



The relationships between school, curriculum and music education: School culture as research category

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ABSTRACT. This text deepens considerations about the potential of school culture as a research category, in investigations that have as locus the relationship between education and artistic fields, particularly those constituted as a way to work with research objects that occupy different positions in these social spaces, namely: on one hand, schools and curriculum, and, on the other, music education. The argumentation hinges on three axes: the vocation of the school culture category in taking the researcher's analysis to the inside of the school, transcending the mere description; the approaches between education and artistic fields that have been made possible by the use of this category under analysis; and the contributions that the study of school culture have been offering to investigations that have curriculum and music education as study objects. Finally, the text presents notes of a research agenda, from the category school culture, that can contribute to the action of music educators in spaces where music teaching happens and/or is about to be realized.

Keywords: school, curriculum, school culture, music education.

As relações entre a escola, o currículo e a educação musical: cultura escolar como categoria de pesquisa

RESUMO. O artigo aprofunda considerações acerca da potencialidade da cultura escolar como categoria de pesquisa nas investigações que têm como locus a relação entre os campos educativo e artístico, em especial, aquelas constituídas por uma forma de abordar e tratar de objetos que ocupam posições diferentes nestes espaços sociais, a saber: de um lado as escolas e o currículo e, de outro, a educação musical. A argumentação articula-se em três eixos: a vocação da categoria cultura escolar em conduzir as análises do pesquisador para o interior da escola, transcendendo a mera descrição; as aproximações entre os campos educativo e artístico que têm sido possibilitadas pelo emprego da categoria em análise; e as contribuições que o estudo da/pela cultura escolar têm oferecido às investigações que tem como objeto de pesquisa o currículo e a educação musical. Por fim, o texto apresenta notas de uma agenda de pesquisa, a partir da categoria cultura escolar, que pode contribuir para a ação dos educadores musicais nos espaços onde o ensino de música acontece e/ou está por se concretizar.

Palavras-chave: escola, currículo, cultura escolar, educação musical.

Las relaciones entre la escuela, el currículo y la educación musical: cultura escolar como categoría de investigación

RESUMEN. El artículo profundiza consideraciones acerca de la potencialidad de la cultura escolar como categoría de estudio en las investigaciones que tienen como locus la relación entre los campos educativo y artístico, en especial, aquellas constituídas por una forma de abarcar y tratar de objetos que ocupan posiciones diferentes en estos espacios sociales, a saber: de un lado las escuelas y el currículo y, de otro, la educación musical. La argumentación se articula en tres ejes: la vocación de la categoría cultura escolar en conducir los análisis del investigador para el interior de la escuela, transcendiendo a mera descripción; las aproximaciones entre los campos educativo y artístico que han sido possibilitadas por el empleo de la categoría en análisis; y las contribuciones que el estudio de la/por la cultura escolar han ofrecido a las investigaciones que tienen como objeto de estudio el currículo y la educación musical. Por fin, el texto presenta apuntes de una agenda de estudio, a partir de la categoría cultura escolar, que puede contribuir para la acción de los educadores musicales en los espacios donde la enseñanza de música ocurre y/o está por concretarse.

Palabras clave: escuela, currículo, cultura escolar, educación musical.

Introduction

This article deepens considerations about the potential of school culture as a research category in investigations that have as locus the relationship between education and artistic fields, especially those constituted as a way to approach and work with objects that occupy different positions in these social spaces, namely: on one hand, the *school*, characterized by a grammar that idealizes it as a socialization institution; the *curriculum*, hostage of the conversion into pedagogy of social relations of learning that, in turn, are directly related to the development of formalized scriptural knowledge and objectified knowledge; and, on the other hand, *music education*, as a possibility of access and comprehension in a symbolic way with layers of meanings (SWANWICK, 2003).

In this context, we understand that the sense of the study on school culture in these fields is delineated by differences between the objective positions of the school, of the curriculum and of music education, which can be taken to two complementary dimensions, already pointed by Gonçalves (2004):

The first one can be seen in the regulatory action interposed by imposition strategies of a school culture, through the circulation of school instruments and objects to demarcate and prescribe the new, modern, experimental and scientific pedagogical type desired as a school model [...] The second one, in the action occurred in the school's routine that received didactical instruments and school objects all ready, defined and prescribed, which will determine the pedagogical realization desired and thought according to the imposed model (GONÇALVES, 2004, p. 3).

When considering these dimensions, our argumentation is grounded on three articulating axes. In the first one, we present the vocation of the school culture category in leading the analyses of the researcher to the inside of the school – and to the different spaces that take on the role of the school –, transcending a mere description of facts, material and practices, and guiding him or her in the comprehension of the senses constructed in these places. Then, we address the approximations between education and artistic fields, which have been made possible by the use of the category under analysis. Finally, we approach the contributions that the study of school culture has been offering to investigations that have curriculum as a study object.

School culture as research category: transcending the description of school practices

Researches about school culture in Brazil were identified by Valdemarin and Souza (2005), initially,

for their explanatory potential, later configured as study object, especially for the:

[...] vast investigation universe that opens under this perspective, for both ethnographic qualitative researches currently conducted, and for historical researches aimed at the comprehension of the routine of the school, especially those dedicated to the process of appropriation of cultural models circulating in the school universe (VALDEMARIN; SOUZA, 2005, p. 6).

Still concerning the approximations with the potential of this research object, Faria Filho (2007) resumes some analyses about school culture and its relationship with the concept of schooling, indicating a methodological path, namely: 1) compliance with a certain concept of culture; 2) the use of the long time linked to the short one and; 3) the introduction of the macro dimension of schooling process articulated with the micro dimension of school practices (FARIA FILHO, 2007).

Aranalde (2009), in a study about the categories, presents them as indispensable instruments to orient the actions of professionals that work with the organization of information, as principles that allow identifying the essential notes that characterize an object of knowledge. Research categories, according to Kant's philosophy, are constituted as a theoretical condition that guides the apprehension of a certain object of knowledge in order to describe it, analyze it and comprehend it.

School culture, understood as a research category, enables the immersion of the researcher into the routine of the school institution, towards the identification and the understanding of the game that is constituted by and constitutes the practices of the many agents inserted into these fields – practices which result from different habitus that, in turn, orient different forms of being in the school institution.

Based on this, one can comprehend school culture as lenses that allow for a look to the inside of the school, not with the purpose of merely describing its routine and practices, but of comprehending the senses produced there, which orient and are oriented by them. The ultimate goal is to comprehend these institutions so that we can build strategies and actions that are more appropriate and, perhaps, more effective in the spaces that compose them.

The current moment, of educational reforms¹ concerning music teaching (and Arts, in general) in

¹These reforms are configured through the approval of Law no. 11.769/2008 (BRASIL, 2008) that makes the content 'Music' mandatory in the curricular component Art; and through the recent approval, at the Basic Education House, of Legal Opinion CNE/CEB no. 12/2013 (BRASIL, 2013) and of the Resolution Project with the guidelines of the National Council of Education for the implementation of the 2008 law.

Brazilian schools, seems to be an opportune one for us to turn our eyes to the theme. It is necessary to analyze the propositions and the effects they will have on musical practices and music teaching – and the sense attributed to music – that is being configured inside school institutions, as well as to reflect about the theories, the principles, the norms, the rituals, the habits that express school culture.

Within this context, music educators turn their propositions to the school, for the need of putting into practice the mandatory music education. However, authors such as Hargreaves et al. (2001) suggest that schools should prepare their agents to a world in constant change, and the curriculum, organized into subjects, centered on contents and indifferent to the processes, is in crisis for, historically, not being able to meet this social claim. Actually, the mere recognition of the existence of a crisis in the school institution should lead us to review our ideas about it, rather than, lead to efforts toward reforming it in a rush. We are not even capable today of providing an interesting answer to the question ‘what is school?’

The preparation of school to receive music education the way we idealize it has not been proving positive. To “enter” the school space, the recognition of its specificities, particularities and generalities requires the perception of a differentiated theoretical and empirical reality that produces and is a product of culture.

Regarding transformation and permanence in school culture, scholars present some specificity, as well put by Faria-Filho et al. (2004, p. 159):

With respect to changes, Vinão Frago reaffirms the little subjection of school culture to transformations, whereas Julia seems to be concerned with the inflections and, in this way, with embracing the ruptures, even if in small scale. The same thing is manifested in Forquin when he interrogates about the continuous selection and negligence process of culture, promoted by the school institution, and in Chervel, when he attributes a structuring function to the educative role of the school in the history of education, in which he shows his receptiveness to Pierre Bourdieu’s lessons.

The notion of habitus worked on by Bourdieu (1983; 2009) helps us with these apparent contradictions, because it allows us to comprehend the permanence in the change. School culture ends up inculcating into its agents tendencies that generate practices and perceptions that, as a result, preserve, even in the midst of changes, important aspects that are constituted by and constitute the field in question. Knowing this habitus, the field, the fights that take place on it, the agents and their strategies and, therefore, the school culture that permeates all of this,

becomes imperative for the proposition of actions in the different educative spaces.

It is noticeable, therefore, that the work with school culture is not limited to a description of practices, contexts and subjects, but it encircles the comprehension of senses attributed to the relations established in school institutions.

Since the Aristotelian conception of category², the latter did not serve only to catalogue the things of the world, but it was conceived as a foundation to the construction of knowledge about what surrounds men. As a research category, school culture has been enabling the immersion into other fields, with highlight to the artistic one.

From the education to the artistic field: school culture and symbolic power

Approximations with the artistic field have been oriented by studies developed by Bourdieu (1996; 2001; 2003) with the perspective of revoking the eternal oppositions that have fragmented the comprehension of artistic practices and production, between text and context, individual innovation and collective constraint, essence and history, interpretation and explanation, founding, in this way, a historical science of cultural works, capable of conciliating the social need that they incorporate with the potential that they have to express trans-historical truths and values (WACQUANT, 2005).

The artistic field has been broadening our interpretations around symbolic power, through which one expresses something ‘invisible’, whose detention and practice require complicity and even a manifested indifference by both those who are subjected to said power, and those who make use of it. This concept is being already approached in researches in the education field (SILVA, 2006, 2012; among others), in which we began to see its explanatory potential for the school culture category.

The symbolic power provides data about the confirmation or transformation of a view of school and, by doing so, it instructs an action over this very same school. It is almost ‘inexhaustible’, as it idealizes a specific mobilization effect. Such power is only exercised in a ‘natural’ manner, that is, if ignored as an arbitrary exercise. To understand this exercise, the concepts of field, habitus and cultural capital were crucial.

Projecting these concepts to the inside of the intersection between the education and artistic fields

²“The Aristotelian system of classification emerged for the need to comprehend and express reality in an organized and accurate manner. For such a purpose, said system sought for the identification and the establishment of basic concepts that oriented groupings and partitions of the real operated by human thinking, that is, of primordial categories” (ARANALDE, 2009, p. 91).

means to understand them as spaces endowed with instituted rules that govern access and success, and that determine the position occupied by their agents. These agents fight for the appropriation of the cultural capital, herein understood as the knowledge of aesthetic deciphering codes, which end up defining the legitimate way of approaching the work of art.

[...] the class of art objects would be defined by the fact that it demands to be perceived aesthetically, i.e., in terms of form rather than function. [...] Does this mean that the demarcation line between the world of technical objects and the world of aesthetic objects depends on the 'intention' of the producer of those 'objects'? In fact, this 'intention' is itself the product of the social norms and conventions which combine to define the always uncertain and historically changing frontier between simple technical objects and object d'art (BOURDIEU, 2001, p. 271).

From this perspective, the habitus would correspond to a system of unconscious dispositions that constitutes the product of the internalization of objective structures, in short, a set of schemes implemented, first, by family education and, then, transformed by the school's action, constituting the structuring principle of all ulterior experiences. However, Bourdieu himself affirmed that school action was developed in an education system that legitimates social privileges, under apparent neutrality.

[...] the educational system tends to transform social privileges into natural privileges and not privileges of birth. Intelligence, talent, gifts - these are the titles of rank in bourgeois society which the school blesses and legitimizes by hiding the fact that the scholastic hierarchies which it produces by an apparently perfectly neutral process of inculcation and selection reproduce, in both senses of the work, social hierarchies (BOURDIEU, 2001, p. 241).

About music education, previous studies (PEREIRA, 2012; JARDIM, 2003; VIEIRA, 2000) have been developed in order to denaturalize certain forms of thinking of and articulating music teaching, profoundly influenced by the tradition institutionalized by conservatories, which in the end reproduce social hierarchies. The notion of conservatory habitus allowed Pereira (2012) to unveil principles that were interiorized and put into action in music teaching practices that end up naturalizing and prescribing a legitimate and distinctive taste. The author points out that such principles hinder the understanding of music as a social phenomenon, setting criteria that favor the selection of a certain repertoire, and determine from

the construction of the curriculum and teaching practices to the forms that one behaves and even dresses – indicative and institutors of a symbolic power learned and disguised as natural and legitimate.

Music teaching takes place in varied spaces that often appropriate a school form³ that rules the organization of times and spaces, of selection of knowledge, of construction of pedagogical material, etc. Thus, school cultures are produced in these different places from the appropriation of a 'culture of school' – employed by Forquin (1993) in the same sense as 'culture of office' or 'culture of prison', referring to more general characteristics of school institutions.

Whether in music schools, in social projects or in the basic education school⁴, music teaching, though having different purposes and perspectives, is structured by and structures a singular culture, product of a selection performed in and by culture, selection which is organized, 'normalized', 'routinized', constituting itself as object of a deliberate transmission under the effect of the imperatives of didactics (FORQUIN, 1993).

In these contexts, it was also possible to find marks of a 'teaching system' that, to use Bourdieu's words, ends up transforming social privileges into natural privileges from an apparently neutral selection and inculcation of products and cultural process that tend to reproduce social inequalities. Based on this, the investigation about the presence of a conservatory habitus in the production of the school culture proper of each one of these spaces becomes an interesting possibility of research.

To come to this comprehension of teaching systems and of the culture they produce, some dialogues were built with other areas of knowledge that promote different concepts of culture, namely: Sociology, Anthropology, History and Cultural Studies, mainly in the Language and Literature field. Thus, it was possible to escape from the trap of transforming 'school' into an adjective for culture.

In this sense, it was necessary to look for these different conceptualizations, as well as to establish some dialogues between their authors – not in the sense of supporting the concept of school culture, but because they enable the construction of references for the analysis of culture. On one hand, as the organization of the meanings and values of certain social groups, and, on the other, as the confrontation

³About school form see Vincent et al. (2001).

⁴We have extended the understanding of school not only to basic education institutions but also to the many teaching levels and forms: higher, specialized, formal and informal.

field of these groups, in which cultural practices can only be understood inside the process of capital valuation.

On School Culture: dialogues in the context of curricular studies

The concern with the school culture matter, within the limits of this analysis, rises in the scope of the turning of curricular studies in the field of the New Sociology of Education, with origins in Great Britain (1970), headed by propositions of the critical sociology of curriculum, to which the role of the curricular theory would be to establish relations between curriculum and broader social interests, radically opposing the predominant technicist treatment.

This milestone commenced a new visibility pattern, to which the selection, the organization and the distribution of knowledge are not neutral and selfless actions, they serve groups that hold the economic power and that, in turn, enable, through cultural imposition, forms of oppression and domination over economically unprivileged groups. Such perception finds other perspectives in the Bourdieuian analysis according to which the elite culture is very close to the school culture.

[...] a child from a petit-bourgeois background (and a fortiori from a peasant or working-class background) can only laboriously acquire that which is given to a child from the cultivated class - style, taste, sensibility, in short, the *savoir-faire* and art of living that are natural to a class because they are the culture of that class (BOURDIEU; PASSERON, 1964, p. 43).

This 'labor' occurs in the internalization process of teaching contents that are product of a selection made within culture, which means that not everything that composes a culture is taught, and that all forms of education carry out a particular combination of emphases and omissions.

Williams (1961) considers that the selection made by and for teaching corresponds to fundamental cultural principles and choices linked to the social choices that govern the practical organization of the educational system. In this way, culture is not only the repertoire, the symbolic material inside which the choice of the things to be taught is made, it is also the dynamic principle, the driving force, the generating scheme of the choices of teaching; that is, school cultural selection means, at the same time, selection in culture and selection resulting from culture (FORQUIN, 1993).

The curriculum is regarded as a social and cultural artifact. This means that it is placed within the wider frame of its social determination, of its history, of its

contextual production. The curriculum is not an innocent and neutral element of selfless transmission of social knowledge (MOREIRA; SILVA, 1995, p. 7 and 8).

From this perspective, it is possible to affirm that culture requires interpretation more than causal explanation, since it is a radically interactive and hermeneutic phenomenon. To Pérez-Gómez (2001, p. 15), knowing it

[...] is an endless undertaking. The very fact of thinking it and re-thinking it, of questioning it or sharing it supposes its enrichment and its modification. Its reflexive character implies its changing nature, its self-constructive identity, its creative and poetic dimension.

School culture, as a unique expression, presents differences with groups or sub-cultures in its inside. Differences which feed themselves with the comprehension of common norms and principles, and particular norms, which causes each school to have a common and proper character. It is this exact affirmation that distances us from using school culture only as a theoretical concept, and puts us closer to what we seek, that is, its practical implications – hence its category condition.

To deepen the search for practical implications, we appeal to the warning idealized by Warde (2013), regarding the treatment of the concept of practice in studies about school culture:

Debates held between Marxists and pragmatists for over a century are being putting aside to make room for more rudimentary forms of understanding practice as any action, reaction, behavior, conduct, reflex, activity or gesture. If we sum Hegel together with his immediate offspring, then we will have two wasted centuries of effort toward deciphering the objectified relations that men establish with each other mediated or not by the relationships they maintain with things (WARDE, 2013, p. 45).

Based on this idea, we founded our practices on the sense proposed by Bourdieu, an analysis model immersed into the historical dimension (concept of field), which situates and explains the diversity of habitus through the positions occupied by the social agents. Agents who, from their specific capitals, will participate in symbolic fights for legitimation of practices and works, in the midst of the relations of force and power established by means of the history of the field under analysis, in this case, education.

Thus, school culture is not simply a given empirical reality, of first order, liable to immediate recognition, without the mediation of theories and concepts, implicit or explicit, and of practices. It is

understood that only from the mediation of theories, concepts and practices is that it is possible to identify distinct marks of studies about/of/in school culture, beyond the exercise of inferring by interpretation of analysis contexts, or even of the theoretical positions adopted by whom has researched or written about the school.

School culture rehearses strategies to question macro spaces (world) and micro spaces (existence) of the school and brings us close to new tactics to think – as well as to organize and to speak – about our experiences and our emotions, conferring meaning and order to our thoughts and feelings. It is from this perspective that the notion of aesthetic experience⁵ is conceived, an order of the pleasure obtained by interaction acts between agents, of cognitive, moral and emotional nature.

The agents, or groups of agents, are distributed into the school space according to their volume of cultural capital and to the symbolic relations established as a result of it, which are interpreted as particular modes of using and consuming goods. These modes are objectified by perception, classification and codification systems, through social conditionings managed under a social condition, in this particular case, mediated by the school space and time. In this context, all of these practices and all of the actions are objectively in harmony with each other by means of an unconscious process.

Barroso (1996) points that the principle of homogeneity (of norms, spaces, times, students, teachers, knowledge and inculcation processes) constitutes one of the more distinctive marks of school culture. Santos Guerra (2002, p. 287), in turn, adds:

[...] the myths on which the school articulates itself refer to the kindness of cultural patterns; to the causal efficacy of education; to the equality of opportunities; to the homogenization of behavior; to the uniformity of rules; to a stable grouping; to the transformation of the activity into a routine; to cultural transmission; to the efficacy of obedience; to the value of authority.

In our complex and plural schools, changes happen at a speed that surpasses any predictions. The same time and space shelter the most diverse models of life and development, and this is reflected on socialization processes.

Pérez-Gómez (2001, p. 17) states that, it is necessary to begin to

[...] consider the school as an ecological space where cultures cross each other, whose specific responsibility, [...] is the reflexive mediation of those plural inflows that the different cultures permanently exert over the new generations.

And, when dealing with music and with teaching it, this crossing of cultures allows observing and analyzing the confrontations that are established between a curriculum's official music, that one consumed by the students, that one available in global society and the 'music of the school'. We understand the latter as produced by and producer of school culture.

On school culture as an analysis category in studies about music education: some 'elucidation' perspectives

Pereira (2012) shows that the conservatory *habitus* has been orienting the construction of curricula for music teaching, which has been intensifying the confrontations between the curricular official music and the 'music of the school'. This *habitus*, proper of the artistic field when taken to the education field, has been legitimating valuation criteria of a musical repertoire that is considered universal, timeless, ahistorical and, consequently, antisocial.

The conservatory *habitus*, understood as incorporated history, turned into nature and for this reason forgotten as such (BOURDIEU, 2009), would be the operating presence of all tradition in music education of which it is a product. In this sense, this *habitus* privileges not only repertoires, but also process of teaching, of creation, of appreciation and of *performance* that are proper of classical music – cultural capital that is highly valued in the artistic and education fields.

By creating a musical valuation system⁶, the conservatory *habitus* contributes to the highlight of the classical music and to its naturalization as a valued cultural capital. When this capital is put into dispute inside the artistic and education fields, the fight for appropriation of legitimate forms of dealing with classical music becomes a *sine qua non* condition to reach new positions inside these fields.

Thus, the curricular practice oriented by the conservatory *habitus* is configured as a strategy that

⁶Green (2003) helps us understand this musical valuation system as a product of an ideology that flourished during the 19th and 20th centuries. These ideological positions suggested, in general, that the highest value possible arises when music can be said to possess certain properties, such as universality (as the music's capacity of expressing the human condition); eternity (meaning that music has values that will never die); complexity (for instance, in harmony, counterpoint, form or executive demands on performance); and originality (breaks with convention in order to establish new stylistic norms that will influence future generations).

⁵The aesthetic represents the possibility of investigation in the way the sense of possibilities and impossibilities, of proximities and distances is constituted (BOURDIEU, 1979).

proposes itself to offer everybody access to this musical universe; but by doing so, as Bourdieu (2008) announces, the school system ends up reproducing and sanctioning the initial inequalities among children. In effect, so that the privileged ones are privileged, and the unprivileged ones, unprivileged, it is necessary and enough that the school ignores, in the sphere of the contents it transmits, of its transmission methods and techniques, and of its evaluation criteria, cultural inequalities between children from different social classes (BOURDIEU, 2008).

Moreover, the incorporated dispositions, shaping a conservatory *habitus*, find in the school an important ally to their perpetuation. The centrality of musical writing, characteristic of the classical tradition, is legitimated and extremely valued in schools. Teaching ends up becoming more visual than auditory, which results in the fact that the exploration of the body as the first musical instrument and the bodily experiences that concretize more abstract musical parameters do not have space in classrooms full of lined desks.

Thus, there is a devaluation of the musical practice brought by the students to the inside of the school and, so that its incorporations into the curriculum and into school practices can happen, it needs to be transformed through criteria established by the conservatory *habitus*. Many times, in this process, the students begin to reject music itself, since it has become another 'music of the school', as Green (2006) shows in her studies about the appropriation of popular music in London schools.

In addition, Lühning (2013) remembers that, the generations of the second half of the 20th century, in special, were influenced by a school musical experience based on the notion of folklore. This term used to designate traditions practiced in all regions of the country, in general, based on orality and inserted into specific and quite diverse social contexts. Its application, according to the author, prevented a conceptual connection of folklore with the term culture, generally referring to musical practices based on writing transmission. "There was, thus, a continuous process in which popular musical practices were emptied from their real meaning in the social sphere in general" (LÜHNING, 2013, p. 23).

In this context, even though higher education institutions of music in Brazil have delineated their curricula with the European classical music for decades – while, in schools, teaching was ruled by the concept of folklore –, in the last 15 years, a new perception and recognition of musical and cultural

diversities have been slowly constructed, particularly in the Brazilian case, as reflexes of educational policies, with the promulgations of Law no. 11,769/2008 (BRASIL, 2008), which makes mandatory the work with the content Music in the subject Art, and of Decree no. 485/2006 (BRASIL, 2006), which addresses the protection and promotion of diversity of cultural expressions. However, it is necessary to take into consideration the fact that, most of the time, music teaching is not conceived in the pedagogical political project of schools (DEL-BEN, 2005). In any way, thinking about the insertion of diversity into the curriculum, in face of conservatory *habitus*, becomes quite complex.

The resolution project presented by the National Council of Education (BRASIL, 2013) for the operationalization of music teaching in basic education schools sets forth, as a competence attributed to schools, the definition that each institution should include music teaching in their political-pedagogical projects as a mandatory curricular content, aiming at the offering of musical activities to all of their students. In this sense, music teaching is then contemplated as a curricular content, rather than only being offered in seasonal projects to some students. When the activities are provided to all students, without any type of selection/exclusion, the crossing of cultures proposed by Pérez-Gómez (2001) is accentuated, and the tension of the curricular selection, aggravated.

Thus, the school culture category enables, in the different spaces that appropriate the school form, the unveiling, the analysis and comprehension of this tension, which involves symbolic violence, good cultural will, reproduction of inequalities, and construction of 'survival' strategies, affirmation of and fight for positioning in the field, as well as valuation of different capitals in dispute.

With this knowledge produced about curriculum, school and the socio-cultural relations established there, it is possible to construct proposals that, in the case of music education, in particular, work with music in the way suggested by Swanwick (1994; 2003), as a form of interpreting the world and expressing values, a mirror that reflects cultural systems and networks and that, at the same time, works with a window to new possibilities of acting in life.

Some studies have already been proposed from this viewpoint, with highlight to Puerari (2011), Santos (2013) and Campos (2009). Puerari (2011) uses school culture as an analysis category to understand the music schooling process at a basic education institution of Porto Alegre, RS. In this scenario, she analyzes a specific case from the view of a music

teacher, observing that many are the forms of thinking, realizing and attributing sense to music teaching in basic education. They result, according to the author, from some intentionalities and aspirations of certain conceptions of education, of a set of goals and purposes, processes of selection and organization of what is considered as valid to be taught in specific contexts to specific groups.

Such idea meets what Del-Ben (2009, p. 116) states, that is,

[...] whatever the systematization to be constructed by teachers might be, it needs to occur inside each school institution, because it has to make sense to the community that is part of it, meeting its objectives and interests, and its conditions and needs.

Santos (2013) analyzes an orchestra constituted by students from a school in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul State, and from the community surrounding it, as a particular mode of teaching music, which is configured from musical practice in groups, with reference in the profession of musician, having performances and shows as the peak of learning. In this process, affective bonds are strengthened through collective interaction and practice, cultivating what the members themselves calls 'second family', creating the ambivalence of a rigid and formal structure of an orchestra as a welcoming environment.

It is worth highlighting, in this analysis, that such a collective practice makes sense to the institution in which it was inserted, for its actions and results, consolidating itself as a way of teaching music in the school, especially for being constructed, articulated and sedimented inside the school itself. In other words, the school has changed its *modus operandi*, its times and spaces, as a sign of commitment with this manner of teaching music:

This way of thinking of teaching was born in the school, with a music teacher who, when realizing the students' interest in learning music, started to build in the school a form of teaching music, with focus on the collective practice, which was gradually expanded 'throughout her own life'. (emphases added).

This practice started to be developed through a small instrumental group, at a different time from that of the classes, since the teacher could not develop the activities of the group in class. To do so, school schedules and spaces had to be reorganized in order to meet the functioning of the group that, due to its actions, began to be seen and accepted by the school, and was extended to the community.

The group expanded its activities, brought new ideas, as the creation of instrument workshops, and

became an orchestra, with a routine of public performances and shows, besides successive rehearsals and situations of collective interaction, mixing the requirements necessary for the preparation of the work with the social relationships constructed with the life in group.

With the organization and creation of new times, spaces and practices, the school needed to create new routines as well, and adjust its *modus operandi* in order to put up with the demands and functioning of the orchestra (SANTOS, 2013, p. 236-237).

Although the project presents traits of a conservatory *habitus*, for its strong connection with music traditional teaching, it is necessary to observe how the school reorganizes itself around a musical proposal, so great is the sense that this practice has acquired over time.

Campos (2009), in turn, in a study about musical groups and marching bands in basic education schools of Campo Grande, MS, belonging to the state network, registers that musical learning becomes just one of all possible learnings in the middle of others that derive from musical practices,

Bonds are made from the relationship the participants establish with music and with other components of the group – bonds based on friendship, on socialization, on recognition, on discipline and on the love itself for music (CAMPOS, 2009, p. 436).

She observes that the work performed in the school by musical groups can cause their members to acquire important knowledge and behaviors for a more effective insertion in cultural manifestations of their community, allowing for their personal and professional accomplishment.

Concerning the musical learning developed in these groups, the author reports something similar to that found by Santos (2013): learning

[...] acquires an unique form, as it differentiates itself from the systematized, gradual and cumulative form adopted and practiced in the school, and adapts itself to the needs and interests of public performances and presentations (CAMPOS, 2009, p. 440).

It is possible to conclude that the study of these school realities, from the school culture category, though configured as studies of specific cases, they assist in the comprehension of how schools have been constructing places and sense to music teaching. By transcending the mere description of practices and realities, these studies provide theoretical and empirical substrate for one to think of the transformation of music education practices into a curricular element in basic education schools

– urgent need following the awaited homologation of the resolution proposed by the special commission of the National Council of Education.

When employing school culture as a research category, we attempt exactly this, to transcend the description, to deepen the understanding of senses constructed inside these fights for economic, symbolic and cultural power, refracted inside school institutions, materialized in curricular documents and expressed in the production of their particular cultures.

Such process broadens the perception that music education and education in general are disconnected from their contingent historical arbitrariness, whose essence is taken as the natural order of things; and allow for the development of new paths in the education and artistic fields, result of strategies that are socially oriented towards everyone's education.

It is in this context that we argue, by confronting the alleged neutrality of the school and of school knowledge, that what this institution represents and demands from its agents is basically the tastes, the beliefs, the attitudes and the values of dominant groups, slyly presented as culture. And, in this way, we question the curriculum as a practice, of distinct and multi-referenced meanings. Conceiving it represents a process that admits a production/reproduction logics, with the introduction of successive discourses, whose meaning is apprehended in/through re-contextualization (official and/or pedagogical); by means of a procedural approach that does the interrelation of two intrinsic components present in any curricular project, that is, what is intended (curricular expectations and intentions) as well as what and where it occurs (curricular reality) (SILVA, 2012).

School culture, in this dialogue field, establishes the existence of a social structure of domination that, by organizing the social practices and perceptions, operates in all dimensions, heckling the several agents and defining one in relation to the others. This process shapes a set of meanings, expectations and behaviors shared by a certain social group that facilitates and commands, limits and enhances social interchanges, individual and collective productions and achievements, inside a defined spatial and temporal milestone.

Final considerations

Even though we possess these analysis benchmarks, we do not cease to recognize the relative autonomy of the school, its participation in the reproductive cycle of the stratified society, and the conflicts and contradictions that emerge. Such autonomy expresses itself through the heterogeneity

of the components of the domination process, through the cultural production of dominated groups, proposing ourselves to understand it, also, as the producer of a new emancipatory practice of resistance to reproduction.

In this context, music education, as part of the curricular program of basic schools, can play an important role when it values and provides instruments for reflection, criticism and expansion of the musical repertoire of students – and, by extension, of the community of which they are part. A music education, as Kater (2012, p. 42) tells us,

[...] conscious of its time and space conditions; contemporary and able to conjugate the characteristics of the past with those of the present, as well as welcoming and respectful to both cultural expectations and particularities of the subjects involved.

When recognizing (hearing) the different musical cultures crossing each other in the school, it seems that it is by means of the curricular practice that the ordinary knowledge of students dialogue – already consciously or not – with the knowledge established by school tradition, making room, inside school culture, for the construction of musical knowledge and practices. Within this recognition, it is still possible to speak of a research agenda from the school culture category that is integrated into the school pedagogy, or better, informed in the configurations of curricular practices (in teaching and learning processes); fundamental in curricular justice, ensuring the interests of the unprivileged ones; necessary in studies about the school, from the political to the curricular field, and, finally; its form in non-school environment, defined by the search of the topology of social positions. Research agenda which, by allowing this level of comprehension of the school and of its cultural practices, will be able to contribute to the action of music educators in spaces where music teaching happens and/or is about to be consolidated.

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