

The disciplinary community in Goodson: impasses in a post-structural approach

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ABSTRACT

Based on our research about curriculum policy in a discursive approach, we discuss the Ivor Goodson's thought focusing the interpretation of disciplinary community as such subjectivities produced in the policy. We argue that Goodson proposes the notion of disciplinary community as a professional community that impels the curriculum policy and uses the name of the school subject in the fight for their interests. We conjecture, in the context of curriculum theory, his perspective of political subject – the disciplinary community –, by trying to present some impasses generated by the conception of disciplinary community in the history of school subjects, considering the appropriation of this thought in a discursive approach. This paper, in summary, focuses on what Goodson makes us to think about disciplinary communities, and how his notion of disciplinary subjectivity is changed in the production of curriculum policy, insofar the post-structural approaches are introduced in our researches.

KEYWORDS

disciplinary community; discourse; curriculum policy.

A COMUNIDADE DISCIPLINAR EM GOODSON: IMPASSES EM UM REGISTRO PÓS-ESTRUTURAL

RESUMO

Tendo em vista nossa trajetória de pesquisa investigando políticas de currículo em uma perspectiva discursiva, abordamos o pensamento de Ivor Goodson com foco na interpretação das comunidades disciplinares como subjetivações produzidas na política. Defendemos que Goodson propõe a noção de comunidade disciplinar como comunidade profissional que dinamiza a política curricular e vale-se do nome da disciplina na luta por seus interesses. Conjecturamos, no âmbito da teoria curricular, sua perspectiva de sujeito político – a comunidade disciplinar – visando apresentar alguns impasses gerados pelo pensamento da história das disciplinas escolares sobre a comunidade disciplinar, tendo em vista sua apropriação em um enfoque discursivo. Este texto, em síntese, focaliza o que Goodson nos faz pensar sobre as comunidades disciplinares e como sua noção de subjetividade disciplinar na produção das políticas de currículo é modificada ao incorporarmos aportes pós-estruturais em nossas pesquisas.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

comunidade disciplinar; discurso; política de currículo.

LA COMUNIDAD DISCIPLINAR EN GOODSON: OBSTÁCULOS EN UN ENFOQUE POST-ESTRUCTURAL

RESUMEN

Basados en nuestras investigaciones de las políticas de currículo desde un enfoque discursivo, discutimos sobre el pensamiento de Ivor Goodson con foco en la interpretación de las comunidades disciplinares considerándolas como subjetivaciones producidas en la política. Defendemos que Goodson propone la noción de comunidad disciplinar como comunidad profesional que activa la política curricular y se apoya en el nombre de la disciplina en la lucha por sus intereses. Conjeturamos, en el currículo, su perspectiva de sujeto político –a comunidad disciplinar–, con el intento de presentar algunos de los obstáculos generados por el pensamiento de la historia de las asignaturas sobre la comunidad disciplinar, en vista la apropiación de ese pensamiento desde un enfoque discursivo. Este texto apunta, en síntesis, lo que Goodson nos hace pensar sobre las comunidades disciplinares y como se cambia su noción de subjetividad disciplinar en las políticas de currículo cuando incorporamos el post-estructuralismo.

PALABRAS CLAVE

comunidad disciplinar, discurso, política de currículo.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS TEXT

The main conclusions and forms of operating of the History of School Subjects by Ivor Goodson have received great emphasis in curriculum research in Brazil. While other authors like André Chervel, Dominique Juliá, Stephen Ball are also references for those interested in questions related to the organization of school subjects – and its history, structure in different spaces and times and capacity to control the meaning of the curriculum – Goodson's hypotheses about the emergence, stabilization and change of subjects through history have received greater attention from curriculum researchers. This is no different abroad (Garrat, 2000; Green, 1999; John, 2005; Kirk; MacDonald; Tinning, 1997; O'Neill, 2000; Popkewitz, 2010).

In Brazil specifically, Antonio Flavio Moreira not only incorporated some of Goodson's conclusions into his PhD thesis (Moreira, 1990), but also contributed to the formation of a research group focused on the History of School Subjects. The work of Ferreira, Gomes and Lopes (2001), Lopes (1999), Lopes and Macedo (2002), Macedo (1998, 2000) and the work of Moreira himself (Moreira, 1998; Ferreira; Moreira, 2001) are examples of this first profitable moment. Later, even after this group had become reorganized in other institutions and formats, its members continued to conduct studies influenced by this initial direction. This research led to new work by these same authors and by new members of the field that focused on the study of Goodson's texts. With respect to this second period, we can highlight work by Ferreira (2007), Gomes, Selles and Lopes (2013), Lopes (2008), Lopes and Macedo (2009, 2011); Macedo (2007), Martins (2007a, 2007b), Oliveira (2009), Rosa (2007, 2010), Selles and Ferreira (2010) and Souza (2009). This group of studies, followed by several theses and dissertations supervised by these authors or by researchers in other networks, are emblematic of the extent to which Goodson's theorization has been profitable to the curriculum field in our country.

With what can be called a post-critical turning point¹ for the curriculum field in Brazil in the 1990s, which was most expressive in the Curriculum Working group of the National Association of Graduate Studies and Research in Education (ANPEd) (Carvalho, 2012), a hybrid trend began to develop in the field between critical and post-critical tendencies (Lopes; Macedo, 2014). In specific relation to work on curriculum policies works that incorporates discussions about the history

1 Theoretical considerations about the question of using the already consecrated term post-critical, are beyond the scope of this study. We recommend Lopes (2013). We take advantage of the opportunity to point out the term "turning point", equally renowned, is not used by us with the idea that all curriculum productions in Brazil become post-structural and post-modern since the 1990s. We want to emphasize the entry of these productions and the change of the research schedule that occurred in the field. Maybe current research in relation to that is produced about theses and dissertations in Brazil, such as the work of Lopes; Macedo and Paiva (2006) carried out from 1996-2006, would come to the same conclusion that the authors of the historical-critical approach are still dominant. In spite of this, the registrations that weaken the historical-critical predominance have probably been amplified.

of school subjects into curriculum studies, this hybridism appears to be especially significant. It operates with the intent to articulate conclusions about school and the disciplinary community with discursive and post-structural dimensions, especially when the investigations focus on a particular school subject. In a specific manner, in our research group, the increased incorporation of discursive contributions has led us to the need to more vigorously question the impasses generated by this hybridism (Abreu, 2010; Busnardo, 2010; César, 2012; Matheus, 2009; Oliveira, 2012a; Torres, 2011).

In an earlier study (Lopes, 2011), the notion of school subject was questioned considering discursive approaches. Based on this interpretation, we argue that school subject fields are not epistemological divisions, but policy articulations² produced by contingent subjectivations involved with these school subjects. With this reading, we understand that it is also necessary to question that which is understood by disciplinary community. Who are the social actors of this community? How is the subjectivity understanding disturbed, such that we begin to operate with processes of subjectivation in the post-structural approach? In what way does the notion of disciplinary community in Goodson show itself to be (in)compatible with the post-structural discussions about subjectivation.

The choice to address Goodson in this article, instead of other authors of the history of school subjects mentioned earlier, is not because he is highly significant in the trajectory of our research group or because of his the importance of his thinking for the curriculum field, as we have already pointed out. Above all, it is based on the fact that we understand that Goodson has advanced most in the studies of the history of school subjects, in the questioning of a epistemological view of subjects and in the defense of a conception of disciplinary community detached from determinisms exclusively associated with the economic structure. In other words, it is because Goodson's work has proved to be very powerful and emblematic in the realm of social-historical thought, in the attempt to articulate structure and action, structural determinisms and possibilities for escape of the subject, which we think is valid for discursively problematizing his conclusions in the post-structural curriculum approach.

It is important to emphasize that this does not involve questioning Goodson for not taking a post-structural approach. From a discursive perspective, it is not pertinent to restrict an author or a theory to categories of right or wrong, appropriate or inappropriate in absolute terms, or even to operate with a pretension of surpassing his argumentations. We are interested in understanding what Goodson allows for interpretation of disciplinary community and what he blocks with respect to discursive approaches.

For this reason, in the first section we explore tension concerning the notion of school subject. We seek to argue, as Goodson advances, in relation to other critical and socio-historical theorizations, building the notion of school disciplinary community as a community of teaching professionals that use the school subject's

2 About articulations, see Laclau (2011) or, in the curriculum field, Lopes (2012a).

name in the fight for their interests, supporting themselves with the social bonds found in schooling processes.

In a second moment, attentive to Goodson's studies about the school subjects, we conjecture limits and possibilities for his thinking in the post-structural curriculum theory, focusing on his perspective of policy subjectivity – the disciplinary community – as a body that produces the curriculum policies. We present some impasses generated by the thinking of the history of school subjects itself about the disciplinary community. In the third part, we discuss possibilities to deconstruct moments of Goodson's thinking, focusing on the interpretation of the disciplinary communities as subjectivations produced in the policy.

We think it is important to focus on these performing subjectivities of the policy, because we investigate the production of curriculum policies by those involved in the production of disciplinary discourses, but also with other discourses that circulate in the area known as Basic Education (*Educação Básica*, in Brazil). We think, therefore, that this paper is less about what Goodson thinks about disciplinary communities, and more about what Goodson makes us think about disciplinary communities and how his notion of disciplinary subjectivity in the production of curriculum policies is modified when we incorporate post-structural contributions to our research. In other words, this article does not try to criticize Goodson for not attending to discursive contributions, but to investigate the impasses generated in his theorization by the post-structural approaches, which we explore in our investigations.

GOODSON: DISCIPLINE, SUBJECTIVITY AND POLICY STRUGGLE

The links between Goodson's work with the sociology of curriculum and more specifically with the main conclusions of the New Sociology of Education are constantly reiterated³. It has been less frequently indicated how the insertion of his work does not occur without theoretical constraints in the movements with which he is connected. Goodson (1995) proposes a theoretical-analytical approach based on a historicist concern and simultaneously on a situational relevance caused by the social structure at a given moment, together with the understanding that engagement and subjective decision are a result of the contextual overlapping of history and social structure. With this approach, Goodson (1993, 1995) considers the history of school subjects based on the involvement of individuals who are professionally linked to a certain school subject, in a given social context and taking into account, simultaneously, the historical approach of the subject field and of schooling. As a professional in a determined school subject field, the teacher is linked to a community. Once these elements that indicate his theorization are interlinked, Goodson (1993, 1995) understands the history of the curriculum, to be the history of schooling itself.

3 See, for example, Viñao Frago (2006).

Theoretically, Goodson (1993, 1995) criticizes many recurring readings among his possible colleagues, in the New Sociology of Education and in the reconceptualization movement. He (1993, p. 193) considers the purely critical-reproductivist perspectives as “raw notions”, based on the concept that teachers are in a passive position with respect to policy. To the contrary, Goodson (1993; 1995) indicates that, among the main reasons for the influence of an academic approach in a school subject, are the allocation of resources and job security and possibilities for professional success of the teachers. This perspective (Goodson, 1993) significantly inverts the common among educational sociologists, who may conceive the influence of an academic discourse on school subject as a simple and unidirectional form of domination, of the exercise of power.

According to Goodson, power relations are not as concentrated as a rigid understanding proposes. By arguing that there is no pure domination, without the interest and operation of school subject groups, we think that Goodson is not dismissing, in the sense of a broader critical current, the capacity of a certain elite knowledge, which is a defender of science, to emphasize its forms of knowledge as legitimate standards. Goodson (1993) also recognizes that teachers, components of school subject communities, operate in favor of a greater link between the school knowledge and the student, precisely because he considers that a greater proximity and identification with the school subject of greater prestige may lend the school subject better conditions for survival in the curriculum. The actions of these teachers would be motivated by material interests and a promising career. This would be attained through the struggle for the maintenance and stabilization of the subject, and by promoting that it detains knowledge of high status, so that it occupies a prestigious place in the official curriculum.

This is why Goodson criticizes philosophical and sociological basis. With respect to the first group, where works by Hirst, Peters and Phenix are considered seminal, Goodson (1993) argues that they consider the academic discipline as a matrix for schools and school knowledge as dependent on scientific/academic knowledge, and therefore the school subject as a version of university knowledge adapted for the purposes of teaching. According to the author, this interpretation favors the hierarchy of knowledge, in which scientific and academic subjects lead the production of knowledge and make viable the legitimation of academic coordination of the school curriculum.

In the second group, studies based on critical sociology, Goodson criticizes works like those by Young for neglecting the actions of different disciplinary groups in the defense and promotion of school subjects. This position is presented, even though Goodson (1993) agrees with the New Sociology of Education's reading that curriculum and school subjects are socio-historical constructions strongly related to dominant interests. What Goodson (1993) proposes – in harmony with and simultaneously distancing himself from the New Sociology of Education – is not a disregard of the dominant interests, but rather that these interests are also mobilized (maybe even exploited) in the interaction of the different groups with these interests. With this perspective, Goodson (1993, 1995) calls for a theoretical

approach in which different social groups actively operate in (relation to) the production of traditions, and can use the dominant rhetoric to promote their own interests.

It is with this perspective that Goodson (1993, 1995) tries to understand the work of disciplinary groups in the promotion of school subjects. In this way, according to Ball (1983), Goodson is oriented by Weberian interactionist thinking. Even though Goodson (1995) himself criticizes use of the interactionist interpretation for the investigation of school subjects, because he thinks that this approach emphasizes the school practice, the negotiations made in the school context, as explanatory of the processes of legitimation and change in knowledge. The interactionist reading, from his perspective, could wind up reinserting a perspective close to the sociological vision that he has criticized, since the school practice would now be overvalued in detriment to the interests from beyond the school, sealing itself off as an all encompassing explanation of the social processes that produce the curriculum.

Goodson rejects an explanatory model based purely on a philosophical perspective, from the sociology of knowledge or on Weberian interactionism, because of his appropriation of historical studies. According to Goodson (1993), a historical approach to school subjects can address the problematic of the processes that created and promoted them, which are not considered in *Knowledge and Control* (Young, 1971). Reiterating his criticism of the New Sociology of Education, Goodson (1993) points out that considering school subjects as socio-historical constructions of a determined moment is not sufficient, even though it is also plausible, for understanding the actions of groups operating in the militancy in favor of a school subject. According to Goodson (1985), the insufficiency of the sociological and philosophical concerns is in their disregard for the evolutionary character of the phenomenon of the school subjects. For him, the structural approach or that of social order limits the problematic, because it assumes a perspective unconcerned with historical aspects that can explain decisions made at different times and by different actors.

We call attention to the constraints Goodson created in his relation to the New Sociology of Education movement by affirming that it is not comprehensive from a historical perspective. We think that Goodson's resistance to the critical sociological perspective, which is found in the reflections of *Knowledge and Control*, is not the result of a disagreement with the critical ideas, but from a perspective of socio-historical criticism that, according to Goodson, does not consider the development of sub-groups that operate in the relationship with the school subjects. The history, which Goodson understands to be essential in the comprehension of the social construction of school subjects, cannot *simply* be a history of social stratification caused by economic factors, a history sustained by conflict among social classes. We argue that the historical substance of the curriculum, as Goodson understands it, does not make sense if it were anything other than that mobilized by the practitioners of the school subjects. This interpretation of history differs from a perspective that focuses on the economic structure, which is used by many of the critical thinkers that composed the New Sociology of Education. They used the economy as a basis for the construction of analyses concerning education and, consequently, curriculum, on a macro-analytical scale, more concerned with

generalizations in which the recognizable center would be the link between social relations of production and the reproductive character of the school (Oliveira, 2011).

This does not mean that Goodson (1993, 1995) does not recognize that economic determinations are influential in curriculum production and, especially, in the maintenance and promotion of school subjects. The author himself points to the relationship among these organized groups and the dominant power looking to improve working conditions. For Goodson, what cannot be reduced by a critical macro-analysis is the single and articulated character of these groups throughout history and in specific social contexts. Another salient characteristic of his work (Goodson, 1993, 1995, 1997) is the concern not only for interrelating macro and micro analysis, but also for introducing ethnography as a way of comprehending the actions, fusion, conversion and production of different values by school subject groups in different time periods.

The possibility therefore emerges to conjecture that Goodson's approaches what may be read as Weberian interactionist thinking⁴, since despite agreeing with and considering a determined historical materialistic reading, symptomatic of the Marxist thinking that marks many works of the critical register, this is not the only explanation he uses for historical and social connections. Goodson considers a range of other elements, such as the interaction among motivated actors who, even though inserted in a social context, are capable of constituting and transforming the elements of social regulation (rules and values, for example) through different senses that they attribute to them. With this perspective, Goodson (1993, 1995) proposes a reading of social structure and, simultaneously, of subjective intervention in the context of this structure. This reading is joined by a historical and ethnographic perspective attentive to the different dynamics and configurations of the school subject groups in the course of time.

The social history of a school subject, of the groups that identify with it and argue in its favor, is what should gain importance in the investigations seeking to analyze the processes of legitimation of knowledge and schooling (Goodson, 1993). According to Goodson (*idem*), based on studies like those of Esland and Dale and also those of David Layton about the history of school subjects, although many school subjects correspond to those taught at universities, this does not mean that their operational mechanisms, internal structure and social purposes are aligned with the academic discipline.

4 Although we consider that a characterization of Weber's work goes far beyond the scope of this study, and in respect to the author deserves a more careful approach, we use elements that we judge pertinent in his work, considering his influence on Goodson. According to Giddens (2005), Weber's thinking absolutely rejects the formulation of general laws and determinist schemes based on general theories of progress. Although Weber recognizes that economic relations can influence the historical process, they are seen as having contingent validity and specific and variable importance, deserving to be a part of a broader empirical investigation about the elements that interact in specific circumstances.

Instead, Goodson (*idem*) emphasizes that not only are the school subjects are not derived from academic disciplines, but many chronologically precede university disciplines⁵, which are more strongly linked to the scientific field. With this position, Goodson (*idem*) indicates that these aspects can explain the legitimation of knowledge and school subjects in the official curriculum, to the degree that once they are under development in the schools, as a function of social demands, a base is formed for launching the academic discipline, with the initial purpose of educating trained professionals in the *school subject field*.

Motivated by these indications, Goodson (1993, 1995, 1997) investigates school subjects, focusing on the relationships that give them a certain status (high, intermediate or low) and configuration. He identifies a common element among some school subjects of greater prestige in the school curriculum: a close relationship between the school subject and an academic discipline (Goodson, 1993, 1995, 1997). However, the relationship between the two occurs in various manners: and each has a distinct history, making it impossible to establish rigid or general laws for understanding their revitalizing processes.

The history of the scientific field, of school subjects, of schooling, of the social demands of a determined moment and market demands are placed by Goodson (1995) as the entire range of possible inputs to the effects that cause the changes in configuration of a school subject and, consequently, of the curriculum. In this sense, Goodson (1993) proposes the comprehension of disciplinary communities as an anchorage for the investigation about the influence of those effects that reshape a school subject. The basis of the focus on the disciplinary community consists in the understanding that these are the actors that enact the promotion of a school subject, since they organize among themselves with the intention of acquiring professional benefits.

Along with Goodson (1993, 1997), when considering the hierarchy of knowledge and, consequently, of the school subjects, it can be argued that, in a possible apotheosis (with territorialization in the scientific, academic and school environment), a discipline is mobilized by researchers from the scientific disciplinary field, professors and teachers. These different groups, articulated in different historical periods under a common name (the name of the subject), constitute, according to Goodson, a disciplinary community. These groups operate in the “management” of the school subject, influencing, generating and canceling opportunities, shifting borders and priorities, developing a sophisticated bureaucracy and institutionalizing specialized associations, with their particular norms and ethics.

In Goodson’s conception (1997), a disciplinary community is not a homogeneous group, but is formed by the relationships among the internal sub-groups, which are professional factions with different perspectives. In the scope of a disciplinary community, he also highlights that since its internal groups have different conceptions, disputes and divergences through which negotiations are made and agreements reached. For Goodson (1993, 1997), a disciplinary community operates,

⁵ For example, we suggest Goodson (1990).

among other possibilities, in the attempt to maintain the curricular stability of a school subject and, simultaneously, promote it in the knowledge market.

Even though the disciplinary community is not seen as homogenous, but internally fractioned, it is admissible to think that Goodson conceives it as having a positivity that is able to integrate individuals that act within it: a professional identification with the school subject symbolic mechanism. In this way, it is possible to understand that the policy action is only developed among the peers, the school subjects practitioners. We highlight that, in some moments, Goodson (1993, 1995, 1997) and Goodson and Dowbiggin (1993) come to prioritize, based on a social hierarchy of knowledge, the action of individuals who serve as scientific or university authorities in the disciplinary community. Therefore, even though Goodson and Dowbiggin recognize the active role of teachers, they place them in a subordinate position, in which they are able to act through resistance, and must deal with what supposedly originated in the general academic and policy fields (Goodson, 2008). In addition, the policy action can also be traced through disciplinary associations, in which professional representatives of the school and university negotiate the decisions to be made (Goodson, 1993).

We argue that a recognition of the primacy of the university context develops due to Goodson's theoretical-methodological approach, which is based on an ethnographic vision and socio-historical criticism and influenced by the works of David Layton (1972). One of his hypotheses is that a school subject passes from a utilitarian and pedagogical tradition, based on students' wishes and linked to the daily problems of the students, to an academic tradition, with a standardized body of knowledge, with academic problematics and a systemization of the procedures that are key to the reproduction of the school subject knowledge. In its last defining stage, an identified professional body comes to exist, with established values and with an organization and content selection determined by the specialized academics, researchers in the field, who therefore are legitimators of the school subject knowledge (Goodson, 1993). The disciplinary community is thus defined as comprised of professors and researchers who pertain to that disciplinary field. This delineation is what leads us to discuss the links with the subjectivation processes.

We also emphasize that in Goodson's theoretical register (1993, 1995, 1997), even though they comprise the disciplinary community, the teachers are in a secondary position in terms of policy intervention, limited in relation to the professionals in the field who respond for academic knowledge. This segmentation may be seen as corresponding to a social hierarchy of knowledge, as Goodson himself recognizes by emphasizing the need for social legitimation through the institutionalization of the field in the university and scientific realm.

THE DISCIPLINARY COMMUNITY IN GOODSON: DESTABILIZING THE SCHOOL SUBJECTS

Goodson's analyses allow considering that the promotion of a school subject produces ambivalence, through which its initial promoters, the teachers, fight for a status that leads them to subordinate in a certain way. Moreover, the acquisition

of prestige conceded by academic legitimation leads the school subject to only be considered valid if it is linked to academic purposes, therefore it is a necessary to import university context nuances to the school. If it is a demand for the teacher to elevate the school subject to the academic and scientific level, upon reaching this status, the same school sub-group becomes submitted to the academic discipline, which is now the legislator of the disciplinary field. The academic discipline defines the problems, the methodology and who is a professional. With this, differentiated values and perspectives are established, and distinct social purposes between the academic disciplines and school subjects. We think this is an opportunity for the formation of new sub-groups organized around the readings and which are capable of disputing among themselves, and aspire to the redefinition of the field. These sub-groups act together to solve problems that may include, extrapolate or even escape from the purely epistemological discussion about the school subject thinking.

We emphasize the need to criticize this reading not only because it subordinates school groups to university groups, but also because it understands that articulations take place among sub-groups constituted from a historical background. By understanding that the militants in a disciplinary community are the practitioners of the school subject, Goodson (1993) emphasizes the existence of a preconceived identity, a common data to all the identities articulated with and in the *community*: to be a professional of that school subject or discipline.

We defend that Goodson (1993, 1995, 1997) constructs the reflection about the operations of the disciplinary community as a form of feedback aimed at supporting growth of the subject domains. All work in favor of the academic-scientific institutionalization of a school subject would thus generate greater solidity in the school curriculum, and the generation of certified professionals who reproduce the marks or limits of the school subject. With increasing participation of the school subject's name in the most distinct spaces (academic, scientific and school), with the school subject formation in the university, with the research and the founding of disciplinary associations and the consequent increase in bureaucratization, the field gains greater social recognition and distinction. It can propagate its characteristic nuances and thus strengthen the building of the school subject in the curriculum.

The feedback that we mentioned would allow the name of the school subject, as a symbol, to gain greater corporatist possibilities and opportunities, since the increase in the spectrum of professionals and specializations would pollinate the school subject rhetoric, mentioned by Goodson (1995), in different spaces and at different times. It would promote the social importance of the school subject and, consequently widen its dominions in different contexts. That is, if we are still affirming that all the work is eminently aimed at job stabilization and improvements in professional prospects for teachers.

Otherwise, it would also be possible to argue that, given the expansion of the professional field, the decisions made in favor of the school subject are no longer based only on professional benefits for teachers. They are also influenced by the aspirations of other professionals who act in different positions in the field, whether as researchers, association representatives, professors, etc., who work together for the maintenance and expansion of the school subject limits and have a common

interest that the disciplinary field and its forms of knowledge be as well as its ways to be recognized, disseminated. In this scenario, the school subject is thought of as “coalition” (*idem*, p. 190), which encompasses different identities, values and interests. The professions made possible by the school subject field should, therefore, be thought of as a range of different objectives that maintain themselves subtly aligned under a common name at particular periods in history.

According to Goodson (*idem*), the school subject is, therefore, a fragile, vague symbol. It carries different values and visions of conflicting worlds that change according to the time. The elements capable of keeping it integrated tend to gain force as the dispersion of versions about the school subject become reduced as a with respect to a greater good for the professionals: the promotion of what is understood as school subject to an academic condition. In this condition as an academic subject, as “real science” (*idem*, p. 191), authorized by academics, the school subject coalition is generated, capable of integrating its professionals and identifying the labels of the field, with its common problematics and interests.

Until now, Goodson (1993, 1995, 1997) is concerned with systematizing the school subject development by considering the social actors and their performances in different periods in the promotion of a school subject. The author (1995), however, calls attention to factors external to the disciplinary community that operate in favor of the emergence or promotion of a school subject. These factors include industrial and commercial demands, the production of textbooks, the action of agencies external to the school or university, as well as a wide range of social actors external to the school subject field, to the school and to the university, that can act in the diffusion of the school subject marks through public debate. With this indication, Goodson (1995) emphasizes the rhetorical and ideological elements involved in the promotion of the school subject knowledge as something worth being institutionalized and disseminated socially. He also adds that the structures and external forces impose themselves not only as sources of ideas, proposals or constraints. They are definers and advisors in the production of new content, categories, social functions and activities, to which the school and the disciplinary field in general should remain close to in order to attract support and legitimation (*idem*, p. 192).

The negotiation with external forces, according to Goodson (*idem*), is of utmost relevance for the construction of the school subject field, since it is based on the capacity of a school subject to respond to social anxieties that give it status, prestige, territory and allocation of greater resources. These concerns, external forces, cannot be considered only in terms of formal groups (parents, employers, unions and universities), but as a larger group, considered as the “public” (*idem, ibidem*), as a public sphere that encompasses the formal groups cited above, but also includes thinkers, politicians, managers and among many others.

In this sense, Goodson (*idem*) also suggests that the actions of school subject professionals is restricted because it is submitted to external forces. The school subject practice is only socially authorized when it corresponds to demands external to the field itself. To the contrary, it is not able to survive social negligence, and thus loses, or is unable to attaining, relevance in the public debate and therefore becomes dispensable. In agreement with Reid (1984), Goodson (*idem*) indicates

that the appropriate projection of labels, as well as their association to broader public debate, with rhetoric plausible for justification, may be seen as the essence of socio-historical construction of the disciplinary community.

TENSIONING GOODSON'S DISCIPLINARY COMMUNITY IN THE POST-STRUCTURAL APPROACH

To consider the disciplinary community, as perceived by Goodson – the entire range of professionals practicing in the field over time –, to be central to the definition of policies, imposes limits to a post-structural reading. Even within Goodson's theoretical approach, it leads to two initial possibilities for viewing this notion. The first consists in reading that the disciplinary community, as an analytical category, is not comprehensive enough to include the actors involved in the policy production, since it restricts the identification to the common desire to obtain corporatist benefits, in which professional benefit is the element that equalizes and integrates the different professionals practicing the school subject.

Implied in the first, the second turns to consider that the *external forces*, discussed by Goodson, are not completely external, but are capable of influencing the school subject professionals, or moreover, because they can impose more force on the production of policy for a disciplinary field by constraining its practitioners (organizations in the category, disciplinary associations, etc.) to respond to anxieties *external* to the field. They are even able to transform them into school subject problematics, given the need for dialogue between the field and the broader social context, which recognizes it and reiterates its importance.

For Goodson (*idem*), the effort to produce school subject responses to the social demands circulating in public debate is a latent question and essential for the maintenance of a school subject. It is in this sense that the need is questioned for diffusion of school subject labels that are capable of reverberating in the public debate as a means to resolve problems or even as an element of defense and maintenance of the school subject structure in the face of criticism of the field. This reading already problematizes the centrality of the disciplinary community in policy definition. Moreover, it makes clear how a broader policy, which is outside the limits of the school subject, constraints that stimulate that which is understood to be disciplinary.

We emphasize that limiting the disciplinary community, understood to be the central policy subjectivity in the promotion of the school subject, to professionals practicing in the field and, consequently, to consider that all possibility, or motivation for involvement in the curriculum policy, is fundamentally based on corporatist questions is, throughout the work of Goodson (1993, 1995, 1997), a question that invites reconsidering his perspective of school subject and policy.

Even though recent work by Goodson (2008) does not focus on discussions directly concerning school subjects, the author gives continuity to the perspective of a subjectivity that is capable of interacting with a reading of a determinant structure. This Subjectivity, in the context of his initial theoretical formulations, based on ethnographic and critical socio-historical studies, or in the context of his current

studies, those that incorporate teachers' narratives and life stories, is considered by the author (Goodson, 1993, 1995, 2008) as conscious (of its reading of the world, disciplinary corporation, school, of his or her life story/subject/career). The actions of these social actors, seen by Goodson as holders and/or specialists of the history of the history of the school subject field, of schooling, are concerned with the formation of attitudes, with decisions they made concerning policy in a given context.

The search for deeper understanding about the policy awareness of these social actors, about the reasons (career, curriculum and knowledge) that lead them, at a given moment, to act in favor of a cause, initially resulted in the incorporation of ethnographic studies (Goodson, 1995), aligned with the perspective of Levi-Strauss. Through these studies, Goodson began to understand that the approach of different school subject sub-groups would lead to the construction of a general scenario for the policy. Later, trying to understand not only the motivations of the sub-groups, but, individually, those of teachers with respect to the subject field, with the school and, mainly, with the policy, Goodson (2008) began to introduce the teachers' narratives and life stories as a methodology for accessing the individual missions and life projects of the teachers.

The deepening of the historical-ethnographic investigations about the social actors involved in the school subject sphere leads to what Goodson (1995,2008) begins to search for in the interrelation of autobiographical reflections and life stories with social theory, methods for understanding the individual attitudes of the professionals in the school subject and their resulting capacity for refraction and intervention in the policy processes. For Goodson, the adoption of this referential, which is considered to be potent in the penetration of the subjective reality, makes possible the comprehension of the meanings attributed by these social actors to the policy process. In this case, the life story of each social actor analyzed allows filling a supposed vacuum, seen by Goodson (1995) as inherent to the policy processes. Goodson (*idem*) therefore guarantees an investigative eye, organized using the references from the life stories, attentive to the teachers' experiences and expectations, whose focus is on the interaction of the personal reality of the subjectivities with the policy.

Among different elements of Goodson's work, recognizing the differences between its stages, we highlight the common reading of a historically influenced subjectivity, conceived *a priori* from by its current challenges, but positioned and exposed in a specific structural and social context, with which the Subject negotiates based on his or her awareness of his or her needs, problems and aspirations. For Goodson, the conception of a pre-existing subjectivity, aware of its history, projects decision as calculation. The Subject makes decisions based on the conscious of the socio-historical processes that present themselves in the policy. This subject is not systematically determined by the structure, but interacts with it, resisting, denying its determinations and acting in a guided manner, looking to satisfy its demands. This reading is emphasized by Goodson's focus on considering the possibility of a subjective decision, motivated by the subject's conscience of his condition, professional status and of the school subject, in opportunities produced by the contextual overlapping of history and social structure.

The character of a subjective conscience, as well as readings of the determining factors to the policy engagement, are aspects that are so clear for Goodson (1993, 1995) that they symbolize the material interests of the community in the search for professional and corporatist benefits. In addition, the coordination of the historical and social factors is highlighted to pave the way for policy articulations in the context of the disciplinary community and, later, in the way each teacher will deal with the socio-historical structure in which she finds herself. In agreement with the notion of the Subject of socio-historical ideals, Goodson conceives a conscious and ideologically guided subjectivity, which uses the valves opened by the interrelation of history with a determinant contemporary social structure. Despite this, he opposes a series of concepts of the world that are purely structural, sociological, historicist or Marxist, as well as their derivations, which were discussed here and considered by Goodson (1993, 1995, 1997, 2008) as restrictive, and thus seeks multiple causes. We defend that it is as a function of this theoretical-methodological strategy that his work has proved to be so important for the curriculum field in his constant attempts to overcome so many determinist readings of the structures about the curricular meanings regarding positions that defend a subject's chances for escape when faced with structural impediments.

Considering the post-structural concerns we emphasize here, we highlight that disciplinary community Goodson's analysis maintains, however, an attempt to stabilize dynamics that cannot be controlled, cannot be delimited. Goodson does not fail to deny a series of elements, even in their theoretical constructs, which are determining factors for a broader comprehension of curriculum policy.

About these factors, we call attention to Goodson's failure to read the identifications *external* to the disciplinary community, such as movements of the country, the market, as well as the wider public debate, as secondary or auxiliary forces to be used or considered by the disciplinary community, considering their strategies for promotion and professional success. We point out that, if these external elements, highlighted by Goodson (1995), should be considered as pressure mechanisms for the disciplinary field, it is because it is understood to be important to respond to these social concerns, to which the school subject is exposed and needs to maintain itself as such, to be seen as valid and necessary.

Even if they seek to obtain a greater allocation of resources and power, the practitioners of the school subject, upon negotiating with these *external forces*, whose ground does not have an epistemological focus or does not concern the discipline's history, are influenced by discourses not necessarily focused on questions that defend or promote professionalization of the disciplinary field. One of the ways to consider this is to recognize that the maintenance of the name of the discipline (its patterns of change, its labels) may be much more related to an attempt to sustain a place in policy action, which even if it gravitates virtually to questions understood to be disciplinary, it is no more than an empty, vague body, without defineable limits that is produced and sustained as a function of the articulations triggered and the consequent provisory signification of what the school subject is in the context of the curriculum policy.

We defend that these factors that escape the centrality of the policy action, according to Goodson, may be considered as intensely capable of producing meanings and mobilizing discourses in the curriculum policy for a disciplinary field. Personal demands, collective group missions, historical perspectives, organizations external to the field, broad public appeals, discourses by authorities, interviews, philosophies, etc., are elements to be considered in the comprehension of the policy decisions, whether they are internal or external, whether they are involved or not by an institutional or corporatist cloak. Our argumentation returns to the possible reading that, instead of conceiving the dynamism internal to the disciplinary fields as capable of defining the curriculum policies, we believe that the broader context of the policies is what allows the school subjects, through their institutions, to sustain themselves as moments of subjectivation. To place the disciplines in perspective in this manner is to reiterate them as continuous movements in response to the articulations of which curriculum policies are composed.

By calling attention to Goodson's possible theoretical limitations in a post-structural reading of the object in question, by focusing on his disregard for some factors that he himself emphasized in his investigative formulation within the realm of his world conception, we are not seeking to complement the author's proposals, but to understand the limits of his contributions when we investigate the policies for a school subject in the post-structural register.

We point out that in his systematic formation, Goodson reduces an entire set of broader discursive implications to an ancillary condition. We call attention to the perspective that it is not in the systematization by one who is *outside* or *inside* and *doing something* that it will be possible to discursively comprehend the internal and hierarchized relationships of the disciplinary field, as well as its relationships with the public debate and its negotiations intended to secure professional benefits. It is much less our concern to understand conflicts and policy articulations of subjectivities to be presupposed, conceived from a vision of history and society, delineated by structuralist nuances. We propose focusing on that which is established in Goodson's formulations, to deconstruct that which has become well-grounded.

If we consider the policy for a disciplinary field as a struggle for the meaning of that which comes to be curricular (Lopes, 2012b), this policy is motivated not only by claims from the discipline's practitioners, but also by all the meanings that operate to influence, in a given context, the production of policy. Therefore, the idea of the disciplinary community, as described by Goodson (1993, 1995, 1997), is not sufficient for understanding the social actor that produces it by producing policy.

This is revealed throughout Goodson's work by his initial supposition that the disciplinary community is configured by differentiated sub-groups that struggle among each other in the search for the predominance of a vision of discipline. These sub-groups that, even though they can be opposed to one another, mutually cooperate with the intention to promote the school subject, since even though they do not agree on all the terms, they have the positivity of professional wishes and social prestige. There is a presumption that the discursive conflicts occur through transparency and it is possible to infer that the sub-groups mentioned are homogenous in their interior, until a disagreement forges a new faction.

We highlight that this conception of the world is expressed in Goodson's theoretical operation, since, in his early works, with the intention to access the reasons and the policy conscious of the social actors in relation to policy, he deepened his methodology using ethnographic studies about the disciplinary community and its sub-groups. At a later moment in his work, looking for continuity in his search to understand the factors that condition and interfere in the policies, he began to introduce the narrative and life stories of teachers to understand how they interact with policy, agreeing with or opposing it, based on their experience, values and conceptions of schooling.

In this scenario, a conception of historically triggered and determined subjectivity is retrieved, which is capable of negotiating with the structure based on the rationalization of its socio-historical condition. This is a reading of subjectivity approximated to the perspective of the modern subject, but that, simultaneously, has its policy possibilities limited by a conception of structure that can be interpreted as that proposed by structuralism. The entwinement of these conceptions sustains a scenario in which the conscious, historical subjectivity, deals with a determinant and oppressive structure that changes with each epoch. In this manner, the idea of a structurally and sequentially determined subjectivity is possible. Since, if the structure conditions possibilities for action restricted to the structure itself, which changes over time, we have the perspective that the history that imbues the Subject is no more than the history of a subjectivity conceived sequentially and traumatically by different structures in different periods. The subjectivity, therefore, as proposed by structuralism, is secondary to the structural determination. What Goodson emphasizes is that the subjectivity is not passively exposed to it, but resists/interacts with the possibilities that it generates.

The historical context to which Goodson (1995) refers, the scenario for policy production, in which disciplinary histories, of teaching life, intersect with the social structure of a given moment, comes about as the consequence of decisions made in positions occupied by subjects in an earlier socio-historical structure. What results, or what is made possible by a given context, therefore, are possibilities for designing strategies based on the historical developments that already launched the subjectivity, in its contemporaneity, to a given position in the social structure. The conception of subjectivity, as a function of the reverberations or results of the historical process, can be thought of as predisposed to a determined set of decisions in the context in which they insert themselves. The context is that of space-time, or *locus*, of continuity of the results of decisions consciously made at other times and, therefore, establishes itself as saturated by them, it is a result of them. To that regard, Goodson (*idem*) argues that people are not wandering through life, they recognize the structural and historical pressure in their professional and personal lives, and act contextually from these references.

We consider that Goodson's concepts about the production of curriculum policy, the school subject constructions and, in this capacity, the politics struggle and subjectivity, imprint a restricted reading of the world with respect to the comprehension of other elements that produce policy, which blot out their structural approaches and escape to identity systematization, conscience and a fixed identify.

Although Goodson's formulation is not based on a theoretical unicity, by being dislocated in a post-structural register, it remains limited in its supposition that the intersection of different elements (history, structure, subjective conscience) create opportunity for social action and change, by attenuating their restrictive prisms in a theoretical construction that conjectures them as interdependent and complementary.

We call attention to the idea that the articulation of historicist and structuralist matrixes, considering the relativization of their nuclear determinist (as we read) potentials, does not avoid, in and of itself, that the consideration be maintained of their capabilities to delimit or prescribe the social and, therefore, to condition possibilities to a subjectivity supposed to be conscious of this social organization. The softening of the purely historicist, structuralist and enlightenment and modern conceptions of the subjectivity when integrating them to a specific theoretical body, allows for the interpretation that it is still not possible to operate outside its bonds. The postponement of a world vision by the interposition of another widens the space, but continues to restrict the conception of policy, struggle and subjectivity in this policy, limiting it to an area allowed by the overlapping of a history, a structure and a foreseen subjectivity.

In this sense, if we want to associate ourselves to post-structural approaches – and this, like so many others, is a decision that may or may not be made – we are led to read, in Goodson's formulation, prominent structural factors about the social, the subjectivity and the policy of curriculum. We think that the expectation of a center of reference, which very well may be the structure, the history, the subjective conscience or even an integrated vision of all of these, is guaranteed by Goodson's approach, allowing for the vision of a theoretical-methodological organization that renders impossible a rupture with a classist, segmented and categorizing view of dynamics that, from our point of view, are beyond the systematization of presuppositions.

In agreement with the theoretical perspective through which we read curriculum and curriculum policies (Lopes, 2012a, 2012b; Lopes; Macedo, 2011), we defend that Goodson does not allow for the consideration of contingency as propulsion of policy articulations and, in conjunction, the precipitation of a subjectivity without historical or structural ground of commitment to a community, professional association or knowledge. He disregards identifications that, in his own theoretical registration, escape systematization, politically made secondary and thought of as providing motives for the strategic actions of conscience social actors who operate in the coalition in which the school subject field is constituted. This index incites questioning of how curriculum policy is conceived, by assuming clearly established borders, capable of saying who produces meaning for policies and based on which factors.

In a possible search for precision in the definition of the groups and their moralizations, Goodson attenuates the perspective that circulatory meanings and, therefore, those that are liable for articulation to the disciplinary field and name, are powerful (potent) in producing and strengthening policy discourses. Goodson (1993, 1995), in his vigilance over the territorial limits of what is understood as school subject communities, tends to block a reading that there is no defined territory and that the idea of a limit is only a reason for concern when a (signification of

a) threat to the school subject name is produced. Goodson's conception, focused on his theoretical concerns, considers that policy is developed by identities in conflict, when we propose, though the theory of discourse, understanding that policy produces the identifications (Costa; Lopes, 2013).

If the signification and, therefore, the production of curriculum policy for a school subject field is produced by social differences, which have no ground (Lopes, 2012a, 2012b), be it disciplinary or not, which may not be speaking for the school subject, but may be heard due to identifications with the school subject, influencing in the signification of the disciplinary discursive field, we have the opportunity to recognize that policy production unfolds from dynamics that extrapolate the subjectivity and identity design fixed by Goodson, together with his historical and structural foundation. This possibility is raised by incorporating a discursive reading that necessarily implies the reconceptualization of the social, of struggle and of policy subjectivity. It is this wager that we look to make with the discursive approaches.

CONCLUSIONS

We sought to argue that the productivity of Goodson's thinking about school subject communities in the curriculum history does not make this thinking immune to the impasses generated by a post-structural reading of policy subjectivities. If there is agreement with the idea of a decentralized subject and with the proposition that the policies produce subjectivity (Hall, 2003; Lacau, 2011; Derrida, 2006a), the discursive limits of a disciplinary community cannot be defined before the policy decisions. They can also not be enumerated as social actors that produce meanings for the curriculum policies, in the name of a school subject, as stable and stabilizing leaders, as authorities formed by an epistemological approach, even when socially constructed, indifferent to the policy itself. Through the name of a school subject and of the disciplinary organization itself, curriculum interpretations are sedimented, an attempt is made to stabilize a curriculum, pedagogical actions are constituted, beyond and below the actions of the teaching professionals who are legitimated as spokesmen/women for this name. To investigate curriculum policy trying to contain once and for all the borders that name it as a disciplinary community becomes a vain and obligatorily imprecise task.

One of the investments that our research group has made in order to operate with the school subject register in policies is to avoid the focus on professional identity traits of the school subject communities and seek the reference to subjectivities produced by the curriculum policy (Abreu, 2010; Costa, 2012; Oliveira, 2012a, 2012b). To investigate who speaks in the name of a school subject becomes less important than understanding the articulations that constitute school subject discourses and therefore subjectivate the collectives that speak in the name of the school subject, which use it as an opportunity for involvement in the policy. These discourses are always translations that attempt to contain the differ that cannot be completely contained (Derrida, 1991, 2006b). We name discourses – constructivist, historical-critical, instrumental, neo-Marxist, phenomenological, interactionist, psychological, sociological, Freirian – in an attempt to refer to the spectrums of

pedagogical discourse that we know cannot be stabilized, since separated original texts are not fullness to which we can make reference (Siscar, 2013). It is not possible to repeat the syntax or the context of the original text. Every reiteration is subject to supplementation, to the language games relative to the differ.

This understanding leads us to two theoretical strategies with which we conclude using the discursive supports to which we are committed. The first of them is the radical contextualization of policy investigation. We sought to relate to the institutional circumstances and structures, in the Derridian sense, of each reading. We always investigate a context – which is not delimited in space or time, but by the series of possible substitutions that constitute a given discourse. In this context, a given contingent community speaks in the name of the school subject, decides in the name of that which is assumed to be the truth of the school subject knowledge. Because of this decision the disciplinary community is subjectivated, judges and commits itself, justifies actions and creates the history that sustains the reasonability of these same actions and decisions. The second strategy relates to the focus on demands, as proposed by Laclau (2005). Laclau, debating with sociological approaches to political investigation, proposes that we not focus on the social groups that are supposedly already constituted, but on the demands that are mobilized and that, once articulated, are capable of organizing different groups. A social demand is characterized by Laclau (*idem*) as requests and expectations that, if not met, may become demands in defense of which various groups unite in a political struggle. This strategy would distance us from an essentialization of the identities of the subjects who act in the policies⁶, by understanding these identities as constituted by the way that the demands are incorporated in the articulatory practice.

In curriculum policies, we seek to construct the notion of curriculum demand and therein the notion of school subject demand: the demand in name of the curriculum, of school subjects, the educational demands and those related to professional issues and career, which are not necessarily clearly separated. Through their enunciation, references are made to the curriculum tradition, to well-grounded pedagogical discourses, but the policy fight itself modifies both traditions and demands, which constitute other discourses in virtue of the contextual articulations.

The school subject is therefore a discursive construction. It is not a body of primordial knowledge to be appropriated by the members of a community who without it would be excluded. The disciplinary community, in turn, is not the group of professionals who organize in defense of their interests and their careers. The disciplinary community, according to the argumentation we constructed, is the set of subjectivities constituted in provisory operations in the discursive field of the school subject. The community and the subjectivities and identifications do not have an origin, a genesis. Their knowledge is constructed to the degree that the school subject subjectivities are also constructed. It is through different policy struggles that school subject fields are organized, simultaneously organizing the school subject identifications.

6 Laclau work politics and we apply your theory of discourse on policies.

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