

Teaching Guidance Activity: counter-hegemonic pedagogical theory?¹

Atividade Orientadora de Ensino:
teoria pedagógica contra-hegemônica?

Actividad Orientadora de Enseñanza:
¿teoría pedagógica contrahegemónica?

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ABSTRACT

In this article, we aim to discuss the possibility of understanding Guiding Teaching Activity (GTA) as a counter-hegemonic pedagogical theory. This study considers the foundations, method, learning content, and political-pedagogical direction adopted and systematized in AOE in order to contribute to its understanding as a pedagogical theory and, at the same time, situate it within the field of counter-hegemonic pedagogies developed in Brazil. The article follows the parameters of conceptual research, specifically drawing on bibliographic references linked to the field of pedagogy, from a Historical-Cultural Perspective, to compose the theoretical scope defended. By understanding AOE as a theory of pedagogical activity for the organization of teaching, we highlight the unity between the activity of teaching and the activity of the subjects of school learning, culminating in a general and counter-hegemonic form of organization of school education. In this sense, we seek to present the arguments and characteristics that give AOE the dimension of a pedagogical theory.

Keywords: Teaching Guiding Activity; Pedagogical Theory; Counter-Hegemonic.

RESUMO

Neste artigo, temos como objetivo discutir sobre a possibilidade de compreender a Atividade Orientadora de Ensino (AOE) como uma teoria pedagógica contra-hegemônica. São considerados nesse estudo os fundamentos, o método, os conteúdos da aprendizagem e a direção político-pedagógica adotados e sistematizados na AOE; a fim de oferecer contribuições para sua compreensão como uma teoria pedagógica e, ao mesmo tempo, situá-la no campo das pedagogias contra-hegemônicas desenvolvidas no

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Brasil. O artigo segue os parâmetros de uma pesquisa de caráter conceitual, recorrendo especificamente a referências bibliográficas vinculadas ao campo da Pedagogia, na Perspectiva Histórico-Cultural, para compor o escopo teórico defendido. Ao compreender a AOE como teoria da atividade pedagógica para a organização do ensino, destacamos a unidade entre a atividade de ensino e a atividade dos sujeitos da aprendizagem escolar, culminando em uma forma geral e contra-hegemônica de organização da educação escolar. Nesse sentido, buscamos apresentar os argumentos e características que conferem à AOE a dimensão de uma teoria pedagógica.

Palavras-chave: Atividade Orientadora de Ensino; Teoria Pedagógica; Contra-Hegemônico.

RESUMEN

En este artículo, nuestro objetivo es debatir sobre la posibilidad de entender la Actividad Orientadora de Enseñanza (AOE) como una teoría pedagógica contrahegemónica. En este estudio se consideran los fundamentos, el método, los contenidos de aprendizaje y la orientación político-pedagógica adoptados y sistematizados en la AOE, con el fin de contribuir a su comprensión como teoría pedagógica y, al mismo tiempo, situarla en el campo de las pedagogías contrahegemónicas desarrolladas en Brasil. El artículo sigue los parámetros de una investigación de carácter conceptual, recurriendo específicamente a referencias bibliográficas vinculadas al campo de la Pedagogía, desde una perspectiva histórico-cultural, para componer el alcance teórico defendido. Al comprender la AOE como teoría de la actividad pedagógica para la organización de la enseñanza, destacamos la unidad entre la actividad docente y la actividad de los sujetos del aprendizaje escolar, culminando en una forma general y contrahegemónica de organización de la educación escolar. En este sentido, buscamos presentar los argumentos y características que confieren a la AOE la dimensión de una teoría pedagógica.

Palabras clave: Actividad Orientadora de Enseñanza; Teoría Pedagógica; Contrahegemónica.

1 Introduction

The concept of Teaching Guidance Activity (AOE) has been developed since the 1980s by Manoel Oriosvaldo de Moura, with the aim of proposing that the organization of teaching incorporate the concept of activity systematized by Alexei Leontiev, grounded in the category of labor as the ontological foundation of social being, as thoroughly substantiated by Karl Marx. In this trajectory, the concept of Teaching Guidance Activity was defended in Moura's doctoral dissertation (1992) and subsequently served as the foundation for research by the author and his collaborators, particularly those associated with the Study and Research Group on Pedagogical Activity (GEPAPe em Rede).

In Santos's (2024) research, it is highlighted that over this period of more than thirty years, Teaching Guidance Activity has been examined in numerous master's theses, doctoral dissertations, and postdoctoral studies, and has similarly been described in various ways: as a pedagogical instrument (Bernardes, 2006); a theoretical-methodological strategy (Moretti, 2007); a process (Fraga, 2016); a mediating instrument (Panossian, 2014); a pedagogical proposal (Sarmiento, 2019); a mode or procedure of teaching (Rigon, 2011); guidelines for organizing teaching (Dias, 2006); theoretical-methodological guidelines (Nascimento, 2014; Gladcheff, 2016); and even in collective works such as Moura et al. (2016, pp. 82–83), where AOE is presented as "a proposal for organizing teaching and learning activity that, supported by the assumptions of historical-cultural theory, offers a possibility for carrying out educational activity."

Currently, Teaching Guidance Activity has been considered in more recent studies as a theoretical-methodological foundation for the organization of educational work, as previously pointed out by Silvia Moraes (2008). This synthesis, by emphasizing the organization of teaching, makes explicit the dialectical unity between teaching and learning.

Thus, our objective is to discuss the possibility of understanding Teaching Guidance Activity (AOE) as a counter-hegemonic pedagogical theory. This study considers the foundations, method, learning contents, and political-pedagogical direction adopted and systematized in AOE, aiming to contribute to its understanding as a pedagogical theory while simultaneously situating it within the field of counter-hegemonic pedagogies developed in Brazil.

In presenting the understanding of Teaching Guidance Activity (AOE) as a Brazilian counter-hegemonic pedagogical theory, we initially acknowledge that this is a complex theoretical endeavor; nevertheless, it is essential to systematize new studies that strengthen both the executing and orienting dimensions of AOE (Araujo, 2019). Considering it as a pedagogical theory—and, moreover, as a counter-hegemonic one—is grounded in the theoretical-methodological principles that guide it toward understanding and proposing the educational phenomenon in opposition to the logic of capital.

The studies systematized in this article constitute a possible path toward understanding AOE as a pedagogical theory. However, the goal is not to issue a definitive verdict on Teaching Guidance Activity as such, but rather to share our investigative path so that future studies may elaborate upon or refute our thesis.

In placing AOE within the realm of pedagogical theories, we rely on Libâneo (2005, p. 25), for whom such categorization "[...] stems from a theoretical stance according to which theories, contents, and methods constitute cultural mediations already established in practice and theory, forming part of the socio-historical activity of the pedagogical field." For this reason, the author argues that "classifications of theories are, therefore, mediational instruments that enable the formation of mental schemas and frames of reference" (Libâneo, 2005, p. 26); this constitutes our primary intended contribution: identifying the place of AOE within the scope of pedagogical theories.

To this end, we begin the article by highlighting the concept of the theory of pedagogical activity and of counter-hegemonic pedagogical theory; subsequently, we seek to demonstrate the learning theory, learning method, learning content, and political-pedagogical direction that bring us closer to the idea of AOE as a counter-hegemonic pedagogical theory.

2 Theory of Pedagogical Activity

Various authors have dedicated themselves to the study of educational theories, systematizing their contributions to Pedagogy. This organization enables teachers to ground their teaching practice by aligning theoretical foundations with practices reflected in classroom instruction. Authors such as Mizukami (1986), Libâneo (2014 [1985]), Saviani (2008c), and Gadotti (2003), among others, provide insights into how syntheses derived from Sociology, Psychology, Philosophy, and other fields of knowledge have come to direct the ways we conceptualize and propose education, particularly in the school context. Furthermore, the term theory, within pedagogical classifications, is qualified in various ways. In Libâneo (2005), for instance, one finds concepts such as conception, approach, perspective, and trends, among others.

Longarezi (2024, p. 12), when addressing the theories, methods, and contents of pedagogical trends, highlights the coexistence of distinct approaches "guided by peculiar foundations, modes, and conditions that materialize in teaching-learning processes that diverge in their content, methods, and learning theories." In this sense, and regarding the object investigated in this article—AOE as a counter-hegemonic pedagogical theory—we agree with the author that:

Identifying theoretical, methodological, and content guidelines, in light of specific psychological, pedagogical, and didactic perspectives, allows us to understand the nature of pedagogical work and its implications for human formation and development. (Longarezi, 2024, p. 12)

As noted, in Brazil, various authors have sought to narrate the development of pedagogical conceptions and their developments within Didactics—that is, in the materialization of modes to organize teaching activity. In this study, when speaking of AOE, we initially refer to two questions: namely, what constitutes a theory and what constitutes a pedagogical theory.

What characterizes a theory? In conceptualizing theory, Pereira (1990, p. 19) describes it as a concept understood differently throughout history: classical thought conceived theory as tied to the field of philosophy, wherein "[...] the act of theorizing in philosophy enters through the door of a critique of knowledge [...] classical thought values, perhaps excessively, the act of theoretical knowledge (in the sense of abstraction)." The author states that this is a way of conceiving theory in relation to logic, thereby revealing the existence of a "correct" way of thinking. Thus, theorizing from the perspective of classical thought consisted of "[...] almost purely abstracting [...] an abstract exercise of reasoning, distant from the concrete, from the real. Theorizing becomes merely an art of working the mind with the idea while divorced from a broader reality" (Pereira, 1990, p. 19).

In this manner, theory is conceived as abstraction, and human beings are highlighted as thinking beings whose process of theorizing involves contemplation. An example mentioned by the author is the definition found in philosophy dictionaries or glossaries. One such example is Abbagnano (2007, p. 952), who points to one meaning of theory as "speculation or contemplative life [...] thus opposed to practice and, in general, to any activity that is not disinterested, that is, which does not have contemplation as its goal." Therefore, in this classical sense, theory consists of abstracting practical phenomena, wherein we are what we know within a perfect hierarchy.

Theory in modern science, according to Pereira (1990, p. 30), adds the researched object; that is, "its main innovation is its link with the researched object, and therefore with experience or experimentation in a direct cause-and-effect relationship." However, the abstractive aspects mentioned in classical thought are not invalidated. As an example,

the author mentions the hypothesis that abstraction consists of a "more or less loose elaboration. It suffices that the phenomenon in question prompts the scientist to entertain various hypotheses about the same phenomenon" (pp. 40–41), which would be encompassed by processes of analysis-synthesis and induction-deduction. Its existence presupposes stages of observation, hypothesis, experimentation, and law, where law provides support for the formulation of theories. Therefore, theory is understood as the result of experimentation. Consequently, the existence of a theory in modern science appears as a "[...] crowning of the hypothesis, after proven experimentation. If a hypothesis is a supposition to be put to the test through experimentation, a theory already implies the proclamation of its results" (p. 52).

Drawing on studies on Marx's method, Netto (2011) argues that theory is a specific mode of knowledge and is not limited to the analysis of a given object, as the researcher must devise explanatory strategies for each phenomenon or object of reality. Thus, theory is not understood as a mere association or summation of factors. In this perspective, it can be understood as "[...] the ideal reproduction of the real movement of the object by the researching subject: through theory, the subject reproduces in thought the structure and dynamics of the research object" (Netto, 2011, p. 21). In addition, the author explains that theory "[...] is the real reproduced and interpreted on the ideal plane" (p. 21). We emphasize that the structuring of theory must not be limited to the realm of intellectuality—that is, to abstractive capabilities alone. Accordingly, by this criterion, a pedagogical theory must reproduce and interpret pedagogical activity on the ideal plane and constitute a dialectical unity between theory and practice—that is, praxis. Considering these aspects, what constitutes the pedagogical character of a theory that is labeled as such?

One interpretive possibility is found in Saviani (2008a, p. 166), who systematizes the meaning of "pedagogical" as an adjective with methodological repercussions, "[...] denoting the mode of operating, of executing the educational act." Thus, pedagogical conceptions impact the educational process so as to guide it. The author asserts that educational—that is, pedagogical—conceptions typically stem from three levels: Philosophy of Education, Theory of Education, and Pedagogical Practice. In the domain of Philosophy of Education, Saviani (2008a, p. 167) clarifies that the guidance for understanding the educational phenomenon

occurs through "[...] radical, rigorous, and comprehensive reflection," aimed at exposing the objectives and values embodied in humanity and society.

Regarding Theory of Education, Saviani (2008a, p. 167) discusses its pursuit of systematizing knowledge surrounding educational issues to help grasp "[...] the place and role of education in society." A theory of education, when aligned with Pedagogy, also contributes to structuring "[...] methods, processes, and procedures, aiming to impart intentionality to the educational act to ensure its effectiveness" (Saviani, 2008a, p. 167). The last point listed by Saviani (2008a) considers pedagogical practice within the framework of organizing and conducting the educational process itself (Saviani, 2008a, p. 167). Thus, these three levels—understanding, theorizing, and practicing the educational phenomenon—defended by Saviani (2008a), configure a pedagogical theory.

According to Saviani (2008b), not every theory of education qualifies as a pedagogical theory; to declare itself a pedagogical theory, it must be linked to the problematics of educational practice—that is, to the teaching and learning process. The reason for this distinction, as warned by the author, stems from the existence of theories that "[...] analyze education in terms of its relationship with society, without aiming to formulate guidelines to direct educational activity" (Saviani, 2008b, p. 12). We understand that these guidelines that direct educational work are closer to the field of didactics, which is the main branch of Pedagogy (Longarezi, 2024).

However, what do we designate as a counter-hegemonic pedagogical theory? In the following section, we discuss Brazilian counter-hegemonic pedagogical theories to position AOE as a constituent of this practical-theoretical movement linked to overcoming the exploitation of human beings by human beings governed by the logic of capital.

3 Brazilian Counter-Hegemonic Pedagogical Theories

To understand the concept of the counter-hegemonic, we must first define the phenomenon we contradict: hegemony. In explaining this term, we adopt the studies of scholars who discuss Gramsci's work. We emphasize that although Antonio Gramsci was not the first to address the concept of hegemony, he is one of the Marxist scholars who investigated the subject most deeply (Moura, 2023).

The concept of hegemony in Gramsci is constituted both by "[...] its dimensions, as theoretical-conceptual categories, and by its expressions, as practical

manifestations of these categories in reality" (Moura, 2023, p. 39). Furthermore, drawing on Gramsci's syntheses, Moraes (2010, p. 54) states that hegemony "[...] presupposes winning consensus and the political-ideological cultural leadership of one class or block of classes over others." Thus, hegemony reveals a clash of conceptions, judgments, and principles. In this direction,

[...] hegemony is obtained and consolidated through struggles that involve not only issues linked to economic structure and political organization, but also, on an ethical-cultural level, the expression of knowledge, practices, modes of representation, and models of authority seeking legitimacy and universalization.

Taking these aspects into account, the author cautions that hegemony cannot be understood merely as a mode of social oppression; rather, it must incorporate "[...] cultural direction and social consent to a universe of convictions, moral norms, and rules of conduct, as well as the destruction and overcoming of other beliefs and sentiments regarding the world" (Moraes, 2010, p. 55). Therefore, hegemony is a political and economic mode of action that unfolds across different spaces of the cultural structure, where class struggles are present within a given historical context.

Moura (2023, p. 83) notes that the concept of counter-hegemony is not drawn specifically from Gramsci himself, but is referenced within educational research to articulate the epistemological and ideological importance in the class struggle—that is, in the struggle against the dominant hegemony. When we attribute the concept of counter-hegemonic to AOE, we seek to strengthen its commitment to this struggle as a theoretical framework and a collective commitment against dominant, alienating forms of teaching organization sustained by the logic of capital. Thus, representing a counter-hegemonic pedagogy means joining the class struggle present not only in society but also in educational thought, thereby avoiding a supposed neutrality.

The idea of counter-hegemony is also present in the understanding of education, recognizing that education cannot be neutral and that its role is to teach and learn knowledge within society; however, under capitalism, this role also assumes the function of teaching and learning the ideologies of capital. For this reason, there is no neutral education: knowing its purpose reveals which side education takes in any context—in favor of or against the dominant order (Moura, 2023, pp. 82–83).

Moraes (2010), also drawing on Gramsci, uses the term counter-hegemonic to distinguish actions that operationalize the creation of a new ethical-political mode, whose function is to expose and seek to reverse "[...] the conditions of marginalization and exclusion imposed on broad social strata by the capitalist mode of production" (Moraes, 2010, p. 73). These considerations regarding the category of hegemony lead us to believe that a pedagogical theory presenting itself as counter-hegemonic seeks, through its ways of theorizing the educational phenomenon and its propositions for organizing teaching, to forge a new logic aimed at educating everyone—especially working-class students—toward an alternative conception of society.

In light of this, we address the genesis of AOE to demonstrate the context of its emergence and the structuring of its didactic principles regarding the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, we already consider it a theory of pedagogical activity. However, what leads AOE to be a counter-hegemonic pedagogy? And moreover, what does a counter-hegemonic pedagogy consist of?

The context of Moura (1992) thesis falls within the period of redemocratization in Brazil, between the late 1980s and early 1990s. This political transition configured a favorable conjuncture for the emergence of counter-hegemonic pedagogical proposals seeking to overcome the official (productivist) pedagogy of the time. In addition, these new approaches presented themselves as instruments in defense of the interests of the subordinated classes, in opposition to the logic of the ruling class. Factors supporting this movement included:

[...] the election to city halls and state governments of candidates from parties opposing the military regime; the campaign demanding direct elections for the President of the Republic; the transition to a civilian government at the federal level; the organization and mobilization of educators; the Brazilian educational conferences; the critical scientific output developed in graduate education programs; and the increased circulation of pedagogical ideas fostered by the creation of new media (Saviani, 2008c, p. 416).

Along similar lines, Candau (1993, p. 10) asserts that the 1980s corresponded to "[...] a true revolution in Didactic thought in the country. It was a stage of paradigm shifts, negation, search, and reconstruction." The author claims that this period represented the most fruitful milestone in Brazilian academic production on the multiple determinations

regarding the organization of teaching—that is, didactic-pedagogical guidelines linked to what, how, for whom, and why to teach. Furthermore, Candau (1993, p. 10) describes working-class education as a central element of these discussions, stating:

The intimate articulation between concrete school practice and reflection on school-society relations was particularly elaborated. It is from the analysis of daily school life, the theory-practice relationship, and the articulation between thought didactics and lived didactics in the teacher's daily routine that new knowledge emerges, produced amidst the contradictions inherent to all concrete social practice (Candau, 1993, p. 10).

Likewise, Faria (2011, p. 68), in highlighting counter-hegemonic educational guidelines in the 1990s, points to contributions from works and research groups grounded in Historical-Cultural Theory. The author cites the works developed by GEPAPe as one of the emerging theoretical constructs that distance themselves from postmodern literature on the organization of teaching.

Saviani (2008b) describes counter-hegemonic pedagogies, following Snyders's definition, as Leftist Pedagogies. In another study, Saviani (2007) defines counter-hegemonic pedagogies as guidelines that did not become dominant, yet intentionally and systematically aim to establish education in service of those striving to change the existing social order in search of an alternative form of sociability.

Saviani (2006, 2008c) lists the following as counter-hegemonic pedagogies: Popular Education Pedagogies; Pedagogies of Practice; Critical-Social Pedagogy of Contents; and Historical-Critical Pedagogy. Alongside the leftist pedagogical ideas listed by Saviani (2008c), we can consider Teaching Guidance Activity as one such critical pedagogical theory.

However, what elements, beyond those already presented, enable us to understand Teaching Guidance Activity (AOE) as a counter-hegemonic pedagogical theory? One possibility would be to analyze elements of similarity between AOE and other critical pedagogical trends formulated in the Brazilian context—a theoretical exercise that, while intriguing, would require tracing the logical-historical development of distinct pedagogical theories, which is impossible within the scope of this article.

Another point reinforcing our caution in systematizing this synthesis aligns with Moura (2023, p. 168), who notes that the critical didactics movement—situated in our

introduction to this section—"occurred as a collective struggle of subjects willing to commit to an education aimed at social transformation and combating technicist didactics." These debates fostered questions ranging from teacher education to teaching and learning relationships. The intensity of debates in that period was characterized by a latent need for social transformation. However, as Moura asserts (2023, pp. 168–169),

[...] from the standpoint of hegemony, we must emphasize that fighting for social transformation does not necessarily imply a counter-hegemonic struggle. This is because social transformation can mean, for example, improving teachers' working conditions without disrupting the locus of oppression.

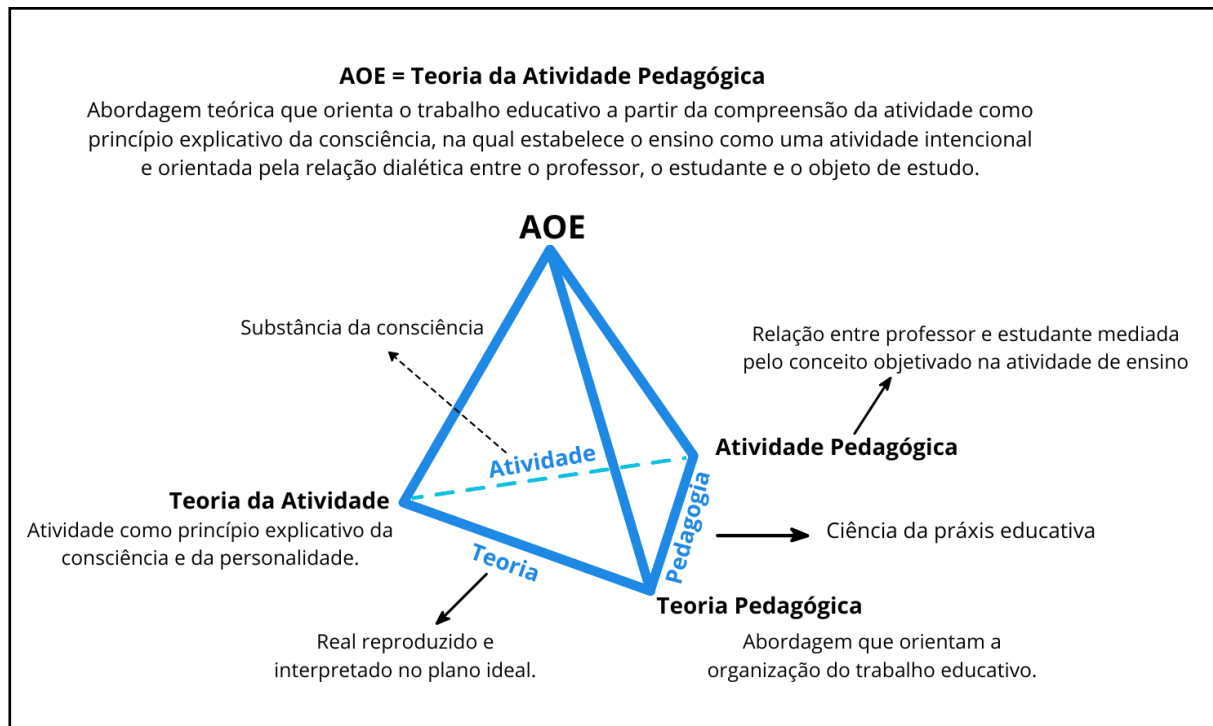
At this point, highlighting the aspect of class struggle, the question arises: Is Teaching Guidance Activity (AOE) a perspective aimed at refining the understanding of pedagogical activity—that is, a more sophisticated way of conceiving and proposing the organization of teaching—while remaining alienated from the mode of production? In other words, do we seek to gain space in curricula, teacher education, and ways of thinking and proposing teaching merely to preserve and strengthen the current mode of production?

We argue that we do not. As Moura (2023) points out, adopting a counter-hegemonic stance implies understanding that the way capitalist society is structured does not contribute to the humanization of subjects. This social organization is characterized by injustice, inequality, and the absence of freedom. In this sense, by emphasizing a counter-hegemonic educational and didactic perspective, we position ourselves against neoliberal capitalist society, aiming to promote a radical transformation of the modes of production and reproduction of life. This counter-hegemonic understanding of education views human activity as an essential part of the omnilateral formation of human beings. Consequently, a didactics grounded in these principles must foster pedagogical activity through the development of consciousness guided by a collectivist ethic (Makarenko, 1977).

Thus, considering what has been discussed, can we conceive of AOE as a Pedagogical Theory? We understand it as a generalized mode of thinking about teaching and learning activity—an approach that adopts the principles of human consciousness and personality formation, identifying in the concept of activity the transformative role of teaching activity. Reflected in these considerations, we performed a theoretical modeling

exercise organizing the concepts of "theory of pedagogical activity" arranged in a tetrahedron, representing the concepts complexified in the constitution of AOE as a theory of pedagogical activity.

Figure 1 - AOE as a Theory of Pedagogical Activity



Source: The authors (2025).

In this framework, we can view AOE as a theory of pedagogical activity because it unifies activity as an explanatory principle of consciousness and personality within the organization of educational work. These elements form a unified whole that proposes teaching as an intentional activity guided by the dialectical relationship between teacher, student, and object of study.

In light of these points, we establish AOE as a counter-hegemonic pedagogical theory, as this understanding remains conscious of the genesis of the AOE proposal. As Moura, Longarezi, and Puentes (2023, p. 21) point out, AOE contains in its constitutive links the assumptions of Historical-Cultural Theory regarding human development, concept formation, and consciousness development; it also encompasses

[...] the ideological perspective on the role of knowledge in human development; and the way collectives must appropriate what humanity produces—in opposition to the individualistic view as the ultimate synthesis of the mode of production defended by neoliberalism—leading us to forge a conception of pedagogical activity aimed at developing a collectivist consciousness regarding the production and appropriation of human culture in favor of the maximum potential of those who produce it.

Thus, it can be observed that defending a collective work methodology in opposition to the capitalist mode of production—marked by individualism—was present in the genesis of Manoel Oriosvaldo de Moura's proposition when he studied an alternative way of organizing mathematics teaching, at that time, for early childhood education. Consequently, the direction of studies grounded in AOE aligns with counter-hegemony—that is, a critical conception of Education, Pedagogy, and Didactics.

In view of this, in the next section, we delve into the genesis and development of AOE to demonstrate—from its context of emergence to its current structure—the theory of learning, method, and content regarding the educational phenomenon that grant AOE the status of a counter-hegemonic pedagogical theory.

4 Teaching Guidance Activity in the Dimension of Pedagogical Theory

To enrich our understanding of AOE as a pedagogical theory, we draw upon the specific characteristics described by Longarezi (2024): learning theory, method, and content. The author considers these elements essential for explaining the materiality of pedagogical trends within educational practices. Therefore, learning content, method, and theory are viewed as specific properties that qualify perspectives on teaching-learning processes, particularly regarding their theoretical-methodological and psychological properties.

Based on studies by Davydov (2019, 2020), Longarezi identifies two theories explaining learning: reflex-associative theory and activity theory. These theories are linked to methods, with Longarezi (2024) highlighting the inductive method and the deductive method. Furthermore, they utilize and produce two forms of thought: empirical or theoretical.

Based on these characteristics, Longarezi (2024) analyzes traditional, behaviorist, humanist, sociocultural, cognitivista, and developmental approaches. In

her analysis, she concludes that only the developmental approach enables the development of theoretical thought (content), as it is grounded in the concept of activity (theory), wherein learning occurs through theoretical tasks and practical actions guided by the deductive method.

In this regard, Manoel Oriosvaldo de Moura stated in an interview that the epistemological root of Teaching Guidance Activity is identical to that of Developmental Didactics (Moura; Longarezi; Puentes, 2023). In addition, we understand AOE as a critical perspective within Brazilian pedagogical studies that aligns with discussions and investigations on developmental teaching to ground its theorization. Thus, in this section, we address the formulation of AOE to present the learning theory, method, and content that this perspective has sought to systematize across related studies.

Moura's doctoral thesis (1992, p. 64), the landmark document explicating Teaching Guidance Activity and marking the origin of AOE, defines guiding activity as follows:

[...] an organized action to be developed in the classroom. It defines the main moments of teaching: the learning-triggering problem; the organization of the space where it will take place; the syntheses necessary for understanding the concept at hand; and the evaluation of student progress.

Thus, initially and in principle, AOE is configured as an action directed toward the classroom, utilizing the learning-triggering problem as its tool, which presupposes the organization of space and the realization of syntheses. Assessment appears as a means of tracking student progress.

The initial formulation process of AOE in Moura's dissertation (1992) exhibits connections with Constructivist studies, as studies by Constance Kamii and Rheta DeVries are cited alongside guiding activity. This does not imply that the learning theory founding AOE rests on Constructivism, but rather that the author underwent a transition, given that in the same section he references studies by Zinaida Kalmykova and Pavel Kopnin. We infer that when Moura produced his doctoral dissertation, between 1987 and 1992, few works by Soviet psychologists were available in translation. In an interview (Moura; Longarezi; Puentes, 2023, p. 16), Moura reaffirms this point:

It was at the beginning of my doctoral studies that I gained access to HCT [Historical-Cultural Theory] through its primary authors: L. S. Vygotsky, A. N. Leontiev, and A. R. Luria. The contribution of Professor Marta Kohl de Oliveira, through her course in the graduate program at the School of Education of the University of São Paulo (FEUSP) in the late 1980s, was fundamental. We had to read and discuss a book of newly translated texts by those authors: *Linguagem, Desenvolvimento e Aprendizagem* (1988), which she co-organized. It was of paramount importance to me because, at that time, my research problem did not fit into the constructivist perspective held by my advisor's research group. Constructivist contributions are also present in my dissertation because that was how we were trained and what was then considered most advanced.

In light of this, we highlight what we designate as a transition, given Moura's observation that HCT represented "[...] the encounter with a theory that enabled me to forge a synthesis stemming from concerns developed as a teacher in both basic and higher education; the latter enabled practice grounded in [...] sociological, political, psychological, and epistemological foundations that allowed me to give meaning to the pedagogical actions I advocated to my student future teachers" (Moura; Longarezi; Puentes, 2023, pp. 16–17). Thus, we witness a shift from a cognitivist understanding to a developmental conception of teaching and learning. Beyond what is materialized in the dissertation as the weaving of theoretical relationships around the object of investigation, we observe a qualitative leap in the comprehension of the human being, world, society, and education in Moura's (1992) reading based on the principles of Historical-Cultural Theory—most notably the concept of activity, which the author describes as follows:

The concept of activity culminated in what I was seeking to lend meaning to pedagogical activity. Suddenly, what I had read about the human way in which humans make themselves human made sense. K. Marx's concept of labor and A. N. Leontiev's (2021) concept of activity converged into what I consider the framework of reference for my understanding of pedagogical activity. To better explain, we can begin with A. N. Leontiev's (2021, p. 177) statement: "A person's activity also constitutes the substance of their consciousness." Within this assertion lies what K. Marx told us about how humans make themselves by making their object. Finally, L. S. Vygotsky provides the synthesis necessary for our interpretation regarding how labor, as activity, allows human beings to constitute themselves socially. And L. S. Vygotsky, by generalizing K. Marx's concept of instrument and recognizing the role of the sign in the historical development of higher psychological functions, explicates the role of language, also as an instrument impacting human nature (Moura; Longarezi; Puentes, 2023, p. 17).

In this sense, it is possible to infer that Teaching Guidance Activity (AOE) emerges as a necessity tied to the demands of its era, arising from the work of a teacher and researcher who envisioned a general mode of organizing pedagogical activity that defines human objective conditions, grounded in a learning theory that enhances psychological development. We can relate this circumstance to Marx and Engels's (2011, p. 93) assertion: "If man is shaped by circumstances, then circumstances must be shaped humanly." Given this, we consider that the core of GEPAPe's research stands before us: "[...] pedagogical activity as a synthesis of teaching activity and student learning activity" (Moura; Longarezi; Puentes, 2023, p. 18).

The organization of didactic actions within a developmental perspective is described by Longarezi (2024, p. 23) as a set of actions that empower the student through "the collaboration of a more experienced other (the teacher), within their zone of potential development (the gap between the student's actual and potential levels of development)." Thus, we agree with the author that while organization will occur directly, learning must be organized appropriately, because:

[...] the quality of this process depends on the quality of the mediations offered to students; and if students spontaneously develop empirical thought, didactic processes must occur through the mediation of scientific knowledge. Thus, assimilation can occur through the formation of scientific concepts, generalized modes of action, and practical skills. Therefore, assimilation is theoretical in nature. (Longarezi, 2024, p. 23)

How has this assumption guiding the organization of teaching revealed itself in AOE's propositions? Through its materialization in what are termed Learning-Triggering Situations (SDA). Here we encounter the second category—the learning method—given that we have so far discussed AOE's connection to a learning theory enabled by appropriately organized instruction that drives psychological development. This is because AOE, as a theory of pedagogical activity, defends the thesis that:

[...] the formation of consciousness regarding school education as Activity occurs in the movement of appropriating foundational concepts concerning a general mode of organizing teaching as an activity directed toward forming a collectivist personality. (Moura, 2024, p. 1)

The method embedded in teaching guidance activity is the deductive method, materialized from the presentation of the collective synthesis mobilized by the Learning-Triggering Situation (SDA). When Moura et al. (2023, p. 26) affirm that the objective of an SDA is to "confront students with potentially mobilizing problems to set into motion previously grasped knowledge [...] and thereby allow the appropriation of a new concept or its deepening," they bring us closer to Longarezi's (2024) discussion of the deductive method's characteristic feature, which moves from the general to the particular with the task as its starting point. In this sense, an SDA functions as a task within the framework of the deductive method.

Within an SDA, problems of a theoretical nature must be facilitated to generate general modes of action, because through such problems, learners appropriate a generalized mode of action that can serve as the foundation for action in other contexts. The formulation of a Learning-Triggering Situation is rooted in the essence of the concept, which must reveal the human need underlying that concept's existence (Moura et al., 2010).

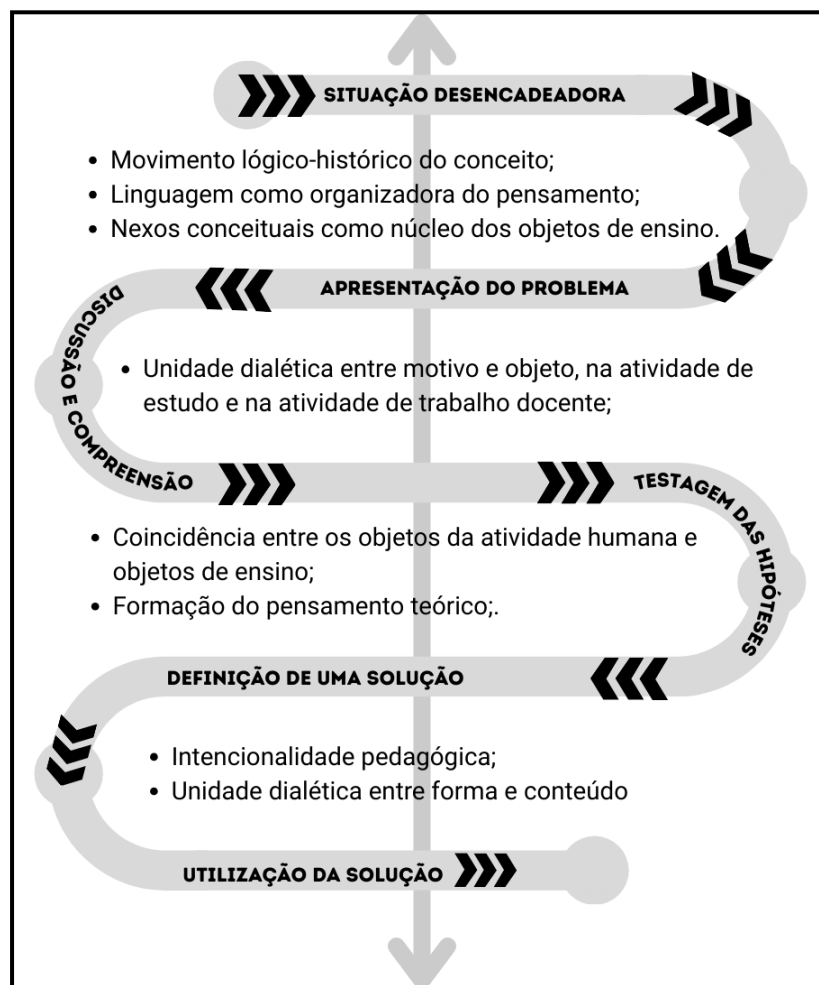
Furthermore, we infer that the deductive method manifests in AOE through the movement between the orienting and executing dimensions of Teaching Guidance Activity, as observed in Araujo (2019, pp. 132–133). Motive and object correspond to the activity's orienting dimension. In this sense, the "motive of AOE is to enable humanity's social experience, objectified in culture, to become the subject's own experience," this motive being the element that mobilizes the activity. The author further asserts that the object of AOE is the theoretical knowledge systematized by humanity. Complementing this assertion, we understand that this knowledge is permeated by conceptual nexuses (internal and external). Sousa (2024, p. 162) highlights that these nexuses were "[...] historically constructed across diverse social practices, political, cultural, and social contexts, representing links between concepts that are themselves historically constructed across diverse contexts."

Understanding motive and object, we ask: What is the relationship between the elements of the orienting dimension? Drawing from Araujo (2019, p. 133), we understand that it concerns the "formation of the human personality"—the fundamental need of pedagogical activity. For the motive and object of the activity to be realized, actions and operations—characteristic of the second dimension, the executing dimension—are essential. Actions are

directed toward "[...] specific objectives which, in the case of school education, are identified with the appropriation of scientific concepts" (Araujo, 2019, p. 133). Operations, necessary for internalizing actions, are driven by general modes of action—as occurs in AOE—when the objective is developing students' theoretical thinking.

Thus, an SDA constitutes a theoretical-practical task within the executing dimension, not as an isolated element, but as an oriented one. As stated by Araujo (2019, p. 133), this process occurs "when a specific theoretical plane guides the methodological plane." Thus, in Teaching Guidance Activity, the orienting dimension creates the conditions for realizing the executing dimension. Araujo (2019), in listing the principles and practices of AOE, synthesizes them as follows:

Figure 2 – Principles and Practices of Teaching Guidance Activity



Source: Adapted from Araujo (2019, p. 142).

We maintain that through AOE's principles and practices, it is possible to create problems of a theoretical nature (Learning-Triggering Situations) that ground practical actions, which, systematized into general modes of action, constitute the driving force of theoretical thought. Zinchenko (2005, p. 74) states that theoretical thinking "[...] develops subjects' readiness for thought and, based on this, forms a readiness to think in concepts (rather than living according to concepts)." Highlighting this passage, we affirm that the process of concept appropriation is an activity; moreover, such concepts are articulated within a system. Thus, a subject possessing theoretical thinking reflects upon concepts rather than treating them as ends in themselves. This reinforces our defended thesis that AOE, through SDAs, can create conditions for the development of theoretical thinking engendered by general modes of action.

Therefore, Teaching Guidance Activity, in its foundations, directs the educational act, offering "[...] a way of putting into practice what has been an interpretation of the contribution of historical-cultural theory and, particularly, activity theory to school education" (Moura, 2021, p. 15). In summary, we can affirm that through activity structure, AOE presents a viable framework for proposing and understanding the educational phenomenon.

5 Final Considerations

In this article, we sought to discuss the learning theory, method, learning contents, and political-pedagogical direction adopted and systematized in Teaching Guidance Activity (AOE), with the goal of offering contributions to understanding it as a pedagogical theory while simultaneously situating it within the field of counter-hegemonic pedagogies developed in Brazil. To this end, we structured our presentation around the concepts of theory, pedagogical theory, theory of pedagogical activity, and counter-hegemony.

Pedagogy, understood as the science of educational praxis, encompasses ways of proposing and understanding the educational phenomenon through learning theories, methods, and contents. We infer that the science responsible for systematizing this knowledge is Pedagogy. This is because, as Vygotsky (2003, p. 42) notes, "[...] we cannot allow life—unmediated by any science—to dictate pedagogical demands; this is a matter for theoretical pedagogy."

Thus, we reaffirm that Teaching Guidance Activity is grounded in Historical-Cultural Theory, particularly in the concept of activity, which shapes its conception of learning and teaching theory. In grammar, we learn that the verb "to teach" is a ditransitive verb requiring two complements: a direct object representing what is taught, and an indirect object indicating to whom the instruction is directed. For instance, in the sentence "She taught mathematics to the students," "mathematics" is the direct object (answering "what did she teach?"), while "to the students" is the indirect object (indicating "to whom did she teach?"). Thus, the verb "to teach" always demands both the content to be transmitted and the recipient of learning. Therefore, we argue that a historical-cultural understanding of learning cannot be dissociated from the comprehension of the teaching that enables learning.

Expanding the sphere of teaching, we highlight method, concluding that AOE employs the deductive method, utilizing the Learning-Triggering Situation (SDA) as a theoretical task with practical actions that, through the historical synthesis of the concept, enable general modes of action. Furthermore, we argued that the Learning-Triggering Situation (SDA), as an action (executing dimension), is guided by theoretical principles that enable its existence (orienting dimension).

Regarding content, we advocate for the centrality of theoretical thinking, formed through instruction appropriately organized around scientific knowledge. Thus, AOE, as a theory of pedagogical activity, converges into an approach that guides educational work based on understanding activity as an explanatory principle of consciousness, establishing teaching as an intentional activity guided by the dialectical relationship between teacher, student, and object of study.

We emphasize that, as noted by Cedro, Moretti, and Moraes (2019), conceiving the organization of teaching and educational research through the lens of AOE presents a challenge, as the objective conditions of capitalist society trend toward schooling processes that dehumanize subjects. However, while we face challenges imposing limits on educational practice, we simultaneously possess a counter-hegemonic possibility for radical transformation.

Therefore, beyond presenting AOE as a theory of pedagogical activity, we broaden its characterization by identifying it as a counter-hegemonic theory of pedagogical activity. This is because its origins are tied to proposals opposed to the logic of capital in

its approach to learning, methods, and content—though that alone is insufficient. Thus, understanding Teaching Guidance Activity as a counter-hegemonic pedagogical theory means, in our perspective, fighting for a new model of society rather than merely adapting to the prevailing one.

We reiterate that this is only one possible way of understanding AOE as a counter-hegemonic pedagogical theory. We emphasize the importance of future studies that further explore this approach, examining its epistemological, psychological, and didactic aspects to integrate it into curricula and teacher and student education processes. In this way, it will be possible to strengthen pathways toward constructing a new form of sociability.

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