

## Historical learning in History teaching: some considerations

Lídia Baumgarten\*

**Abstract:** This article presents some reflections on the understanding of History teaching, its relation between the past and the present, a relation with daily life and the formation of a historical history of students from two classes of basic education in the municipality of Assis, state of São Paulo, in 2013. An activity with application of questionnaires, with open questions and some with alternative answers, being yes or no, and need to justify them. The selected classes were 7th Year of Elementary School, with a participation of 35 students and a 1st Year of High School, with eleven (11) participating students. It was used as a theoretical basis, such as Schmidt (2004), Cainelli (2006), Rüsen (1992), Guimarães (2003), Monteiro (2001) and Bittencourt (2005). As results, it is pointed out that the teaching of History develops as a central objective to instrument the student to produce his own knowledge. The social function of History must be to approximate its contents with the daily life of the student, thus providing a formation of Historical Critical-Genetic Consciousness (Rüsen, 1992).

**Keywords:** History Teaching, Historical Learning, Historical Consciousness.

### Introduction

This article presents some reflections on the understanding of History teaching, its relationship between past and present, the relationship with everyday life and the formation of historical awareness of students from two classes of basic education in the city of Assis, State of São Paulo in 2013. During this period, she worked as a professor of History Teaching Practice and Supervised Internship at Unesp, Assis Campus and Presidente Prudente Campus, teaching the discipline of Content, Methodology and Practice of History Teaching, in the Pedagogy course. The activity consisted of the application of questionnaires, with open questions and some with alternative answers, being yes or no, and the need to justify some of them. The selected classes were a 7<sup>th</sup> Degree of Elementary School, with the participation of

---

\* Doctor in History from the Paulista State University - UNESP. Assistant Professor at the Federal University of Alagoas – UFAL.

35 students and a 1<sup>st</sup> Degree of High School, with eleven (11) participating students.

The theme related to the teaching of History, its relationship between past and present, the relationship with everyday life, the formation of students' historical consciousness and its relationship with the teaching-learning process that takes place inside the classroom and outside it, poses an initial question: Why should history be taught at school?

Firstly, we emphasize the need to understand the social reality that results from the actions of men who have long attributed the view of History as the action of solitary heroes. In second place, it should be emphasized that the role of the historian and the discipline of History must follow the changes, always starting from the present. In other words, we must consider the importance of the historical moment and fact that is permeated by social, political, economic and cultural relations.

If we seek to understand how History teaching has been developed in the classroom and what the students' appropriations of History contents are, some concerns and questions come to mind, such as: Has the student been producing his/her own knowledge? Have public schools and teachers considered the student's social practice and school culture? Considering that they work with History textbooks, most of the time, as the only teaching resource, and that they have the same contents suggested for the elementary and high school years, has this content been adapted to the curricula of each school?

Considering the discourse of the possibility of adapting to the curriculum of schools and the autonomy of the student, but which is something imposed and has a characteristic of mass education, of teaching the same content to all students, without taking into account the specificity, the particularities, the cultural traits of each student and the school culture of each place/school; What does it mean for teachers, both recent graduates and those who have been teaching for some time in schools, to work with this teaching material?

Are textbooks a subterfuge used by teachers to avoid facing the problems encountered in Brazilian schools? Or are they seen as a solution to the problems faced by teachers? Consideration should be given to the different attributions and activities that teachers must fulfill and, therefore, they have difficulties in preparing more creative classes, using different methodologies/languages, they feel unmotivated, they hardly manage to update and train themselves and follow the transformations of society that are reflected in teaching. Therefore, do you see in this teaching material a possible path? These are some questions and concerns that instigate us to reflect and seek alternative and significant paths for History teaching in Brazilian schools today.

In view of the questions mentioned above, we borrow the concept of historical consciousness from Rüsen (1992). The author presents four types of historical consciousness: the traditional one, which comprises the temporal totality and is presented as a possibility of continuity of past models and can serve to keep traditions alive. The exemplar, in which past experiences, in the form of cases, represent and embody general rules of temporal change and human conduct. Criticism, as the constitution of identity by the force of denial and, lastly, the genetics, contemplating different points of view that finds the perspective of temporal change that is the essence and what gives meaning to History. Therefore, social life is seen in all its abundant complexity, and this takes place in a process of dynamic development. Hence, we emphasize that it is essential that History teaching enables new practices in History classes, providing new forms of appropriation and learning of History contents that will contribute to the formation of a critical-genetic historical consciousness (Rüsen, 1992).

Rüsen claims that,

Since the elements of the four types are operatively merged in the process that gives practical life a historical orientation in time, we can reconstruct the complex relationships between these elements to precisely determine and define the structural speciality of the empirical manifestations of historical consciousness and its relation to moral values. (RÜSEN, 1992. IN: SCHMIDT, BARCA, MARTINS, 2010, p. 71).

Based on our reflections on the concept of critical-genetic historical consciousness (Rüsen, 1992), it is relevant to highlight the existence of different interests involved in the dynamics of the social process that, consequently they directly influence the dynamics and the way in which the History learning contents in schools takes place.

Textbooks generally neglected the participation of minority and marginalized groups in the great social movements that took place in human history. In this way, two types of history are configured: one that seeks historical truth and the other that works with the social place, the representation of the real.

Research has sought to highlight the cultural diversity of different subjects who were previously marginalized by academic research. With the inclusion of different social groups in the researched themes, it is concluded that this contributes to the understanding of the social relations that are established between the different social actors.

History taught in elementary school has always been seen as the specialized work of

historians. Therefore, it is up to schools to play the role of mere reproducers of a fragmented, static knowledge, an acquaintance that does not provide to produce student knowledge in the classroom. Debates and discussions cannot arise disconnected from the historicity that produced them.

In the 1950s, schooling reached reduced portions of the population. With the coup d'état, different civil and military, national and international interests start to collide in this context. With the Institutional Act (AI 5), enacted in 1968, what was left of the country's democratic freedom was lost.

During this period, the Brazilian school reality underwent profound changes. Basic education and higher education have a quantitative expansion in the places offered. The Basic Directives Law of 1961 could not escape the pragmatic conception that intended to form the citizen along the lines of the State's interest. From that period on, industrialization, which sought to create manpower for this same industry, sought to develop the "technization" of school education, which had, above all, an elitist character and did not prepare the student for life.

The University Reform of 1968 deepened the axes of the discussions that focused on the dilemma between quality versus quantity, leading to a consequent fall in the level of primary and secondary education. If, on the one hand, university reform served as an instrument of development and social progress, meeting social demands, on the other hand, it attacked the student movement, university autonomy and the possibility of contestation within universities.

The subjects of History and Geography also lost a large space in the curriculum, which caused the reduction of the credit hours of these subjects to the detriment of other subjects considered more "useful" that had been incorporated and needed space and were at the service of the labor technization. In the same way, we also have in this period the implementation of vocational courses, which provided a quick entry into the job market and aimed at the popular classes. These courses were usually held in a maximum of two years, in addition to being preparatory for the college entrance exam.

From this context, it must be considered that the principle of national security and economic development, guiding the new educational policy, start to clash with the principle of teacher autonomy. Short-time graduation accentuate or even institutionalize the devaluation and the consequent proletarianization of the education professional, who loses autonomy, insofar as his/her preparation for teaching activity is minimal. This graduation end up legitimizing technical control and new relations of domination within schools.

As of 1985, the disciplines of History and Geography returned to the curriculum,

replacing Social Studies, OSPB (Brazilian Social Organization and Policy) and Moral and Civic Education. During this period, the subject of education reforms was increasingly intensified. In addition to the theoretical studies produced and renewed and pioneering practices, several legal measures were taken so that teaching could perform its social function, to help people to live better in society and participate in it actively and criticism.

Official texts, such as the Brazilian Constitution of 1988, emphasize the discourse of “education as a right for all and a duty of the State”. The Law of Directives and Bases of National Education (LDB) considers that “Basic Education has the purpose of developing the student, assuring him/her the common training indispensable for the exercise of citizenship, and providing him/her with the intellectual means and conditions to progress in his/her work. and in further studies” (LDB, 1996, Chapter II, Article 22).

In LDB official text, we find, on the one hand, an excerpt that highlights the importance of research in the process of teacher training. However, the dichotomy that emphasizes the separation between teaching and research appears explicit. On the other hand, by abolishing the minimum curriculum, it gives freedom for other experiments. The National Curriculum Parameters point to the discussions and dichotomies between historical knowledge, the field of research and production of knowledge by specialists and school knowledge, knowledge produced in the school space. In addition, the National Curriculum Guidelines affirm the need to “link education with the world of work and social practice, consolidating preparation for the exercise of citizenship and providing basic preparation for work” (DCNEM, 1998).

From the 1980s onwards, the resistance and struggles of workers took on a class dimension: new unions and wage claims emerge. In addition to the mobilization in favor of the revaluation of the teaching profession, the educational policy, the role of the school, the curricula and the educational process are questioned in depth.

Curricula begin to be redefined under other parameters, rethought under new perspectives related to the country's social and economic changes, globalization and the transformations of the role and power of the State in the new economic world order. The formal presentation of official curriculum proposals sought to overcome the technicist model of the 1970s.

Thus, the gap between the history studied and produced at the university and that taught in elementary and high schools is evident. The Brazilian academic space encompasses a multiplicity of readings and interpretations, methods and themes, teaching practices and diversified research. Even so, it is still an “elitist” production space.

For the basic education school, there is a need for a varied bibliography and pedagogical practices that stimulate debate, investigation, and creation, as schools have been spaces of transmission of one and another historiographical reading, fragmented and simplified, constituting a single version. of the story.

The job of the historian and the sources is to create forms and conditions to produce knowledge that reaches schools and society in general. The New History, through the French intellectuals of the Annales School, promoted from the beginning of the 20th century a critical dialogue and opposition to the traditional positivist conception, transforming the way of researching and studying history. In this way, all men, and women, rich and poor, blacks, Indians, whites, rulers and ruled, employees and employers are considered subjects of history. The new history began to deal with everything that men and women did in the past and are doing in the present. Unfortunately, the weight of traditional historiography and the conception of history of parents, students and many teachers make it difficult, even today, to incorporate new thematic fields, new problems and new sources in the classroom.

Another relevant aspect to be mentioned is the issue of cultural shock that happens to middle-class teachers, who in general are faced with students from simpler backgrounds, that is, from another cultural context that provides the encounter with the other, establishing the need of a dialog. This makes pedagogical practices difficult, as most of the time the student's culture is not considered. It is worth mentioning that one of the outstanding characteristics of our culture is the richness of its diversity, which occurred with the meeting of different cultures - whites, blacks, and Indians.

The Brazilian school brings together students from the most varied cultures. However, “she has not yet learned to live with this reality and, therefore, does not know how to work with children and young people from the poorest social strata, made up, for the most part, of blacks and mestizos” (FERNANDES, 2005, p. 379). Therefore, the school is a socializing vehicle and a transmitter of culture. The role of the school is to generate its own and differentiated culture, but it also produces multiple cultures and a globalized culture. Culture is built from the knowledge acquired and experienced in practice through the social relationships that are established throughout society and at school.

Culture is one of the most dynamic and unpredictable elements in the context of current historical transformation. The classroom is the space for sharing individual and collective experiences in which the relationship between subjects and the different types of knowledge involved in the production of school knowledge and culture is established. Educational

institutions must promote a more in-depth analysis through curricula, teaching programs and textbooks that seek to aggregate different cultures inserted in the school space.

Having said that, it is worth asking: what is the importance of History teaching beyond the school space? And what does history have to do with culture? Thompson (1981) states that the history studies the lives of all men and women, with the aim of recovering the meaning of individual and collective experiences. From this perspective, the content selected in the classroom must establish relationships with the daily lives of students and teachers, as well as confront the cultural experience of students and teachers with other sources of historical knowledge, in other temporalities and spaces.

The syllabus of the curricula has prioritized a monocultural and Eurocentric view of our past, exalting the role of the colonizer and denying the participation of black people in the construction of Brazilian history and culture. Furthermore, textbooks are permeated by a positivist conception of Brazilian historiography that excelled in the reporting of great facts and heroes, overshadowing the participation of other segments of society in the country's historical process.

History teaching must encourage the student to know the cultural diversity and cultural assets of our rich and multifaceted historical heritage, because only then will we be contributing to the construction of a plural and citizen school and forming Brazilian citizens aware of their role as historical subjects and agents of social transformation.

It is not enough just to awaken students' critical sense, or to review the traditional content, or even to replace the teaching material with one that is more appropriate to the student's reality, but it is essential to review the conception of history that implies this content (SCHMIDT, 2009). Changing the traditional content does not resolve the issue, but the student must be guaranteed the production of a reflection of a historical nature. The teacher must repudiate the concern with exhausting the content and the sequential process. Therefore, he/she must work with what it means for him/her to speak of historical process and historical consciousness.

The teacher is seen, sometimes as a transmitter of knowledge, sometimes as a producer of knowledge and practices. However, it must promote the union between academic competence, which are the domains of knowledge, and pedagogical competence, which are the domains of "transmission of knowledge". The History teacher usually presents him/herself in a situation of concern to externalize what he/she knows, at the same time he experiences insecurity in relation to the social and cultural problems faced by young people and in relation



to the lag of their own training (SCHMIDT, 2009). Therefore, it is worth mentioning that the formation of the History teacher must be continuous, seeking to build their personal and professional identity. In addition, the teacher must follow the changes that have occurred and occur in society and participate in the current debates that take place at the university.

Reflecting on the traditional conception of teaching, we can say that it offers students only the condition of receptacles of information, contents and curricula. That is, knowledge is presented as a finished product and there is a linear and sequential view of history. This history excludes the reality of the student and the experiences of the history lived by him/her. The student assumes that what should be taught is what is learned at school and feels insecurity and fear in the face of the instruments of power to which they are subjected. In addition, the story must relate to the present and the reality of the student. The classroom must be a space where a dialogue relationship is established, seeking to give meaning to historical learning.

Maria A. Schmidt and Marlene Cainelli (2004) state that the traditional method places the teacher as a transmitter of knowledge, and the student as a mere receiver. It is characterized in a descriptive language of history, with a factual nature and deterministic model. The dialogued approach seeks to get students to interact with the proposed theme. It is up to the teacher to use them according to the need verified in the school environment, since it is the reality of this place, its location, and the participatory community that will determine the methods to be used.

Study and reflection must be the essence of the teaching-learning work. The teacher must keep in mind which conception of history teaching he/she wants to work on: either he/she participates in the production of historical knowledge, or it is just an echo of what others have already said.

The teacher is responsible for teaching the student to acquire the work tools – the know-how, encouraging them to raise problems, transforming issues into problematic ones. The student must be given effective participation in the process of doing. That is, to offer him/her the opportunity to appropriate knowledge and to see him/herself as a subject of History.

Analyzing some aspects about the role of the internship in teacher training, we emphasize that it has been, most of the times, the first experience of their field of activity. The internship has always been identified as the practical part of professional training courses in general, as opposed to theory. Training curricula have been made up of an agglomeration of disciplines, isolated from each other. Thus, it is necessary to consider the need to review the academic training of teachers - the researcher teacher in the classroom and the researcher teacher -, seeking to overcome the traditional gap between academic research and pedagogical



practice, articulating educational theory and practice (PIMENTA , 1994).

Ana Maria Ferreira da Costa Monteiro (2001) works with the concept of reflective teacher created by Donald Shön (1995). From this perspective, the practice is valued teacher as a source of research and teacher autonomy, in addition to developing professional responsibility. According to the author, Shön defends the idea that,

Teachers create specific knowledge linked to action, which can only be acquired through contact with practice (...) Shön created the category of reflective-teacher and the concept of reflection-in-action, according to which the teacher analyzes and interprets his/her own reality in the act, and the concept of reflection-on-action, which implies a retrospective and reflection on what has been accomplished. (MONTEIRO, 2001, p. 133).

The internship takes place in the interaction of training courses with the social field in which educational practices are developed. The conception of teacher education must be guided by the production of knowledge from their educational practice, overcoming the traditional academic perspectives and techniques of teacher education. Research is seen as an alternative for professional growth for teachers in training.

So, we highlight the need for articulation between content and form. Conceição Cabrini et al (1986) emphasizes that there is no separation between form and content, as we would be accepting the existence of “absolute truths”. In this way, the student would not be a historical agent and subject of the production of his/her own knowledge. The practice in the classroom fundamentally depends on the way the teacher sees the teaching-learning process and on his/her’s History conception.

For Maria de Fátima Salum Moreira, the problems are already present in the initial training of teachers in the initial series.

The picture of the conditions in which the teaching of history is being carried out, especially in the initial grades of elementary school, is quite discouraging. In addition to the little importance attributed to such work by the teaching professionals themselves, they are, in most cases, quite unprepared in relation to its theoretical and methodological foundations. Thus, the teacher usually carries out such teaching in a random and uncommitted way with a project with which he/she is involved because he/she has effectively participated in its elaboration. (MOREIRA, 1996, p.51).

The historical doing and the pedagogical doing are based on the didactic transposition of the historical doing, using didactic methods as a useful tool for the teaching-learning process. As didactic methods, we highlight the document that is the starting point of making history in the classroom, helping to develop the student's critical sense.

Another aspect that is relevant in this process is the relationship between technological innovations and History teaching, as one must consider the need to know how to articulate, think and reflect, based on new technologies, and not to fill the absence of the teacher. The new technologies must be articulated with the curricula and with the pedagogical practice in its entirety, so that the students become aware of the plurality of present and past realities.

For Schmidt and Cainelli (2004), teaching strategies, considering the methods and techniques applied, are relevant procedures for the organization of knowledge, and these are articulated with the constitutive elements of historical knowledge with those of pedagogical practice.

The methodologies used in History teaching, contemplating the different languages and sources, are not just a way to bring knowledge to the student, but a way that leads them to appropriate this knowledge in a significant way. That is, a historical knowledge that allows the student to form his/her historical consciousness that approaches the critical-genetic type, and that effectively serves as a guideline for his/her practical life.

In the same perspective, Bittencourt emphasizes that it is

It is fundamental for the teacher to bring out the social representations that students have on the topic to be studied, to identify them and thus better organize the contents to be presented, expand information, explain with greater care comparative studies and establish with greater certainty the criteria for choosing suitable teaching materials (BITTENCOURT, 2005, p. 240).

The student's historical initiation takes place through historical knowledge, which is something constructed from a methodological procedure, since history is a construction. The student is a historical agent, as the subject of the production of his/her own knowledge.

For Fonseca, it is necessary

To make the conscience of young people grow through a work of reflection and reconstruction of the human experience. It is undoubtedly a task of a

technical, theoretical, and political nature, since the choice of what is taught and how to teach is a fundamentally political-cultural and educational decision (FONSECA, 2003, p. 46 and 47).

In the same perspective, Schmidt states that

For classroom practice to acquire “the good smell of freshness”, it is necessary to definitively assume the challenges that historical education faces today. It would be one of the ways to contribute so that the students become aware of the plurality of present and past reality, of the issues of their individual and collective world, of the different paths and historical trajectories. (SCHMIDT, 2009, p. 65).

### **Historical learning: experience report**

I will report below the responses of the students based on the six questions of the questionnaire. The activity consisted of the application of questionnaires, with open questions and some with alternative answers, being yes or no, and the need to justify some of them. The selected classes were a 7<sup>th</sup> Degree of Elementary School, with the participation of thirty-five (35) students and a 1<sup>st</sup> Degree of High School, with eleven (11) participating students.

About the first question, “Do you like the discipline of History? What makes you like it or not?”, of the eleven (11) high school students who answered the questionnaire, four (4) said they DO NOT like History, and seven (7) said YES. The justifications of the seven students who answered yes have to do with History’ content, the ease of learning and the way the teacher teaches. The only student who justified his answer, of the four who answered no, highlighted the fact that History only studies the past.

Of the thirty-five (35) 7<sup>th</sup> degree students, sixteen (16) answered YES, twelve (12) answered NO, and seven (7) answered A LITTLE/MORE OR LESS. The justifications of the students, who answered YES, are based on the relationships established with the teacher who, according to them, explains well and with the understanding and affinity with the subject/discipline. In addition, most students emphasize the possibility of getting to know the past, understanding how other peoples (Greeks, Indians, soldiers, and their ancestors) lived. That is, it is possible to get in touch with myths, legends, and stories that students do not know.

The justifications of the students who answered A LITTLE / MORE OR LESS and NO, are related to the fact that history studies the past and aspects of life in the past and, therefore,

they are not interested in the history of the past and consider the subject/discipline tiring, boring and annoying. However, it is possible to say that most students see in history the possibility of understanding the past, relating present and past and seeking to recognize the changes that have occurred over time. This leads us to believe that History teaching should provide students with a learning close to their reality and that the teacher's relationship of respect and commitment makes a lot of difference in the process of building historical knowledge, a way of “teachers and students, subjects who share experiences in history classes, to establish new relationships with historical knowledge” (SCHMIDT, 2005, p.9). In relation to the second question, “which subjects do you like the most and why?”, high school students answered that they like Mathematics (4 students) and English (4 students), Art (3 students), Physical Education (2 students). Students). Geography, Portuguese, History, Sociology, Philosophy, Biology and Chemistry were chosen by only one student each.

The reasons are the most varied. Some, because they understand better and find it easier to learn certain subjects. Others, for the content; some like to do math and others like to read. Others still prefer Physical Education because it is a fun subject and because they can leave the classroom. Some students like some subjects, especially because of the teacher. Finally, some students responded that they like all subjects.

Seventh grade students like science (20 students), History and Mathematics (9 students), Physical Education (8 students), Art (7 students), Geography (6 students) and Portuguese (5 students). Of the six (6) students who responded that they like geography, two of them said it's because the teacher is nice. Others said it's because the teacher is fun and explains well and because you need to pay attention in class and be active. Of the five (5) students who answered that they like Portuguese, two of them said that it is because it is a little of what they understand. The others, because they have to pay attention and be active and because they like Portuguese better.

Of the nine (9) students who responded that they like history, three (3) highlighted the teacher's way of explaining. The others highlighted the fact that they can know things about their ancestors, because they are related to mythology and because they like to read, because they find it interesting and easy to learn. Only one (1) of them answered that they like it a little, because they only write and never do a free activity, only in the classroom. Of the nine (9) students who responded that they like math, three (3) are because they like to do math, another two (2) by the way the teacher explains it and three (3) of them see ease of the subject. Of the seven (7) students who answered that they like art, four (4) said it is because they like to draw,

two (2) because it is a practical class and one (1) because they must pay attention and be active.

Of the eight (8) students who responded that they like physical education, four (4) highlighted the fact that it is an outdoor class. The others emphasized that it is because they can play and practice sports, because it is easier and because they must pay attention and be active. Of the twenty (20) students who answered that they like science, four (4) said that it is because they can study interesting things, five (5) because they like to carry out experiments and two (2) because of the way the teacher explains it. The other students justified their answers, stating that they liked to know about the human body, animals, plants, etc., because it is cool and easy to learn, because the teacher gives practical classes and because they go to the laboratory.

Based on the students' answers and justifications, we can highlight three aspects. The first is that learning history has to do with affinity with the discipline. Like it or not is part of the aptitudes and abilities of the students to understand the contents. The second is that the relationship with the teacher is something that can contribute to learning, as we mentioned in the first question. Finally, the way in which this learning takes place must be dynamic. In other words, the activities must escape from a traditional, boring, and monotonous class. The teacher can and should explore spaces outside the classroom and use all kinds of language, sources, and new technologies for historical learning, and that it makes sense in the student's life beyond the classroom.

However, it must be considered that it is not enough just to review the contents and methodologies, or to awaken students' critical sense, or even to introduce new technologies and replace didactic material. It is necessary to review the conception of history that is being introduced in the school space, as indicated by Schmidt (2009). Jaime Pinsky (1992) also emphasizes the need to rethink the political and social meaning of the discipline of History. Thus, the different teaching techniques and methodologies developed in the classroom will play an essential role in the construction of historical knowledge.

All eleven (11) high school students answered YES in the third question, "Does the History subject bring any relationship between past and present for you?". The students' justifications were based on two aspects. First, because they believe that many things and facts from the past are used and are present today. The second, since History relates past and present; and this past be often remembered in the present, and because we can see that mistakes made in the past can be corrected in the present.

Of the thirty-five (35) 7<sup>th</sup> grade students, twenty-nine (29) answered YES and six (6) answered NO. Of the twenty-nine (29) students who answered YES, we highlight the

justifications that refer to the possibility of understanding the transformations that have occurred throughout history, relating past and present, leading to the reflection of differences. Themes such as slaves, Greeks, wars, religion, city and technology were mentioned in the students' justifications.

Another aspect to be highlighted was the justification that history is not used only in school. Therefore, this answer approaches a critical-genetic historical consciousness. Of the students who answered NO, most do not see any relationship between past and present, as they consider the past distant from the present and without any relation to their daily life. Here it was also possible to apprehend that the student needs a learning that is closer to his/her daily life, which will allow him/her to give meaning to his/her experiences through historical knowledge. Schmidt (2005, p. 9) states that “the involvement with one's historical reality is a basic presupposition for the work of producing historical knowledge in history classes”.

For the fourth question, “Do you think the discipline of History is useful for your life outside of school? In other words, does it serve as an instrument of guidance to make decisions in practical life?”, of the eleven (11) high school students, seven (7) answered YES, and four (4) answered NO. Of the seven (7) students who answered yes, one (1) highlighted that History can help him/her become a teacher. Two (2) students observed that History is always present in everyday life. One (1) student stated that History can help to identify facts and things from the past. Two students highlighted the fact that the History content that is taught/learned at school can be used in the future outside of it as well and will serve as a guide to make decisions in everyday life.

Of the four (4) who answered NO, three did not justify it and only one highlighted that there were many changes and transformations in the present, although he/she highlighted that History only studies the past. Based on this, the History taught at school, in a way, loses its meaning, precisely because it studies the past. It is possible to perceive that the student cannot understand the notion of process and historical time, nor does he/she see the possibility of historical knowledge influencing his/her practical life, although he/she is aware of the changes that have taken place.

Of the thirty-five (35) 7th grade students, sixteen (16) answered YES, and nineteen (19) answered NO. The justifications of the students who answered YES are close to a critical-genetic historical consciousness. Some highlighted the possibility of knowing and identifying events, buildings, customs, values, old objects, among others. Others think of history as a way of knowing the past, giving meaning to existence in the past and, thus, reflecting on the

transformations that have occurred throughout history and their consequences in the present.

Another group of students already sees history as a way of understanding and reflecting on conflicts, whether in religious matters or in relation to territorial disputes, so that the same mistakes of the past are not made, helping in decision-making that involves society in general and the daily life of each of them. The past serving as a reflection and guidance for practical life, constituting concrete possibilities for changing attitudes.

The group of students who answered NO was based on two aspects. On the one hand, students have little affinity with the contents worked in the history class. The reasons are those highlighted in the previous questions and the outstanding characteristic is the fact that the classes are boring, tiring and not very dynamic. On the other hand, students do not make any relation of their daily life with the past and, therefore, do not see any use of history in their practical life and, therefore, it does not serve as a guide in or for decision-making. Jörn Rüsen (1992) works with the concept of historical consciousness, which works as a guideline for real life issues and situations, experienced in the present, and has the specific function of helping people to better understand these experiences from the present reality.

In the fifth question, “how is your relationship with the teacher? What do you think of the way he/she teaches? And are the topics interesting?”, all high school students stated that the relationship with the teacher is good, that he/she teaches well and clears up students' doubts. In addition, two (2) students highlighted the attention given by the teacher to the students and the constant search to innovate the methodologies and the way of teaching to improve student learning, although there is not much interest on their part. Four (4) students highlighted the good relationship with the teacher and the way of teaching, but considered the class boring, annoying and very discursive.

In the 7<sup>th</sup> grade class, twenty-six (26) students answered that the relationship with the teacher is good and that he/she explains well. The students highlighted positive aspects, such as clearing up doubts, trying to diversify classes and motivating students to participate in the class. About the item that refers to the themes, most students think they are interesting. Others already think they are uninteresting and, therefore, the class ends up being tiring. Nine (9) students responded negatively to the items asked. Of these nine (9), seven (7) students highlighted that the relationship with the teacher is not always good, and the topics are not always interesting either, but that he/she explains the subject well. Only two (2) students said that, in addition to the relationship with the teacher not being good, he/she also does not explain well, and they do not like history.



From this information, we can conclude that a good relationship with the teacher influences the interest in the discipline and in the themes of history and vice versa. Except for the two (2) students who said they do not have a good relationship with the teacher and that he does not teach well, all the other students (of the nine (9) who highlighted negative aspects) highlighted the way the teacher teaches. That is, although they do not have a good relationship with the teacher and do not find the topics interesting, the students highlighted that the teacher explains well. Therefore, the teacher/student relationship and the way he/she teaches is fundamental for a meaningful and reflective learning. From the perspective of Selva Guimarães Fonseca (2003, p. 76), “the historian-educator or teacher is someone who masters not only the process of building historical knowledge, but also dominate the set of knowledge and mechanisms that enable the socialization of this knowledge within the limits of the school institution”.

The high school students were divided into the sixth and final question, “how would you like the history class to be?”. Seven (7) students would like the class to deal less with the past, to be more interesting and interactive, with more conversations and less texts. Two (2) students criticized the attitude of their classmates, claiming more interest and collaboration on their part, especially at the time of explanation. Another two (2) students believe that there is no need to change the activities carried out in the classroom.

The answers of most 7th grade students were basically since they would like more practical and more dynamic classes, suggesting some activities to be developed inside and outside the classroom. Five students (5) responded that they would like the classes to remain as they are. One (1) student questioned the mandatory reading of texts (I believe it is the collective reading of texts, in which each student reads an excerpt). Three (3) students took the opportunity to refer to some rules imposed by the teacher and that they would like to be allowed in the classroom, such as sucking candy, chewing gum and drinking water. One (1) student asked about the negative points given by the teacher.

Among the suggestions we can highlight visiting museums, watching movies, working in groups and outdoors, more interesting topics and activities that relate the lives of their ancestors with their own life stories.

Although in the previous questions most students answered that the teacher explains well that the topics are interesting, that there is a relationship between past and present and that history serves to guide them in everyday life, at this moment they highlighted that classes end being tiring, because the teacher does not deviate much from the textbook. That is, the class is

based on reading the text of the textbook, the teacher explains and then answers the questions in the textbook that are closely related to the test that will be given to assess students.

Thus, it is worth emphasizing the need that the teacher must explore different languages in the History teaching, without ceasing to rethink on a daily basis about the concept of History that permeates their pedagogical practices in the classroom. Bittencourt (2005) states that the use of documents in History classes is justified by teachers as an efficient pedagogical tool, as this activity brings an approximation to reality; in which concrete situations are presented in relation to an abstract past, favoring intellectual development, replacing a limited pedagogical form, that is, based on the accumulation of facts.

### **Pointing out some considerations**

Although it is a consensus among most teachers that a history class must necessarily relate past and present, allowing the student to recognize the historical transformations that have taken place, the traditional/expository class, comprising activities of reading the text and explanation, questions and answers, has still been commonly developed in the classroom.

Therefore, we believe that the History teaching should have as a central objective to equip the student to produce his/her own knowledge. The social function of History should be to bring its contents closer to the student's daily life, thus enabling the formation of the Historical-Critical-Genetic Consciousness (Rüsen, 1992).

It is essential to avoid presenting ready-made answers to students, even if teachers perceive students' learning difficulties in different activities and are concerned that they learn. Pay attention to the interpretation questions in order not to give ready answers. Text interpretation that poses some "according to the text" questions is not the same as analysis from different languages and sources, insofar as we allow students to confront different points of view.

In order to effectively take place a learning process that stimulates reflection and questioning, it is necessary to start from the student's reality, what he knows about the topic to be addressed, trying to make an initial survey and work with their social representations. Zamboni (1998) reinforces that teaching materials are expressions of representations and in each of them we must adopt a specific procedure to analyze them.

In the same way, it is necessary to articulate the themes to the student's daily life, which

is closest, even if it is a content from a distant past. It is also essential to present the objectives of each class.

We emphasize here the need to use different methodologies, far beyond the textbook. The possibility of working with thematic axes that cover the contents to be worked on, developing activities with different methodologies/languages and documents throughout a bimester/semester provides a reflective and questioning learning process. The theme proposal can come from the students' suggestions and the project can be elaborated together with the students – Participatory Project, between teachers and students.

Projects with interesting themes and different languages do not always provide significant learning. Teachers need to rethink their concept of History, student, society, citizenship, equality and justice, in order to enable students to see themselves as part of the process and active participants in society. That they take an interest in the country's political and social issues and have the possibility to transform their reality and that of their surroundings. In other words, History learning to guide your practical life.

We believe that the role of History is to be a tool for the student to act in society and not as a mere subject of content assimilation, which privileges memorization. The teacher should not be concerned only with exhausting the content, avoiding its fragmentation, but rather, rethink the conception of the teaching-learning process and of History, as mentioned above, because most of the time, we are only in the frustrated experience of trying to teach.

The most authoritative teacher who does not maintain a good relationship with the student is not always able to participate and, consequently, learn and understand historical facts. It is necessary to establish a relationship of respect with the students. You should avoid passing long texts on the board, as students, while questioning the teacher's methodology, expect to receive the content ready, thus approaching a learning that permeates the banking concept of education, pointed out by Paulo Freire (1983).

One of the main challenges of education in the current context is to establish links between History teachers, the university and trainee students, based on the real needs of those involved in this process. According to Ibiapina (2008), collaborative research allows participants to work together and support each other, aiming to achieve common goals negotiated by the group's collective.

The exercise of teaching is not reduced to the application of previously established models, but, on the contrary, it is built in the practice of subjects, teachers historically situated. It is necessary to avoid the idea that the university already has the answer to the problems that

the school faces. It is also necessary to overcome the representation that university professors take the answers/recipes of what should be done to solve their problems.

It is essential to establish a systematic dialogue about the daily issues of History teaching with the collaboration of teachers who are in public schools. Garrido et al (2000) state that knowledge about teaching does not occur before doing it, as established by the paradigm of technical rationality, but begins by questioning the practice. Practice is the teacher's object of permanent investigation, during their training and professional action. Monteiro (2001, p.133) states that teachers create specific knowledge linked to action, which can only be acquired through contact with practice.

Therefore, both newly graduated teachers and those who are already in the classroom must rethink their pedagogical practice. Teacher training is not limited to initial training. He/she must be prepared to carry out a daily pedagogical practice of continuing education, mediated by theory and constant contextualized and collective reflection. The axis that articulates the dimensions of training is research, which is an epistemological and methodological instrument of the process of building the knowledge of the teacher in training (ANDRÉ, 2010).

The teacher must master the content/theory, with the objective of “filtering” the knowledge for the student's understanding. Monteiro (2001, p. 13) proposes that “professional practice is not a place of application of university knowledge, but of “filtration”, where it is transformed according to the demands of the work”.

The exercise of knowledge does not occur merely through its transmission and assimilation. Quite the contrary, it is mediated by an action: that of doubting, questioning, and asking. History should not be presented as absolute, ready, and finished truth.

Historical learning becomes significant from the moment we instrumentalize the student to capture knowledge through sources, documents, different languages and teaching materials and the theoretical framework that already exists on historical facts. In other words, narrative, and historical experience.

In possession of this teaching material, the student can reflect, interpret and build a new knowledge that will help him in his practical life. History begins to make sense beyond the classroom, school tests, entrance exams and the assimilation of knowledge. The History teaching becomes significant when we initiate historical knowledge and enhance the student's reflection and the confrontation of different ideas and conceptions, which will result in a historical learning that will guide them to make decisions in their daily life, and which will have an effective result. the social and ethical commitment of and in Brazilian society.

## Bibliographic References

- ANDRÉ, Marli (Org.). *O papel da pesquisa na formação e na prática dos professores*. 11ª edição. Campinas: Papirus, 2010.
- BITTENCOURT, Circe (Org.). *Ensino de História: fundamentos e métodos*. São Paulo: Cortez, 2005.
- BRASIL, Lei de Diretrizes e Bases. *Lei nº 9.394/96*, de 20 de dezembro de 1996.
- BRASIL, Ministério da Educação e do Desporto, Secretaria de Educação Fundamental. *Parâmetros curriculares nacionais*. Brasília: MEC/SEF, 1998.
- CABRINI, Conceição et al. *Ensino de História*. Revisão Urgente. 4. ed. São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1994.
- CAINELLI, M. *Educação histórica: perspectivas de aprendizagem em História no ensino fundamental*. Educar. Curitiba. Número especial, 2006.
- FERNANDES, J. R. O. Ensino de história e diversidade cultural: desafios e possibilidades. *Cadernos CEDES*, Campinas, v. 25, n. 67, p. 378-388, set./dez. 2005. Available at: <<http://www.scielo.br/pdf/ccedes/v25n67/a09v2567.pdf>>. Access in: Monday, May 13, 2013.
- FONSECA, Selva Guimarães. *Didática e prática de ensino de história: experiências, reflexões e aprendizados*. Campinas-SP: Papirus, 2003.
- FREIRE, Paulo. *Pedagogia do oprimido*: 12ª edição. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1983.
- GARRIDO, Elsa.; FUSARI, Maria.F.R.; MOURA, Manoel. O.; PIMENTA, Selma.G. A pesquisa colaborativa na escola como abordagem facilitadora para o desenvolvimento da profissão do professor. In: MARIN, Alda Junqueira (Org.). *Educação continuada*. Campinas: Papirus, 2000.
- IBIAPINA, Maria Lopes de Melo. *Pesquisa Colaborativa*. Brasília, LIBER, 2008.
- MONTEIRO, Ana Maria Ferreira da Costa. Professores: entre saberes e práticas. *Educ. Soc.* [online].2001, vol.22, n.74 [cited 2010-05-27], pp. 121-142 .
- MOREIRA, Maria de Fátima S. A criança e a história: quem ensina o quê? *Revista Nuances*, vol. II. pp. 51-54. Presidente Prudente, 1996.
- PIMENTA, Selma G. *O estágio na formação de professores: unidade teoria e prática?* São Paulo: Cortez, 1994.
- PINSKY, J. (org.). *O Ensino da História e a Criação do Fato*. 4a. ed. São Paulo: Contexto, 1992. SCHMIDT, M. A. A formação do professor de História e o cotidiano da sala de aula. In:

- BITTENCOURT, Circe (Org.). *O saber histórico na sala de aula*. São Paulo: Contexto, 2009.
- RÜSEN, J. O desenvolvimento da competência narrativa na aprendizagem histórica: uma hipótese ontogenética relativa à consciência moral. In: SCHMIDT, M. A. ; BARCA, I.; MARTINS, E. R. (Orgs.) *Jörn Rüsen e o ensino de História*. Editora UFPR, 2010.
- SCHIMIDT, Maria Auxiliadora; CAINELLI, Marlene. *Ensinar história*. São Paulo: Scipione, 2004.
- SCHMIDT, M. A. M. S.; GARCIA, T. M. F. B. A formação da consciência histórica de alunos e professores e o cotidiano em aulas de História. *Cadernos Cedes*, Campinas, vol. 25, n. 67, p. 297-308, set./dez. 2005.
- THOMPSON, Edward Palmer. *A miséria da Teoria*. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 1981.
- ZAMBONI, Ernesta. Representações e linguagens no ensino de história. *Revista Brasileira de História*. vol.18, nº.36, p.89-102, 1998.

