

## Schooling, adolescence and the ubiquity of entertainment: curriculum practices for high school in Brazil

### *Escolarização, adolescência e a ubiquidade do entretenimento: práticas curriculares para o Ensino Médio no Brasil*

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#### ABSTRACT

The present study seeks to analyze the changes in curricular practices aimed at the schooling of adolescents in southern Brazil. When questioning the infrastructure of these practices, the training purposes, the guiding rationalities and the training provisions that re-elaborate the concept of class were described. The empirical corpus that referenced this study consists of a set of eight episodic interviews carried out with teachers and pedagogical coordinators who work in high school. In a society in permanent transformation, in which the subjectivities of these students and their relations with the school receive a new set of investigations, the models of educational innovation that are intensely disseminated are based on processes of pedagogical aestheticization. In this context, it can be concluded that the emerging pedagogies for teenagers' schools, specifically in High School, are governed by two guiding rationales: sometimes linked to the management of learning towards performance on standardized tests, sometimes in tune with creative, interactive strategies and fun with a focus on the ubiquity of entertainment.

*Keywords:* Schooling. High school. Entertainment. Adolescence. Brazil.

#### RESUMO

O presente estudo busca descrever os deslocamentos nas práticas curriculares direcionadas escolarização de adolescentes no sul do Brasil. Ao interrogar pela infraestrutura dessas práticas, foram descritos os propósitos formativos, as racionalidades orientadoras e as disposições formativas que reelaboram o conceito de aula. O *corpus* empírico que referenciou este estudo é constituído por um conjunto de oito entrevistas episódicas realizadas com professores e

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coordenadores pedagógicos que atuam no Ensino Médio. Em uma sociedade em permanente transformação, na qual as subjetividades destes estudantes e suas relações com a escola recebem um novo conjunto de investigações, os modelos de inovação educativa que são intensamente difundidos estão alicerçados em processos de estetização pedagógica. Neste contexto, pode-se concluir que as pedagogias emergentes para a escola dos adolescentes, especificamente no Ensino Médio, são regidas por duas racionalidades orientadoras: uma atrelada à gestão das aprendizagens na direção do desempenho em testes padronizados, outra sintonizada com estratégias criativas, interativas e divertidas com foco na ubiquidade do entretenimento.

*Palavras-chave:* Escolarização. Ensino Médio. Entretenimento. Adolescência. Brasil.

## Introduction

*Entertainment escapes from that temporal functional limitation. It is no longer episodic, but rather becomes, so to speak, chronic*  
(HAN, 2019, p. 202)

A high school curriculum reform has been in process from late 2016 in Brazil. Initially conducted by a Provisional Measure signed by the President of the Republic, this reform was materialized in the law no. 13.415/2017 and by publishing of the definitive version of our national curriculum called National Common Curriculum Base (BNCC, Base Nacional Comum Curriculum, in Portuguese). The referred reform might be organised in three broad guidelines: a) setting out of steps based on the fields of knowledge to make the curriculum pliable by students' choices; b) increase of young and teen students in school; and c) emphasis on development of models of full-time holistic education, based on cognitive, social, and emotional skills. Emphasis on promotion of different methodologies for students, search for innovative curriculum architectonic, and centrality for permanent dialogue with the young, attend these guidelines.

Despite its scant democratic implementation, regarding the low participation of educational institutions, students, and education practitioners in decision-making process, we must admit the referred curriculum reform moves forward in shaping models of curriculum development more open and able to tune in to contemporary demands. From BNCC normative text, one takes as a starting point a plural widened notion of youth, which involves 'organising a school that houses diversity and recognises young people as their legitimate spokespersons concerning curriculum, teaching, and learning' (BRASIL, 2018, p. 463). Notions like young protagonism, life projects, learner's ways come to be part of a new curriculum grammar for young schooling in Brazil.

To implement these concepts, the referred normative document relies on curriculum possibilities resulting from investigation to educative intervention, providing students

with a world as an 'open field' for understanding (BRASIL, 2017). In general, centrality is ascribed to adolescents' ability to make decisions when defining their training courses from offering of paths attending their interests either from academic deepening perspective or within the scope of technical and professional training. National standards for High School curriculum, published in an updated version in late 2018, have asserted the need to renew curricula and methodologies for this training step.

The curriculum must include a methodology evincing contextualisation, diversification, and transdisciplinarity or other forms of interaction and articulation among different fields of specific pieces of knowledge, contemplating life experiences and binding schooling to the work of world and social practice, and enabling the use of studies and recognition of knowledge gained in personal, social, and work experiences (BRASIL, 2018, 7. art.)

Thus Brazilian high school education has been addressed to a wide process of diversification of training routes and expansion of curriculum architectonic centred on creative innovative methodologies. In general, young and adolescent school begins to dispose from what we characterise as a 'productive connection between pedagogic aestheticisation, active learning and teaching solutions' (SILVA, 2019, p. 108). The organisation of such architectonic, in light of the contemporary capitalist arrangements, permits 'lesson' concept to be repositioned: either closer to learning management or interactive strategies shaped by entertainment possibilities. From this perspective, new pedagogies for Brazilian adolescent schools are marked by the 'chronic entertainment' (HAN, 2019).

It is worth repeating that we have contemporarily experienced a renewed interest on possibilities to encourage innovations in processes of young and adolescent schooling. Our concern in this study has not been to construct opposition to these models, once we also hold a more innovative democratic curriculum disposing new models of school management. This study emphasises description of displacement in curriculum practices in young and adolescent school, as well as making explicit the concern with excesses of a type of school shaped by the pursuit of entertainment. Our theoretical approach inscribes itself in the perspectives of Curriculum Studies and privileges dialogue with Didactics and contemporary social theories. It is worth highlighting that the empirical corpus referencing this study has been shaped by eight episodic interviews by teachers and pedagogical coordinators working in high school classrooms in Rio Grande do Sul.

Thus the paper is organised in three sections. First, we revise studies of adolescent schooling in international literature, highlighting studies by Anne Barrère, Jonathan Haidt, and Mariano Narodowski. Understanding outlines of contemporary debate, potentials, and controversies, has been the main goal of this part of the study. On the second section, we revisited theoretically relations between young schooling and educational innovation. The intention has been to outline some conceptional features

to serve as starting point to examine practices selected to be analysed. Finally, besides presenting the methodologic route of this work in a few words, we have disposed a curriculum analytics centred on articulations between devices for pedagogical aestheticisation and ubiquity of entertainment in practices disposed in the High School, particularly by implementation of new patterns on this educative step in Brazil.

## **Adolescence in question: a revise**

The relations between adolescents and educational institutions are at once overt and ambivalent, as the French sociologist Anne Barrère (2013) explains. They are shaped as overt while much of this period was experienced in school in most countries. They are also relations characterised by ambivalence, once adolescence is a social construction permeated by different representations. In this relation between school and adolescence, we have also found different processes, as the will to change, openness to innovation, and existential curiosity, many times with lack of interest in school, dropout and failure, many conflicts, and early entrance in the professional world.

Following the French sociologist's elaborations, it would be convenient for us to be aware of three structural changes going with perceptions adolescents have of the school. The first change, which is historical, concerns extension and unification of schooling that occurred during the second half of the twentieth century. The second change, Barrère (2013) also depicts, evinces transformations in the forms of socialisation — repositioning relations between adolescents, families, and schools. The third structural change shows the emerging conditions in the late twentieth century, including cultural, economic, and political questions in Western societies. The so-called monopoly of school as a training agency came to be interjected by networks of sociability, digital age, or even by emergence of the so-called 'youth cultures'.

Henri Lehalle (2011), summarising, restated that in a broad sense adolescence is perceived as a transitional period: children are gradually recognised as adult people. However, as he says, this is an inaccurate definition, once 'childhood and adulthood do not correspond to stable periods, and adolescence must be considered in a set of individual evolution, insisting in continuing individual constructions during life' (p. 26). In other words, adolescence must be examined in the complex set of dimensions characterising human development

Lehalle (2011) argues that, historically, this stage of life is defined by a set of adjustments linked to changes in their body, professional choices, identity, or even relation to the choice. From a more contemporary perspective, one assigns centrality to the notion of autonomisation in its versions derived from different cultural contexts. The author evinces two observations that may be useful for this initial diagnostic: a) social representations of adolescence are culturally based; and b) adolescent routes

are diverse.<sup>1</sup>

We should still consider a wide set of educational investigations concerning somatic changes during puberty, cognitive questions, interactions with families, and peer groups. However, as a priority we will examine training dimensions related to schooling, that is, we want to think how these individuals manage to ‘gradually establish principles of life to guide their choices and commitments for a number of questions’ (LEHALLE, 2011, p. 29). Once again drawing to Anne Barrère’s study, the very democratisation or extended access to schooling for an adolescent generation deserving a more attentive exam, once ‘apparent homogenisation of school routes conceals important disparities’ (BARRÉRE, 2013, p. 21). Or even social challenges are evinced.

Massification of the secondary school education foregrounds articulation between the education system and economic system. By extending their studies, students and their families expect to acquire a higher social status, and in the case of families in lower positions, to experience upward social mobility (BARRÉRE, 2013, p. 23).

It is in this context that in international literature various readings about the possible ways for contemporary youth schooling proliferate in the early twenty-first century. For purposes of this section, we shall revisit controversial analyses concerning this problematic stemming from Yuval Harari (2018) historiographic writings, Jonathan Haidt’s psychological studies, and Mariano Narodowski’s pedagogical approach. Summarising, later we shall put these considerations into the form of a dialogue with our research findings. Each of these critical approaches, which are pluralistic, permit us to map the outlines of this debate.

Harari (2018), in his *21 Lessons for the 21st Century* (in Brazil, ‘21 Lições para o século 21’), draws a diagnostic of social narratives that used to predominate in the end of the last century, making explicit the power of the liberal narrative, that one praising the value of freedom and human rights. After the 2008 crisis, the historian diagnoses disillusionment with the liberal narrative engendered by ‘sense of disorientation and impending doom, [which] is exacerbated by the accelerating pace of technological disruption’ (p. 21). In this scenery, artificial technology, biotechnology, and artificial intelligence might help in restructuring economies and societies, including the very architectonic of life.

One of the challenges Harari (2008) cites is how we shall teach our children and adolescents born on the early century, these who will lead their own lives with much information and little certainty. Apart from far-reaching view of the cosmos, it would

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<sup>1</sup> Thus the impossibility to fix universal meanings concerning adolescence is evinced, once routes of these individuals are diverse (involving aspects like family relationships, networks of sociability, insertion in the world of work, gender, race, among others).

be necessary to live with uncertainty and constant presence of algorithms trying to unveil our lives.

So, what should we be teaching? Many pedagogical experts argue that schools should switch to teaching “the four Cs”—critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. More broadly, they believe, schools should downplay technical skills and emphasize general-purpose life skills. Most important of all will be the ability to deal with change, learn new things, and preserve your mental balance in unfamiliar situations (HARARI, 2018, p. 323).

Guiding this reflection on to the twenty-first century context, Harari (2018) holds that adolescents need to relativise faith in adults, because these ‘knew things very well and the world was slowly changing’ (p. 328). In this century, conversely, ‘due to the accelerating pace of changes, you will never be sure whether what adults are telling you is a result from a timeless wisdom or out-of-date prejudice’ (p. 328). Next, we bring pertinent (and controversial) reading of recent texts by Haidt and Lukianoff (2019) and Narodowski (2016).

Upon examining universities around the world, Jonathan Haidt and Greg Lukianoff (2019) question whether ‘we are adequately training the young to face adult life, or we are overprotecting them (p. 24). In a very provocative work, the American authors explain that three wrong ideas have been introduced in the education of the new generations. The first idea is that young people are not prepared to be contradicted, or to deal with divergent ideas, so that they are weak to face challenges from a society that is more and more plural. Faith in their own sentiments is another idea the authors have challenged: to live with other feelings and perceptions would be crucial to enlarge our view of life and people. The third wrong idea, Haidt and Lukianoff (2019) have discussed, refers to the binary view that society is divided into good and bad people.

The authors’ concern is that, even paved with good intentions, such ideas may lead adolescent education to a scenery where they can no longer listen to people and arguments they do not like, which might interfere with social, emotional, and intellectual development. The term authors have recurrently used is ‘coddling’, which reminds us of the perception that we were ‘mollycoddling’ or ‘overprotecting’ this generation young and adolescents, teaching them in contact with knowledge, people, and institutions hardly contributing to their autonomy and construction of a shared future.

We have found another reading by Mariano Narodowski (2016), who argues that there has been pedagogical mutation characterised by declining adult authority, or as he calls it, the shape of ‘a world without adults’. His considerations take as a starting point a significant change concerning the possibility of a childhood’s end since the 1970s. As he discusses, if mysteries of life were preserved and transmitted by adults over the last centuries, adults ‘believe they have seen in new childhoods and adolescences the key to open doors to understand recent social changes’ (NARODOWSKI, 2016, p. 23).

Such changes tend to reposition meanings of childhood, adolescence, and adult life.

While commenting Margaret Mead's social thinking, the Argentinian educator favours the notion of 'postfigurative culture' and its implications to think about childhood. For Narodowski, the value of the study lies in its depth and heuristic potential to explain conceptions of childhood and youth occurring in the twentieth century. From this perspective, we can state that our culture was a postfigurative one as it was 'based on the shape of a heteronomous and dependent child and on an autonomous and responsible condition' (p. 33). However, this evident legitimacy of adult authority has fallen into decline.

Being young (including child or adolescent) no longer supposes lack to be covered by the correct adult training action as time goes by. On the contrary, it is a set of positive attributes not only for them — and this particularly — in adults who wish to have an outward expression, language, and aesthetic tastes similar to youngsters' (NARODOWSKI, 2016, p. 84-85).

Along this introductory section, we seek to trace out how adolescent and young schooling has been studied in current traditions of thinking that are derived from different fields of knowledge. Harari's historical provocations, Haidt's psychological precaution, and new training conditions Narodowski depicted function as a starting point for an attentive exam of policies and practices of schooling addressed to this public. Are we prepared to assign responsibilities concerning the future to younger generations? Does our society 'mollycoddle' adolescents to the point of preventing them from living with difference or listening to divergent thinking? Are the very adults struggling to recognise themselves in this condition due to endless extending of adolescence? Our goal was not to establish common grounds or fix a style of reading for this question. In our own way, we shall seek the help of these different sagacious traditions in the following sections.

## **Young schooling and models of educational innovation**

Young and adolescent schooling has been a privileged object of study in history and the sociology of education since the late twentieth century (BARRÉRE, 2013). For Zufiaurre and Hamilton (2015), from the theoretical perspective, we have experienced the right time to discuss about education and schooling repositioning them from through other lenses. Reflecting on circumstances permitting the advent and consolidation of the modern school is still a relevant object; while early in this century, we need to update our diagnoses. The development of industrial societies, processes of secularisation or even the centrality of rationalism — characteristics of a school forged in modernity — entered a wide process of reshaping, either compelled by globalisation and neoliberalism, or by the very reordering of the school and pedagogy in the last century. The challenge Zufiaurre and Hamilton have posed takes as starting point the notion of 'infrastructure

of schooling' (2015, p. 13). That which they call infrastructure of schooling provides possibilities to question educational proposals, guiding rationalities or even training disposals historically contributing to the outlining of predominant school forms. Departing from a consecutive succession or mere circumstance, these infrastructures have been constructed in different social processes characterised by complex demands for updating and change in its time.

The concept of schooling has occupied a privileged position in the argument the authors have proposed as an 'institutional concentration of some educational routines one believes to be repetitive and successful' (ZUFIAURRE; HAMILTON, 2015, p. 15). In this light, schools refer to a set of processes and institutional resources, leading to a site, a specific way to teach, and specific materials and techniques. In their modern form, schooling practices began in Europe between the sixteenth and seventeenth century, and by particular agencies of power, 'acted as agents of human experience in particular directions' (p. 15). Class, curriculum, and didactics, as we know them, help to reorganise and redistribute the teaching experience in particular directions.

Schooling plays an important role in distributing experience and human resources. It supposes to be a central part in political and moral economy in modernism, permits and regulates a regime of distribution and addressing, as well as retention of human resources. In these terms that schooling processes and resources work, or may work, as governing inequality (ZUFIAURRE; HAMILTON, 2015, p. 15).

In a classical publication, Alvarez-Uría (1996) helped in a very pertinent diagnosis of relations between school and the capitalist spirit. When he entered this classical debate, the Spanish sociologist argued that, further than reproductive theories predominant at that time, school and capitalism 'have been forged in time and space, subjected to multiple transformations, successive adjustment and readjustment, as well as new rationalisations that made it very difficult to — sometimes prevent from — tracing clearly at the margins of history their true nature' (1996, p. 133). From this framing, relations between school and capitalism could not be easily traced due to their complexity and multidimensionality. In other words, it would be a permanently rewritten diagnosis.

As for Zufiaurre and Hamilton (2015), the starting point for Alvarez-Uría's historical digressions was found in the school working forged since the sixteenth century. Either through a Weberian approach, or his Foucauldian updating, the sociologist depicts the invention of the modern school as a 'machinery' which, in homology to religious organisations, acted in 'producing new personalities and subjectivities characterised by a new spirit' (ALVAREZ-URÍA, 1996, p. 136). His approach still proposes similarities between school and total institutions (Goffman) and greedy institutions (Cosser).

In total institutions as in a convent, there are disciplinary rules, control of motion, time marked by doorbells replacing conventional church bell



chimes; finally inmates are obliged to submit to pre-established norms. [...] On the other hand, the school shares some features with the greedy institutions: it requires student and teacher total commitment, mind and body immersion in activities totally involving the subjects, not only in classroom time, but also in their daily life and rest hours (ALVAREZ-URÍA, 1996, p. 136).

Construction of school subjects' discipline and absolute commitment has served as an explanatory metaphor for modern school consolidation. The spirit of capitalism, as Alvarez-Uría depicted in analogy to the Weberian thinking, has found in this institution a favourable site for the construction of the industrial society. However, along the twentieth century, through different routes, we have found a reshaping of capitalism — in its permanent crises — and, in an articulated way, new demands emerge for schools associated with new training profiles to be shaped.

With the neo-liberalism advent and management of the way of life stemming from this neo-liberalism (DARDOT; LAVAL, 2018; SAFATLE, 2021), concerns as to encourage innovations into school cultures, particularly in the school of adolescents. Their social and professional inclusion, preparation to be a citizen, or even the groundwork for higher education were placed under debate, particularly regarding a school inability to respond to contemporary challenges. Innovating has become a fundamental imperative for young schooling (SILVA, 2020b), requiring changes in the training action, and, concurrently, stimulating them in the search for results in standardised tests.

Upon carefully examining models of educational innovation developed and implemented in Brazil in its variations and specificities, we have seen concern with renewal in teaching methodologies and introduction of technological artefacts able to modernise the curriculum and teaching action. Specifically in the teaching stage of high school, it is proclaimed the need for young schooling to incorporate daily aspects of these students making staying in school more attractive and ludic. Care in diversifying our adolescents' school experiences, encouraging more significative learning, is a determinant factor in constructing fairer and democratic schools (SILVA, 2019). By the way, the educational literature has widely developed this aspect in the last decade.

Arguing about creative schools, Ken Robinson and Lou Aronica (2019) depict how the standardising culture has negatively influenced on schooling. Often driven by political and economic interests, this standardising culture renders unviable a revolution in schooling organisations. For the authors, such revolution 'is based on the belief of the individual's values, right for self-determination, our potential to evolve and live a full life, and civic responsibility and respect for others' (2019, p. 7). Regarding teachers' work in the construction of creative schools, Robinson and Aronica hold that these professionals need 'a wide repertoire of abilities and techniques' (p. 11), considering

high education expectations and need to empower students in construction of their projects.

Widening this brief diagnostic, Sahlberg (2018), by commenting Finnish experiences, challenges us to seek other ways to renew teaching establishments further than reformism and current performance measures. From its perspective, ‘the Finnish experience shows that consistent focus on equity and cooperation — not choice and competition — can lead to an education system where all children learn well’ (p. 47). Issues like personalised learning and distinction were posed as basic principles for education objects could be achieved.

A new flexibility within the Finnish education system enabled schools to learn from one another, and thus make best practices universal by adopting innovative approaches to organize schooling. It also encouraged teachers and schools to continue to expand their repertoires of teaching methods, and to individualize teaching in order to meet the needs of all students (SAHLBERG, 2018, p. 90).

Another important dimension refers to emerging education challenges in the digital age. Recently Pérez-Gómez (2015) has argued for updating the teaching literature before the accelerating pace of the current change. We have experienced changes in the nature of production, politics, and the very daily life of people. For the author, with the advent of the digital age — and the shaping of a network society Castells (2000) indicated — we have to reflect on a wide set of aspects, among them, the expansion of digital tools, open-coded initiatives, the shared character of knowledge, the demand for new cognitive skills, or even new models of collaborative work.

The education renewal from this diagnostic brings with it the recognition in students’ subjective changes (SILVA, 2020b), and, at the same time, the possibility of new modes of cultural literacy for citizens.

The challenge for contemporary school resides in difficulty and need to change the deluge of disorganised fragmented information of knowledge, i.e., organised bodies of proposition, models, plans, and mental maps helping to understand reality in a better way, as well as in difficulty to change this knowledge into thinking and wisdom (PÉREZ-GÓMEZ, 2015, p. 28).

Widening the scope for this brief revise involving issues to articulate young schooling and education renewal, in the following section we shall encourage articulations between the contemporary construction of adolescence and the seek for new curriculum designs based on education renewal. From composing an empirical corpus derived teaching situations encouraged in schools in southern Brazil, as well as the analysis of media materials addressed to these institutions, we shall depict particular outlines and tendencies of teaching education for the school of adolescents. The hypothesis to be explored is that current models of education renewal are still distant

from the possibility to encourage changes in the education infrastructure, as well as the increase of democratic curriculum practices once the latter are based on processes of training aestheticisation guided by the ubiquity of entertainment.

## **The training aestheticisation and the ubiquity of entertainment: critical appreciation**

Anchored in the possibility of producing analytical perspectives for the study of curriculum practices contemporaneously mobilised in high school education, we shall seek to construct a diagnostic linked to some the key contributions of the Curriculum Studies, dimensioning our study in the interface between theorisations for the field of Didactics and the contemporary social theory. In methodological terms, we have organised this study in two stages: a) production of Brazilian-published literature revise about adolescent schooling, assigning special attention to issues concerning training situations; and b) conduction of episodic interviews with (she)male teachers working in high school in four different regions in Rio Grande do Sul (southern Brazil). At the same time, we have delivered a conceptual revise in different traditions of the Curriculum Studies.

Specifically in this paper, we are analysing data collected in the second stage of the study, i.e., empirical forays into four state schools at Porto Alegre, Caxias do Sul, Pelotas, and Passo Fundo, in the southern region in our country. Definition of the schools occurred from systematic interlocutions with the respective regional education coordination bodies, privileging schools that had recently made curriculum reform for introduction of active methods and teaching differentiation. Apart from sessions to observe school activities, eight episodic interviews were conducted with teachers and pedagogical coordinators working in schools encouraging curriculum renewal. Two criteria were employed to select interviewees: 1) that they arrange the development of renewing curriculum practices; and 2) that they work in state schools and that they have their training work regarded as relevant by regional education coordination bodies.

It is worth highlighting that the option of this mode of interview refers to the importance of understanding the teachers' experience in the issue, especially to diagnose and depict how they mention their possibilities of professional intervention, pieces of knowledge selected for their classes, and methods chosen for this stage of the basic education. For Flick (2009), the starting point for the episodic interview is the supposition that a subject's experiences in a particular field should be recorded and reminded as forms of narrative, episodic, and semantic knowledge (p. 172). The episodic interview favours description of interviewees' experiences.

### *The issue of ubiquity of entertainment in curriculum practices*

In the data analysis to be presented below, we have verified the argument recurrence

about shaping more creative dynamic classes characterised by students' activities. Far from being a new training tendency, as Charlot (2020) has admonished us, from this perspective, we seek for classes where entertainment is central. In a context in which neo-liberal neo-technicism (PIMENTA, 2019) prevails, one may find a ubiquitous condition for the entertainment. In its Latin origin, ubiquity refers to that which is omnipresent, which can be found everywhere.

On examining closer contemporary society issues, philosopher Byung-Chul Han (2019) formulated the hypothesis that entertainment has been converted into a new paradigm to explain our relationship with ourselves, institutions, and the very society. In its reading, entertainment has become ubiquitous currently, i.e., it is present in every site of human action, rather than in the free time. Entertainment has become chronic: associating free time activities with work, learning and leisure, study and amusement. In the words of Han (2019), 'much earlier he formulated entirely another relationship with knowledge' (p. 201).

Extending this argument, we can think that entertainment escapes its occasionality in different Western societies, addressing intense totalisation in experiences lived early in this century. Once again drawing on the philosopher, 'so entertainment, beyond episodes, is not simply about creating a new mode of living life, a new experience in the world and time' (HAN, 2019, p. 202-203). When we drew this diagnostic to think about young schooling in the above context, we soon verified two prevailing tendencies: a) the development of creative classes and management of learning; and b) the encouragement interactive classes and seek for entertainment. As we shall elaborate on henceforth, it is a significant displacement in curriculum practices addressed to Brazilian young and adolescent schooling.

### *Creative classes and learning management*

Seeking for more creative classes and procedures favouring students' learning management became recurrent in Brazil. To some degree, it is a demand long required in the field of education in its diverse critical strands. Summarising, Pimenta (2019) highlights that the resignification of this field takes us to think about teaching from a multidimensional perspective that, while it comes closer to the students' demands, 'it must understand it as an educative pedagogical praxis to consider contradictions and quandaries in the contexts in which it is conducted' (p. 34). Concern for classes and widening in relationships between teaching and learning are also expressed as key issues in this training literature in Brazil.

Regarding the studies of young and adolescent education, from a pedagogical perspective the studies of Mesquita (2020) stand out. Especially in concerning high school, she proposes 'training for youth', from a multidimensional perspective, to encourage 'interactive methodologies, emphasis on a relational dimension favouring

interactions and recognition of the teacher's role as a meaning maker' (p. 201). Seeking construction of young protagonists requires the disposal of instruments favouring dialogue and interaction.

As we noted in preceding sections, we have no longer found concern to update the teaching repertoire for teachers who will work in practices of schooling adolescents. However, unlike what researchers in the field of teaching have pointed out, concern with creativity and seek for interactivity became obsession, coming very closer to what we have called 'modernising compulsion' (SILVA, 2020b). In the above-mentioned text, Pimenta (2019) has already announced a tendency to return to instrumental training, encouraged by diverse authors holding certain 'neo-liberal neo-technicism' (p. 19) in the country. Charlot (2020) moves forward with this hypothesis stating that now what we have called 'contemporary pedagogy' no longer exists as these education movements relinquish the anthropologic task of reflecting on education proposals and goals.

While observing curricular practices of southern Brazilian schools, we have found recurring concern with learning management and seek for more creative classes. The interviewed teachers hold the importance of reorganising classes with students' demands and autonomy construction. They have also indicated the relevance of improving our language to dialogue with twenty-first-century adolescents. There is no doubt these arguments are important, but what called our attention was the concern to make classes more creative — 'amazing experiences', as an interviewee mentioned — and the possibility to encourage learning with play, games, and new didactics.

One of the recurring dimensions evinced is how digital medias can inform classes, providing more space for creativity and interaction among students and with teachers. We present interviewing excerpts with two teachers below.

For me **the class is a big hypertext**. As people surf on the internet in various ways, I believe the class could be though this way: quite interactive and **every student can follow a different hyperlink**.

Source: Entrevista PEM/03 (our italics)

Our work as teachers **gets easier with digital medias, they inform the class**. I see in the school that classes students like the most are those ones that **don't teach only theory**. There are videos, plays, online research, sometimes all this at the same time. They always tell me we need to **be open to dialogue, to talk about doubts, to be with them**. I think: more **connection** among people.

Source: Entrevista PEM/01 (our italics)

Another underscored dimension was the seek for new instruments, new modes of organisation of learning time and space, and different ways to draw the students' attention. By the way, this issue appears both in the need to equip laboratories and thematic classrooms, and the very intention to make funny classes. As we have indicated

above, these institutions are pilot-project schools in the high school reform under way in Brazil; so they became a benchmark for the public education.

We present below extra excerpts of episodic interviews with two pedagogical coordinators. The first coordinator pointed out her experience with the theme of visual thinking, in which the production of graphs, mental maps and creative notes were privileged. The school sought to work with more interactive learning techniques. Apart from underscoring the possibility to equip a new laboratory, the other coordinator, in turn, praised the need to make the school a more comfortable funny site.

Last year a project was made with the high school about **visual thinking**. The idea was to **think how we could study and make this study more dynamic**. It involved classes for more than a month and even today there a people using it. **Mental maps, open graphs and creative notes** were the studied themes. I remember teachers were saying that the most important was to know how to **select and prepare information**, singling out ideas by colours and arranging maps.

Source: Entrevista CEM/03 (our italics)

We bought many instruments, **equipped our new laboratory also to welcome the New High School**. Our challenge, so long ago, is to construct a school to be closer to students. **Let's dispute their attention**, it may seem strange, but that's it really. Making a nice school, seeking new methodologies, and trying to **make their lives here lighter, funnier**. To be an adolescent is not easy, you know how many people have problems with depression, these thing.

Source: Entrevista CEM/05 (our italics)

In general, the last talk of the pedagogical coordinator provides the axis of concern for this analytics: to make classes more creative is to dispute the attention of adolescents making classes lighter and funnier. Although we disagree with this premise, as we have stated above, our challenge is to show its excesses. Once again drawing on philosopher Byung Chul-Han, when entertainment is chronic it is possible to think in a fusion between work and free time, a kind of 'cognitainment', that is, 'a hybrid marriage of knowledge and entertainment' (2019, p. 201). There is an infrastructure of schooling characterised by the aestheticisation of pedagogical doing which, while it is engendered in the logic of lightness and amusement, it enters the symbolic struggles for an economy of the attention in the school of adolescents. For Hamilton and Zufiurre (2015), we can state this is an internal reorganisation of education and schooling.

### *Interactive classes and the seek for entertainment*

Hamilton and Zufiurre (2015) remind us that the history of schooling is not a succession of events; however, it is important to conduct scrutiny of schooling narratives

that, often, refer to new milestones. Describing the infrastructure of schooling, in light of this, provides an opportunity to conduct circumstantial syntheses of new directions of the school practices. Some similar notes we have found in Aquino and Boto (2019) as they revise the concept of educational innovation positing it as a ‘new-old’ imperative, and in Biesta (2021) as he states the present language of learning leads us to a ‘restricted education diet’.

As we have been describing it, a demand evinced in adolescence literature now refers to subjective impacts in the use of digital technologies. From this argumentative field, this implies redefining the issue of time, space, and teaching experiences these subjects are exposed in school. In Brazil, we have found different curriculum modalities responding to this challenge: either reducing class hours or enlivening them with hybrid methodologies, or improving the modes of student participation in classes making them more interactive. We rehearse a seek for interactive experiences beyond the models of teacher-centred classes. When we first met Han’s (2019) philosophical writings, this perception that the entertainment becomes a new paradigm immediately drew our attention as it is able to explain new relationships we are having with ourselves and the world.

As soon as entertainment acquires this status, we also observe in teaching literature a wide process of rereading of the New School studies which already one year ago announced the threshold of the student experience and activity (AQUINO; BOTO, 2019). However, a new set of conditions is important to explain this issue at this moment. With the neo-liberalism advent, with changes in the world of work, and massification of the access to digital technologies, the seek for flexible subjectivities begins so as to encourage the concern for the immediate future and agency modes of life open the constant change (SENNETT, 2008). The pace of change is accelerating and teachers are positioned between educational innovation and hurry to achieve results, making the quality of classes to be linked to the quality of changes.

Our episodic interviews with teachers and coordinators working in southern Brazilian High School show the above-mentioned tension: there is a search for interactive classes and performance in large-scale assessments. All the excerpts below show these tensions.

**More interactive classes are real!** Last year taught nice classes using **Socratic**. It is a tool to make **live questions** and answer them, these stuffs help students to participate. One thing I have noted: some students have nothing new and this creates delay in student learning and quality of classes, you know?

Source: Entrevista PEM/04 (our italics)

**Real interactive** classes are very important. I see teachers using many YouTube videos, dinette sets, and go for a walk. Adolescents need these things, **they are restless and they’re always ahead of us**. Some teachers chat with them, for example, about **Netflix series**, this brings **new subjects** for our classes. Keeping

the classes attractive is very important

Source: Entrevista PEM/04 (our italics)

I hardly see high school teachers wish to make something different. **Enem and vestibulares are the biggest concern in the classes.** In the beginning of the year, I think in the first semester, some **game-centred activities** were organised. I find **games amazing** and they often draw their attention. Games are **funny and students without even noticing it.** This project I'm talking about was with **simulators in the field of business.**

Source: Entrevista PEM/02 (our italics)

Finally, we could think that even the preparation for the High School Teaching National Exam (ENEM, in Portuguese), the key national assessment for this step of the basic education, should come with an entertainment-centred pedagogical design. Han (2019), in these conditions, reminds us that 'only that which entertains is real and effective' (p. 206). In other words, under the aegis of the ubiquity of entertainment, the very reality seems to have become an effect of entertainment. As we argued in preceding sections, schooling of Brazilian adolescents needs to modernise for demands of the new time, either moving forward in reorganising knowledge and experiences to be taught, or renewing the teaching repertoire for the dialogue with these subjects. What we have sought to indicate in the development of this analytics refers to the training limits from entertainment ubiquity, serving as a pedagogical reference to reform curriculum practices for the school of adolescents in Brazil.

## Final considerations

In this study we have sought to describe displacements in curriculum practices occurring in children's schooling in the last decades, choosing to conduct episodic interviews with teachers working in southern Brazil. When we diagnosed entertainment ubiquity similar to the one Han (2019) philosophically developed, we have managed to characterise some repositioning of class concept, either associated to the management of learning or articulating the seek for interactive strategies characterised by entertainment. Without dispraising such possibilities of encouragement of educational innovation, our interest was to indicate that new pedagogies for adolescent schools bring marks of widespread entertainment.

In tune with Zuffiurre and Hamilton methodological terms, we have sought to describe and analyse the infrastructure of schooling in this context. This concept has permitted us to challenge the educational proposals, the guiding rationalities, and training provisions Brazilian contemporary education has evinced. Teachers' talks, collected by episodic interviews, permitted us to state that present curriculum and



pedagogical designs for adolescent schooling, as they are anchored in aestheticisation processes and gourmetisation of educative doing, are still distance from the possibility to encourage changes in education infrastructure. While it is a desirable goal for schools in our country, the seek for creative interactive classes seems to be insufficient for the shaping of democratic, integrated, and innovative curricula.

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