

Dialogs between the cartography method and some philosophical assumptions of Hannah Arendt in educational research

Diálogos entre o método da cartografia e alguns pressupostos filosóficos de Hannah Arendt na pesquisa em educação (resumo: p. 12)

Diálogos entre el método de la cartografía y algunas presuposiciones filosóficas de Hannah Arendt en la investigación en educación (resumen: p. 12)

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The article explores the cartography method and the writings of Hannah Arendt on action, politics and education. Based on the articulation between these two universes, the authors aim to build the following positions for a field research in the sphere of education: the researcher's implication in the research process, recognizing themselves as part of the process and breaking with their alleged neutrality; acceptance of unpredictability during the development of the research; and, finally, the political commitment to the collective with which the researcher works and to the world we, researcher and participants, inhabit. Furthermore, the study presents questions about the relationship of one of the authors, as a researcher, with her research field, taking into consideration her experience as a producer of thoughts about the methodological challenges faced by works grounded on cartography.

Keywords: Cartography. Intervention research. Method. Politics. Action.

Introduction

- Y están apareciendo en el mundo unas series de problemas que ningún país del mundo, ni el más grande, puede arreglar, y que necesitan acuerdos mundiales.
- Cómo cual?
- Los pobres de África... no son de África, son de nuestra humanidad. El problema de la inmigración clandestina que se quiere meter en Europa se arregla arreglando la pobreza en África y no construyendo muros. Tenemos que hacer un esfuerzo porque ese problema es de la humanidad toda. Tenemos que empezar a pensar como especie. Entonces, aplaudimos la integración financiera. Aplaudimos las comunicaciones, y la política? Quién se va a hacer cargo de ese continente de nylon (plástico) que se está armando en el Pacífico más grande que Europa? Y el derretimiento de los polos, cómo vamos a enfrentar eso? Es decir, hay que pensar por el mundo entero.”

Interview with José Pepe Mujica^(c)

We chose Pepe Mujica for the initial tone of the article with the intention of enlarging the borders of co-accountability, of care for the world and for the other. Our question is the accountability of the researcher who investigates multiple realities in research with human beings, committed to the improvement in public education for all. This position, which refers to a very broad struggle, has been constantly summoned nowadays and sustains the terrain that triggers the reflections that will be presented here. The articulation between some philosophical assumptions of Hannah Arendt and the cartographic method will highlight the plane of experience as the one that enables reflections on the reality of Brazilian education in every place where it occurs. The writing will focus on theoretical-methodological approximations in the frontiers of the two theoretical constructs mentioned above, motivated by the experience lived in the encounter between the field and the researcher. In this text, we will focus on empirical research as the plane of experience in which the research questions arose. According to Passos and Barros¹, it is the plane of experience “that intermediates subject and object, theory and practice, in the same plane of production or of co-emergence”¹ (p. 17).

Intervention research grounded on the cartographic method starts from knowledge deriving mainly from institutional analysis (René Lourau) and schizoanalysis (Félix Guattari and Gilles Deleuze). Inspired by these thinkers, a group of authors has formalized clues that mark the ethical-political place of this way of doing research². We will propose articulations between Hannah Arendt’s concepts of action and politics and intervention research grounded on the cartography method.

The concept of experience proposed by Larrosa³, which borders literature and science, initiates this approximating conjecture. The author starts from the Greek root of the word experience, *periculum*, which brings meanings like “crossing”, “passage”, and arrives at the derivation *peiratés*, which means “pirate”, to highlight the subject of experience based on that figure: the “subject of experience has something of this fascinating being who crosses unprotected an indeterminate and dangerous space, putting himself to the test and pursuing

^(c) José Pepe Mujica, former president of Uruguay, in an interview given to Jordi Évole for his program “Salvados”, in 2014.

- And a series of problems has been emerging in the world that no country, not even the largest one, can fix and which needs international agreements.

– What problems?

- The poor in Africa... they don't belong to Africa, they belong to humankind. The problem of clandestine immigration, which has been put on the agenda in Europe, is fixed by fixing poverty in Africa, not by building walls. We must make an effort because this problem belongs to the entire humankind. We must begin to think as a species. So, we acclaim financial integration. We acclaim communications, and what about politics? Who will be responsible for that amount of plastic, bigger than Europe, that has been forming in the Pacific? What about the melting of the poles, how are we going to face it? That is, it is necessary to think for the whole world.



in it his opportunity, his occasion”³ (p. 26). It is this travelling figure, open to experience, who stimulates us to think about this way of researching, as, without defining us, it develops a type of knowledge that cannot be put in the logic of a scientific method to be reproduced. As a methodology that is distant from the classic meaning of method, which is grounded on the possibility of reproduction, verification and prescription, cartography opens itself to the plane of relationships, in which there is a dimension of uncertainty that we could name a pirate becoming: we navigate uncertain waters, the compass shows directions, and the actions to arrive where we intend will depend on what happens along the way.

The experience, taken as something that affects, is what happens to us and not what happens outside us. This conception values dependence in human relations, that is, the fact that the experience is necessarily formalized in relations.

We will briefly present, below, an outline of the concrete research experience that motivates the methodological reflections presented here, showing the singularities that constitute it. It is an ongoing Master’s degree (one of the authors is the Master’s student and the other is the supervisor) in which the researcher examines a municipal elementary and junior high school located on the periphery of the north zone of São Paulo. When the new management, principal and vice-principals^(d), arrived at the institution, they proposed the collective construction of a political-pedagogical project. The coordinators, who used to be teachers at this school, accepted to be part of the enterprise and were added to the managing group. After years with deputy managements, the inauguration of this group through a civil service exam for effective administration strengthened the possibility of projects having continuity in the long run at the school: rethinking the curriculum, fostering teacher education and democratizing institutional decisions, among other actions that take time. Generally speaking, there are two great differences that mark this moment of the school: the change in the way decision-making is conducted and the transformations performed in the curriculum – the importance given to the diversity of cultural expressions and to students’ voice, interdisciplinarity in knowledge construction, and the fight against racism, machismo and LGBTphobia. The school was inaugurated 18 years ago and this proposal started to be implemented, within this institutional history, three years ago. The projects undertaken during this period of time have caused intense changes referring to: the duration of classes; implementation of new disciplines and varied projects; the holding of assemblies; elimination of expulsion and suspension; intensification of debates among professionals; the holding of meetings by principals, teachers and coordinators, with the participation of students, to decide on didactic-pedagogical matters and educational actions; the new ways of dealing with indiscipline; and changes in the physical space, with tags on doors, the new floor and the vegetable garden.

How can we study this ongoing movement? Learning about a moving field, a reality that is not delimited by finished facts, is only possible in its transformations. It is from the variations that we are able to understand things⁴. We are studying a school that does not settle for its way of functioning and where many changes are happening. This institution’s professionals rethink the practices and have many questions and uncertainties. In this movement to amplify the debate about the school’s reasons for existing and about its ways of existing in the territory, political issues have been placed in the center of the institutional practices and, for the research, cartography and Hannah Arendt’s conceptions of action and politics have guided our work.

^(d) When the principal takes office, he or she appoints two assistants that will compose the team with him/her, according to article 9 of Directive no. 2174 (April 14, 2011) of São Paulo’s Municipal Education Department.



The points that we will highlight in this cartographic way of doing research, interacting with Hannah Arendt's discussions, are: 1) the researcher's implication in the research - making them accountable for the relationships they establish in the field and for the interventions they make in the world; 2) acceptance of unpredictability as part of the process; and 3) access to the collective and to the research's political dimension.

The researcher as world producer

We use José Pepe Mujica's discourse to argue that the researcher must be committed to their surroundings and to expand the frontiers of accountability for what one does and says about the studied reality. It is necessary to situate the writings in the singularity of the research, which encompasses a researcher's encounter with the field where the reality on which they focus is produced, for the researcher's actions frame the plane in which they work, constituting possible lines of analysis.

In intervention research, the researcher is one being situated among other beings who, by doing their (the researchers') job, acts in the world. Their actions occur in relationships and generate effects as one "action always has a chain reaction"⁵ (p. 236). Speech and writing are acts that build reality.

Hannah Arendt presents us human plurality as a fact without choice, a fact that constitutes what we are - we live together on Earth⁵. This also happens in intervention research grounded on cartography. There is a joint action, a doing together, that is inherent in this nature of research. Not together in the sense that we will all become researchers, but considering that "when I insert myself into the world, it is a world where others are already present"⁶ (p. 191). Human plurality is part of what we are and, as José Pepe Mujica warns us, from the moment when we are in the world, the world's issues are ours. This also happens in research. To enter school through the path of the encounter and to access the different components of this reality imply breaking the classifications and hierarchizations that organize our relationship with reality⁷. It is an entrance that requires that we should be open to what lies between the lines - which, in the cartographic method, refer to what is called extracodes: what is not obvious when we look⁸.

The researcher must pay attention to the route in which the issues gain relevance and the objectives are defined from the relationship with the field and not in advance. That is, the method (the way of doing) produces effects on the research process, on the researcher, and on the results that must be considered in the analyses¹.

Our action in the research is not different from the other actions on the world. To Arendt^{5,6}, to act means to take the initiative, to start, to put something in motion. We act by means of words and actions. The momentary and spontaneous character of the action, that is, beginning, happening and ending in a certain context, demands that we do not think of it in functional terms, as the production of something for an external purpose. The story created by the action is not fabricated out of a context precisely because it starts from a web of existing relationships⁶ in which it happens and establishes other relationships. There is no control over the action's connections after it is launched in the world. It has an unlimited and irreversible character, an "inherent tendency of breaking all limits and transposing all borders"⁵ (p. 236). In a research



whose priority are human relations, uncertainty and indeterminacy are inherent in the procedure. They are neither deviations nor mistakes, as they are constitutive elements of the very nature of the relations the researcher works with. In this domain, “every process is the cause of new unpredictable processes”⁶ (p. 193). There is interdependence in the actions; the researcher is part, influences and does not have control over the effects that happen in the encounter and which must be considered in the research.

Action reveals and constitutes who we are. Actions are tied to people. In fact, “action without a name, a ‘who’ attached to it, is meaningless”⁶ (p.191). In research, this occurs through the way in which we act with our interlocutors or build the research discourses. The researcher is a force present in the arena that produces relations, analyses and writing.

Intervention research demands breaking with an exteriorized writing. When the procedure itself implies knowing the forces in the game where the institutional practices and ways of thinking and acting in the daily routine are constituted, writing demands a narrativity that does not define the existence of “they” as being outside the “we” who write.

Therefore, the research is responsible for the mark left in the world. It outlines possible meanings that become memory. Arendt presents the processes of joint action with their extensibility in time due to their effects.

What endures in the realm of human affairs are these processes, and their endurance is as unlimited, as independent of the perishability of material and the mortality of men as the endurance of humanity itself. The reason why we are never able to foretell with certainty the outcome and end of any action is simply that action has no end⁵. (p. 288)

Unpredictability as part of the process

The collective plane where the research takes place, the fact that the research itself produces the field, do not constitute lack of methodological rigor. The issue of the researcher’s posture - a posture of openness to relationships and, therefore, to the unpredictability of action - represents, in cartography, an ethics, as we see in Escóssia and Tedesco⁷, based on Simondon:

Acting ethically means putting yourself as a singular point of an open infinity of relations, without your action leaning on norms that function as *a priori* forms, imposed on action from the outside⁷. (p. 106)

This openness is articulated with the unlimited character of action and with another character presented by Arendt: unpredictability^{5,6}. This dimension recalls the pirate of Larrosa’s experience, who puts himself in a dangerous and indeterminate space, open to face what comes. The pirate carries his compass, has a direction, and accepts the indeterminations that occur in the process.



The researcher has some tools that they control and decide: the frequency with which they will go to the school, the people and activities they will monitor, the bibliographic companions - in short, a series of decisions that must contribute to a responsible foundation in the route. However, as we mentioned above, there is unpredictability in intervention research that must be part of the analyses.

When we are dealing with research in schools attended by children, there is an extra factor to extend such unpredictability. It is the presence of these newcomers in the world, the bearers of the new. As Arendt mentions in the only text in which she disserts directly about education, called "The crisis in education"⁹, this sphere of society always has to deal directly with natality - the coming of new and unique individuals, different from any other individual that existed before. These individuals bring with them the possibility of starting something new. Tension is always present there, between the responsibility of presenting the world to them and that of not preventing them from bringing the new.

In the research, the presence of natality insists in the untimely character that transgresses certainties. What guides us in the research pathways in this sphere is the responsibility towards education and, consequently, towards the world. According to Arendt^{5,6}, the promise is what helps us to deal with the unpredictability of human action and, in educational research, the ethical commitments made with the field are promises of meaning to the research.

To summarize, when we include unpredictability in the research process, we can affirm some important positions to be highlighted about this way of researching. First, when the researcher commits to a collective, unpredictability will not be a choice; it is inherent in this way of researching. Second, admitting it in the process does not exempt commitments that act as promises, guaranteeing certain "islands of predictability", provided it is possible to fulfil them⁵. Finally, we have to consider the specificity of education in this aspect of the research, as it is an environment where the relationship to the new has a special place, implying a commitment to openness in the present in the relation to childhood.

In the cartographic method, dealing with unpredictability is implied in a way of doing that considers procedurality in the construction of things. The writing of the processes of change in which the researcher and the field are implicated becomes the focus.

Every cartographic experience monitors processes more than represents states of things; intervenes in reality more than interprets it; assembles devices more than attributes any nature to them; dissolves the observers' point of view more than centralizes knowledge in an identity and personal perspective⁸. (p. 170)

The pursuit of knowledge decentralization maintains the researcher's implication^(c) in the field of analysis. When the researcher has to deal, inevitably, with the unpredictability of action because it is a research with a group of people that act and react to it, the ethical direction of the research refers to the researcher's commitment to complying with agreements made during the research. Thus, unpredictability reorganizes actions instead of preventing them. According to Vicente and Filho¹¹:

^(c) "It is necessary to emphasize that implication is not related to the notion of commitment, motivation or personal relation to the field of research/intervention; on the contrary, to explore implication means to talk about the institutions that cross us. [...] Implication denounces that what the institution triggers in us is always the effect of a collective production of values, interests, expectations, desires, beliefs that are imbricated in this relation."¹⁰ (p. 47).



Promise and fulfilment constitute the possible faculty for confrontation with the unpredictability of action. It is necessary that the promise is fulfilled so that there is an effective proportion between unpredictability and the power of promising¹¹. (p. 144)

This takes us to the next section of the text, in which we reflect on the responsibility assumed with the collective.

The affirmation of politics in research

Understanding research as political action, we will use Arendt's conception to articulate politics-research-intervention. Some of the author's concepts enlarge our comprehension of politics in the encounters of this research. Firstly, the very concept of politics as the field of public debate and plurality of opinions. Secondly, the concept of *amor mundi*, extremely precious to educational research, meaning care for the world, a concern for the common world shared by men. And, thirdly, the concept that Arendt borrows from Kant, referring to enlarged mentality.

By viewing politics as the collective modes of deciding on the way we want to live and to conduct public matters, our position in this debate defends the commitment to oppressed lives that have no participation in decision-making processes. The founding conception of this way of doing research, which recognizes that we are objectified by what we seek to objectify in the research¹², brings the challenge of tensioning, in us, too, the exercise of enlarging connections and inclusions in politics. Otherwise, we would treat structural exclusion as a problem exclusively of the researched field. And, as it is a research that approaches these decision-making processes, it does not refuse to recognize itself as a political action and, therefore, to face the challenge of enlargement.

Rocha and Aguiar¹² recover in Lourau a provocation to the alleged separation that we build between theory and politics:

The intellectual [...] with his wise man's language, with the manipulation or ostensive consumption of the instituted discourse and the game of multiple interpretations, of "points of view" and "levels of analysis", hides behind the curtain of mediations that interpose themselves between him and the political reality. The intellectual programs the separation between theory and politics: The better to eat you with, my dear..., but forgets he is the only one who postulates such separation, such dissociation¹². (p. 656)

To Arendt¹³, there is a separation between thinking and acting, and the latter is more connected with the sphere of politics. A difference of conceptions needs to be demarcated here. When Arendt differentiates thinking from acting, she defends that the former would be related to the individual's moment of private thought, while the latter would be connected with their actions in the world (when thought is materialized in acts and spoken words, gaining visibility in the public world)¹⁴. Arendt saves the dimension of political action to the moments when we are in a collective, dealing with differences



and deciding something together. There is something improbable and incalculable that is possible in politics and depends on people acting together.

In the conception of the cartographic method, this separation is not possible. To Deleuze¹⁵, one of the authors who inspired this research perspective, thought is action performed corporally and collectively. The aim is to break the duality between mind and body and move towards a subjectivation that is socially produced and lived.

Recovering our objective of experimenting with some propositions of Arendt and of intervention research to strengthen ethical positions in educational research, we invested in the dialog between them, protecting their differences and attentive to contributions from the two theoretical universes that allow us to defend research as political action.

The action performed toward those who contribute to the production of research data and analyses is a dependent action, implicated in a collective, no matter if they are actors of a practical territory or of a theoretical territory; therefore, we must take ethical-political care for those with whom we relate.

With this, we recover Arendt's politics, sewing it with studies concerned with the plurality of men, the public space and the production of common elements. In politics, a theme "is forced into the open field that it may show itself from all sides"⁹ (p. 300). The theme is generated in the games of forces of the territory inhabited in the research. The researcher is not the owner of the theme nor of the issues referring to the research; they monitor the game, compose and are open to the unpredictable, both of politics and of the research, which reorganizes actions and reflections.

In the researched public school, there are many debates with the participation of all the segments of the community. In them, political acts are performed and there is a freedom that puts the fixations of a research into motion. These acts are ways of caring for the common world shared by men, are acts of *amor mundi*. In the sphere of the production of the research itself, we think of it as the production of a discourse about the world that produces new worlds and, therefore, requires reflection and stancetaking based on the following question: What world do we want to produce? This issue implies a political judgement that "does not eliminate risk but affirms human freedom and the world that free people share with one another. [...] it establishes the reality of human freedom in a common world"¹³ (p. 11).

For this issue of the world we want, it is necessary an enlarged mentality⁽¹⁾. Brayner¹⁶, reflecting on Arendt's ideas, highlights: "when one judges, he or she judges as a member of a community" (p. 191); that is why it is necessary to look at the phenomenon from an enlarged perspective. One judges while thinking of the common good, not of individual advantage, and the validity of the judgement lies in its communicability to the others¹⁶. This discussion makes us insert the debate about the research in the field where it takes place. To accomplish this, general feedbacks at the end of the work are not sufficient, as the knowledge gained participates in the process, agreements are discussed and reviewed, and the research becomes a body that is composed in the process of coping with the problems that arise in the daily routine. In this sense, academic discourse is committed to strengthening Men's common field.

⁽¹⁾ Hannah Arendt works with the concept of enlarged mentality based on Kant's reflective judgement: "this enlarged way of thinking, which as judgement knows how to transcend its own individual limitations, cannot function in strict isolation or solitude; it needs the presence of others 'in whose place' it must think, whose perspectives it must take into consideration, and without whom it never has the opportunity to operate at all"⁹ (p.275).



The exercise of this commitment is not easy. The difficulties to produce common elements and to generate moments of dialog about daily actions within routines full of urgent demands from a vulnerable territory are lived at the same time as the difficulties to construct a piece of writing committed to the ethical-political assumptions approached in this text. The path is made with lapses and failures that, if taken as opportunities, amplify the understanding of the complexity present in daily life. The ethical direction of the compass does not fail when our thought allows itself to doubt, to be amazed and to question the rightness of its own doing.

It is in the tensioning that political action occurs; it is the tensioning that enables to break with a stereotyped thought that believes in linear processes pregnant with prescriptions of success.

Intertwining with the experience of field research

The research field demanded attention to the political-pedagogical process of construction of the educators' work and demanded caution: How can we give visibility to what is invisible in the daily routine of the group's decision-making process? How can we participate in the group's movement committed in an ethical way to the diversity that exists in the school community? How can we inhabit a field, as researchers, affirming the tensions, difficulties and doubts triggered by this relation?

These questions reveal that the researcher's relationship to the research field is embodied and political. The methodological positions presented here require a relationship to the field that tolerates questions that will not be solved in isolation by the researcher. If we had had certainties from the outset about what it means to be a peripheral-school-in-search-of-a-collective-political-pedagogical-project and we had clung to general categories, we would have annihilated unpredictability, politics and responsibility in the encounters.

Based on the methodological reflections outlined in this article, it is possible to say that the political and scientific responsibilities of the research bet on the upcoming relations that lie outside the predictable train of thought and depend on the collective.

Concluding remarks

In times of trivialization of politics, in which it has been reduced to the spheres of parties and governments, Arendt's conception of politics and the cartographic method have been relegated to the background; due to this, it is important to include these discussions in the debate about academic production. The cartography method, by emphasizing the questions presented here - about the collective dimension, the rupture with neutrality, and about politics and the unexpected -, composes an attitude implicated with those who participated in our research. In this sense, Hannah Arendt's contributions have the potential for enlarging the borders of this implication, by means of the concepts of action, politics, enlarged mentality and *amor mundi*.

Amor mundi, as we mentioned above, is the commitment we assume to caring for the world. "This world is common to the entire humankind: it is the common ground



of those who inhabit Earth at any time”¹⁷ (p. 59). This understanding summons a necessary act of accountability for what surrounds us, as “no human life is possible without a world that witnesses the presence of other human beings”¹⁷ (p. 59). It is an act that connects us globally, as Pepe Mujica remarks.

A research that inhabits a school that values dialog and debate and sees itself entangled with conflicting positions has a position: it aims to conquer and socialize knowledge that enlarges the borders of accountability, of care for the world and for the other. Therefore, the research is committed to this enlargement.

Authors' contributions

All authors actively participated in all stages of preparing the manuscript.

Conflict of interest

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

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O artigo aventura-se nas fronteiras do método cartográfico e dos escritos de Hannah Arendt sobre ação, política e educação. Desse encontro, busca-se construir posições para uma pesquisa feita em campo no âmbito da educação, tendo em vista a implicação do pesquisador no processo da pesquisa, reconhecendo-se como parte desse processo e rompendo com sua suposta neutralidade; a aceitação da imprevisibilidade no percurso de criação da pesquisa; e, por fim, o compromisso político com o coletivo com o qual se trabalha e com o mundo que nós, pesquisadores e pesquisados, habitamos. Apresentam-se também questões suscitadas a partir da relação de uma das autoras, como pesquisadora, com o seu campo de pesquisa, tomando a experiência como produtora de pensamento sobre os desafios metodológicos de trabalhos pautados na cartografia.

Palavras-chave: Cartografia. Pesquisa-intervenção. Método. Política. Ação.

El artículo se aventura en las fronteras del método cartográfico y de los escritos de Hannah Arendt sobre acción, política y educación. A partir de ese encuentro, se busca construir posiciones para una investigación realizada en el campo en el ámbito de la educación: la implicación del investigador en el proceso de la investigación, reconociéndose como parte de ese proceso y rompiendo con su supuesta neutralidad. La aceptación de la imprevisibilidad en el recorrido de creación de la investigación; y, finalmente, el compromiso político con el colectivo con el que se trabaja y con el mundo que nosotros, investigador e investigados, habitamos. También se presentan cuestiones suscitadas a partir de la relación de una de las autoras como investigadora, con su campo de investigación utilizando la experiencia como productora de pensamiento sobre los desafíos metodológicos de trabajo pautados en la cartografía.

Palabras clave: Cartografía. Investigación-intervención. Método. Política. Acción.