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AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL DIALOGUE AMONG THE PRAXIOLOGY OF PIERRE BOURDIEU AND THE EPISTEMOLOGIES OF THE SOUTH OF BOAVENTURA DE SOUSA SANTOS

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ABSTRACT

Neoliberalism is in full development in the most diverse countries and, thus, affects relevant fields of society; among these, school education (at all levels). Understanding that education must promote the emancipation of the student, does it, inserted in the logic of capitalism, truly fulfill this function? Or, on the contrary, does it respond to the interests of the dominant? Reflections like these, supported by two of the most relevant theorists of the last decades, which we aim at in this work. In this bias and from the theoretical review of Pierre Bourdieu's praxiology and the Epistemologies of the South of Boaventura de Sousa Santos, we trace an epistemological dialogue explaining the converging points among the authors, and these are the ones that guide our considerations regarding an emancipatory education.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this article is based on the theoretical thread developed by two of the most important thinkers of the last decades: the french Pierre Bourdieu and the portuguese Boaventura de Sousa Santos, who share a critical perspective on the role of school education (in all levels) in the formation of an emancipated subject. In this sense, based on the bias developed by each of these, we draw an epistemological approach among them, seeking to unveil the educational processes that, increasingly, respond to the interests of the dominant, and thus, comply with the capitalist "rules of the game", making that education, at all levels, to carry out the functions of accommodating and reproducing social classes. (BOURDIEU, 1976, 2014). This is how the school may not act, as many believe, in an equitable way, that is, reducing the inequalities resulting from the capitalist system. More than that, Pierre Bourdieu states that the school system, including the university field (BOURDIEU, 1976, 2011), has as one of its primary functions, perpetuating these disparities. It is in this bias that education must be rethought, as it does not meet the needs of those who need it most.

More than that, it does not cover new ways of producing knowledge, new epistemologies, or even, emerging epistemologies or Epistemologies of the South (SANTOS, 2010). Promptly, to meet the complexity of the current society, the education must be greening (SANTOS, 2010, 2018, emphasis of author), that is, capable of absorbing new and old perspectives of knowledge production, whether scientific or not. In this way, understanding that education can be a truly transformative and emancipatory tool, we propose a reflection on the area of school education, brought about by the approximation of the concepts developed by the aforementioned authors, in an attempt to point a north, or why not, a "south" (SANTOS, 2010, 2018, p. 53).

School education and its role in accommodation of social classes: From critics to education

From the initial exposition of the concepts of Pierre Bourdieu and Boaventura de Sousa Santos, it is realized that, for both, the school and its way of producing and reproducing knowledge must be rethought, because, instead of exercising an emancipatory function, as many believe, it works by accommodating social classes, that is, reproducing them

according to the aegis of dominant interests, and thus, perpetuating the inequalities of the capitalist world, been them epistemic, economic, social and cultural. Pierre Bourdieu and Boaventura de Sousa Santos reflect contemporary education with criticism, unveiling their deceits and decolonizing their epistemological bonds. According to Boudieu and Passeron (2014), one of the problems of school education refers to the pedagogical relationship because it is directly linked to a communication relationship; therefore, it would be incipient to assess any educational context without taking into account the level of success of pedagogical communication. This index proves to be one of the most reliable in the productive analysis of a pedagogical action, as it is not isolated in a pedagogical context and aims for a multivariate understanding. At this point, it is essential to understand that the success of pedagogical communication depends in large part on the quality of assimilation or "inculcation" by the recipients, and these in turn, have their receptive qualities influenced by the various social and school structures that permeated their lives. This is how the school contributes to the maintenance of social classes. Therefore, it is through this instituted power of language that the interests of the dominant classes are conserved and inculcated by the school universe. The "inculcation" occurs so discreetly and effectively that even the system's "emitters" are unaware of their function. What is certain is that the students, sharing the "rules" of the school system, are the biggest victims because they live in the illusion of being understood and understanding.

In Higher Education, this is aggravated because the university professor suffers from a "nostalgia for the pedagogical paradise", based on the traditional teaching patterns and that reproduce the ailments of the classes through a pedagogical discourse totally out of touch with reality, where there is no concern with the decoding of the sender's language by the receiver (BOURDIEU; PASSERON, 2014, p.131). The system for evaluating the informative performance of communication among students and teachers, made only through presentations or dissertations, serves the purpose of preventing an understanding of the misunderstanding (BOURDIEU; PASSERON, 2014). According to Bourdieu and Passeron (2014), in the relationship of pedagogical communication students do not have the right to understand, but the duty of learning. To do this, they need to lower the level of demands in terms of understanding. If the receiver is not given the right to understand, the great fallacy present in the educational communication system is evident. Therefore, the value of the individual at school, at any school level, is due to the distance between the linguistic domain required by the school and the domain that he acquired through family education, plus the education provided throughout his trajectory their social class.

In reality, each family transmits to their children, more indirectly than directly, a certain cultural capital and a certain *ethos*, implicit and deeply internalized value systems, which helps to define, among other things, attitudes towards capital and the institution school. Cultural heritage, which differs in two respects, according to social classes, is responsible for the initial difference of children in the face of school experience and, consequently, for success rates (BOURDIEU, 2007, p. 41-42).

The great illusio is that the school institution demands capital that it does not offer itself; that is, it values the student for his ability to master the language and decode, but does not provide tools (capital) for that (BOURDIEU; PASSERON, 2014). In this way, only students from the dominant classes have the social, economic and cultural conditions to accumulate the necessary capital to minimize the distances in the pedagogical communication processes. Therefore, the education system, through pedagogical communication, perpetuates its functions of legitimizing the dominant culture and guarantee the inculcation of the class system within the school system, given it institutionalized credibility and reproducing these structures according to the interests of the dominant classes. Our other theorist, the portuguese Boaventura de Sousa Santos, also makes considerations about education and the need to rethink it in order to make it a tool capable of equalizing social disparities. Therefore, it must be able to perform an emancipating function; and with that, transform the social reality of those involved in them. Thus, it will not act as one of the elements used by the dominant class to accommodate the dominated.

The theoretical production of Boaventura and its political performance reflect its bet that it is possible to produce knowledge committed to the processes of social emancipation and to the counter-hegemonic struggles. Another world is possible and emancipatory education plays an important role in this process. Boaventura does not dialogue with any conception of education, but with an emancipatory conception of education, one that does not avoid conflicts, but understands them as contitutive part of the pedagogical processes. (SANTOS, 2018, p. 516).

In this sense, Boaventura points to an education that goes in the opposite direction of hegemonic dominant interests, and that come from a scientism molded from the needs of the capitalist system. It is an education aimed at the emancipation of man and that will no longer serve the purposes of the dominant. Thus, it is a deeper understanding of the concept of education, which does not reduce it to the school institution; but rather, understanding it as a continuous and plural human formation process, or even a social right (SANTOS, 2018). It is understood that Bourdieu and Santos do not deny the relevance of the school (for good and for bad), but, on the other hand, they recognize other ways of producing emancipatory knowledge, whether those are scientific or not. Thus, for both, educational processes can and should occur in fields other than school. It is in this sense that Bourdieu emphasizes the forming function of the familiar habitus; and, on the other hand, Boaventura explains about a plural education, which does not depend exclusively on the school system.

Pierre bourdieu's praxiology: the field, habitus and capital concepts in the bourdieusian perspective: Starting from what has already been exposed, it is necessary to go a little deeper into the assumptions inherent to each of the authors who contribute this article, so that we can find other points of convergence among both, which is the objective of this review. Therefore, we will now approach Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical perspective, mainly with regard to the concepts of field, habitus and praxiology. In order to address the theoretical implications of the concept of field, we can understand it as a kind of "society" that can, through the provisions of its "singular structures", act on its "citizens"; thus producing the

specific possibilities for the agents inserted in it. Therefore, the school is certainly a field. A field of knowledge production. According to Catani (2011, p. 2):

The notion of field replaces that of society, because, for him [Bourdieu], a differentiated society is not fully integrated by systemic functions, but, on the contrary, it is constituted by a set of social microcosms endowed with relative autonomy, with logics and own, specific possibilities, with interests and disputes irreducible to the functioning of other fields.

In this sense, each field has its own dispositions, and so, to understand it, it becomes necessary to unveil the rules of the "game", to know the structuring and *structured structures* that operate in the field. These, called Bourdieu de *habitus*, are internalized and externalized by agents inserted in a determined field. In the scientific field, for example, the game consists of the struggle for competence and scientific authority, where *habitus* operates as a structure that forms the competence to speak and write with authority in front of a scientific community.

The scientific field, [...] is the place, the playing space of a competitive fight. What is at stake specifically in this struggle is the monopoly of scientific authority defined, inseparably, as technical capacity and social power; or, if we like, the monopoly of scientific competence, understood as the ability to speak and act legitimately (that is, in an authorized and authoritative way), which is socially granted to a determined agent. (BOURDIEU, 1983, p.122-123).

Rogério, Albuquerque and Sales (2012, p. 31) state that, according to the social space in which we interact, "we internalize structures that become our lens for reading reality, and we externalize them in our choices, judgments, tastes, attitudes; that is, *habitus* provides us with a practical sense [...]." In this way, it is understood that the field submits its agents to a specific *habitus*; but, in reverse, it is also nourished by the externalized *habitus* of its agents. Therefore, *habitus* is not configured as a rigid system, as it changes based on social interventions and according to the actions of individuals (*Idem*). According to Bourdieu (1994, p. 65):

Generating principle lastingly armed with ruled improvisations [...], habitus produces practices that, insofar as they tend to reproduce the regularities immanent to the objective conditions of the production of its generating principle, but, adjusting to the requirements registered in the title of objective potentialities in the situation directly faced, they do not allow themselves to be deduced directly, nor from the objective conditions, punctually defined as the sum of stimuli that may appear as having triggered them directly, nor from the conditions that produced the durable principle of their production [...].

Therefore, the *habitus* is capable of structuring alignments that can operate on the agents of the field, but these do not work as rules or obligations, since they can, based on the agents' actions, be modified; because, when we propose the study of a field, such as school education, we must perceive the implicit and explicit relationships in it, understand them as the result of the reactions and actions of its agents and which are

conditioned to the field's dispositions. In this sense, Bourdieu developed, based on the concepts of field and *habitus*, and using the assumptions of phenomenology and structuralism, a proper way of understanding the "social world". Therefore, the praxiology, developed by Bourdieu is an epistemological elaboration that traces a dialogue between the objectivism of structuralism and the subjectivism of phenomenology, but, it reformulates their ideas to elaborate a method of analysis of society (FREITAS, 2012). According to Bourdieu (1994, p.47),

[...] the knowledge that we can call praxiological has as its object not only the system of objective relations that the mode of objectivist knowledge builds, but also the dialectical relations between these structures and the structured dispositions in which they are updated and that tend to reproduce them, that is, the double process of interiorization of exteriority and exteriorization of interiority [...]. (BOURDIEU, 1994, p. 47, emphasis of author).

It is understood that praxiology comprises both the movement of objectification, externalization of knowledge in the world, and the process of subjectification, internalization of exteriority that transforms the same. In this way, when using praxiology in the field of school education, we expect "broad and deep explanations" about the social, economic and cultural processes that act on this field and its agents (students and teachers). "[...] Praxiology means the passage from the mere analysis of the *opus operatum* (product) to the penetrating dive into the *modus operandi* (process)." (FREITAS, 2012, p. 6, emphasis of author).

Boaventura de sousa santos: the epistemologies of the south and the ecology of knowledges

"[...] we are again perplexed, we have lost epistemological trust; a stranger feeling of irreparable loss was installed in us, even stranger because we are not sure what we are about to lose [...]." (Boaventura de Sousa Santos).

The term epistemology emerged from the 19th century in the scope of philosophy; but, it represents a form of knowledge present since classical philosophy in the dialogues of Plato, Socrates and the Sophists, who are the founders of relativistic thought in science and philosophy. Etymologically, epistemology means: discourse (logos) about science (episteme) (LARA, 2011). Therefore, epistemology is defined as a critical study about science and their paradigms. Its characteristic a constant and attentive observation of the structures that define truths in Modern Science. Lara (2011, p.122) complements this conception when says that the epistemology "It is essentially a critical study with a view to determining the logical origin of science, its value and its reach." According to Japiassu (1991, p. 12), "The history of science is a net of implicit judgments about the value of scientific thoughts and discoveries. The role of epistemology is to make them explicit." This is how paradigm and epistemology coexist in the production of scientific knowledge. The first is understood as a set of truths experienced, accepted and recognized by the scientific field; and the second, as a kind of philosophical study capable of reflecting on these truths and, if necessary, contesting or denying them, in order to trace, from that point on, within science, the new paradigms. According to Lara (2011, p.122),

"Every science, governed by a paradigm, carries in its footprints the mark of epistemological reflection, which leads the scientist to a constant transition between certainty and uncertainty, arising from the cognitive limitations that make part of their nature." In this way, epistemology does not define the paradigms of science, but, by exerting a careful consideration on them, it can, at a certain moment, unveil its crises and encourage the formation of new paradigms. It is a fact that Modern Science and its paradigms no longer meet, or at least do not fully address, the complexities of current society. Santos (2008, p. 83) agrees with this when he says, "Modern science is not the only possible explanation of reality and there is not even any scientific reason to consider it better than alternative explanations of metaphysics, astrology, religion, art or poetry." Santos suggests the configuration of an emerging paradigm that works for humanity, in accordance with its well-being, a social paradigm, and not only a set of truths that meet the dominant interests in science, whether these are linked to the growth of capitalism of the 17th century, or even to the economic interests that today dominate the so-called Modern Science (SANTOS, 2008).

Emerging paradigm science is more contemplative than active. The quality of knowledge is measured less by what it controls or makes it work in the outside world than by the personal satisfaction it gives those who access and share it. [...]. Scientific creation in the emerging paradigm is assumed to be close to literary or artistic creation, because like these it intends that the active dimension of the transformation of the real (the sculptor working with stone) be subordinated to the contemplation of the result (the work of art). (SANTOS, 2008, p. 86-87).

The emerging paradigm described by Santos (2008) is about an inclusive, not exclusive, plural, and not homogeneous posture; thus, we must also consider other epistemologies, even if they are not scientific, or even, they are peripheral, of the "South". In this perspective Boaventura uses the term Epistemologies of the South. We understand that the word "South" refers to what is peripheral, to what lies beyond the "abyssal line" that divides the knowledge of Modern Science, with what happens out of this line. The "South" was once geographic, but today, its not so much. Santos and Meneses (2010, p.11) describes that the Epistemologies of the South,

This is the set of epistemological interventions that denounce the suppression of knowledge carried out, over the last centuries, by the dominant epistemological norm, value the knowledge that successfully resisted and the reflections that these have produced and investigate the conditions of a dialogue between knowledge. This knowledge dialogue is called ecology of knowledges.

Therefore, the Epistemologies of the South point to a decolonized and unveiled construction of knowledge and are defined mainly by an "ecological" posture. As stated before, in view of the complexities of current problems, including those related to education, the scientific paradigm, alone, is no longer able to support. Other paradigms are needed! Or even, a multi-paradigmatic posture. It is necessary to ecologize knowledge!

In the ecology of knowledges, [...] the search for credibility for non-scientific knowledge does not imply the discredit of scientific knowledge. It simply implies its counter-hegemonic use. It is about, on the one hand,

exploring the internal plurality of science [...], on the other hand, promoting interaction and interdependence among scientific and other non-scientific knowledges. (SANTOS; MENESES, 2010, p.57).

Therefore, starting from the central idea of the ecology of knowledges, we cannot admit that there is only one model capable of producing and validating the knowledge. It is necessary to combat epistemological hegemony, which is notoriously signified by science and adopted on a large scale by traditional education. In this sense, and from what has been described, it is understood that the school, anchored by the hegemonic knowledge of Modern Science, acts as a reproducer of the interests of the dominants of capitalist society. In such a way, Boaventura's reflections on education dialogue with Bourdieu's thinking, placing school education as being able, if it does not really have an emancipatory bias, to help accommodate the classes and thereby maintain or even accentuate inequalities, whether economic, social or cultural. Also according to Santos (2018, p.531),

The fact that the model of technical application of science continues to undermine the educational system today is understandable only by inertia or bad faith, or both: by the inertia of official culture and educational bureaucracies; for the bad faith of the capitalist institutionality that uses the model of technical application to hide the political and social character of the disorder it establishes. In view of this, the emancipatory educational project must create an epistemological field in which the model of technical application of science is put in conflict with an alternative model. The conflict between the two models will become, in this domain, the core of the teaching-learning process.

This is anecological posture, decisive for the formation of the student, allowing an emancipatory education to occur legitimately, truly capable of mitigating the currently inequalities in a model of capitalist society; because, understanding that Modern Science has, as one of its greatest purposes, the function of "inculcating" the interests of the dominant, how could we think of a transformative education, if the disciplines, contents, curricula, methodologies, among other aspects of the traditional school are shaped only from that scientific conception?

Final Considerations

From what we have outlined so far, we learned that both Pierre Bourdieu's and Boaventura de Sousa Santos's works are not limited to criticizing education. Both point out that education can and should be emancipatory, thus attending to the interests of students at the expense of capitalist (neoliberal) purposes. This is clear in the work of Santos, but this engagement is not present in the bourdieusian work. Thus, it is relevant to unveil Bourdieu's contributions to what we call emancipatory education, and thus, to further narrow the epistemological dialogue proposed by this paper. Perhaps, due to having a very dense language, Pierre Bourdieu can be mistakenly perceived as a "reproductivist", that is, who discusses the school's social reproduction function, but does not point to a new proposal for the school and education. The fact is that, by revealing "the rules of the game" in the field of school education, Bourdieu supplies us with a critical-reflective capacity that provides us with relative autonomy in this field. Let us now return to the concept of linguistic (cultural) capital. Knowing the linguistic (cultural) capital permeates the individual from his family education until his last educational stage, and that this is decisive for the students' "success" or "failure" on the processes of decoding pedagogical information, at whatever level, wouldnt we give more attention to the tools needed to accumulate that capital?

To be aware of these processes already taking a step towards emancipatory education. In such a way, the agents inserted in the field of education must be aware that the more cultural capital they accumulate, the more they achieve autonomy in this field, even if it is relative.

In order to accumulate cultural capital, it is necessary to work with the "subject on himself [...]. It requires an *incorporation* [...], it costs time that must be *personally* invested by the investor." (NOGUEIRA; CATANI, 2014, p. 82-83, emphasis of authors). Soon, the incorporated cultural capital becomes a *habitus*. In such a way, *habitus* is developed by the performance of agents in the search to "accumulate" the incorporated cultural capital; but, at the same time, it is possible that the agents' *habitus*, shared within a certain field, also define, based on a praxiological relationship, the capitals established there.

Therefore, the field is transformed by the action of agents, but this transformation depends on the place that each agent occupies; that is, the force it exerts on the field is proportional to their capital. It is a kind of symbolic power that each agent has in the field and that can transform this according to their interests. According to Bourdieu (2004, p.25), "[...] the opportunities that a singular agent has to submit the forces of the field to his wishes are proportional to his strength on the field, that is, [...] to his position in the capital distribution structure." Therefore, when Bourdieu points out linguistic as preponderant pedagogical (cultural) capital for communication to take place, and from that, the transmission or not of operating capitals at school, he unveils the logic of this field, and thus, puts us in a privileged situation as agents capable to change our school trajectory. By trajectory, we understand:

Different from ordinary biographies, the trajectory describes the series of positions successively occupied by the same writer [agent] in successive states of the field [...], having made it clear that it is only in the structure of a field, that is, repeating, relationally, that the meaning of these successive positions is defined [...]. (BOURDIEU, 2005, p.71-72).

It is a question of *greening* the *habitus*, or even the knowledges, taking into account the experiences (capitals) acquired in other fields of knowledge. It is at this point that bourdieusian theory draws a vertex with Boaventura's proposals. Bourdieu, when explaining that the field, even having its inherent dispositions (*habitus*), can incorporate other *habitus*by the action (dispute) of their agents,approaches Santos' ecological thinking. Bringing this to the field of school education, it is suggested that the school, even though it is a field constituted by *habitus*, can be transformed by the dispositions of their students and teachers (agents). Thus, the school can share other forms of knowledge production, other epistemologies. An emancipatory school must absorb the epistemological plurality in which we live.

In practice this means a decolonization of knowledge. Santos (2018) points to the need to break up with the hegemonic knowledge defined by the 16th century capitalist society, which dictated the paradigms of Modern Science, and consequently the educational models and proposals. How will we have an emancipatory process in education if it doesn't basicly havethis proposal? The fact is that hegemonic scientific knowledge does not have the function of emancipating the student. For this reason, we give relevance of unveiling the inculcated purposes in the education, so we would trace the actions that will free us from this paradoxical deception. In this sense that Santos defines the concept of an emerging paradigm, and later, the Epistemologies of the South. The epistemologies of Modern Science have long ceased to account for the complexities of our society. And more than that, they are experiencing a paradigmatic crisis. The time has come for revolutions, and as Santos himself reports, today we are experiencing a scientific revolution (2008). Santos and Meneses (2010, p. 55) state that, "[...] the idea of the world's socio-cultural diversity that has gained momentum in the last three decades and favors the recognition of epistemological diversity and plurality as one of their dimensions." Thus, a plural society cannot be understood only through the pragmatism of Modern Science. Other epistemologies are needed! Other knowledge! The truth is that we share an epistemological lack. Promptly, the school, inserted in this social reality, must be rethought so that it recognize the most varied knowledges (whether scientific or not), and must also include the knowledge developed by their agents (students and teachers). It is about not disregarding any means or process of knowledge production, searching to forge a cultural capital capable of revealing the necessary codes to include ourselves in a excludent society. In this way, we avoid an alienated education, disconnected from the active dispositions in all fields of knowledge production, among them, the field of school education.

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