

Cartographies of school everyday life: insurgent approaches in qualitative research in education

*Cartografias dos cotidianos escolares
abordagens insurgentes nas pesquisas qualitativas em educação*

*Cartografías de los cotidianos escolares:
abordajes insurgentes en las investigaciones cualitativas en educación*

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ABSTRACT


The analysis of field experiences in a qualitative study conducted in urban peripheral schools in the city of Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, revealed unprecedented challenges in qualitative research with an emancipatory focus in the field of education in Latin America. In this scenario, a methodological perspective is outlined, inspired by the guidelines of ethno-research in education, in dialogue with the reflections of the polyphony paradigm and the theory of the sociology of everyday life. Additionally, the tensions and complexities in field experiences and the weaving of the anthropological narrative at the level of affections and subjectivities are considered. The process allowed the establishment of possibilities of coherence between epistemological foundations, theoretical constructions, political and cognitive horizons, methodological (dis)paths, and the ethics and aesthetics of the resulting textual weavings.

Keywords: Bricolage. Cartographies of School Everyday Life. Emancipatory Approaches. Qualitative Research. Polyphonies.

RESUMO

A análise das experiências de campo em um estudo qualitativo conduzido em escolas da periferia urbana da cidade de Salvador, Bahia, Brasil, revelou desafios inéditos na pesquisa qualitativa com enfoque emancipatório na área da educação na América Latina. Nesse cenário, delineia-se uma perspectiva metodológica inspirada nas orientações da etnopesquisa em educação, em diálogo com as reflexões do paradigma da polifonia e a teoria da sociologia do cotidiano. Além disso, são contempladas as tensões e complexidades nas experiências de campo e na tessitura do relato antropológico no âmbito dos afetos e das subjetividades. O processo permitiu estabelecer possibilidades de coerência entre os fundamentos epistemológicos, as construções teóricas,

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os horizontes políticos e cognitivos, os (des)caminhos metodológicos e a ética e a estética das tessituras textuais resultantes.

Palavras-chave: Abordagens Emancipatórias. Bricolagens. Cartografias dos Cotidianos Escolares. Pesquisas Qualitativas. Polifonias.

RESUMEN

El análisis de las experiencias de campo en un estudio cualitativo realizado en escuelas de la periferia urbana de Salvador, Bahía, Brasil, reveló desafíos inéditos en la investigación cualitativa con perfil emancipatorio en el área de la educación en América Latina. En este contexto, se delinea una propuesta metodológica, inspirada en las indicaciones de la Etnopesquisa en Educación, en diálogo con las reflexiones del paradigma de la Polifonía y las proposiciones de la Sociología del Cotidiano. Además, se contemplan las tensiones y complejidades en las experiencias de campo y en la elaboración del relato antropológico a nivel de los afectos y las subjetividades. El proceso permitió establecer posibilidades de coherencia entre los fundamentos epistemológicos, las construcciones teóricas, los horizontes políticos y cognitivos, los (des)caminos metodológicos y la ética y estética de los tejidos textuales resultantes.

Palabras clave: Bricolaje. Cartografías de los Cotidianos Escolares. Enfoques Emancipadores. Investigación Cualitativa. Polifonías.

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary times, the chronic instability of Latin American contexts and its repercussions on science education have become evident in the face of multiple challenges, such as political and health crises, educational reforms, migration, climate catastrophes, and environmental conflicts. Added to this scenario are the rapid transformations resulting from the hegemony of social networks and information technologies in daily interactions. Furthermore, structural social injustice and the historical devaluation of education and science persist. Given this panorama, the need emerges to promote discussions on a research agenda that fosters a more fruitful dialogue between contemporary epistemological currents with an emancipatory approach and the ever-changing realities of Latin American schools.

As a contribution to the development of this research agenda, this article presents the theoretical, epistemological, and political foundations that inspired the methodological strategy of a qualitative study from a cultural perspective in the field of science education (Sánchez-Molano, 2020). The research was conducted in public schools located in the urban periphery of Salvador, Bahia, where science teachers¹ declared that they adopted meritorious teaching processes.

The political and methodological premise guiding the selection of these teachers was the search for insurgent educational processes that incorporated critical approaches to environmental issues. The study considered the possibility of exploring school life to map pedagogical dynamics involving schools and science teachers engaged in community struggles. The objective was to reflexively document the practices of leading teachers in these insurgent dynamics and disseminate their school processes to inspire other educators. This choice was aligned with Ferraço's (2017b) recommendation to strengthen movements of resistance and creativity within everyday school practices, acknowledging that, even in these spaces, life reinvents itself.

1 Natural sciences and/or biology, and/or chemistry, and/or physics teachers.

Engaging school practitioners² in reflexive processes without any form of coercion was a significant challenge. To achieve this, an open call was made to public school teachers in Salvador's peripheral areas. The first author of this article offered to collaborate as an assistant teacher in meritorious science teaching processes with an emphasis on environmental education. Interested teachers were invited to apply via electronic communication by submitting a letter of intent expressing their desire to participate and describing their teaching practices.

The call for participation took place between January and April 2017, receiving six applications. The letters were analyzed, followed by visits to the applicants' schools, where semi-structured interviews and informal conversations were conducted to select the research participants (Sánchez-Molano, 2020).

The researcher, referred to in this article as Pimenta, developed a deep connection with the selected schools, spending significant time in the field, which allowed access to multiple sources and data. The teachers mentioned in the anthropological narrative played a central role in organizing the 2017 and 2018 school science fairs, events that were relevant for discussing the integration of environmental dimensions into science teaching practices (Sánchez-Molano and Almeida, 2020).

This process enabled the documentation of thoughts and words "that overflow through the walls and hallways of schools and are not always spoken"³ (Ferraço, 2007, p. 87, our translation). The experiences encountered throughout this cartographic journey⁴ were transformed into fictional narratives. Following Ferraço (2017a), the intention was not merely to narrate about the school actresses but to weave their stories together with them. Thus, the fictional narratives served as drafts for collaborative writing exercises.

The aim was to create an interactive dialogue through which the teachers would share reflections and emotions, weaving a multicolored text. This exchange process continued until reaching a 'temporary saturation,' an interpretative and affective truce that resulted in a text open to new readings, interpretations, and rewritings, akin to a palimpsest.

In this ethical and aesthetic challenge of validating academic knowledge based on "a communicative base of gazes" (Carvalho, 2001, p. 116), the researcher's role was no longer monopolized, but democratized. As the teachers reflected on their own practices, they underwent a process of deterritorialization,⁵ adopting an external perspective on themselves. Simultaneously, they had full freedom to record their perceptions and voices regarding the narrated experiences, ceasing to be mere actors and becoming empowered as authors — even questioning and narrating about Pimenta himself.

RELEVANCE OF CARTOGRAPHIES OF SCHOOL DAILY LIFE

When, where, why, with whom, and for what purpose to use cartographies of school daily life (CSDL) are questions we aim to address in this section. These guidelines help to understand the relevance of the CSDL methodological approach and the epistemological framework that supports it.

2 In this article, we use the terms actresses and school practitioners interchangeably to refer to basic education teachers who carry out their work in school institutions. The feminine gender will be privileged in the text as a disruptive syntactic mechanism aimed at recognizing and honoring women, their struggles, and their immense contributions to the field of formal, informal, community, social, and popular education, among others.

3 All translations of direct quotes from Brazilian Portuguese to American English were carried out under the authors' responsibility.

4 For readers interested in delving more deeply and extensively into these experiences, as well as learning about other field happenings experienced by Pimenta, it is recommended to read the full cartographic account that is part of the doctoral thesis of the first author of this article (Sánchez-Molano, 2020).

5 Deterritorialization, as theorized by Deleuze and Guattari (1995), refers to the uncertainty and instability generated by the deconstruction and displacement of structures and identities. This process challenges the established norms and provides a foundation for alternative forms of organization and meaning-making.

THEORETICAL FIREFLIES IN CULTURAL WANDERINGS

Working with CSDL requires engaging with wanderings and itinerancies, embracing a political commitment to epistemologies and theoretical foundations that break away from hierarchical, circular, totalizing, and essentialist categorizations. Emancipatory epistemologies influence the researcher's vibratory body,⁶ shaping their gaze and their ability to capture the symbolic and affective flows present in the research field.

The cartographic researcher is guided by 'theoretical fireflies,' as described by Certeau (2016), which illuminate new paths and challenge old paradigms. These fireflies lead us to abandon theoretical cathedrals and immerse ourselves in the worldly mud of culture and the concreteness of practices and affects.

In this context, the research whose methodology we aim to analyze engaged in dialogue with authors such as Leff, Reigota, Hooks, Walsh, Santos, Guattari, Lacey, Fanon, Hall, and Chaves. These profane thinkers represent a diverse repertoire that encompasses cultural studies, insurgent environmental education, epistemologies of the South, and post-critical theories. Their ideas allow for the discovery of hybrid pedagogies and epistemologies, curricula-in-action, and mutant theories that emerge from the fertile ground of culture, struggles, and affectivities.

Cartographic research, as an heir to cultural analysis, challenges structural determinations and proposes comprehensive approaches. It seeks to understand how hybrid and complex phenomena are produced, focusing on practices, subjectivities, and meanings. In this way, CSDL fosters a sensitive and critical reading of school realities, always in dialogue with the multiple voices and experiences that shape everyday school life.

SOCIOCULTURAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL MARGINS AND GAPS

Cartographic research in education, grounded in emancipatory principles, aims to identify interstices and opportunities for action that challenge inertia and deterministic tendencies in pedagogical practice. Cartographic researchers explore epistemological, disciplinary, and cultural boundaries, as well as social margins, respectfully and deeply analyzing contexts, subjects, and phenomena. This approach is inherently political, as it seeks to provide visibility and amplify the voices of marginalized populations, often rendered invisible and instrumentalized by hegemonic epistemologies.

The research in question examined everyday practices in public schools on the urban periphery, identifying "experiential knowledge" (Ferraço, 2017b) related to environmental issues and their integration into science education. Environmental education (EE), a conceptually complex and epistemologically hybrid field, is permeated by passions and political interests. In the Latin American context, characterized by multiculturalism as well as socio-ecological oppressions and tensions, emancipatory EE is a relevant yet underexplored theme in urban periphery school settings. It lacks a robust repertoire of theoretical and empirical references. Furthermore, the complexities of intercultural and affective dynamics in these contexts render any quantitative approach that seeks to classify or measure them unfeasible.

It is thus crucial to highlight the epistemic, political, and economic marginalization of the peripheral areas of large Latin American cities. These Afro-Indigenous communities have historically been excluded from the classical epistemological categories and the social welfare achieved in modernity. Erased from official history, silenced in political decision-making, and rendered invisible

6 For Sander (2011, p. 13), the vibratory body "refers to a mode of subjectivation that configures the world in the way it presents itself to the body, in the form of vibration and contagion. It implies a vulnerability and porosity to the world, emphasizing the body's vocation for becoming, and integrating it into subjectivity to displace it from its identity territories."

in mainstream media, these territories frequently appear only in the crime sections of newspapers (Zibechi, 2015).

Cartographic approaches explore the relationships and tensions between regulatory systems and individuals' freedom of action. The challenge for engaged qualitative researchers is to identify, within regulatory structures, gaps through which to weave subversive practices and dynamics (Walsh, 2017). CSDL fosters a reflective and proactive perspective on school dynamics, surpassing superficial, hasty, and reproductive interpretations.

The cartographic researcher adopts a "researcher's itinerancy" (Macedo, 2016), navigating research settings with flexibility, maintaining an attentiveness that is both open and focused, without excessively fixed or predetermined objectives (Kastrup, 2019). Macedo (2016, p.63) describes the act of cartography as:

Walking in search of encounters with happening-based knowledge. Attending to flickers of light that ignite, dim, or extinguish; to beams that shift in place, perspective, and intensity; that converge, separate, complement, hybridize, or suddenly emerge. Cartography embraces multiple references, remaining open to understanding the ineliminable heterogeneity in motion and along multiple paths.

The researcher maintains a floating attentiveness, waiting to be impacted and challenged by what emerges. This approach does not aim to solve specific problems or represent objects but rather to trace processes and, ultimately, to reveal possible, emerging, and seductive scenarios, subjects, proposals, and phenomena.

CARTOGRAPHIC MOMENTS

According to Clifford (2001), anthropological contacts are not achieved through analysis using only intellectual categories. "We apprehend the other through their integrity" (Clifford, 2001, p. 56). Therefore, to understand cartographic research, it is necessary to refer to the ethnographic tradition, which is based on the roles of two characters: the main actor or ethnographer and the author or anthropologist.

From a cultural perspective, the researcher attempts a deterritorialization, organizing their fragmented and plural subjectivities into two large identity blocks. Two entities are created, the actor and the author, who, in the struggles and tensions of desire, try to remain separate and pure; but, traversed by experiences and happenings, they constantly mix, reproduce, improve, and translate. The actor block expresses itself as a vibratile body, subject to experience, merging with the author block, which expresses itself as a reader and interpreter of clues and signs, a textual weaver. The fusion of these blocks creates a fragmented entity in which parts of both remain intact, while others blend in a third space that gives authenticity to cultural studies.

This dichotomy reflects the ambiguity of the human condition and can be understood from a sentimental perspective (Rolnik, 2007). When actor and author merge, they gain the privilege of interpreting, reflecting, translating, and creating. This bifurcation of desiring intensities allows the tense and creative encounter between the living data of reality captured by the ethnographer and the knowledge systematized in theoretical networks embodied in the anthropologist, challenging the cultural researcher to make some of their identity fragments more expressive.

Cartographic methodologies can be thought of as creative games involving four moments: interpretative (author), affective (actor), dialogical (actor-author), and textualization (author). The affective and dialogical moments confer identity, value, and emancipatory richness to cartographies, overcoming the colonial, elitist, and ethnocentric limitations of traditional

anthropological approaches. The academic differentiation of CSDL lies in its affective, political, and aesthetic horizons. The cartographer does not impose their maps and values but analyzes and negotiates itineraries and differences (Macedo, 2016).

In CSDL, the interpretative component interacts dialectically with the affective and dialogical. Emotions color and bring life to cultural translations.⁷ In turn, meanings, senses, and symbols nurture affectivities, promoting democratic and original research paths. A successful cartographic research is one that expresses and records a high density of passions, catharsis, and deterritorializations among the participants.

INTERPRETATIVE MOMENTS

CSDL, being a type of anthropological approach, explore the meanings and signifying procedures used by school actresses to make sense of their daily lives. According to Geertz (2003), anthropological analysis is the 'science' of cultural translation, an interpretative exercise that seeks to construct, from these meanings, a provisional and intelligible framework. For Clifford (2001), participant observation is the distinctive feature of anthropological strategies, requiring researchers to experience, both at the corporal and intellectual levels, the eventualities of cultural translation, reducing sensations into words, discourses into texts, and daily life into art.

From this opaque and dispersed flesh, from this exorbitant and confused life, finally passing to the clarity of a word, becoming a fragment of language, a single name, legible to others, citable: this passion inhabits the ascetic armed with instruments to fight his own flesh, or the philosopher who does the same with language until losing the body (Certeau, 2013, p. 220).

Observing and interpreting school scenarios with respect and care involves recognizing the complexity of their dynamics and actresses. This becomes evident when identifying the *negatricities* of school practitioners. The concept of *negatricity* relates to the idea of alteration, highlighting how school practitioners can generate their own strategies that diverge from the researcher's plans (Macedo, 2016). School actresses cannot be taken as docile and disembodied entities, free from desires and interests in the research process. CSDL are sensitive to these subtle games that school practitioners develop in relation to the researcher.

These games became evident in the research in question when, in an informal conversation, the teacher Amarela⁸ from Águas Mornas School revealed to Pimenta her great interest in resuming the school's gardening and organic garden projects. She mentioned that upon seeing a publication about school gardens on his Facebook profile, her interest in developing a project in that regard was renewed.

Teacher Amarela's confession revealed that school actresses were not just objects of the researcher's observation but also active observers. This led Pimenta to perceive school actresses as political agents, endowed with desires, cunning, and interests, explicit or not, in the research relationship. He noticed that each of his gazes and actions modified the scenario, influencing the responses and attitudes of the actresses, leading him to understand the research field as a living entity capable of producing happenings that affect the researcher, their beliefs, and the expected results (Macedo, 2016). It became evident that qualitative research should be understood as an active and polyphonic negotiation between significant subjects (Clifford, 2001).

7 Homi Bhabha (2013) understands cultural translation as a general activity of communication between cultural groups.

8 The school actresses and institutions are represented in this text through pseudonyms.

Metaphorically, interpretative moments would not be like taking photographs of school phenomena but rather like making a film, capturing details, movements, affective vibrations, and micro-stories. When analyzing school scenarios, researchers, following Geertz (2003), should consider the theatrical nature of human interactions, avoiding seeing school actresses as essences or fixed identities. Instead, the researcher's gaze should focus on the relationships between people, encounters, conversations, happenings, and experiences (Ferraço, 2017a). The emphasis of observations should be on borderline situations, relationships, and instances that shape the intentionality of human praxis (Guattari, 1992).

To skillfully address the interpretative moments of cartographic research and capture the dynamic complexity of the educational field and its protagonists, it is necessary to construct 'methodological Frankenstein's'. This involves the original and specific use of a diversity of methods and perspectives. Thus, the cartographic researcher projects himself as a bricoleur.

The bricoleur is a responsible transgressor, the bricoleur betrays the established order, wanting to be ethical in their intention to surpass limits, borders. They outwit the usual delimitations to think along another path, generally reaching other ports, often seen as unsafe, insignificant, and threatening (Macedo, 2016, p. 68).

Methodological bricolages, encompassing narratives, life stories, affective contacts, conversation circles, document analysis, and detailed observations of daily life, are powerful amplifiers of the people's voices and murmurs. They capture the chaotic expression of affections and cultural forms, in which practices often refute or oppose discourses, and rituals do not coincide with the meanings expressed at the level of consciousness and/or emotions.

This approach reveals school dynamics more authentically and vividly than standardized methods, allowing for a deeper and more complex understanding of the educational phenomenon. The creative triangulation of sources and methods aids in identifying regularities, confirming suspicions, contrasting accounts, and sometimes challenging initial perceptions, resulting in the construction of richer and more robust empirical material. For instance, the methodological bricolages in the research in question allowed *Pimenta* to identify an attitude among some school protagonists that he called 'axiological pragmatism.'

In the initial contacts, teacher Azul from Cheiro do Mar School and her Institutional Program of Initiation to Teaching Scholarship (PIBID) workgroup, sometimes with sectarian and dogmatic tones, openly declared themselves to belong to the historical-critical pedagogical current. However, as the fieldwork extended and affective contacts deepened and diversified, other deeply rooted beliefs were perceived in these school protagonists, such as conservative religious convictions and mercantile life horizons. They seemed to use academic and scientific discourses instrumentally to gain recognition and academic opportunities without confronting their prior beliefs. Thus, in this specific case, critical and academic discourses tended to circulate as mere formalities or empty labels in the articulations between university and school.

Based on the above, it can be argued that the standardized application of instruments in the form of structured or semi-structured interviews presents certain limitations to which the cartographer must be attentive. These instruments can be valuable at the beginning of anthropological contacts to collect specific information, such as dates, names, and numbers of places, institutions, and people, providing important initial coordinates for the research. However, when seeking to identify and analyze representations, meanings, dynamics, processes, desires, and values, the information obtained in these interviews should be complemented through different instruments, sources, and informants.

During the application of highly structured and standardized instruments, the cartographer must be particularly attentive to the relational and contextual circumstances that arise in the interaction between interviewer and interviewee. Moreover, it is important to note that the application of these instruments, due to their degree of formality, can create pressure and stress on the interviewees, inhibiting the fluidity of conversations. This became evident during the research in question when Pimenta concluded the extensive question script, ended the interviews, and turned off the recorder. At that moment, the interviewees relaxed, resulting in more revealing conversations.

The foundation of the cartographic approach is methodological bricolage, implying that there are no rigid strategies or tactics to build empirical material. According to Macedo (2016), cartography is a flexible and open practice in which there is no fixed recipe. In the absence of prescriptions, creativity becomes indispensable, which can be understood as a *gambiarra*⁹ act, in which heterogeneous materials are combined and repurposed (Certeau, 2016). There, the “meaning is tied to the signification that this reuse confers” (Certeau, 2016, p. 114), eliminating any sacred value certain methods might have.

In this sense, methodological proposals that creatively employ tactics such as cine-conversation (Toja, Machado and Alves, 2023) and the use of images (Oliveira, 2007) stand out. These approaches are powerful in activating the voices of school actresses, as they provide a sensitive and aesthetic stimulus followed by a conversation circle. This subsequent stage seeks to overcome the interpretative blind spots inherent to each interacting subjectivity, promoting a sense of belonging and collective empowerment.

AFFECTIVE MOMENTS

The affective moments of cartographic dance can be understood as cadences of desire, with advances and retreats. In CSDL, the researcher opens to the actresses, sharing, embedding themselves, and often blending in, dissolving into their cultural forms to gain better access to the phenomena they seek to understand. Fieldwork thus becomes a fundamentally sensitive strategy, in which the school actresses and their respective settings determine the rhythm of the cartographic dance. Here, the researcher allows themselves to be carried away, potentially being understood as the subject of the experience, the plaything of circumstances, a bodily territory where powerful encounters and happenings unfold.

Experience should be understood in the sense established by Larrosa (2002), as that which happens to us, that which touches and crosses us with impunity, transforming us and leaving some wounds and scars on our skin. It is advisable for the researcher to perceive themselves as a wandering traveler and, in the best *flâneur* attitude, to lose control and direction, even if only temporarily, to truly grasp the depth, powers, charms, and networks that compose the enigmatic entities shaping their projections. “The *flâneur* [...] develops forms of reaction appropriate to the rhythm of the great city. He captures things in midair, thereby allowing himself to imagine he is close to the artist” (Benjamin, 2010, p. 38).

The researcher must let their garments fall, seeing themselves bare and free of prejudices, feeling the flutter of butterflies in their stomach, the shiver of cold on their flushed skin. Following Certeau (2013), the researcher, doubting the modern exaltation of the sense of vision, plunges synesthetically into the feeling of the world, activating their sense of touch, smell, taste, hearing, and intuition. “When the world is perceived through the body, the world is no longer an object at hand; instead,

9 According to Bouffleur (2013, p. 7), *gambiarra* is the “act of improvising material solutions with utilitarian purposes from industrialized artifacts.”

we become part of the world — our body and our becoming are the world”¹⁰ (Mignolo and Vasquez, 2017, p. 499, our translation).

The *flâneur* approach, ideal for the educational cartographer, is the most effective way to immerse deeply in fieldwork. The researcher becomes receptive to unexpected situations that transcend the ‘initial academic objectives’ of the research, such as invitations to gatherings outside work hours, rides offered by teachers, and participation in projects and exhibitions from other fields of knowledge.

Furthermore, in a world dominated by social networks and information and communication technologies, it is crucial for cultural researchers to master these tools to integrate into and comprehend the symbolic universe of school actresses. Certain school environments and settings are also rich in symbolic elements and social dynamics that can deepen the understanding of schools and the phenomena occurring within them. In the context of this study, the teachers’ lounge at Águas Mornas School stood out as a strategic space where Pimenta could grasp significant routines and happenings.

The teachers’ lounge was a place where school practitioners unloaded their frustrations, sadness, anger, and pain after a difficult class or day, but also where they shared their daily joys. Here, they discussed political issues, commented on details of their personal lives, travels, and culinary preferences. It was also a space where teachers gathered information about their students, conducted evaluations, and made academic decisions. This lounge was a multifunctional space frequented by a constant flow of school actresses, who interacted and mingled according to their affinities and immediate needs.

In these lounges, in cars, on streets, Pimenta attempted, as much as possible, to enter with the open attitude of the cartographer recommended by Kastrup (2019), willing to be surprised by what was presented, activating their vibrational body (Sander, 2011) to fully experience both the joys and sufferings of the field (Larrosa, 2002). The precarious nature of this wandering required great flexibility to betray and change plans, a broad openness and promiscuity to dance with different characters, spaces, and times. The researcher jumps without a parachute toward other subjectivities — an openness to the world that, in turn, detonates and destabilizes the identity territories through which the school actresses navigate.

The school cartographer acts as a hunter of happenings, understanding them as singularities that break the regularity of everyday life. According to Macedo (2016), the happening has certain characteristics: “it is always directed, meaning that the one to whom it occurs is themselves implicated in what happens to them. The happening can never be essentialized. A happening is only a happening in relation to someone. What is a happening for some may not be for others” (Macedo, 2016, p. 72). Furthermore, “happenings are improbable, they interfere, and they are ineliminable from human experience” (Macedo, 2016, p. 27). Thus, the complementary notions of experience (Larrosa, 2002) and happening (Macedo, 2016) serve as the sparks that guide affective flows (Rolnik, 2007) in cartographic research.

DIALOGICAL MOMENTS

In the perspective of contemporary ethnography, the paradigms of experience and interpretation are being replaced by the paradigms of dialogue and polyphony (Clifford, 2001). This shift has occurred because the relationship between culture and society has changed: culture is no longer reserved for certain elites; it is no longer “stable and defined by a code accepted by

10 In this text, the translations of textual quotations from Latin American Spanish to American English were carried out under the responsibility of the authors.

all” (Certeau, 2016, p. 104). As a result, contemporary cultural analysis is seen as a constructive negotiation involving multiple conscious and politically significant subjects (Clifford, 2001).

These changes in cultural analysis have brought challenges to anthropological research, especially when studying school settings in Latin America. Questions arise about the axiological and political validity of classical tactics of camouflage and complicity in school situations, where ethical considerations are permanent and expressive. Furthermore, it is important to explore other tactics that consider the characteristics of school settings and protagonists, as well as the type of anthropological contact desirable in emancipatory educational research. Are dialogical and reflective partnerships possible?

The pursuit of polyphony in anthropological research, with an emphasis on the creation of democratic and dialogical artifacts and procedures, suggests clues for CSDL. The adoption of open narrative tactics, receptive to the unexpected and to differences, promotes coherence in qualitative research in school settings in the Global South (Macedo, 2009). In dialogical moments, researchers must actively express their creativity and ethical horizons, playing the role of catalysts for contacts and happenings, weavers of solidarities and engagement.

In the research conducted at Águas Mornas School, Pimenta realized the need to break with formalities that restricted the expression of the diversity of voices among school practitioners. This perception was driven mainly by pragmatic reasons, aiming to facilitate the organization of the 2018 school science fair. Additionally, Pimenta recognized the potential of information technologies, apps, and social networks to dynamize, catalyze, and democratize critical and emancipatory social processes.

Pimenta participated in several meetings during the pedagogical journey in January 2018, when he requested the science teachers’ emails, phone numbers and WhatsApp contacts. He created two groups, one on WhatsApp and another via email, to share communications and important documents about the science fair. His goal was to expand and diversify communication channels and promote new encounters, believing that, with greater engagement from the teachers, more initiatives and creativity would emerge in the school science fair. “In the encounter, experience shifts, vibrates, institutes, and realizes the happening” (Macedo, 2016, p. 37). Moreover, he sought to ensure agility, transparency, and clarity in communication, facilitating the monitoring of the process and avoiding the exhausting bureaucratic filters.

He feared that, by continuing to rely on a single teacher, as in 2017, the problems and misalignments of previous fairs would repeat, obstacles would persist, and teacher Amarela would end up overwhelmed by such a complex process. “A cartographic research, by intensifying communication, enables relationships, attractions, and contagions, activates the collective plane of forces, the transindividual collective” (Macedo, 2016, p. 66).

The bet was to sow multiplicities,¹¹ assemblages that would promote deterritorializations (Deleuze and Guattari, 1995) of the subjectivities of school actors. The plan was to sabotage and destabilize the everyday as much as possible. Pimenta knew that, when a process or social practice becomes a multiplicity, it becomes indeterminate and irreversible, which prevents its return to what is identical, traditional, common, hegemonic, or repetitive. And this happens when several actors enter the same frequency of desire (Rolnik, 2007), when a group of vibrant, activated bodies (Sander, 2011) tune into a common plane (Kastrup and Passos, 2013).

TEXTUALIZATION MOMENTS

The narrativization of practices is the most effective way to connect emancipatory theories to everyday life and common sense (Certeau, 2013), making it the most appropriate means of

11 “A multiplicity has neither subject nor object, but only determinations, magnitudes, and dimensions, which cannot grow without changing in nature” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1995, p. 14).

socializing the results of a cartographic research. This demonstrates that the academic critic should not be restricted to Eurocentric archives, that theory does not need to be the exclusive language of the elites, and that scholars must remain sensitive to the demands and historical tragedies of the Wretched of the Earth (Bhabha, 2013).

The use of a narrative-literary style in the textual productions of CSDL is also justified in that it allows for an escape from the search for a universal and timeless truth in the representation of people, scenarios, and happenings. In this way, it opens and democratizes sensitivities and interpretative possibilities among the reading community. Unlike information, the account does not seek to present the happening in its pure form but rather incorporates it into the narrator's life, communicating it as a personal experience to the listener. Thus, "the narrator leaves their mark on it, like the potter's hand on the clay vase" (Guattari, 1996, p. 76).

The weaving of narratives allows for the drawing of a landscape of experience, zooming in on the repetitive events that delimit a context while also detailing the colorful emergences and subversions that represent breaches and possibilities for the future. This grants the researcher flexibility in selecting and connecting the most relevant or impactful narratives, memories, and experiences. In cartographic texts, the traditional boundaries between the sections of 'theoretical framework', methodology, and results may remain diffused, sometimes making it difficult to distinguish between literary, scientific, and philosophical elements. The only certainty is that everything is political.

In narrative writing within qualitative research, it is crucial to recognize that no act of communication is entirely transparent due to the symbolic distance between the researcher, the research participants, and the potential readers. This distance is influenced by a diversity of factors such as age, ethnicity, social class, sex, nationality, gender, language, and religious beliefs, which inevitably affect communication.

Veiga-Neto (2003) argues that the researcher is always immersed in a language and a culture, so what they (the researcher) says about the latter (about language and culture) is never entirely free from them. This consideration is relevant at all stages of CSDL, from the empirical approach to school settings, through the interpretations of the empirical material constructed, to the negotiation and production of the academic text that will be widely disseminated. According to Deleuze and Guattari (1995), there is no ideal speaker or listener, nor a homogeneous linguistic community. Therefore, in any interpretation or cultural translation, it is necessary to make explicit the port of origin and the destination of the enunciation, recognizing that these symbolic places are historical, heterogeneous, and constantly changing constructions.

Certeau (2013) highlights the impossibility of a pure voice, as every voice is determined by a system and encoded by its reception. We always speak from a specific place, history, and culture, although we are not entirely defined by this position (McLaren, 1997). Thus, it is essential to recognize the cultural distance between the researcher and the research context to understand the degree and direction of identity destabilization, both for the researcher and for school practitioners and the readers of the academic text.

Describing and representing the researcher's biographical journey in a CSDL is the most necessary, complex, and challenging task in the construction of the narrative tissue that sustains the literary dimension of the academic text. Attempting to represent the existential and affective coordinates of the researcher, making them an active presence in the cartographic text, is infinitely complex, as both the researcher and the other actors in the narrative plot are exponents of fragmented, polyphonic, and dynamic subjectivities, expressed in the rhythm of chaotic intensities of desire.

The case of teacher Verde in the research illustrates the challenges and complexities of analyzing and interpreting subjectivities in CSDL. Pimenta was surprised by the radical changes in expressions

and attitudes of that glamorous mathematics teacher throughout the fieldwork. Initially, she was friendly and welcoming, but later revealed conservative political positions close to fascism, stating during a car ride with the researcher that “our flag is blue, green, and yellow; it will never be red.”

Later, in an informal conversation, teacher Verde revealed that she was undergoing psychiatric treatment. In a subsequent semi-structured interview, she expressed admiration and respect for environmentalists and progressive figures such as Leonardo Boff, Chico Mendes, and Paulo Freire. This created a dilemma for Pimenta, questioning what her ‘true’ political and ideological identity was.

This highlights how individuals may adopt diverse discourses in different settings. Understanding the multiple voices that emerge among school actresses allows for a more sensitive analysis of seemingly contradictory attitudes and discourses. This avoids simplistic judgments in cartographic analyses and encourages a critical evaluation of the various factors influencing social interactions in specific contexts.

The polyphonic subjectivities of school actresses are shaped by discourses, experiences, and institutional, linguistic, and economic structures that influence their worldviews, narratives, and practices. It is expected that the emotions, judgments, and appreciations of readers of the cartographic text do not fall on specific individuals or institutions, mentioned under pseudonyms, but rather on the contexts and political, economic, and discursive structures that seek to standardize people and institutions.

In cartographic textualizations, the affective intensities reflected in the plural subjectivities of both the researcher and the participants are often reduced to a simple name, as a way of enabling writing and communication. As Deleuze and Guattari (1995, p. 13) assert, “it is not enough to say long live the multiple, a difficult cry to utter. No typographic, lexical, or even syntactic skill will be enough to make it heard.”

Therefore, it is both possible and necessary to expose some biographical aspects of the researcher in the cartographic text to enable the understanding of their symbolic and affective inheritances, which help determine the cultural distance from which they experience the research settings. The autobiographical account can thus serve as a starting point for the cartographic narrative, subtly intertwined with field experiences until the moment of textual socialization. It is worth remembering that this artificial closure marks only the beginning of new and indeterminate openings.

To create the autobiographical starting point of the cartographic text, fragments of memories are used, understanding, as Larrosa (1994) states, that memory does not merely bring the past to light but is an active operation that temporarily articulates subjectivity. According to this author, memory involves imagination and the construction of a sense of self. The autobiographical account is a type of reflective narrative in which a distinction is created between “the ‘I’ understood as the one who is preserved from the past, as a trace of what was seen of oneself, and the ‘I’ that takes that trace and narrates it” (Larrosa, 1994, p. 30). By narrating, one shares what remains of their self-perception.

Addressing cartographic writing in educational research, inspiration can be found in anthropology. Geertz (1989) recommends an approach that combines the non-authorial stance of the scientist with the self-awareness of the novelist, avoiding falling into either extreme. The non-authorial stance could lead to accusations of insensitivity, of hearing words but not the melody; whereas the hyper-authorial stance could result in criticisms of impressionism, of hearing a melody that does not exist.

Advancing propositions on cartographic writing, it is necessary to recognize that all discourse or communication carries an intentionality and a performance. The engaged voice

cannot be fixed or absolute; it must be in constant transformation and dialogue with the world (hooks, 2013). For instance, the textual product of the research in question was directed to the academic community, composed of researchers and practitioners in science education and school-based environmental education. This cartographic textuality would have been radically different had it been intended for a community of philosophers, artists, scientists, or even a government or social movement.

On the other hand, it is essential that the cartographic researcher, in pursuit of political coherence, comprehensively, deeply, and honestly records the anthropological perspectives that school actors cast upon them. Polyphony is an ethical imperative in cartographic research with basic education teachers, whose voices and murmurs are often ignored in the formulation of public policies. These actresses and authors of the 'school comedy' must have their voices and symbolic territories fully represented in the textual weave through generous citations and the democratization of interpretation. Collaborative writing fosters clinical approaches, understanding the clinical perspective, according to Macedo (2016, p. 62):

The clinical approach implies stepping outside of ourselves and looking at ourselves in a way that questions our own moments. The clinical approach is self-critical because the observer is also urged to observe themselves, to experience distancing to make explicit the dynamics and power of their implications. It means walking toward the other and, from their point of view, undertaking the effort of dialogue.

Pimenta sought to democratize writing and interpretation by attempting to craft a text woven by many hands, with the active participation of teachers. To this end, he drafted and shared preliminary versions as a starting point, hoping to inspire the participants' passions, memories, and texts. However, the few contributions received ultimately became subordinate to the researcher's version. This may have occurred because the drafts were shared via email due to the restrictions on in-person meetings imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, a period during which Pimenta was organizing the results of his dissertation. He acknowledged that a more participatory, democratic, and dialogical engagement could have been achieved if he had shared the narratives in person and facilitated face-to-face meetings for collective reading and recording of the teachers' comments, thus enriching the textual weave.

Pimenta was careful in creating the drafts shared with the research participants, as he realized that reading these reports could generate unnecessary conflicts among them, given that they worked at the same educational institution and would remain there indefinitely. He was aware that an anthropological text produced within this context of heightened affective intensities could be influenced by value conflicts, micropolitical pressures, and complex networks of subjectivities beyond his control.

By taking the necessary precautions in drafting and sharing the preliminary texts, Pimenta preserved ethical integrity but had to forgo a desired polyphony and generous democratization of perspectives. James Clifford (2001) warns that, while an authority and validity based solely on the researcher's experiences and interpretations may suppress dialogue and the voices of social actors, the opposite is also true: a purely dialogical authority and validity can complicate textualization, making the ethical and aesthetic production of the work problematic.

When composing the cartographic text, attention should be given to the section traditionally known as 'conclusions', even though assigning this term to a qualitative study with a cultural perspective is contradictory. The richness of cultural research lies in its inexhaustible potential to initiate and sustain conversations — always open, always unfolding. The cartographic writer must

thus recognize the impossibility of deriving generalizations, prescriptions, or laws from cultural research, even with dense descriptions, polyphonic interpretations, and rigorous selection of settings and actresses.

In the research analyzed, only two forms of being a public school, of being a science teacher, and of organizing school fairs in the urban periphery of Salvador, Bahia, were tangentially explored. It is therefore reasonable to assume that countless other ways of engaging with these identities and practices exist across different urban peripheries in Latin America. The cartographic text remains open to multiple interpretations, which may emerge from various school actors, practitioners, and readers involved in its dialogue.

These qualitative studies and texts play a fundamental role as pretexts for initiating or sustaining dialogues and conversations. These textual weavings represent sensitive and open perspectives, following the curious spirit of a sentimental cartographer (Rolnik, 2007). Any slight alteration in methodological tactics and strategies or decisions made along the way could have resulted in a different narrative. For these reasons, it is believed that it is neither appropriate nor within the researcher-writer's authority to bring the cartographic text to a close. In this final section, the researcher's responsibility is to reopen the conversation, create openings, and highlight gaps and challenges deemed fruitful, infusing them with coherence and political strength (Walsh, 2017).

TENSIONS BETWEEN INTERPRETATIVE, DIALOGICAL, AND AFFECTIVE MOMENTS

The cartographic dance, by its inherently hybrid nature, unfolds amid persistent tensions between its cognitive, political, and sentimental horizons. Awareness of these tensions and the pursuit of harmony between distinct moments serve as indicators of the quality of cartographic work. To illustrate these tensions, a degree of reflexivity on Pimenta's experience with the research in question is essential.

In the second semester of 2018, Pimenta gradually distanced himself from Águas Mornas School due to escalating political-ideological conflicts within the WhatsApp group designated for coordinating the school science fair. These tensions affected his relationships with the teachers Amarela and Verde, his primary interlocutors. Pimenta realized that his presence might have been causing discomfort, making them feel monitored or intruded upon.

The teachers expressed concerns regarding the research objectives and requested that he refrain from sharing political content in the group. This context raised ethical questions about whether, in his attempt to amplify voices and provoke expressions from the school actresses, the researcher might have been overstepping ethical boundaries in educational research, inadvertently imposing a form of experimentalism on the realm of emotions and social relationships.

Considering that teacher Verde's subjectivities regarding environmental issues aligned harmoniously with the theoretical and epistemological perspectives of the research, it would have been more prudent for Pimenta to adopt a less ideological, partisan, and electoral discourse. He could have emphasized environmental issues as a unifying narrative, establishing points of connection, building bridges, and creating spaces for negotiation to foster dialogue and common agendas (Kastrup and Passos, 2013).

Reflecting on his presence in the school setting, Pimenta justified his occasionally proselytizing approach based on the understanding that CSDL are inherently political, aiming at theoretical-conceptual gains and the deterritorialization of participants. However, this political approach should not transform research contexts into polarized arenas of ideological dispute, as this would constrain the possibilities for dialogue. In the case of Águas Mornas School, it would have been more appropriate, both conceptually and politically, for Pimenta to soften or reduce the frequency of his ideological and partisan discourse in his interactions.

Faced with the stark confrontation of his field experience, Macedo's (2016) contributions allowed Pimenta to rethink his tactics, strategies, and the scope of the cartographic journey in that specific context. Macedo (2016, p. 64) suggests that:

The cartographer carries in their pocket a criterion, a principle, a rule, and a brief roadmap of concerns. The criterion is the degree of openness to life that each person allows themselves at any given moment. The principle is the adoption of an extra-moral stance, which enables the expansion of life, allowing it to find channels for realization. The task is to create pathways whenever the pulsations of life are blocked or hindered. The rule is to provide elasticity to the criterion and the principle, a tolerance threshold for disorientation and reorientation of affections, a limit of deterritorialization.

Pimenta reflected on the ethical boundaries of his strategy of provocation and sharpening political contradictions to highlight and confront ideological perspectives and cultural representations. He assessed the potential political or cognitive gains of this approach in comparison to the affective, emotional, and health-related losses that could impact all those involved. As a result, he decided to withdraw, reduce his presence, and ease tensions without entirely disconnecting.

Pimenta acknowledged that the notion that his actions over the course of two or three months could make a significant difference was pretentious and self-centered. He concluded that his help might not have been necessary, even though he had hoped to learn from the strategies, negotiations, and procedures the teachers employed to navigate institutional challenges and internal differences during the final phase of organizing the 2018 school science fair. He was aware of the various conflicts among the teachers regarding their vision for the science fair and how it should be conducted, regretting that he did not have the opportunity to understand how these issues were addressed and resolved to ensure the event's realization.

CARTOGRAPHIC OPENINGS

Certeau (2016) points out that ethnology involves domination, as it observes popular culture from a position of epistemic superiority, generating stereotypes and naturalizing differences. In educational research, the use of the prefix "ethno" may suggest a false superiority of the researcher over the school practitioner, further widening symbolic and affective distances. This term, laden with colonial connotations, conflicts with dialogical approaches to education, which promote collective knowledge construction and social transformation. Therefore, it is necessary to critically examine the use of "ethno" lenses in qualitative research with an anthropological bias in school contexts.

Despite these ethical concerns, anthropological research in schools is necessary and can be valuable for reflections on social transformation and the emancipation of marginalized groups. This is evident in the cognitive gains in intercultural education, environmental education, and science teaching within the research methodology presented in this article. Ethical considerations in cultural research in schools can be more coherently addressed when the research relationship focuses on collaboration, on *with*, on establishing partnerships — rather than on distant observation or intervention, centered on *about*.

However, the meaning of a successful partnership in educational research involving school actresses must be problematized. From an insurgent perspective (McLaren, 1997), partnerships are not considered successful when the researcher merely adapts to school routines or pursues merely instrumental and overly specific objectives without questioning the realities and oppressions involved.

For an emancipatory partnership to be effective, it must be guided by political considerations that challenge and disrupt everyday dynamics and forms of oppression. In this sense, CSDL seek catalytic validity, which “refers to the extent to which research influences the way those it studies understand the world and how they shape it to transform it” (Macedo, 2009, p. 114).

Partnerships have ethical limits, but these do not preclude reflections on the everyday realities of social groups, even when a *common plan* cannot be established (Kastrup and Passos, 2013) or when *multiplicity* is not achieved (Deleuze and Guattari, 1995). The impossibility or frustration of a partnership, often misinterpreted as superficial contact or instrumental intervention, can be academically and politically enriching. Ignoring the political and emancipatory dimensions of partnerships may result in research that perpetuates oppressive conditions. Thus, partnerships must remain open possibilities without restricting awareness-raising processes regarding oppression.

CSDL provide political coherence and flexibility for investigating school realities in Latin America, responding to the call to understand, in all their richness and complexity, the everyday lives of the Wretched of the Earth (Alves, 2003). This requires fostering affective bonds and approaching school protagonists and marginalized communities with sensitivity and respect (Oliveira, 2007).

CSDL tactics align with the dynamics of emancipatory pedagogical processes, demanding expressive affectivity, cultural translations, and dialogical strategies. An engaged researcher must avoid instrumentalist approaches, instead fostering mutual cultural enrichment, the activation of emancipatory desires, and collective weavings. In turn, school practitioners committed to social transformation need to cultivate reflexivity, curiosity, and openness to otherness. This approach tends to erase all boundaries between practitioners and researchers.

The research in question can be described as *flâneur* research, as it did not have a predefined empirical object but was shaped through observation, listening, and field experience. The school science fairs emerged as the central object of analysis only after fieldwork concluded, providing coherence to the experience and offering a relevant foundation for dialogues with emancipatory theoretical frameworks.

Research characterized as *flâneur* plays a necessary role in exploring new territories. Certainly, other readers and researchers will adopt more defined objectives and focuses, sharper lenses, more directed passions, and more refined instruments. They will concentrate on specific aspects, delving into details, and exploring certain perspectives and situations presented in the cartographic narratives.

It can be argued that the primary intention of this research and its methodology was to initiate dialogues and explore paths that have traditionally been neglected, forgotten, or avoided — yet are of significant social and political relevance. These beginnings will resonate with those who aspire to more humane worlds and believe in the potential of environmental education and science teaching in urban periphery schools as tools for advancing towards these horizons.

In seeking a brief synthesis of the methodological reflections presented, it is possible to affirm that CSDL are based on the notion of cartography developed by Kastrup (2019) and Macedo (2016), as well as on the methodological insights of Certeau (2013), adapted to educational contexts by authors such as Alves (2003), Ferraço (2007) and Oliveira (2007). This methodological approach involves an open and sensitive attitude towards negotiating common plans with research participants, avoiding researcher impositions.

This approach values surprise, creativity, polyphony, and the democratization of gazes and interpretations while also paying attention to political aspects and the catalysis of affects. CSDL require

generous periods of field immersion to allow *vibratile bodies* to be activated (Sander, 2011) and for *common plans* to gain consistency (Kastrup and Passos, 2013).

The primary objective of this approach is not to solve problems or represent objects but to follow processes and detail phenomena in exploratory studies. The researcher must maintain an open and flexible presence in the field, with a distracted yet sensitive gaze attuned to happenings and surprises, unconcerned with chronological time and willing to fully experience the intensities of happenings. A kinesthetic immersion in the field is fundamental, following clues and intuitions.

Furthermore, it is crucial to establish stimuli and provocations that activate the voices, passions, and representations of the involved actors, fostering continuous interactions, reflections, and dialogues that generate deterritorializations among the interacting subjectivities. The contacts should be directed toward weaving networks, discussions, assemblies, movements, collectives, or multiplicities, paying special attention to shared connections and desires, prioritizing the initiative of school actors.

A detailed record of field experiences and the systematic organization of the empirical material are necessary, along with the promotion of polyphonies and the democratization of interpretations in research outputs. When tensions arise between interpretative, affective, dialogical, and textualization moments, affect and politics should take precedence.

These suggested characteristics remain flexible and open to lessons derived from praxis, always echoing the words of the Spanish poet Antonio Machado: “Traveler, there is no path; the path is made by walking.”¹²

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¹² “Caminante, no hay camino, se hace camino al andar.”

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