

Start from the middle of making: recompose Sociology teaching*

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Abstract

Considering contemporary debate on the ontological turn, this article seeks to discuss possible implications of its assumptions to understand Sociology teaching practices in school. Education and teaching are conceived by detaching from epistemological debate (how to know) and approaching to that of ontology (how reality is produced), as a way to open a field of attention to the materiality of knowledge practices. This perspective is explored having as a triggering the fieldnote of a pedagogical planning situation observed during an ethnographic research carried out in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. As the controversies contained in the narrative unfold, they show the limitations of representational language to describe Sociology teaching in high school. Therefore, one might wonder: what kind of teaching would be possible when we assume that there is no world - nor Sociology - ready before everyday practices? Thus, as the article explores the tracks indicated in the fieldnote itself, it leads to the idea of “starting from the middle of making” as a proposition of inversion and transmutation of the elements involved in pedagogical intervention in school. Hence, teaching practice is conceived less in normative and finalistic terms, but more in the idea of openness to recalcitrances and cultivation of attention to processes and paths.

Keywords

Sociology teaching – Ontological Turn – Teaching Practice – Ethnography – Anthropology of Education.

* Translated by the author and revised by Amini Rassoul. The translator and the author take full responsibility for the translation of the text, including titles of books/articles and the quotations originally published in Portuguese.

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<https://doi.org/10.1590/S1678-4634202147223740>
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Introduction²

Recently, some approaches on Anthropology, Philosophy and Social Studies of Science and Technology have taken ontology as a matter of concern, insofar as it contrasts with the representational perspective. Instead of assuming the existence of different points of view about a single reality – in the track of cultural relativism – the existence of several worlds is explored, multiple ontologies, which emerge in the daily practices of humans and non-humans. It is in that sense that Viveiros de Castro (2002), in his research on Amerindian shamanism, highlights the existence of a multinaturalism, which opposes Western multiculturalism. Likewise, Steil and Carvalho draw attention to the emergence of a new realism or new materialism, which seeks to move away from a semiotic reason, which for a long time allocated only meaning as the object of the human sciences, being taken apart from matter and corporeality (STEIL; CARVALHO, 2014, p. 164). Thus, the ontological perspective ends up questioning a series of dichotomies that structure the Western tradition, such as mind and body, culture and nature, subject and object.

In this movement, apart from an epistemological approach – which deals with the perspective of a subject who knows a given reality – the concern about ontology leads us to question the ways in which reality is constantly produced or “co-produced” (MOL, 2002). It decentralizes from the existence of a rational subject as the main agent and recognizes other forms of agency, not only human. Therefore, matter is no longer conceived as something inert, as if it had to wait for the attribution of a meaning or the impression of a subjective intention. On the contrary, the ontological approach focuses attention on the ways in which the matter overflows, interwoven in a “meshwork” of life that cannot be contained (INGOLD, 2012). Knowledge, therefore, comes to be regarded less in its descriptor character of a pre-existing reality and more as an action of composition with others - humans and non-humans.

Shifting to the field of Education, we propose to discuss the implications of such “ontological turn” (SOUZA, 2015; TADDEI; GAMBOGGI, 2016) to the understanding of teaching practices. Firstly, when we think about Education through this logic, we cease mapping theoretical positions and pedagogical concepts as representations or sets of ideas previously formulated. In contrast, we are interested in giving primacy to the practices and the ways how different agents perform a reality at every emerging moment. We are interested in opening a field of investigation about how meaning and matter are mixed in the fabrication of worlds. To this end, we intend to analyze some consequences of such approach taking as a starting point a situation experienced during the ethnographic research carried out for my PhD thesis *Learning and science in Sociology teaching in school: an anthropological approach* (SCHWEIG, 2015a).

Some research in Education concerning other disciplinary traditions such as Physics and Biology has incorporated approaches that question the human and non-human dichotomy,

2- I am grateful for the exchange of ideas with the artists Angela Francisca Almeida de Oliveira and Rafael Araujo. I also thank *Educação e Pesquisa*'s anonymous referees for their suggestions, and thank Pedro Rodrigues da Silva, Marcelo Moura Mello, Arllan Maciel Cunha Alves and João Pedro Marques Mourão for previous reading and encouragement.

considering its implications for teaching³. However, little has the field of Sociology teaching explored the potentials of these criticisms – even though those approaches are sought to investigate more central objects in the Social Sciences research agenda. Seeking to fill this gap, my doctoral research evoked contemporary theoretical discussions of Anthropology to investigate a specific issue: the teaching process of Sociology by High School teachers. To accomplish that, much of the ethnographic fieldwork took place in the scope of teacher training programs. The situation chosen to be explored in this article ended up not being part of the final text of the thesis. However, it remained reverberating and provoking new investigations, reappearing here with other translations.

Through the narrated excerpt, I point out some disagreements and hesitations which occurred in a pedagogical planning situation. Inspired by Bruno Latour's (1994) "science in action" perspective, the proposal here is to open the "black box" of the pedagogical planning to capture it in its controversies and in what it indicates about Sociology teaching in a broader sense. For that, we explore some extracts of the narrative throughout the article. It leads to the conception of "High School Sociology teaching" not as a ready-made object, coherent in advance, but as a "leaky thing" (INGOLD, 2012), which has its reasonableness and uniformity always provisional, being constantly renegotiated in action. This less fixed perception aims to create a proximity to Sociology teaching as an "event" (DELEUZE, 2003). Thus, it moves away from attempts of outlining some previous coherence within the scope of meanings or affirming a normative proposal. Such movement, far from weakening Sociology teaching, seeks to strengthen it in its potential for composition and openness. Finally, exploring the dilemmas and paths proposed by the fieldnote itself, we consider the potential that the "making" can offer to teaching and learning Sociology at school.

Opening the black box of pedagogical planning

The fieldwork research, carried out through participant observation and in-depth interviews, took place between 2013 and 2015 in the city of Porto Alegre and metropolitan area. In addition to the observation of teachers' practices in schools, with different years' experience, I specially dedicated myself to following the activities of training programs for Sociology teachers – such as the teaching internship practice in the undergraduate Social Sciences Degree course, seminars and meetings of the Institutional Scholarship Program to Initiation to Teaching (PIBID), within the scope of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS). Along with the activities at the University, I followed more closely a group of undergraduates in the schools where they realized teaching internship, in orientation meetings with professors, in addition to joining the activities of the two state schools linked to the Social Sciences PIBID Program.

Each school of the PIBID Program had a supervisor, a Sociology teacher who was responsible for receiving six Social Sciences undergraduate teacher apprentices. Some of

3- We have some cases in Science Education which dialogue with Bruno Latour's Actor Network Theory. See, for example, Lima; Ostermann; Cavalcanti (2018).

them were also enrolled in teaching internship concomitantly. At PIBID, their activities consisted of observing classes and producing fieldnotes, planning and conducting workshops aimed at High School students, besides the participation in organizational meetings with the supervising teachers and coordinating professors at the University to evaluate and plan the activities.

Thus, throughout much of my fieldwork, I was able to meet with a group of apprentice Sociology teachers during their training activities on different days of the week. In this way, right at the beginning of the research, in September 2013, during a state teachers' strike, I took part in a meeting where PIBID scholarship holders decided to organize apart from the official schedule of the Program and without the presence of neither the school supervisors nor the University coordinators. Their aim was to discuss how the scholarship holders could act during the strike as the classes had been suspended and when they would have the opportunity of carrying out activities with the high school students in a more autonomous way.

That meeting, without supervisors or coordinators, gathered eight holders and was held in an informal setting of the Student Union at the Faculty of Education at UFRGS. The discussion about how they would plan the activities provoked a chain of divergences that materialized some tensions around Sociology teaching. Those tensions resurged in subsequent moments of the fieldwork – hence the choice of such situation as a trigger for the reflections developed here. At the beginning of the meeting, it was visible that a large part of the holders was mobilized by the possibility of taking advantage of the freer character of the strike to propose methodologies different from traditional classes, such as group dynamics and games.

One holder, however, emphasized the importance of also offering a moment of “exposition followed by a debate” about the strike, in order “to convey the sociological view” to the students, presenting some authors, conjunctural analysis and examples. Some holders questioned the idea of exposition, remembering the importance for the students to be the “protagonists”. The first replied by saying that it would be important to “have theoretical base”, to prepare a speech about the history of strikes, to see how each government dealt with it, how the media portrayed it, “in order to start making Sociology”. Everyone agreed that this would require “a lot of prior preparation” and they feared they would not have time for that.

During the conversation, someone suggested having a stencil workshop. The group seemed to find it interesting. They wondered whether it would be better to locate the stencil moment before or after the debate with the students. A scholarship holder, who had previous experience in acting and Drama teaching, argued that they should have the stencil first, and then debate. Two other participants held the opposite, stressing that students could change their minds after the debate and then the stencil would have been done. The first holder argued that “the making of the activity itself would be problematizing”. If the production of the stencil came after the debate, it would seem that the students had to do a “simple assignment” to show that they had understood the content. Otherwise, according to him, they could “see what they were thinking, mention their production during the debate and start to discuss from it”.

“To convey the sociological view”

Sociology being notably made up of a plurality of perspectives, theoretical controversies and methodological possibilities, what do the PIBID scholarship holders mean when they talk about “conveying the sociological view” to the students? How is that supposed singularity constructed within the plurality? To start with, the very name of the curricular component does not always show the diversity it contains. The term “Sociology” is due less to theoretical or pedagogical justifications and more to political paths. As the so-called sociologists were more mobilized in the debates that claimed the recent return of the discipline to school curricula, the name Sociology was chosen for being more disseminated, thus gaining legitimacy for its inclusion as a curricular component (PEREIRA, 2013). However, if we analyze the texts of educational regulations, school Sociology must deal with the knowledge of the three Social Sciences – Anthropology, Sociology and Political Science⁴. This relationship between Sociology (as a name) and the Social Sciences (as official fields covered by the school discipline) is not always unambiguous. Even though the participation of Social Sciences in the composition of school Sociology is officially claimed, there are differences in the involvement of each area, given that anthropologists and political scientists are less involved in its construction⁵.

Thus, in addition to the plurality of “sociological views” that constitute Sociology itself, we must pay attention to other heterogeneities that shape it, articulated with its trajectory in Brazil. School Sociology has been instrumentalized in different ways, having been linked to civic, civilizing and positivist purposes in the early 20th century (MEUCCI, 2011). With the democratic opening in Brazil in the 1980s, Sociology is associated with the development of “critical thinking”, appearing as part of the “necessary knowledge for the exercise of citizenship”, in the 1996 National Educational Bases and Guidelines Law. This latter association, in fact, was the main justification for its transformation into a mandatory High School curriculum component in 2008, through Law 11.684. Furthermore, after more than a decade that this Law existed, Sociology is still the school discipline with the lowest percentage of teachers graduated in the area⁶. In other words, there is a great diversity of professionals practicing the teaching of Sociology. The evidence of such plurality expands internationally when we consider that in other countries the constitution of a school Sociology occurs in quite different ways in terms of limits between academic fields and the articulation between educational and academic policies⁷.

4- The three disciplines are mentioned as components of the social sciences since the *National Curriculum Parameters for High School Education* (BRASIL, 2000).

5- This is evident in the evaluation of textbooks by the Ministry of Education, which indicates that there is an uneven distribution of themes and contents in the three areas, with a predominance of Sociology (BRASIL, 2017, p. 14). Also, within the scope of scientific associations, only the Brazilian Society of Sociology (SBS) is involved in promoting the National Meeting of Sociology Teaching (ENESEB), with no link with associations of the other two areas.

6- According to the 2018 School Census, only 28.4% of Sociology teachers have adequate training – a teacher’s degree in Social Sciences or a bachelor’s degree with pedagogical complementation (BRASIL, 2019).

7- Sociology can be seen as a component of social studies in the United States, in which Anthropology is hardly present (DECESARE, 2014). In the example of Uruguay, Sociology teaching is more closely related to Law (FERNANDEZ; OLIVEIRA, 2017).

All things considered, we can hardly conceive Sociology as a coherent and homogeneous whole; even less when we talk about school Sociology. If we take into account only the scope of theoretical and pedagogical conceptions, the idea of “conveying” a certain Sociology to school would already demand greater complexity. Our questioning advances when we reject the very possibility of this prior consensus. Thinking together with Annemarie Mol, we extend to Sociology the principle that there is no ontology – there is no conformity – that is defined before the practices of knowledge; ontology is “performed” in these practices (MARTIN; SPINK; PEREIRA, 2018, p. 301). In this way, we cannot reach a consensus on what Sociology would be before it meets the various others – human and non-human, with their bodies and agencies – that make up its teaching in a situated way, in a perspective of knowledge that is always “partial”, “situated” (HARAWAY, 1995). As a result, Sociology is not merely reproduced – or “conveyed” from the academic-scientific environment to that of the school; it is “co-produced” in this space (MOL, 2002; SCHWEIG, 2015b). Multiple Sociologies have emerged. In this sense, thinking of a movement of “conveying the sociological view” to school, far from constituting a one-way path or generating congruence, brings with it a series of multiples and potentialities of composition.

“To start making Sociology”

What do we need to “start making sociology” in High School, as claimed by one of the scholarship holders? Concepts, theories, authors, conjunctural analysis? Theoretical base, exposition, preparation? How to establish a line that separates the sociological reflection from non-sociological reflection? We can still approach these issues through the trajectory of Sociology teaching in Brazil. There is a hesitation about a “start”, given that the first educational reforms that include the discipline in school curricula did not succeed⁸. In addition to that initial hesitation, a look into history shows that the establishment of an academic-scientific field of the Social Sciences in Brazil was not a condition to “start making Sociology” in school. Considering that the official inclusion of the discipline occurred in 1925, by the Rocha Vaz Reform, and the first Social Sciences course was created in 1933 at the Free School of Sociology and Politics of São Paulo (ELSP), there was no specific Sociology teacher training courses at the time Sociology was introduced in schools. Therefore, the discipline was taught by professionals with different backgrounds, such as doctors, lawyers and engineers (MORAES, 2011). In other words, before Sociology was consolidated as an academic discipline, practices called as “Sociology teaching” were already taking place in the country. Moreover, it can be said that the path of Sociology in High School has been marked by several “re-starts”, between withdrawals and reinsertions of the discipline, according to the different educational policies.

8- At the end of the 19th century, two attempts were made to insert Sociology as a discipline in secondary school. However, neither the deputy Rui Barbosa's bill of 1882 nor the reform proposed by minister Benjamin Constant in 1890 was implemented. Only the Rocha Vaz Reform, from 1925, made Sociology mandatory in the final years of secondary courses. This configuration lasted until the Capanema Reform, in 1942, which removed Sociology from the school curricula.

Facing this scenario, we add the fact that the academic-scientific field took too long to become involved in the debate about Sociology teaching. Only with the most recent movement pro Sociology in High School did we see a growing interest of academic researchers in the emerging issue. As reported by Luiza Helena Pereira (2013), the mobilization for the reintroduction of Sociology in High School was initiated by professional associations, such as sociologists' unions and the National Federation of Sociologists in the 1990s. Only later did Sociology teaching gain legitimacy as an object of knowledge production and, consequently, received visibility in academic events⁹. Therefore, we may understand that this most recent “re-start” of Sociology at school, through Law 11.684 of 2008, has very specific outlines. It is the first time, in fact, that we see a collective effort to build teaching guidelines from the academic-scientific field. However, as Meucci and Bezerra (2014) show, recent stabilizations regarding school Sociology are not only consequences of those academic elaborations, but are also based on other elements. The authors point out the National Textbook Plan (PNLD), the National High School Examination (ENEM) and the current models of teacher education curricula as having a fundamental role in the routinization of the contents to be taught on behalf of Sociology in school (MEUCCI; BEZERRA, 2014).

Considering the recent approximation between school Sociology and the academic-scientific field, in addition to its various “re-starts”, I draw attention to the existence of a multiplicity of practices and agents that have constituted Sociology teaching for almost a century. By bringing this up, we shifted from more prescriptive perspectives, concerned with “what, how and why to teach” Sociology. Inspired by what Latour (2012) proposes, in his “sociology of associations”, the work of social scientists could be less to recruit and stabilize the list of entities that make up the social world and more to track the instruments that enable the stabilization of controversies – including the stabilization of the Social Sciences themselves. Transposing that suggestion to think about teaching, we followed other ways to answer the question about what is necessary to “start making Sociology”. This “start” can be seen as a constant “re-start” – or a “start from the middle” –, always composing with ongoing practices and with elements that go beyond the scope of a theoretical or pedagogical “intention”.

“Prior preparation” to have a “theoretical base”

Going back to the narrated situation, we observe that the planning controversy touched on another issue: the need for “a theoretical base” and “prior preparation”. What kind of preparation is needed to start making Sociology in school? Considering various heterogeneities, what is it “to have a theoretical base”? These questions concern the problem of teacher training and remind me of other statements repeatedly heard during fieldwork. Critically, when asked to reflect on their development in the bachelor's course, most Sociology teachers repeated: “the University does not prepare for teaching”. To

⁹ - It is only in 2005 – on the eve of 38/2006 Decision of the National Council of Education, which was favorable to the mandatory teaching of Sociology in High School – that the Brazilian Society of Sociology created a Teaching Commission. In that same year, a working group about Sociology teaching was created at the Brazilian Congress of Sociology.

explain that, they argued about the distance between theoretical discussions at University and the reality of the schools; the fact that they felt able to “theorize” about the school but didn’t feel prepared for teaching “practice” (SCHWEIG, 2015a). In these criticisms, we can observe an assumption that perceptions and skills can be somehow incorporated regardless the engagement with the environments in which they are developed. In other words, it is often expected that the University space can enable someone to do a type of activity that is not part of that environment, conceiving professional training in terms of transferring or applying theories to external contexts of practice.

The idea that it is possible to “have a base” and to have “prior preparation” for practice, and for action in the world, dialogues with certain assumptions that entail the split between subject and object, mind and body, theory and practice. Such assumptions still permeate, to a large extent, curricula and teacher training courses. We can identify behind them the Aristotelian hylomorphic thought, which forges the relation between form and matter. According to that thought, matter has a passive condition, waiting for an agent that will give it a shape according to the purpose he has in mind (INGOLD, 2012, p. 26). There is, therefore, the primacy of reason as the ordering of the world, through the proposition of a previous theoretical outline, which disregards the power of bodies and materials in flow.

Thus, in the context of Sociology teaching, it would be up to the teacher to “convey the sociological view” to students as a form. In the school routine, students would have to learn such form intellectually to apply it to a material – be it to examples of their experiences or to a test, a “simple assignment”, that is, products that can become instruments of evaluation or learning measurement. Still in the narrated controversy, we can observe the hylomorphic logical model and the split via rational mediation operate in different degrees – from the emphasis of “a base through prior preparation” (theoretical and historical foundation), to the “exposition class followed by a debate” (that is, as a condition), up to the claim of the “debate” as prior to the production of the stencil. Therefore, we have stages that follow each other in time and appear to be preconditions for each other: to base, to expose, to debate, to practice. For that reason, we visualize a sequence of attempts to contain the “recalcitrances” (LATOURE, 2007) that the environment, materiality and corporeality offer to the learning process.

However, in the controversy itself, it is possible to notice cracks in this model, since it is not consensual. Some of its limits are evident and there are participants who show them through the claim for “more protagonism” to the students. However, one can go further. In the discussion, an important clue shows up: the scholarship holder who tensions this model the most has a trajectory as actor and Drama teacher, having chosen for a degree in Social Sciences as a complement to his performance in Art. He is the one who proposes an inversion in the pedagogical planning logic, by indicating to “start with making” the stencil. This turn allows us to put the issue of preparation for teaching in other terms rather than the incorporation of concepts or skills prior to engaging with the world. Thus, the holder’s condition as a teacher-artist invites us to investigate how artistic activities could contribute to that task.

“The very making would prompt problematization”

On research methodology in Fine Arts, Jean Lancri suggests “starting from the middle” – inspired by Gilles Deleuze and Paul Valéry – as an answer to students who ask him “where to start”. In his words: “Where to start from? In the midst of a practice, a life, some knowledge, an ignorance. In the middle of this ignorance, it is good to seek the heart of what is believed to be better known” (LANCRI, 2002, p. 18). In other words, far from executing or applying conceptual elaborations, what Lancri proposes is that research in the Arts does not occur within the framework of a theoretical *a priori*. Art works with provisional, tactical concepts – sometimes contradictory – being its validity judged “only by its necessary future invalidation” (LANCRI, 2002, p. 27). In this logic, consequently, it is assumed that the “path” guides the investigation in substitution to the initial “project”.

That happens because researching in the field of Arts is assuming that the work operates “in halfway” between the conceptual and the sensitive, between reason and imagination, between the intellectual and the material. In other words, it does not take as a starting point an immutable world or matter that only serves as support for pre-formulated ideas. Otherwise, materiality challenges its assumptions at all times, causing them to be subverted and recomposed, driving the search to that “halfway”. Fernanda Eugenio and João Fiadeiro (2013) also mention the “start from the middle”, in the sense of “starting with the unpredictable” and not with the already known, controlled goals. They suggest that we put up with “being in the middle”, that we endure not knowing the unpredictable into a “zone of attention”. Thus, “there is no longer a search for answers, but navigation through the questions that the web of relations present there offers” (EUGENIO; FIANDEIRO, 2013, p. 225).

Hence, when proposing to “start” with the production of the stencil, the teacher-artist of our narrative proposes to start with the unpredictable field of “making”, of what is not framed in a form given by a supposed previously agreed “sociological view”. Consequently, he brings the possibility of questioning hylomorphic logic, allocating the “making” not as a duplication or application of mental representations to matter, but as the path itself for learning¹⁰. The way he justifies his proposition to start with the stencil draws attention: “they could ‘see’ what they are thinking”, he said. In other words, “starting with making” restores the materiality of thinking itself. This idea comes close to what Tim Ingold calls “thinking through making”, as an alternative to “making through thinking”. Knowing through “making” would have a procedural feature; it entails following unfolding movements. Knowledge is not “acquired”, but “it grows”, since the properties of the materials are not fixed, but continually emergent along with the materials themselves (INGOLD, 2013).

The concept of “making” can be referred to James Gibson’s (1979) notion of *affordance*, according to which perception is understood not as an acting of the mind, but as an organism as a whole – mind and body – actively engaged in its surroundings; attentive to what the environment offers and affords. That definition shows the body and

¹⁰- As in Soulanges’s sentence, quoted by Lancri: “What I do teach me what I am looking for” (LANCRI, 2002, p. 27).

materiality as locus of knowledge production. As Carolina Camargo de Nadai explores in her research in Dance, the idea of *affordance* indicates a movement of bodily perception or “availability”, which “makes it possible to capture availabilities in the environment and how they generate possible encounters, relationships, actions in a perceiving-making movement” (NADAI, 2017, p. 60). Thus, these ways of researching in Art – because they are more sensitive to different agencies in the composition of their productions – enhance a transition from the representational perspective to the performative approach, given the inseparability between research and creation. Therefore, with the clues indicated by artistic research, we can take other directions to conceive Sociology teaching, considering the centrality of “making” as a way of knowing.

Recomposing the pieces of pedagogical planning

As a consequence, we can ask ourselves about possible ways to plan pedagogical interventions that “start from the middle of making” to produce sociological knowledge. How to propose interventions that take as power – and not as fragility – the idea that Sociology is not a coherent whole prior to practices and encounters? What would be the possible implications of an inversion in the “base – expose – debate – practice” scheme? “Starting from the middle of making” requires tracking a path that admits knowing less as a “description” (or explanation, or interpretation) of a given reality, and more properly as “creation” of worlds, as a composition with several others. Thus, the act of teaching would not be related to transmission or exposure by the teacher, but to co-creation. Thinking with Latour (2007) in his dialogue with Isabelle Stengers’ and Vinciane Despret’s works, the knowledge production would be more a matter of “articulation” – or affectation – and less a question of “reference”.

In that sense, “starting from the middle of making”, as a proposition of attention to current practices, involves sustaining an openness to not knowing, a contact with the unexpectedness of materiality and thinking with the body; with the “event” and its “accidents” (DELEUZE, 2003). Instead of “exposure”, of closing in meanings, statements, explanations and interpretations, we approach the idea of experimenting with “propositions”¹¹ – not as definitive statements¹², but as invitations to a com-position (LATOURE, 2007). The “debate”, less than the explanation of already defined positions, opinions or even theoretical perspectives, can be configured as an invitation to the mobilization of “mediators”¹³, leading to the search for other objects, languages, concepts, instruments – in different possibilities for translating a world that differs all the time. Thereby, we also move away from the idea of “basing”, in favor of the notion of “articulation”, of creating connections

11 - Based on Isabelle Stengers’ readings of the philosopher Alfred Norton Whitehead, Latour (2007) uses the word “proposition” in terms of three fundamental elements, which are also useful for us to explore possibilities of openness in approaching the experience of making. According to the author: “Proposition: a) denotes obstinacy (position), b) does not have a definitive authority (it is just a pro-position and (c) may accept negotiating itself into a com-position without losing its solidity”. (LATOURE, 2007, p. 45).

12 - We can explore here the idea of “tactical” or “provisional” concepts, by Lancri (2002).

13 - Latour elaborates the notion of “mediator” as opposed to “intermediary”. Entities would behave as mediators insofar as they allow changes to be produced – when their uniqueness makes a difference in the set of relations. As intermediaries, entities tend to transpose what is already given, reiterating stabilization (LATOURE, 2012).

with other phenomena, concepts, people, experiences, conceiving knowledge as an expansion of networks in the making of worlds. Hence, we would have a path that is not anchored in “foundations” or in search of “coherences” but advances towards the formation of “consistencies” (DELEUZE; GUATTARI, 1997; EUGENIO; FIADEIRO, 2013).

Such rearrangement requires allocating the teacher’s role and the notion of “preparation” in other terms. Teaching practice would involve sustaining “being in the middle” for longer, following the unfolding of the world as process. It would require evading the temptation of the “epic narrative of critical reason” in favor of cultivating the “art of immanent attention” – like the witches of Isabelle Stengers (2017). “Preparation”, instead of occurring in the sense of being “ready”, filled with content, references and explanatory tables, could turn into a position of “promptness”, with expanded sensitivity to what is to come. The initial attitude towards the organization of an “exposition” becomes the attitude of being “at the disposal” of the other, of the unexpected. Therefore, the dedication to the pre-paration moves towards a connection with per-courses, with the movements of the trajectories of objects of knowledge, of the world becoming world and of the subject himself as an event – that is the result of a series of “accidents” (DELEUZE, 2003).

In this connecting of paths, we put ourselves in “promptness” mode when we recognize what we have as a potential in our trajectories, and which can be placed “at the disposal” of what is there. We recognize and provide the multiplicities and potentialities that Sociology and the Social Sciences can offer – that is the importance of meticulous work of opening their black boxes. Thus, teaching practice is linked to the development of attention to the constant emergence of the properties of oneself and of the world. Thus, such a movement requires moving away from “a plan of principle or finality” (DELEUZE; GUATTARI, 1997, p. 222). In other words, it is about the decentralization of “intention” so that one can develop an “attention” to the event, demanding less normative or prescriptive propositions regarding the practice of teaching.

Therefore, putting Sociology teaching in other conditions was possible through the exercise of ethnographic sensitivity, by intercepting a singular moment in which certainties regarding pedagogical planning and teaching practice were under negotiation. The situation narrated in this article shows a privileged moment of openness in several senses, given that it is led by undergraduates, teachers in training, in the absence of authority figures such as the school regular teachers or University coordinators. In addition, the meeting was only possible in a moment of teachers’ strike, when the routine of the school and also of PIBID were interrupted¹⁴. The uniqueness of the situation is complemented by the presence of an apprentice who is an actor and had been a Drama teacher, referred here as a teacher-artist. In other moments, throughout fieldwork, his presence, both in PIBID Program and in teaching internship practices, provoked other moments of decentralization of certainties about Sociology teaching¹⁵, leading to the investigation of the contributions of artistic ways of making to Social Sciences teaching.

14- The provisional nature of this opening made the pedagogical planning unfeasible, so the activities gained other forms at the schools.

15- See specially Schweig (2015a, p. 92).

The inflection developed here has allowed us to show a series of divergences and tensions that permeate what we have stabilized as Sociology teaching in High School. Taking Sociology less as a “science of the social” and more as a work of “tracing associations”, we understand the “social” not as a given specific domain, but as the result of a constant movement of re-association and reassembling (LATOURET, 2012). By taking further the operations of “strangeness” and “denaturalization”, claimed to be the functions of school Sociology (BRASIL, 2006), the perspective developed here allows us to see the work of a Sociology teacher not only as the one who evokes the “social” as an explainer of the themes and phenomena he teaches, but also as someone who operates and facilitates connections, someone who follows processes and creates alliances. In the case of this research, exploring connections with the ways of producing knowledge in the Arts, for example, indicated a potential path in the expansion of networks in the making of worlds.

Conclusion

Considering the inexistence of an ontology prior to practices, we pursued in this text some of its consequences for Sociology teaching practice in High School. We covered elements of the trajectory of school Sociology in Brazil in order to pay attention to its heterogeneous character, as a result of a series of agencies that go beyond epistemological issues of the Social Sciences. In addition, even with an advance around some stabilizations, the recent character of the approximation between school Sociology and the academic-scientific field shows an unfinished object constituting between dissonances and tensions. Thus, even recognizing the emergence of efforts in creating parameters for Sociology teaching from the academic Social Sciences, we seek to pay attention here to the porosities inherent to the knowledge production process itself. Apart from some normative outlines – such as theoretical references, curricula, parameters, guidelines and curricular base – we accept the fact that in teaching routine, Sociology is once again opened to controversies.

Thus, instead of considering these heterogeneities as fragility or impotence in the teaching practices of Sociology, we emphasize the strength that lies in their capacity for composition in the creation of worlds. As Latour states, “you cannot reach any common world if what is common has already been decided by scientists, out of sight of those whose ‘communalities’ are thus being built” (LATOURET, 2007). In other words, as we recognize heterogeneity and non-completion, we admit the need to establish relations.

In that sense, we affirm the idea of “starting from the middle of making” while imagining possibilities for knowledge as an articulation of multiples, overcoming dichotomies by highlighting the inseparability between matter and meaning. As we have seen, reformulating teaching practice aligned with that way of operating brings the challenge of moving away from more finalistic domains, by cultivating attention to processes and paths, welcoming recalcitrances. On that account, we bet on an inversion and transmutation not to suggest finished models, but as a “proposition”, which, in composition with ethnographic sensitivity and artistic ways of making, made it possible to formulate new questions and suggest other alliances to strengthen Sociology teaching.

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Received on: 08.05.2019

Reviewed on: 01.10.2019

Approved on: 24.03.2020

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