124 - DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF ENGAGED AND DISENGAGED MEMBERS OF THE "*ESPORTE CIDADÃO*" PROJECT

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1 Introduction

The Project *Esporte Cidadão* (Project *Citizen Sport*, in English), PEC, is social and educational-oriented by its coordinators' explicit decision. Following such tendency and from quantitative and qualitative data, we analyzed retention and dropout rates as well as interpreted reasons given both by former participants for leaving and remaining participants for staying in the project.

In this sense, "content is related to an ampler social context, thus becoming tools for critical analysis of reality, thus contributing to the personal and social development of participants (Pedagogical Proposal of PEC, 2001, p. 2). Following the Pedagogical Proposal of PEC, sporting activities are conceived in the perspective "… of social inclusion, in which such values as selectivity and exclusion, oriented to performance, are replaced by participation and solidarity"(ibid.). The socio-educational tendency in question proposes a critical reading of reality (SOARES *et al,* 1992) which, centered in the historical and dialectic materialism, aims at understand the social reality, through physical and sporting activities, in order to contribute to the process of social emancipation of popular classes.

This study is an attempt to test the proposal, with results that partially favor it and with analysis of critical points, which showed up as fragile and need to be reformulated. Among these points, it is worth mentioning the small willing to critically reflect on the contents of the proposal, since participants considered as losing time when they were asked to use part of their class to discuss about everything, instead of playing. There is also manifestation of asymmetrical relationships of power between agents and participants, which became evident through language, as well as incompatibility of the proposal with expectation of students towards sporting competition. In fact, the proposal does not reject sporting competition but it does not favor progression in the sporting carrier.

The proposal does not exclude looking for *excitation,* in explicit words, for quoting Elias e Dunning (1992), or looking for emotion and pleasure. . (LOVISOLO, 1995; 2001; 2002; LOVISOLO; VIANNA, 2005; LOVISOLO; LUCERO, 2006). Nevertheless, it does not center its energy for attaining these mental states. In other words, pleasure in playing is not established as a central goal in intervention, although sporting and physical activity may be conceived as naturally related to these aims.

Based on qualitative and on quantitative data, collected in a random way, we analyzed the degree of retention and dropout of members of PEC and elaborated na interpretation of the reasons presented by dropouts, for abandoning the Project, and by adherents, to remain in it.

In order to analyze participants' satisfaction degree facing the purpose of the project, we use the concepts of *exit* and *voice*, as presented by Hirschman (1970):

"Some members leave the organization: this is the *exit option* (…) members of an organization express their dissatisfaction directly to management or to some other authority to which management is subordinated to or through general protest to anyone who cares to listen: this is the *voice option*" (p. 4).

We also use Hirschman's concept of *loyalty* associated to alternatives offered by participants to overcome failures in the project they take part in:

"As a rule, then, loyalty holds exit at bay and activates voice. It is true that, facing dissatisfaction with the organization state, a member may remain faithful even if, personally, he/she is not influenced, as long as someone acts or that something happens to improve the situation" (*ibid*, p. 78)

Whereas the analysis of voices gives us clues for a reorientation of the project, aiming at developing adherence, favoring perseverance and thus filling the main goals of its creation, the analysis of exit allows us to verify individuals' dissatisfaction with institutions, even if we are prudent in accepting explanations given by dropouts for electing other activities, or for other motivations, outside PEC. The very fact that former participants say they left the project because they were tired of monotony and repetition does not guarantee that the project failed, but only that, for them, at the moment they left, PEC did not represent, then, what they were looking for.

In this study, we give voice both to PEC's young participants who remained in the project and to dropouts in order to identify their reasons for action and, thus, reorient the project intervention strategies. The decision for listening to participants and dropouts resulted in an institutional evaluation of the project which took five years and verified high dropout rate. We are conscious that the only analysis of voice is not sufficient, in itself, for identifying reasons for action and for, based exclusively in speeches, to reorient strategies of intervention.

The pedagogical philosophy of the project, centered in the goal of contextualize the space to favor the development of critical, creative, reflexive and autonomous citizens, values communication in the process of learning. This orientation had strong impact in the decision of hearing dropouts and remnants in PEC. While the staff was involved in the process of creating routines and strategies of ruling the activities, young boys and girls dropped out in an alarming proportion, as it can be verified by the figures below. In fact, in the period between 2002 and 2005, only 7.5% remained in PEC, while 92.5% abandoned it.

It was urgent, than, to hear people interested in the future of the project, that were still there, and to verify, in their voice, what could continue, what needed to change and what had to be changed, immediately. On the other hand, one has arrived at the conclusion that it was necessary to hear those who had been in the Project and that, in the moment of analysis, either were in other institutions involved with physical-sporting activities or, by any other reason, did not to return to the Project.

We well know that it is relevant to understand the reasons of a so big dropout. We also know that it is problematic do accept the explanations given by dropouts, and to take them as an input to change or to continue the politics. The very fact is that, forced to speak, the clients produced the discourses convenient for the context, what does not guarantee that their answers have to be taken seriously. It is in this sense that we opt for the critical discourse analysis to evaluate the speeches of our informants.

We postulate that at the same time individuals have singular disposition for action, they also build shared representations for justifying and legitimizing this action. We perceive the presence of the "other", the hearer, especially in the reasons for evasion and in the social representations about sporting competitions, in which interviewers internalize socially legitimized discourses for justifying their actions.

2 Social-Demographic Features

The sample was composed of 83 informants from whom 69 left and fourteen remained in PEC. All the interviews were face to face, semi-structured, recorded, and transcribed to undergo a critical discourse analysis. The dropouts sample was composed of

35 girls and 34 boys who had been engaged in the project for an average period of 2.3 years. This group age average is 13.4 years old and the educational level varies from 6th grade of elementary school to 1st grade of secondary school. Four of the young interviewees presented one or two-year educational gap. All dropouts live in low social-economic areas neighboring the school where the project is developed. Dropouts interviewed have abandoned the project after considerable experience in it. We avoided interviewing boys and girls who left the project after some weeks or months in it.

The participants sample were composed of 35 girls and 34 boys whose age average is 13.5 years old, retention average is 2.2 years, and educational level varies from 4th grade of elementary school to 3rd grade of secondary school. Four of these participants presented one-year educational gap in relation to age/grade. As well as the dropouts group, all remaining participants live in areas neighboring the school where the project is developed.

3 Reasons for leaving the project

Reasons for leaving the project were studied from the analysis of data of 69 dropouts, collected in interviews, in the first semester of 2007. Although seven different reasons were pointed by participants for having left the project, two of them are more frequently mentioned. From 69 dropouts interviewed, 40% reported they had left the project due to their studies whereas 30% pleaded lack of interest. Similar figures were verified in interviews performed in July 2007. From nineteen dropouts of such period, 40% left the project due to their studies and approximately the other 30% gave up due to personal reasons, as health and familiar problems, change of place of residence, need to work and incompatibility with the practice of a sports modality in another context, which they prioritized due to their participation in competitions.

This first part of data allows us to understand why most of dropouts left the project. Studies are the main reason for them to leave. If we observe interviewee's age group, we will notice that over 60% of subjects of both groups are between 13 and 14 years old. This corresponds in Brazil to the transition phase from elementary to secondary school. The pressure of studies on secondary school students is higher than on the former level, what leads many adolescents to cease systematic practice of physical activities, as it is illustrated by one dropout's statement when explaining why he had given up: "*I've finished 8th grade and the new school timetable doesn't match the project's*". In fact, the project reinforces schooling, since it is necessary to be in the school in order to enter the project. The dropouts are excluded from school, by different reasons, and are excluded from the social project, if not in school. Beyond that, a considerable amount of them abandons the project, for being at the same time in school and working.

When relating gender to social engagements, we verify that the boys' statements differ in a systematic way from the girls'. The boys of the sample, besides studies, also refer to their need to work very soon. Even those who just study prioritize a professional qualification, since it can speed up their entry in the labor market, permitting them to enter a professional secondary school. Two boys' statements make evident such need. The first boy reports he has to work and study as well: "*I work during the day and study at night*". The second claims he has to focus on professional studies: "*I quit because I study in a technical-professional school now*".

Every informant indicates a singular reason for leaving the project, illustrated here as incompatibility between the activities in PEC and new activities in school, need to work and investment in the professional carrier. Nevertheless, all reasons have studies as background. As far as we know, the dropouts who justify their abandon of PEC because of study make use of the *strategy of argumentation* (ROJO, 2005), by giving us moral explanations, free from attack. When we analyze the frequency of classes in the Project, of twice a week, with duration of 50 minutes, and especially the ample set of alternatives, which permits many different options for students, we realize that the argument of need to study does not fit. It is also worth considering that practicing physical-sporting activities may even favor those in intensive process of studying, as alleviating students from stress and tension. Our Frank interpretation, in this point, is that part of our informants gets free from polemic points, by considering that the interlocutor, in the interview, was an agent of the University, who commands the Project. They produce the politically correct discourse, by linking their evasion to reasons of moral order, difficult to contest.

In addition to social engagements and lack of interest, an incompatibility with the practice of other sports activities appears to be a relevant factor for giving up PEC's activities. Despite different, such two reasons have a close correlation, since the pedagogical proposal applied to the project, which has a critical-overcoming feature, has as main target the building of a critical and active citizen. Nonetheless, such proposal has been revealing itself as non-stimulating to PEC's participants, given that we accept their discourse as correct: because the project doesn't value sports competitions, classes are boring and repetitive, since there isn't actual challenges able to thrill the participants and, hence, keep them in the project. This situation can be exemplified by two students' statements: "*I quit because the exercises were repetitive and I didn't feel motivated*"; "*I didn't feel like it anymore…we didn't use to compete at all*". One could state that the same idea applies to those very motivated to competitive practice or with professionalizing horizon, since we can not assume neither that there is *tabula rasa*, nor that all actors have the same priorities, with the same intensity. In fact, PEC has neglected sporting competition, in different dimensions. Even those informants not akin to competition, once the period of learning is finished, have no more interest, when there is no more challenge. To eliminate competition from sport is to suppress part of its essence.

It is difficult to accept that the interests of both sexes are concentrated on activities outside the project, in other projects, schools or clubs, which value sports competitions. Nevertheless, by observing the profile of dropouts one realizes that the majority of them remained in the project for a reasonable time, more than two years. They learned what they had to learn, they have made profit of what was available for them and, when there was nothing new anymore, they quit PEC. This does not mean that the project has failed. We in fact think that social projects are not stable spaces, like schools. When interest ceases, it is time to look for new horizons. The point is that, with no doubt, the project does not offer conditions for continuity in sport carriers, for which it may offer just a mere inception. Stimulated by the possibility of competing, participants give up the social and educational-oriented project to invest in activities they think are more exciting. Sports competitions, as non-boring activities, motivate young people, discharge adrenalin, and are challenging as well. Such activities replace the thrill of the street, which is dangerous as well attractive. The option for activities that encourage sports competitions shows that the referred project didn't meet competitors' goals: "*I quit because I was going to present rhythm gymnastics* […] *that I went to the state championship, then, I couldn't stay anymore"*. Rhythm gymnastics is practiced by the informant, outside the project. The heavy training associated with this activity, as well as the need to participate in sporting competitions - like state championship - became incompatible with the practice of activities inside the project, what led the student to opt for the object of her main interest.

Family problems also lead participants to give up the project, despite little occurrences - less than 10% of the total. In most cases, problems are directly associated to girls. Some informants justify abandoning the project with arguments that can not be opposed. In fact, young women in Brazil generally have to help their family with the housework. Some of the girls had to leave the project because of home demands, as reveals one of them: "*I quit because of my family ... I had to have more responsibilities at home, I had to cook lunch and couldn't take part in Esporte Cidadão anymore*". The argument, here, is stronger than in the case of the boys, since even though there were only two classes a week, with 50 minutes each, the activity in question , dance, was offered only in the period between 10:40 and 11:30, thus impeding girls to go to school in the mornings.

4 Reasons for joining the project

We identified reasons for joining the project from an analysis of 83 interviews of which 69 were performed with dropouts and fourteen with remaining participants. Collected data point to several reasons for joining the project, both for dropouts and participants. From the 69 dropouts, 19 say they joined the project to learn a sports modality, 14 were motivated by friends and

relatives, 14 just wanted to have something to do, 8 due to health problems, 7 because they had affinities with the chosen modality, 4 to make friends, and 3 due to aesthetic matters. From the 14 remaining participants, 9 affirm they joined the project because they intended to learn and develop a sports modality, 2 for having something to do, one due to health problems, one to keep away from the streets, and one was motivated by family.

When dropouts' reasons for joining the project are compared to the remaining participants' ones, a dispersion of reasons stands out in the former group whereas a concentration of them is found in the latter. For the dropouts' group, the most relevant reason for joining was "to learn a modality", which represents 25% of this group reasons for joining. Among the fourteen remaining participants, 60% joined the project due to the same reason. To learn a sporting modality does not necessarily imply participating from sporting competitions. People may relate to sport with aesthetic goals, by health reasons, to fight against inactivity, by relationship reasons, or by practical one, as learn how to swim in order not to die drown. On the other hand, to compete is to get involved in an activity posterior to the learning of a sporting ability. While in the process of learning, there is no pressure to compete. Competition in this moment is of internal nature, one competes against himself. Afterwards, when abilities become automatic, the focus becomes external. It is time to compete against others. It is in this moment that the Project has failed towards those who want to compete. Such figures suggest that the remaining participants have a more objective and realistic idea of what the project can offer them, while, in the dropouts' group, reasons for joining are not directly associated to a concrete possibility of fulfillment, are vague and less pragmatic, as it is indicated in the following statement: "*I got in the program because I didn't want to be at home with nothing to do, I only used the computer, then, I didn't like that, I felt bored, then, just to not stay all day doing nothing, I got in this stuff*". The Project did not fail reaching its main goals. It did not reach all of them in the same proportion, given that goals are dynamic; they tend to enter in scene, when the anterior ones are reached. It is worth mentioning that the strong goal, i.e. learning a sporting ability, may lead to a longer permanence in the Project, if there is hope to attain the other goals. Nevertheless, sooner or later, the *modus operandi* of the Project will confront hope.

5 Sports Competition

Aiming at understating the role given to sports competitions by the project dropouts as well as participants, we elaborated the following questions: Have you ever taken part in a sports competition from PEC? Do you think PEC should value sports competitions? Why? From 69 dropouts, 33 took part in sports competitions while 36 do not compete. From 14 participants, 10 have already participated in competitions while 4 have not. All the interviewees, even those who have never taken part in competitions, highlighted the relevance of sports competitions. In the dropouts' group, 6 interviewees see sports competitions as a way to develop the learning of a sports modality. They consider the moment of competition an opportunity to validate the achieved technique: "*Because it will teach people to swim, people who have never taken part in competitions to keep on developing skills*". Five dropouts consider competitions something of crucial importance to improve their development in the sports modality. Competitions are useful as a test to verify achieved skills and individual limits: "*It's good to see each everyone's skills.*" Five dropouts highlight the role of competition as a motivational factor. Challenge leads them to remain in the project: "*It's good; students have an additional motivation to take part in the project*". Three dropouts see competitions as a way to advance their sports careers. Competition assures visibility, which is necessary for the individual talents to be detected. It gives access to more structured sport contexts: "*Other people may come, see that that person is good, then, they can invite such person to compete in other places, then, and the person starts to stand out…"*

Motivation and the possibility to compete in other places are the most appreciated factors by participants in order to prioritize sports competitions. Participants highlight sport competitions as a possibility for moving through other contexts. In Vianna's terms: "We question if the sport experience may be helping these people to surpass the determinist perspective of the social position limitation to beyond their cultural heritage" (2007, p. 189, our translation). Sports competition is a way to achieve social and regional mobility: "*to better compete, in other places, for example, to get out of here, to another place*". A group of four participants also sees competition as a motivational element for practicing sports. Competitions keep participants interested in the sport modality. Some participants emphasize competition as crucial factor to keep their interest in the project: "*…if we don't have competitions, we'll be just training, training… then we'll lose interest*". They give a beautiful voice testimony, with the threat of exit, in Hirschman's sense: "*… if we don't have anything to do at the end of the year, we won't want to stay…*".

Under the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis, one can say that a substantial part of the discourses of interviewees has identificacional meaning, in the sense that they correlate with the construction of identity of these informants. These discourses are marked by evaluative statements, with adverbs as *better,* in competing *better,* and with affective verbs, as *to like,* in I don't *like* this. The identificacional meaning present in these discourses reveals the degree of compromising of the speaker face what is said. This compromising of the interviewees is associated to the learning and the practice of sporting modalities. The identificacional perspective of the informants conflicts with the pedagogic proposal of the project, in which the emphasis of interventions is put on the representational meaning. In effect, among the first goals of PEC, there is special attention to the building of critical representations about physical and sporting activities, capable of equipping the participants with tools they will use in the process of social transformation. On the other hand, ACD also permits to verify which part of discourses defending participation in competitions is empty of identification marks. This part is made of statements built by indirect discourses, through objective propositions, in which the author does not explicit the subjective basis of his assertiveness. There is a strong spreading of the perspective under discussion, since there are no particular marks in this discourse, which is taken as true. In fact, discourses defending sporting competition are universal, i.e. their authors are not directly implied in what they say, as for example: *"… students have a motivation…",* or *"to see that that person is a good one…".* Observe that in both examples the first person pronoun does not show up, but the generic *students* or *person.*

We interpret the absence of direct discourse as a mark of lack of personal experience of participants with sporting competitions. Their social representations have not been built with reference to their empirical experience. By this reason, part of the interviewees reproduced social representations available in the mass media, thus emphasizing the positive side of sporting competitions.

6 Conclusions

Both participants' and dropouts' representations of reasons for staying in and leaving the *Esporte Cidadão* Project as well as of the role of the sports competition indicate a conflict between the pedagogical proposal adopted by PEC and the meanings these subjects built for their action. Despite contributing external factors for leaving the project, such as school and family problems, the interviewees' discourses and practices revel that their motivations for physical and sports activities practices do not agree with values sustained by the socio-educational proposal of the project. In the context of the investigated project, we observed that the participants experienced the proposals, accepted them for some time and in part rejected the proposal they were submitted to. Exit and voice were important mechanisms to verify joining and retention levels to the investigated project, providing means to observe participants' satisfaction level in relation to the program. The project failed to give no priority to the acquisition of technical skills related to different sport modalities and to neglect sports competitions as well. Taking into consideration the state of the art depicted above, agents of the Project have postulated and implemented some changes of priority in pedagogic actions and in the opportunities of internal and external competition, with animating results, in what concerns changing of voice and, specially, affecting the proportion of perseverance in the Project. Figures point to a new equilibration, with around 30% of retention.

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DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF ENGAGED AND DISENGAGED MEMBERS OF THE "*ESPORTE CIDADÃO*" PROJECT

ABSTRACT

This study aims at describing and interpreting the evaluation offered by engaged and disengaged children of the *Esporte Cidadão* Social Project, which is anchored in sports and physical activities and developed in a low-income urban community in Vila Velha, ES. The answers were obtained from 83 adolescents, boys and girls, from which 14 are still engaged on such activities whereas 69 left the project. Based on Hirschman (1970), we evaluated voice power and engagement of these two groups as well as the effect of their reaction to the inadequacy of the project, leading them to give up sports and physical activities. The analysis of the answers revealed that the social has project partially failed to achieve its member's aims, since there wasn't enough space for competition and other kinds of challenge, since the main activities were concentrated on recreation, leisure, and education for active citizenship. The results of the analysis pointed to a need for reorientation of the project towards more leisure activities, internal and external competitions, without abandoning critical reflection activities. This research main conclusion is that social projects coordinators must evaluate the interests and perspectives of the community they intend to intervene in and must offer challenging activities able to meet participants' goals. KEY-WORDS: social projects, pedagogical intervention, competition, physical education

ANALISE DU DISCOURS DES PERSEVERANTS ET SORTIS DU PROJET SPORT CITOYEN

RESUMEE

L'objectif de cet article est de décrire et interpréter l'avaliation faite par les perseverants et les sortis du projet Sport Citoyen, em Vila Velha, ES. Les réponses viennent de 83 adolescents, des deux sexes, donc 14 continuent à participer des activités, pendant que 69 ont abandonné le projet. D'accord avec Hirschman, on a avaliées leurs réactions en termes de loyalté, voix e sortie, envers l'inadéquation du project, entre ceux qui restent dans le projet et ceux qui ont quité les activités. L'analise du discours des répondants a révelée que le projet a failli en part en ce que concerne attendre les motivations et émotions de ses partenaires, avec space insufisant pour la competition et autres types de défi, étant donné que les activités se concentraient en récreation et en éducation pour la citoyonnité. Les résultats montrent le besoin de réorienter le project dans les lignes de compétition interne et externe, sans abandoner le réflexion critique. La conclusion de la recherche est que les coordinateurs de projets sociaux doivent avalier les motivations, émotions et perspectives de la communauté dans laquelle ils decident faire intervention, aussi bien que oufrir activités adéquates aux motivations des participants.

MOTS-CLE : projets sociaus, intervention pédagogique, compétition, éducation physique.

ANALISIS DEL DISCURSO DE LOS QUE SE MANTIENEN E DE LOS QUE SALEN DEL PROYECTO DEPORTE CIUDADANO

RESUMEN

La finalidad de esto trabajo es describir e interpretar la evaluación hecha por los niños y las niñas que se mantienen e que salen del proyecto Deporte Ciudadano, en Vila Velha, ES. Las respuestas vienen de 83 adolescentes, de los dos sexos, 14 de los cuales permanecen actuando en el proyecto, contra 69 que han abandonado el mismo. Siguiendo Hirschman, hemos evaluado sus reacciones en términos de fidelidad, voz i salida, contra la inadecuación del proyecto, entre los que continúan haciendo ejercicios y los que han salido. El análisis del discurso de los respondientes ha revelado que el proyecto no ha conseguido corresponder a las motivaciones e emociones de sus miembros, con poco espacio para la competición y otros tipos de desafío, dato que las actividades se han concentrado en recreación e en educar el ciudadano. Los resultados muestran la necesidad de reorientar el proyecto para privilegiar competición interna y externa, sin abandonar la reflexión crítica. La conclusión de la investigación es que los coordenadotes de proyectos sociales deben evaluar las motivaciones, emociones y perspectivas de la comunidad en que deciden intervenir y ofrecer actividades que las contemplen.

PALABRAS-LLAVE: proyectos sociales, intervención pedagógica, competición, educación física.

ANÁLISE DO DISCURSO DE REMANESCENTES E EGRESSOS DO PROJETO ESPORTE CIDADÃO

RESUMO

O objetivo deste artigo é descrever e interpretar a avaliação oferecida pelos remanescentes e egressos do Projeto Social *Esporte Cidadão* em Vila Velha, ES. As respostas provêm de 83 adolescentes, meninos e meninas; 14 dos quais continuam a participar das atividades, enquanto 69 abandonaram o projeto. Com Hirschman, avaliamos suas reações em termos de "lealdade", "voz" e "saída", face à "inadequação" do projeto, entre os que permanecem fazendo exercício e os que abandonaram as atividades. A análise do discurso dos respondentes revelou que o projeto falhou em parte em atender às "motivações e emoções de seus membros", com espaço insuficiente para a competição e outros tipos de desafio, dado que as atividades se concentravam em recreação e na educação para cidadania. Os resultados apontaram para a necessidade de reorientar o projeto para privilegiar competição interna e externa, sem abandonar a reflexão crítica. A conclusão da pesquisa é que os coordenadores de projetos sociais devem avaliar as motivações, emoções e perspectivas da comunidade em que decidem intervir e oferecer atividades que as contemplem.