understood and relieved:

I like everything, but it is necessary to understand why the student has certain attitudes. Why doesn't he learn? I know he doesn't learn not because he doesn't want to learn. Back then, and it has already happened a lot, when you research it, he has something involving the family.

She perceives the school as a space to relieve the poverty and the family lack of structure, offering the children some opportunity of insertion in the world from individual effort, once more adhering to values that circulate in the education field. "So, there are some children that, if they don't have the school support, they don't have it at home. The truth is that. The school is their only chance. And they need to take it".

With the investigation, it was possible to evidence that Maria comprehends the school as a machine that needs to function perfectly, each one fulfilling their function. In this aspect, she adheres to the bureaucratic domination (WEBER, 2006). She feels threatened by the teachers, that have enough experience and formation to confront her,

so she uses features of traditional domination (WEBER, 2006), appealing to friendship and tacit individual agreements, as she affirms, 'eating by the edges'. Her formation and experience, always in the same school, to which she owns everything, contribute so she can undoubtedly enter the game of the educational field, adhering to rules and proclaiming her virtues, emphasizing conversion *habitus*, as denominated by Bourdieu (2001d).

Her low cultural capital to be mobilized in the field helps to understand her dispositions of adhesion and conversion to the rules of the game. In this way, she makes a lot of effort, gives her best so the school could function properly. She worries about the children's well-being, whom she takes care with dedication, emphasizing comprehension of her work as the fulfillment of a mission. Acting like that, she contributes to the school work development, because, as she says, it is a small school in a well-located region of the city investigated, in a neighborhood with infrastructure, which serves in its majority lower middle-class families or even poor families, but not so poor as the ones which attend the school where Joaquim works.

Joaquim, the heretic

Joaquim was raised by his mother, who attended the elementary school and worked as a weaver. When he was three years old, his father left home, and there were only reunited in his adult age. His mother was helped by other families. Until nine years old, he was raised by whom he called his respect uncles, who had a great importance in his life and formation, according to him.

He attended the elementary education in a private confessional school and, when he returned to his mother's house, he was enrolled in a public school. He used to work since he was a boy in small jobs and collecting cardboard in the streets, until he was hired by the owner of a scrap heap. The Catholic Church, he used to go by his mother's influence, had an important role in his childhood and adolescence, having worked in Base Ecclesiastic Communities. This activism allowed him to save some political capital in his social trajectory, whose symbolic aspect is a result of recognition of legitimacy of the characteristics learned and relative to the exercise of the social functions.

When I was at high school, I was active at the Church, I would go to the Base Ecclesiastic Communities. I started to teach people in the church to read and write. [...] Then I met a lot of people, and there was an old lady there who organized, how can I say, the material part, of working with the families [...]. I was very interested in those things, and she was one of the people who helped me a lot too.

When he was sixteen years old, he started working in a factory, but he already wanted to attend college, relating to his uncles' influence, who had always valued the studies. He was enrolled in a Business Administration course at the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo (PUC-SP), where he was awarded a scholarship. He changed to the Social Sciences course, which he felt a strong affinity and graduated. While attending Social Sciences, he had his first experience as a teacher, besides working at the Rondon Project:

No, then in the second year of social sciences I started to teach in the public network. Then I started working at the Rondon Project. [...] I went to the suburbs of São Paulo. Then I worked in a huge community, it was a huge slum area at Vila Prudente. [...] And the perspective of acting was to promote, help people to be organized in the community.

Attending an undergraduate course had a very strong impact in his formation:

I was overwhelmed with the university! Gosh, I was... [...] For me, everything was, uau! Nuts! And then the older guys, and the people. [...] And then when I started attending Social Sciences, I really enjoyed, and then I was inserted in every debate, and so on.

He studies, made friends, participated in students' movements, gathering cultural, political and social capital. Those are conditions of expansion of the constitution of the *habitus* related to the domain and valorization of knowledge and the social relations established, empowering the cultural sphere and the social investments.

He had always worked to support and help his mother. When he was at college, working as a teacher, he also worked in a tailor shop, according to him, he was a handyman. One of his clients invited him to work with education in the correctional system. The superintendent of the Institution¹⁰ was a sociologist, with whom he established a strong connection, encouraging him to study. He remained working in the state network, to where he took all the innovations he was learning, inserting himself in debates present in the educational field: "And this thing, the course I attended with Madalena Freire gave me a great kick, because I started to.... I used to teach High School at that time, and I used some things I was learning at the course".

The experience at the Institution was very significant in his life. He participated in the structuration of the education sector, counting on external consulting of university professors, contributing to his formation and expanding his cultural and social capital. He affirmed that was the moment he approached an important debate on the field of education, understanding and owning Paulo Freire's ideas.

He also lived with colleagues politically engaged in adult education, strongly admiring them and establishing friendship. When it was possible, he expressed his relations and friendships acquired, which certainly capitalized his positionings, which was a critical positioning related to the educational debate¹¹. When Luísa Erundina, by that time from the Workers Party, took office the City Hall of São Paulo, Joaquim took a public call to be the principal of a nursery school, according to him, moved by a belief in the political moment lived by the city of São Paulo.

When Erundina took office of the government of São Paulo, it was shoking, you know? I said... Gosh, Erundina! And then a kind of revolution began, Paulo Freire was the Secretary of Education, right? [...] Then I left the Institution, I asked to be fired, and I started being the principal of the nursery school.

10 - The name of the institution was omitted to avoid identification. It will be called as Institution.

11 - The comprehension of Joaquim's position as a critical position is based on debate presented by Contreras (2012).

With the change of administrations in the city hall of São Paulo, Joaquim was fired. He had not been working for a long time, until he came back to the Institution as an autonomous worker, eventually being hired through a public call. At that time, he reached the administration of the program of education of the Institution, an experience in which, according to him, he learned a lot. Still in the Institution, he was dismissed to work in a city in the Great São Paulo (where he was the principal at the moment of the interviews). This happened when the Workers Party took office of that city hall and many of his friends started working there too. He was hired to coordinate a program of children's education alternative to the nursery schools, coordinating multi-professional teams¹². The Program was first established in Churches, then it moved to the building where the school is currently located, reaching, in his words, "almost ten thousand families and four hundred teachers". The work mobilized a multi-professional team and trainees, with permanent formation for the involved workers, to attend children (and their mothers) who are not enrolled in nursery schools.

Working in the Child Program marked his professional life and his beliefs in education, expanding his cultural capital. Moreover, it allowed him to approach the Children Pastoral, where he still works, composing his political capital and expanding his network of relations, that is, his social capital.

Acting in the Child Program, he took a public call to be a school principal, because the city hall was having difficulties to maintain his contract as a consultant. When the Program was extinct, he went to the school, according to him, once it was his only option. He has been there for eight years in the principal position, a place he didn't choose: "Then I got confused. [...] I was a school principal, debating myself, scattering, being a strange to myself. I couldn't understand the teachers, what was happening, the bureaucracy of a school, that terrible thing"!

Acting in the school, according to him, he was first worried about the humanization of the relations: "The first thing, the maximum priority, the issue related to humanization. [...] So, in a school, nobody screams, in a school there is no punishment, in a school there is not this type of moral, physical or psychological punishment".

Such posture at school responds to the relations of power established between teachers and students, confronting crystalized forms of acting in school culture. Joaquim faced strong resistance from the teachers, and attracted certain fame to the school:

Although it seems simple or obvious, it is a difficult construction. To take fifty teachers and review this idea that we can't scream, it is difficult. [...] The school is a little famous in the network, and in the choice, [so they say] "Oh, there! The child could do everything! There, the child can..., the teacher can't do anything, and the child can do everything".

Now, according to him, his worry is related to the fact that the children don't successfully learn the school contents. To convince the teachers about the difficulties of children's learning and mobilize them to face together this problem, he initiated an

12 - The name of the program was omitted to avoid identification. It will be called as Child Program.

evaluation process in the school, and called all the community for the debate. “So, this meeting happened at the theater, with projection. Then I started the meeting with the following question: ‘Do you think this is a good school?’ Could you guess the answer? Yes! Then I said, ‘My first mission here with you is to show this school is not good’”.

To mobilize the school, it is evident that Joaquim relates himself to his cultural and political capital, involving all the community, even to legitimate his actions for the teachers. According to him, from this meeting, he could involve the teachers in the reorganization of school time and spaces, accomplishing a great movement in the school:

The child studies in the afternoon. So, he was coming in the intermediate period and stayed from 11 am to 7 pm in the school. [...] A child that can't read or write and is attending the fifth grade, so I'll put him in the first grade, in the second grade. [...] The teachers dismissed their planning hours, some times a week, and the children who were facing much difficulty, got at school one hour earlier and remained one hour after the end of the class, and they organized groups with the children.

Following his purpose of facing the issue of the children's learning, he approached to the philosophy of the Bridge School¹³. With money raised in a June party, he brought José Pacheco (the teacher who created the Bridge School) and his team for the school. To do so, he involved parents and all the team of school professionals, once more mobilizing his political and cultural capital.

Joaquim expresses his comprehension about the importance of promoting a greater participation of the social community directly involved in the school. But such acting is not immune to contradictions. As already affirmed, the school is a space of power relations. Joaquim approaches the community because he finds a greater resistance to his ideas from the teachers. To convince the teachers and establish the domination, Joaquim uses the dialogue, and, at the limit, he uses the bureaucratic domination (WEBER, 2006) inherent to the function of the principal:

And then people don't do anything. And then we started to call them to their responsibility. Oh, no, I'm not doing that... Then, first of all, we dialogue, talk, explain the reason, collectively. The one who hasn't done it, I call them to talk with me, or with the coordinator, and then we examine, and then we register. I say, “Pay attention, we agreed to do such thing, you haven't done it, you sign here the school register”. The third time, then it is with the registration, but then I'll send to the Education Office. So, it will remain in the Office's records.

Besides using the bureaucratic domination, it was possible to understand that Joaquim uses the domination based on a strong personal charisma, due to his cultural, social and political capital. The teachers who adhere to his proposal, according to him, do this because they are convicted, but also because of his seduction, expressing facets of charismatic domination established by Weber (2006). The following excerpt explains this

13- For further information about Bridge School (Escola da Ponte), see <http://escoladaponte.pt/>.

aspect of his leadership style: “And then, the teachers joined me and said, I want to hear from you, Joaquim, from you! What is the next step? What do you expect me to do?”

At the same time he values the personal relations and the establishment of consensus, it was possible to evidence the clear delimitation of his position as a principal: “I demand myself and demand from all the administrative team coherence”. He recognizes qualities in the group of teachers, and he does not feel threatened with the confrontation: “At the same time there is a lot of fight, lot of arguing. But nobody is punished for arguing with me. Fight in a good sense, right?”

Concerning the administrative team, he divides tasks and responsibilities. He praises the coordinator’s work and emphasizes it is very good, because she is not an educator, evidencing contempt of a more conventional pedagogical discourse, what he denominates as ‘*pedagogês*’ (educators’ language and jargons about Pedagogy): “Our coordinator, she has a great merit. She is not an educator [laugh]. She was an Arts teacher. [...] And then she attended the Pedagogy course”. Concerning the supervision, he affirms having a relation of complicity: “Then my supervisor says: ‘for God’s sake, Joaquim, don’t do this! Because then, you are there, how could you let the guy do it!’”

Concerning the Education Office, he confronts the established hierarchy:

I have already signed that black book of the Office a lot of times! [...] This hierarchical relation, it is horrible! [...] Extremely verticalized. What I joke with the trainee, they tell the trainee to call me, he says: “Oh, you have to do this”. And I say: “No, I don’t have to do anything!” It’s something like that my relation to them.

In his actions, he affirms to give priority to the needs of the community. The mothers actively participate in school life: “I called one thousand and three hundred mothers”. He understands mothers as important partners in his political struggle for a quality education for those children: “What I say to the mothers: I am an employee, I go as far as I can, but I am an employee. You are not, you demand. So, when something is blocking a lot, they do!” He affirms to be driven by a passion, by a belief in education and, in his words: “The education serves to humanize, serves to potentiate intelligences, build affective, ethical relations, provide culture, the construction of culture, and so on. So... It is humanizing in this broad aspect”.

Concerning the school, he is critical, affirming to be a plastered institution, that does not favor the formation and cancel the subjects: “In my studies at Master’s degree, I researched that the school suits to kill people, right? Killing in the sense that Paulo Freire calls, you know?, in its ontological vocation of being the subject, of being more, of always overcoming themselves. The school kills everything”.

Joaquim confronts the educational field, the school hierarchy, the pedagogy and the educators. He owns cultural, social and political capital that allows him to move in the educational field in accordance to what Bourdieu (2001d) denominates heretic, questioning his assumptions without, however, leaving the game, appealing to more heterodoxic educational values, but facing his work as the fulfillment of a mission, aspect of the game in which there is concordance between Maria’s and Joaquim’s dispositions.

It is important to highlight that Joaquim holds a master's degree in education from the University of São Paulo, gathering strong cultural capital, overcoming all his professional and political trajectory, what allows him to be respected and to ask for it, besides being relevant to observe the fact he represents a male leadership in a predominantly female universe (BOURDIEU, 2003d). When practicing the domination, necessary to impose his authority, he moves between the bureaucratic domination and the charismatic domination (WEBER, 2006). At the same time, due to his political convictions and how he understands the education, he mobilizes efforts for the children's education in his school, who live in a situation of extreme poverty and vulnerability, searching for pedagogical alternatives so they could learn.

In conclusion

Through the interviews and their analysis, it was possible to identify that both investigated agents were highly engaged in their functions, because both shared the same professional path, worried about the school and the children. However, two distinct forms of conducting the organization of the school work were explicit, related to different relations expressed by ways of divergent domination, once the agents were motivated by dispositions, beliefs and values referred to their trajectories. However, they had different administrative functions, but in a convergent way, though they refer to the educational field with the values intrinsic to them and to the disputes held in it.

The distinct dynamics of conducting the pedagogical work, here analyzed, are related to the consolidated *habitus* dispositions for the actions in the social trajectories of the investigated subjects, to the different elements of the several capitals accumulated by the agents and to the disputes and values present in the educational field.

The coordinator moves in the educational field in a specific pedagogical function from the weak cultural capital, experience not so varied in the field, joining to the established rules, needing to prove to herself and the others her competence in her work, manifesting *habitus* of conversion and adoption of traditional forms of conducting the school work. She establishes the domination referred to her job guided by aspects of bureaucratic and traditional domination, mainly operating with the teachers appealing to individual agreements and to the feeling of belonging to a big family.

The principal also uses the bureaucratic domination, intrinsic to his job, however, combined with traces of charismatic domination, because he has strong cultural, social and political capital, accumulated in his trajectory, with diversified participation in the educational field. He is convicted he dominates the rules of the game, challenging them, manifesting *habitus* with traces of a heretic posture related to dogma established in relation to the school work, also operating with the families as support to the pedagogical work.

The research provided different ways of understanding the administrators' performance of the pedagogical work in the schools from values and disputes related to the educational field, incorporated as dispositions for the action, which are composed from the professional *habitus* with different dispositions.

It is not about specifying the merit present in different forms of performance in schools, but clarifying they are related to ways of learning connected to formative processes the agents had passed through, translated into values and positioning in the educational field, emphasizing different forms and reasons for the achievement of the school pedagogical work. Thus, it brings contributions to the understanding of school processes conducted in the schools.

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