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Article

School situations involving the religious issue: teaching resources and their origins

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Abstract

This article aims to identify and analyze the genesis of the resources used by teachers to deal with school situations, especially those related to the religious issue. The constitution of resources for teaching practices does not come only from professional experience, particularly in the Brazilian case, where there are no official rules or prescriptions for this subject. Thus, we ask: what are the resources mobilized by teachers in contexts involving the religious issue? What are the origins of these resources for action in real and often unpredictable circumstances? We suggest that the action resources used in teaching practices are consistent with the plurality of references that comprise the teaching identity. Based on ethnographic interviews with eighteen teachers from Elementary School II in the state of São Paulo, 54 situations involving the religious issue were collected. All the situations were analyzed in what concerns the resources used by the teachers. For this article, four situations will be exposed. They were chosen because they are representative, and they can exemplify and assist the argument developed here. To sum up, this paper reveals that the origin of the repertoires used in the teaching practices, as far as the religious issue is concerned, comes from the personal competences, which are closely associated with characteristics of the Brazilian sociocultural configuration, such as the confusion between public and private spheres and the hybrid dispositions of the *habitus* which culminate in the naturalization of religiosity in the teaching practices.

Keywords: Teaching practices, Religion and education, Teacher training, Resources.

Introduction

Teaching practices is a set of actions that results from the accumulation of professional and personal knowledge and values that are built through exchanges, training and experience. It is not only defined by the individual's visible actions, but also by what he believes, feels and says. Teaching practices is reinforced by the professional group in the process of professional socialization and by the institutional group, in which ways of being, acting and thinking are legitimated or

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rejected by peers. From this perspective, teaching practices is individual as well as collective and cannot be dissociated from the whole (FRANCO, 2016), since it is seen as “resonance and reverberation of mediations between society and the classroom” (ibidem, p. 548). Thus, in addition to interaction with peers, teaching practices are built in interaction with students.

Because of the complexity of teaching practices, accounting for all of it would be an ambitious goal. Thus, we decided to choose teaching practices related to school situations that involve the religious issue. This choice was based on a survey on the religions of the Brazilian population through data from the demographic census (IBGE, 2010). We can say that religion is a peculiarity of Brazilian people, since only about 7% of the population declare “no religion.” Moreover, the category “no religion” does not necessarily mean without religiosity.

The rapid expansion of adherents to denominations of high-level of proselytism, as in the case of some evangelical churches, must also be considered (MARIANO, 2004). This aspect reflects directly in the school environment, since, among the members of these churches, there are teachers who have categories of thought that give them (per) mission for an action of teaching religious content or permission for (o) mission of contents that go against their own beliefs (VALENTE, 2015). In the Brazilian case, the population has a diffuse religiosity and, if there is an increase in the number of people without religion, it is because of religious syncretism and the expression of their own religiosity, which does not allow them to make the option for a single religion (SETTON and VALENTE, 2016).

Moreover, as far as the interface between religion and education is concerned, apart from the subject of Religious Education, there are no curricular prescriptions nor normative guidelines on how to act in school situations involving religion. One last element that influenced the choice to research teaching practices and the religious issue was the observation of the presence of religious influences in general on the teaching practices of Brazilian teachers (VALENTE, 2015).

We intend to base our studies in both sociology of socialization and pragmatic sociology, in order to analyze and identify the resources mobilized in teaching practices in situations involving the religious issue. To mobilize the two theoretical currents, we enunciate the possibility of working with the two sociological currents through their contributions: Socialization theories bring the social structures, the individual and history; while pragmatic sociology brings the present and the values (principles of reference) through action, taking into account the plurality of social trajectories without reducing them to the collective game, automatically and directly. Thus, combining these two sociological currents helps us understand that teaching practices is closely related to professional activity.

Professional activity mobilizes what is implicit or the *habitus* of a professional group, understood here as the set of dispositions acquired during the secondary socialization process (vocational training, relations with co-workers, personal and professional experiences, etc.) (KNOBLAUCH, 2008). These are adjusted to a situation in which the professional gender is an integral part (CLOT, 2008). The professional *habitus* results from incorporating professional values and gestures that originate and are the origin of plural practices and relationships. The professional *habitus* represents one of several elements of what constitutes the

complexity of the identity of an individual and, therefore, his or her ability to create and act creatively (JOAS, 2001).

Structuralist sociology understands teaching practices as corresponding exactly to public policies and State norms. Pragmatic sociology provides evidence revealing that teachers take a position regarding orders they receive and criticize decisions from above (RESENDE; DIONÍSIO, 2016, p. 205). Therefore, teaching practices does not necessarily correspond to what is prescribed.

Because of the dual dialogical relationship between novice worker versus experienced worker and profession versus social context, profession and work are constantly recreated. Hence, at the same time that the profession implies a way of being and acting and, this way, constructs the professional; the professionals themselves build their own profession, through their work and their activity, in a process of renormalization – that is – reappropriation and transgression of norms (SCHWARTZ, 2004) or styling of professional genre (CLOT 2008). Added to this, the diversification of training paths and the multiplication of professional demands do not allow us to think of a completed professional identity at the end of higher education or job creation.

The constitution of resources for teaching practices does not occur only within professional experience, especially when it comes to the management of situations involving the religious issue. Thus, our hypothesis is that action resources used in teaching practices go beyond what is offered by school and vocational institutions. In this case, it is interesting to reveal the socializing experiences lived by individuals, inside, outside and against the institutions through which they passed. Thus, we ask ourselves: what are the resources mobilized by teachers in situations involving the religious issue? What are the sources of resources for action in real situations?

Methodology

In order to answer the questions, interviews were chosen as a data collection technique, since it is a method to obtain information about teachers' perceptions, value judgments, and representations (VAN DER MAREN, 1995, p. 314), regarding their own teaching practices.

These are ethnographic interviews, i.e., interviews that are not isolated from a research conjuncture or from a national and local, social and cultural context (BEAUD; WEBER, 2014, p. 155). We sought to understand the origins of these actors' ways of being, acting and thinking, through the report of experiences and reflection on situations experienced by teachers, since these personal dispositions guide their teaching practices in the classroom. The "snowball" method (ALBUQUERQUE, 2009) was used to find volunteers willing to be interviewed, among elementary school teachers in the state of São Paulo.

Semi-structured interviews first asked respondents to describe their personal and professional trajectories. Then teachers were asked to describe situations related to the religious issue. Eighteen interviews were conducted with

teachers in seven different public schools². The situations described were treated as units of analysis since, through them, the interviewees could describe their ways of acting. Through the interviews, we created a corpus of 54 situations, analyzed according to four categories: action strategies, action objectives, resources/repertoires mobilized by teachers to manage situations and action logics. For this article, we bring only the category of action resources.

Considering this is an article, we present here only four situations which are representative of the different types of resources and also the arguments that justify this choice.

Results

External Pressures – religion inside the school

Here, each situation was chosen because it is representative of the influence of the teacher's personal trajectory, as a supportive resource of actions. In other words, the resources mobilized by each of the teachers depend much more on their continuous socialization, particularly their political and citizen background (or lack thereof), than on their context, their situation or specialized teacher training.

Carlos Alberto (vice-principal and History teacher) and André (Portuguese teacher) work in a school in the East side of São Paulo city. Both teachers are residents of the neighborhood where the school is located and share the same physical spaces. Both teachers reported a situation in which an out-of-school evangelical group applied for and was authorized to practice religious meetings within the school facilities. However, each has particular views on the subject.

André perceives the porosity between the two institutions (school and religious) is due to the geographical proximity in which they find themselves, which legitimizes, for the teacher, the sharing of the public facilities of the school. André understands that the permeability of cross-cutting or controversial themes goes beyond the two institutions studied, however, for the teacher, the school has a lot of burden. It "has received high volume of demands, while several sectors of society could also act". In this sense, porosity exists among the various social institutions and the multiple references offered by it are negotiated and corroborate the construction of hybrid *habitus* dispositions (SETTON, 2002).

In the Portuguese teacher's view, religious practice by the school community is legitimized as a cultural expression, but it is not justifiable when the teacher is the one who has the initiative or when it is schooled. Following this same reasoning, the school environment, in André's view, is a public environment that belongs to all and could be used for any form of community manifestation, even religious. The comparison with other cultural manifestations indicates that, for the teacher interviewed, cultural practices of religious content in the school environment is devoid of ideological strategies of domination.

² There were no specific criteria of choice among the teachers, although we presumed that History and Portuguese teachers would have more sensibility to discuss the issue in the research.

On the other hand, the vice-principal, graduated in History, Carlos Alberto, emphasizes that the situation reflects a problem of school functioning. As a public institution, the principal should recognize the existence of other social environments for religious practice. In Carlos Alberto's view, the school board acted the wrong way when it welcomed the external demand of the religious group. "And I think when the school doesn't know how to handle it in a rational, reflective, critical way, it contributes to the problem. And the problem is huge." He even argues with the principal, but his arguments are not heard, as his colleagues attribute his position to the fact that Carlos Alberto is an atheist. Thus, although he makes the effort to separate public and private spheres, his colleagues, who are used to the coexistence of the two spheres, discriminate against him because of his religious choice and "accuse" him of being an atheist.

While André naturalizes the religious meetings, saying that they "don't bother anyone", because they are "very informal", Carlos Alberto suggests to the principal that the practice is not consistent with the laicity of the State and it can cause problems. Although each actor has a different position, the action of the two teachers is mobilized for the same purpose, namely, to avoid conflicts. André tries not to create conflicts with the students and the religious community, and Carlos Alberto, with the one who authorized the religious presence in the school (the principal).

The ideas that Carlos Alberto defends were largely incorporated into his out of school socialization process. As a young man, he took part in the foundation of an Anarchist Punk movement in the outskirts of São Paulo, where they had an environment for debate through readings of Proudhon, Kropotkin and Gramsci. In addition, he worked politically in his school's student union, and later in the metalworkers' union.

Due to learning disabilities as a pupil of basic education, Carlos Alberto "totally broke down", which later became a hatred against school, leading him to "break everything he could" and "intimidate teachers ". His rebellion was fueled not only by the Anarchist Punk movement, but also by the injustices that he lived within the school, from pedagogical activities deemed unnecessary, such as copying the textbook, to reprisal of police officers within the school. Carlos Alberto found his place in school through the student union and his experiences in social movements showed him that the school, in addition to being an environment for social reproduction, is also the space of social transformation (BOURDIEU; PASSERON, 1982).

This teacher's resources come from a personal background, not only from an environment outside the institution, but also contrary to the school (Anarchist Punk movement), and they come as well from legal provisions learned in undergraduate and specialization courses of History (understanding of the concept of laicity). In this sense, continuous socialization is more influential in the teacher's actions than primary or professional socialization. A hybridization of Carlos Alberto's *habitus* dispositions is confirmed, considering the resources mobilized come, at the same time, from the academia, his school career and the Anarchist Punk movement.

For André, laicity was not threatened by religious practice in public space. Associated with the autonomy of action and the equal treatment of religions, laicity

is mobilized by the teacher as an argument for the acceptance of religious meetings at school. This way, André uses his personal skills as his main resource. These competences comprise his ordinary and unskilled experience in the classroom and the syncretism of the dimension of his identity. This teacher's passivity reveals that his process of teacher socialization allows the naturalization of this type of situation – even though it started recently. His response to the religious situation that has been mentioned comes from daily life experience, which is consistent with his non-specialization as a professional³.

The situation presented reveals how the life trajectory of each individual makes each one see the same circumstances in different ways, act in different ways, mobilize different resources, and have differing logics of action, even if they share the same physical environment for action. However, it would not be possible here to talk about teaching autonomy, since the values privileged by these teachers come from personal competences and they were not learned in specific trainings for their profession. Thus, non-formal socialization processes such as socialization in social movements or professional socialization or plural religious socialization are the genesis of the resources mobilized in the formal environment of the school institution.

Religious socialization in school

Anderson is a History teacher in Ribeirão Pires, metropolitan region of São Paulo. The religious issue is central in his personal life and in his work as a teacher, which originates from a Catholic religious education and participation in the Liberation Theology group, which gave him a taste for discussion and questioning certain premises. This experience also led him to choose the undergraduate degree in History and Education and it leads Anderson to frequently expressing his views through Facebook on issues related to the topic.

For Anderson, school is an environment to build a religious identity, since the institution should promote thinking about each person's own religion, as a strategy to avoid "frustration as an adult or the growth of fundamentalist movements". This religious identity construction occurs in the relationship with peers, who have different religious beliefs. This, by contrasting beliefs based on the "scientific" model and, consequently, breaking stereotypes. Thus, school provides exposure to other points of view, ensuring freedom of consciousness and belief.

Religion as family heritage is criticized by Anderson, because it is built in opposition to other religions. That is, it is the social cement that delimits groups - who is inside and who is outside (PIERUCCI, 2008). In this sense, family religious heritage is a context that favors the creation of mistaken stereotypes of other religions. The presence of these prejudices in classroom, in Religious Education or in History, is interpreted by the teacher as a result of the religious culture present in the Brazilian social context.

³ André graduated in Languages and spent over ten years working as a bank clerk, before he began teaching.

Anderson's strategy to answer students' religious questions was to engage them in thinking about such questions. Thus, he asks questions as logical syllogisms that do not necessarily intend to arrive at a truth, rather aiming to make the students think and debate. In his words:

“it is making the person stay, making the person think or have to explain an answer to someone, (...) So if I had the debate in school... ‘Oh, so it was like that, it was like that, wasn't it?’ When we get a reply, that’s when we start understanding... They begin to realize that they didn't even have that answer. That they always believed in what was given and that neither the pastor nor their mother has the answer. He asked his mother, his mother said: "oh, I believed it and that's it." “But if Cain and Abel had three children, each of them went to each continent, which one went to America? Because you would need four children. Did God not even know about America’s existence?” And they start asking themselves or saying simple things, right? (...) And that's the procedure of work.” (Anderson)

In this passage, besides the appreciation of reflexivity (GIDDENS, 1991), the use of religious knowledge as a resource for his action is explicit. His religious training is combined with academic and vocational training and together they are mobilized in this kind of situation. This way, Anderson reveals that the stereotypes presented by the students are just preconceived ideas that were constituted without analysis. Besides, this is how Anderson tries to work through empathy among students and valorization of the knowledge they bring from out of school.

The debate among students enables us not only to break stereotypes, but also to question truths, based on tolerance and respect for the belief of a classmate. Also, these questioning and sharing of religious knowledge by the students facilitate their subjective exercise of their own beliefs. Thus, the process of religious socialization of students not only takes place in the religious and family environments, but also in the school environment, where students themselves seek to check what they have learned in the private sphere with other adults, who are seen as role models.

The situations described by this teacher reveal that it is exactly the way his religious belief was built that enables him to suggest teaching practices in school which is open to listening to students, to the acceptance of Brazilian religious diversity, the recognition of the student's religious dimension and, along with their academic background, a motivation for dialogue on the subject. In other words, it is his religious dispositions that provide him resources for his professional action.

Anderson admits that he kept a “practical sense” (BOURDIEU, 1989) that was learned mostly from the religious institution, but also through his academic studies. This learning was essential to build him as a religious person and teacher at the same time. The identity inseparability (VALENTE, 2018a) enables him not only to identify the institutional record (the type of institution he is in, whether it is religious or secular), but also to mobilize religiously constituted resources in his teaching practices in a critical way and without proselytizing.

Anderson's multiple references provide him with resources for his teaching practices that are different from each other. The combination of such resources is the origin of a plural teaching practice, which confirms the essence of Anderson's hybrid *habitus* dispositions (SETTON, 2002). Finally, the situations described by this teacher indicate influence of the school environment in the process of religious socialization of students. This occurs, through the dialogue with peers, the opening that the school supposedly should provide and in situations related to pedagogical activities and prescribed contents, as we discuss next.

Between beliefs and prescribed contents

Sofia has been a Portuguese and English teacher for five years in São Paulo state's public schools network and calls herself "content focused". Sofia identifies herself as a black woman and, speaking of her life trajectory, describes several moments in which she suffered social discrimination due to the color of her skin. However, Sofia does not identify with African culture and does not recognize a black ancestry in her ways of being, acting and thinking. Sofia would rather have her hair straight and attends the Assembleia de Deus church since she was a little girl. Another indication of her non-identification with black culture is in her speech. She uses the pronoun "they" to refer to blacks - those who "practice" Africanities. That is, there is a group of people linked to Africanities that is different from the group in which the teacher feels she belongs: "*they* have a religion which is very... a religion that suffers a lot of prejudice and in this religion we perceive [situations in relation to social and cultural diversity]". It is worth mentioning that most cases of religious intolerance in Brazil occur among members of Pentecostal or Neopentecostal churches and worshipers of religions of Afro-Brazilian matrices (SILVA, 2007; MIRANDA, 2012). This information was also found in the teacher's speeches about the situations she experienced. It helps us understand the conflicts experienced by the teacher, not only regarding her teaching action, but also her own identity constitution.

Thus, working with African history and culture is, for Sofia, just a response to a legal demand:

"I'm working on this not because I like it, I'm working on it because I must and it's in the legislation. (...) It is my obligation, the legislation says that I have to work Africanities every year. (...) As for Portuguese, the law states that you have to insert some project of Africanity in order for the student to get rid of his common sense and tolerate other religions." (Sofia)

This demand is embraced by the teacher, since she understands that there are no other social contexts to work on African history and culture. In the teacher's view, this work is necessary, because religious intolerance is "common sense", that is, naturalized. Even though she does not like the project, she does it in order to cope with legal prerogatives and to serve the "professional market" better. For Sofia, the project is one, or rather, the only way to work with students' cultural diversity.

The project on Africanities focuses on research of African influences in Brazilian words and daily life, by making posters about Africa, capoeira workshops and discussions with students. Within the context of discussions about Africanities, the issue of religion manifests itself as resistance, for which Sofia feels prepared by starting the didactic sequence with a song.

The anticipation strategy aims the accomplishment of the pedagogical activity she planned. However, such a strategy is not always enough to avoid students's opposition. For this reason, when she recognizes the beliefs of her students, Sofia uses religious resources as drivers of a reflection that condemns the attitudes of religious intolerance towards the religions of Afro-Brazilian matrix:

“When I bring in a leader, a founder, Jesus Christ, I ask what would Jesus do at that time. “Imagine Jesus meets a girl on the street, going to an AfroBrazilian religion temple on a Friday, would Jesus stone her?” I make them think. “How would Jesus act in this case?” (Sofia)

The teacher's way of discussing with students assumes that they are all Christians. The invisibility of the diversity of religious beliefs not only characterizes Sofia's actions, but also the action of other teachers, as exposed in a previous research (VALENTE, 2015, 2018b). When asked about the justification for the use of religious resources, Sofia replies that she is devoid of other arguments, since the legislation "does not convince anyone."

This speech confirms the strength of religion in the Brazilian scenario. Religious institutions take over spaces where the State is fragile, providing the population with benefits such as education (in the case of associated day care centers) and the right to adequate housing (SILVA, 2016) in an institutionalized way and resources for action based on socialization.

In Sofia's teaching practices, the persuasive power of the religious argument is far greater than the discourse concerning laws and the common interests. Therefore, the civic logic of respect for laws and the general interests is replaced by domestic logic. Thus, the origin of Sofia's resources is religious. However, as Knoblauch's research (2014) had already shown, religious and secular arguments are under tension in different moments in the teacher's professional socialization:

“As I have been evangelical since I was born, then I can understand everything about religion, so when you ask me, what my religion can't tolerate... for example, gay marriage, so for me to work in college, for me to work with homosexuals was very difficult, I asked God, all day I asked God: “My God I want you to help me have love for my neighbor regardless of his sexual choice, regardless of religious background, regardless of anything, because always people have something to teach me”... Do you know what I mean? So, I always asked God to help me with that. (...) So today I do not discriminate against anyone because of my education, I go to college, but I'm sure my husband would say: “There is nothing but queers there... that place there is a Sodom

and Gomorrah”, and so on and so forth”... So we can get out of situations showing the same love for this person.” (Sofia)

This statement reveals that it is not only religious socialization and professional socialization that come into tension. A third component is family socialization which, in this case, is in accordance with religious precepts. The negotiation among categories of thought of three different socialization instances imposes reflexivity, but also hybrid dispositions of *habitus* (SETTON, 2002) that enable movement through the three worlds. Thus, within the school, when she incorporates her teaching role, Sofia remains engaged in the Africanities project, which motivates her to update it every year.

However, the separation between secular knowledge and religious knowledge in public and private spaces seems to be confused at times, mainly due to the role of the pedagogical coordinator in school. Sofia describes a second situation in which a very agitated student only stopped interrupting her class, when he stood in a corner, reading the Bible. This allowed the teacher to concentrate in her work, concerned about the other students and the development of the didactic activity. Feeling that her complicity with the presence of the Bible in the classroom could set a precedent for parents' complaint, Sofia turned to the school's pedagogical coordinator to justify her permission to this in her classroom, as the only option she could find to convey the content to the other students in the class. The pedagogical coordinator suggested that Sofia use the biblical text in class as a strategy to get students' attention, because even if the State is secular, the practice would be justified because of the students' interest. According to Sofia, she could not use the sacred text. Her justification for this was not related to the separation between public and private spheres, but to the fact that the content being worked had nothing to do with the biblical text.

In this sense, even if there is an effort by teachers to value their secular knowledge in a public space, the school culture, often imbued with a religious culture, does not motivate this separation. Therefore, the issue is no longer Sofia's socialization, but rather, it becomes the professional gender (CLOT, 2008) and the socialization of teachers as a professional group that shares values and ways of thinking, being, acting and feeling. Thus, Sofia's teaching resources are religious, but unlike Anderson, she does not suggest a reflection that enables her to use religious resources in a secular way, mainly because she is instigated by a social conjunction that legitimizes the use of religious resources in the public school environment.

Discussion

The analysis of the corpus of 54 situations reveals that the category of analysis related to the resources used in the situations is the one with the greatest plurality, that is, in over 68% of the situations more than one resource was used by the teachers. The main resource is the teacher's personal path, that is, his or her continuous socialization, outside the context of work and, as we have seen, also a religious socialization. This reveals a wide range of subjective and individual

resources of these professionals. We will argue here that this way of acting corroborates the singularities of the Brazilian social configuration through three aspects: the frontier between public and private, hybrid dispositions of *habitus* and naturalization of the religious in the teaching practices.

Border between the public and the private spheres

The teaching profession requires personal engagement by the teacher. The boundary between the public and the private spheres, between the professional environment and the domestic environment is fragile because of the profession's own characteristics, such as the free time of preparation of material and vocational training that is confused with “useful” leisure activities, that is, linked to the subject taught. And this is a difficulty of teaching work (LANTHEAUME; HÉLOU, 2008, p. 77). In addition to out-of-school work, there is emotional work as well, as the teacher's involvement with the student is considered essential to the learning process. The socialization effects of different spheres, between the domestic and the professional, promote conditions for the construction of resources that originate in the two spheres, which exist latently and which will be mobilized in the actions of the actors in school situations. Specifically, in the Brazilian case, the confusion between the private and the public spheres perpasses the religious issue and legitimizes the use of religious resources in an environment that values secular knowledge.

According to Prairat “Deontology is the place where professional solidarity is explicit and where the distinction between public (professional) and private (person) identity is reinforced”. (2005, p. 151-152 - free translation). Thus, the identity indissociability of teachers as professionals and religious individuals (VALENTE, 2018a) also results from the absence of a teaching deontology in Brazil, that is, an ethical reflection on the tensions and dilemmas of the profession that ideally should begin in teachers’ training courses.

Hybrid *habitus* dispositions

A specific characteristic of the Brazilian social setting that influences teaching practices is a broad, tense, complex and structured process, which is based on the multiplicity of training experiences resulting in the incorporation of hybrid *habitus* dispositions, a term suggested by Setton (2002). In other words, the social practices of Brazilian agents, guided by the incorporation of values from different culture matrices, enabled the construction of a hybrid culture. By setting up a hybrid system of dispositions, the agent ends up unconsciously privileging or choosing a set of values that he or she perceives, from his/her point of view, as ideal, as “the” best, in obedience to a hierarchical dispositional configuration. Such dispositions are the result of hierarchies of multiple references in an individual's life.

Thus, the hybridization of *habitus* dispositions is not neutral; it follows a hierarchy of values that is legitimized in a given social configuration. Considering it is a State in the Southern hemisphere (MARTUCCELLI, 2010), we must also consider the institutional framework or the strength of the State in Brazil is weak,

causing a devaluation of the public school, a precariousness of the teacher's working conditions, a reflexive fragility of the training courses etc.

State weakness causes teachers to seek references based on social ties rather than deontological principles, with the use of common sense, dialogue, personal experience, as a resource to manage situations within the professional framework. Consequently, the absence of a strong State confirms the liberal logic that the individual relies only on his freedom and on his ability to create, produce and interact, for his own survival in society. One of the characteristics of this weak State is precisely the absence of norms and prescriptions. Thus, the concept of hybrid *habitus* dispositions facilitates the understanding of the prevalence of the use of personal resources by Brazilian teachers, justified by the fact that other resources are not available.

Naturalization of the religious sphere in teaching practices

The religious issue in public schools places teachers at a crossroads between the real curriculum and their own life trajectory. Thus, when creating and acting, Brazilian teachers stylize the professional genre through religious actions consistent with the national culture, which admits the confusion between public and private spheres and between belief and knowledge. Peer socialization highlights the legitimate values, ways of action and shared beliefs among professionals (KNOBLAUCH, 2008). The individual use of the religious sphere as a resource of pedagogical practices shapes the Brazilian teaching professional genre naturalized by the peer group. The resource provenient from the religious spheres is thus seen as an element not only of continuous socialization, but also belonging to these teachers's professional socialization.

Thus, the religious phenomenon is present in the continuous and professional socialization of Brazilian teachers and exercises influences not only in their world views, but also in the selection and hierarchization of learned contents and values transmitted in the classroom (VALENTE, 2015; KNOBLAUCH, 2015). Hence, teachers's professional socialization in Brazil naturalizes the use of religious resources as pedagogical tools.

In this sense, interviews with Brazilian teachers have been further evidence to confirm Farias's (2012) research, which argues that Brazilian people are unaware of the meaning of a secular State. Five of the eighteen Brazilian teachers interviewed could not define the concept of laicity.

Briefly, for the other thirteen teachers, the definitions of laicity were grouped into three categories, in order of frequency: respect, separation, and knowledge. Within the "respect" category, we find non-discrimination, the need to accept others, the recognition of individual religion and the appreciation of religious diversity. In the category of "separation", the concept of laicity is associated with the appreciation of the public interest, the equality of religions and the republic. Finally, in the category of "knowledge", laicity is a way of guaranteeing the right to knowledge, scientific objectivity, and reflection that has the function of eradicating prejudices, promoting respect for all individuals. Still in the latter category, laicity is understood as an aspect that deals with religion as part of culture. The definition

given by the interviewed teachers corroborates the definition of researchers (MARIANO, 2004; CUNHA, 2017; FISCHMANN, 2008) who focus on laicity, since they privilege freedom of conscience, that is, individual freedom.

The liberal logic of this concept of laicity calls attention. Respect, as preached by this notion of laicity, refers to individual respect, which is the type of respect advocated by most teachers. The individual is privileged over the collective. The predominance of such logic is not surprising, since it corresponds to the principles that are most evident in the Brazilian social configuration (MÉNARD; VALENTE, 2016). Moreover, it must be pointed out that this liberal logic is directly related to the coexistence of religions that could tangent politics of difference. However, the argument of coexistence is sometimes used to justify the hegemonic Christian presence.

Therefore, one way to exemplify the naturalization of the religious spheres in teaching practices is in interviewees's speeches. While some understand the school as an environment for students' religious socialization, whether or not the religious identity is constructed in a critical way, other teachers claim that their practices are consistent with the State's laicity (VALENTE, 2015), even if they use religious resources in their pedagogical practices.

Conclusion

The origin of the resources used in the teaching practices, regarding the religious issue, is plural and comes, mainly, from the personal competences of the teachers. These personal resources, in turn, are made up of characteristics of Brazilian society itself, such as the possibility of merging public and private spheres, the hybrid *habitus* dispositions, the absence of curricular prescriptions and definitions for professional ethics and, finally, by the naturalization of the use of religious resources in teaching practices.

Our impression is that the resources derived from personal skills identified in this research are not only mobilized regarding the religious issue, but are also extended to other themes that are ignored by the prescriptions and norms of the school, such as the issues of discrimination and racism. Thus, a teaching work that respects differences and guarantees the right to education of students depends on collective and individual conditions of possibility: such as good working conditions that promote the exchange between teachers, prescriptions and suggestions to act from a teaching deontology and an individual availability of the teacher for a pragmatic reflexivity.

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