



THE FOOD HANDLERS' PRACTICE ON A CULTURAL-HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

A PRÁTICA DAS MERENDEIRAS EM UMA PERSPECTIVA HISTÓRICO-CULTURAL

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Abstract

This article informs on gender and style of action, contributing to new perspectives on organizational studies and new possibilities of understanding the subject within its work environment. The unit of analysis involves the subject, the object and the relationship between them with others subjects, both in terms of gender and style that occur in an activity. The self-confrontation method is used to analyse the practice of Food Handlers (FHs) of a confessional school. The two phases of data collection provided by the method sought to explain the genre and the style of the activities of these workers. The system of rules and regulations indicate a high degree of mechanicity of the workers and is submitted to constant surveillance. Understanding that styles renew genres enables the manager to learn that the invention practiced by individuals within the activity – called stylistic invention – is essential because if it does not happen the genre may be extinguished.

Keywords: Genre. Style. Stylistic renewal. Food Handlers.

Resumo

Este artigo buscou esclarecer gênero e estilo, contribuindo para novos olhares sobre os Estudos Organizacionais e novas possibilidades de compreender o sujeito dentro do seu ambiente de trabalho. A unidade de análise envolve o sujeito, o objeto e a relação de ambos com outros sujeitos, tanto em relação a gênero quanto a estilo, que ocorrem numa atividade. O método de confrontação é empregado na análise da prática das Manipuladoras de Alimentos (MAs) de uma escola confessional. As duas fases de coleta previstas pelo método buscaram explicitar o gênero e o estilo das atividades destas trabalhadoras. O sistema de normas e regulamentações demonstrou um alto grau de mecanicidade das trabalhadoras, submetidas à constante vigilância. Compreender que o estilo renova o gênero possibilita ao gestor saber que a invenção praticada pelos sujeitos no interior da atividade – chamada de invenção estilística - é necessária, pois caso ela não ocorra o gênero pode se extinguir.

Palavras-chave: Gênero. Estilo. Renovação Estilística. Manipuladora de Alimentos.

Introduction

Besides the researchers' concern in comprehending the genre and style theory of Yves Clot expressed in his work "The psychological function of labour" (reference), the study of directed and situated activity divulged a possible empirical approach of such theory in organizational studies, in an attempt to a thorough understanding of the meanings and situational features presented by Food Handlers (FHs) of a religious school that offers elementary education in Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil. In this sense, this paper seeks to shed light on genre and style of an action in a given directed and situated activity. We also aim at contributing to new perspectives on organizational studies and new possibilities to understand the subject within his work environment by going against a set of reductionisms, such as separating the description of labour from the subject, separating reason from emotion, and breaking with the formal description. For Clot (2007) the work activity is part of an assortment of personal activities in inter-meaning.

Atypical to the author is his proposal to look at labour as a directed and situated activity through a dialogical perspective. A significant trait of his theory is the constant inter-relationship of subject, object and others, which cannot be studied by dividing it into parts, but always looking at the whole. More broadly, there is the idea that "man is never alone in the world of objects around him" (J. CURIE as mentioned by CLOT, 2007, p. 7).

Upon explaining the completion of his studies about labour, the author cites H. Wallon's argument, where working is, for example, "to contribute through private services for the existence of all in order to ensure one's own" (CLOT, 2007, p. 8). Apart from this argument that identifies the wealth of a study of a directed and situated activity, such as the case of FHs, there is still interest in relating this theory to a real work situation. Considering that for Clot (2007), in addition to the social function of labour, production of objects and services and the production of social exchange one should advocate the psychological function, which is a resource for the development of the individuals or, conversely, a deleterious restriction. Hence, according to the author, the labour function has a double life, that is, social and psychological.

Considering that working may be not only a suffering, Clot (2007) always deals with possibilities. Possible imaginary or real compensations through which

those who work can recover their psychological availability and the possible action, which will allow the individual's development within the activity. Provided that labour is an activity that entails the possibility of individual development, it requires the person's integral mobilization and it is the abode to various conflicts.

The guiding elements of this work are genre and style, as suggested by Clot (2007). Genre is an open system of impersonal rules, written or not, that defines the use and exchange of objects among people. It is also a flexible system of regulatory variants and restrictions on how to act or not, and conducts transactions among co-workers. It represents the symbolic system, which the individual action must be related to. In addition, it is always subject to a motion that changes and reconfigures it in the interchange among the subjects, the subjects with themselves, with objects and with activities.

Style is what guarantees the psychological appropriation of genre. It is inseparable from effective action, it is functional and simultaneously a subjective figure. Styles of action are not structures or types, but methods of structuring and restructuring action by individuals within a given genre. Far from being an obstacle to genre, style ensures its psychological appropriation and its adjustment. It ensures flexibility and plasticity for performing an action. It has as reserve an aptitude for interposition of the subject in his own professional activity. Therefore, we may think that it signals the labour quality.

Synonymous with a sobriety of performance, the style takes advantage of the material and symbolic assumptions of action through a distancing work. For this purpose, a style always refers to the distancing of the subject, not by denying the assumptions of his action in the social genre or personal memory, but through his generic and subjective development. Moreover, style always acts on the genres that are inserted between the subject and the world (men and things). It is polyphonic; it is defined at the crossroads of the relationship with itself, with others and with the object. It gets rid of the common genre without denying it, but through its transfiguration (CLOT, 2007). Hence, the style of action exposes the autonomy taken with the genres, and not directly with the objects of this action. It is a key indicator of the possibilities and evidence in the activity development.

For the purposes of this paper, we considered as Food Handlers men and/or women who work in

the occupation popularly known as school dinner-person. The term Food Handler or School Dinner-person is not part of the activities included in the Brazilian Code of Occupations. The first term is more commonly known and is used in the professional field of nutrition, but we opted for the description of the National Health Surveillance Agency (ANVISA – in Portuguese). According to ANVISA, a Food Handler is the person who washes, peels, chops, grates and cooks, that is to say, prepares meals and also complies with what is set forth in the Good Practice Manual and the Food Handler's Manual. We will endeavour to reach the elements of genre and style in the activity of Food Handlers in the investigated schools.

This case study incorporated the key concepts, genre and style, and the methodological framework of self-confrontation from the Clinic of Activity developed by professor Yves Clot. The method proposed by that author and used in this study as a resource for collecting and analysing data is understood by the confrontation of the subject with images and speeches about his own activity, providing more than a moment for data collection. This method enables workers to think about their own actions, thus contributing to awareness raising, and not merely to a new representation of the object. The self-confrontation method contemplates the possibility of the worker breaking with alienation and awakening to other engagements. Since it is no possible to explain the activity of the subject from itself, it is important to consider that the action of the subject has the possibility to arise when opposite activities clash, and these activities may belong to the subject and to others in relation to his activities.

The first part of the paper briefly presents the cultural-historical approach in organizational studies presented in the Organizational Studies area of the Brazilian academy. Subsequently, we have the relationship of this approach with Yves Clot's theory. After describing the methodological approach of the study, presentation and analysis of data collected follow, as well as our final remarks.

Cultural-Historical Approach in Brazilian Organizational Studies

Dealing with organizational studies by means of the cultural-historical approach has been hesitant in conferences and journals of the Administration area. However, this approach has been more present in

debates on Education and Psychology areas due to works and contributions of Vygotsky, Luria, Leontiev and researchers of their theories, such as Yrjö Engeström, Michael Cole, Fernando González Rey, and Yves Clot. Two elements approached by organizational studies supported by the Vygotskian concepts and theories should be distinguished here: subjectivity and the concept of practice in the strategy field.

The understanding of subjectivity elements in organizational studies has gained weight in recent times thanks to the efforts undertaken by researchers in comprehending elements present in the interaction of the subject in the organizational environment. Consequently, they break with highly objectivist prospects of instrumentalization of subject-worker by organizations.

A few papers published in journals in the Administration area have made the approach of authors with the Vygotskian viewpoint. As an example, Lima (2007) addressed the contributions of the Clinic of Activity (Clinique de l'Activité) for the field of safety at work. In his study, he applied the method of labour analysis and understanding developed by Yves Clot (2007) in a study carried out in the oil sector in 1996. Following that method, he concluded that the concepts of genre and style of activity (genre et style professionnel), as proposed by Clot, are essential for understanding accidents and their causes.

As another example, Lopes and Carrieri (2010) aimed at analysing the relations established between the individual and the corporate work. As a background, in evidence, studies concerning Yves Clot's works (2007) emphasize the need to recover the subjectivity and its importance for understanding the labour activity, in which "the action is not situated only in the present circumstances. In addition, it is likely situated within the personal and social history of the psychological subject and even in his body" (CLOT, 2007, p. 199). Analyses completed by Lopes and Carrieri (2010), upon analysing the designated successors of a family company, through the individuals' life histories, aimed at understanding the relations established among the daughters who remain in the family business and who leaves the company by understanding of the non-relation aspect.

The psychoanalytic approach combined with the social relation theories provided important contributions for analysing the phenomenon Lopes and Carrieri presented. Results have shown that both

the individual's stay at and leaving from the company are related not only to organizational issues, but also to those psychological ones that arise within the family. The emergence of such questions has exposed that subjective and psychic relations observed among the actors involved were interwoven with the business rationality, which was configured as a reflection of dramas experienced in the family.

Santos, Siqueira and Mendes (2010) stirred up the debate about the intervention of the work organization on the worker's decision to attempt suicide. In order to accomplish the purpose of the argument, they present a brief report of qualitative research performed in the banking sector. Suicide in the labour context is a major object to understand the consequences of administrative practices used in contemporary organizations about the worker's subjectivity. It provides significant clues for the humanization of labour relations and reporting of business methods that culminate in human degradation. For instance, the management modes of work organization are identified as responsible for illness and depression. The grief acquires a major significance, because the ideation, planning and attempted suicide processes are explicitly related to professional experiences.

In his reply to the article of Santos, Siqueira e Mendes (2010), Lima (2010) talks with the authors to put forward the understanding of the subject. As far as Lima is concerned, the core thesis advocated by the other authors is that the subject is likely to develop too severe disorders while losing the "will of living" in some cases. However, Lima (2010) states that we must also demonstrate that adverse economic and social conditions are related to increased suicide rates. In a more specific level, the author seeks to reveal that specific management methods of the labour organization can lead to specific types of illnesses, especially depression and eventually suicide. Moreover, upon suggesting measures that go essentially through management initiatives, Santos, Siqueira and Mendes (2010) would not support the idea that labour problems should be solved by means of changes in their management method and not through the workers' action themselves? By analysing the recommended measures, Lima (2010), based on Clot's reflections (2010), identifies the common practice of always adding more management to the existing management methods, rather than attacking the genuine problems that are the source of conflicts. That is, the problems related to the actual content of

the work, particularly the quality that may be expected from its achievement.

At last, as far as Lima (2010) is concerned, it has to do with deciding whether the changes will come either from the subjects themselves to whom they directly concern, or from the managerial levels. Or in an even simpler manner: it has to do with deciding which is the best direction to be given to this process, either from bottom to top, or from top to bottom.

According to Paes de Paula and Palassi (2007), it was from the interpretive perspectives and criticism that the subjectivity theme in organizations – more specifically the control of subjectivity – began to be investigated in organizational studies from the 1980s, a time when the new techniques of control of subjectivity – now more subtle and sophisticated – were employed in the "neofordist" models, especially regarding the Toyota model (ALVES, 2000; FARIA, 2007). The approaches to this issue come from an assortment of currents of thought of interpretive inspiration, anchored mainly in phenomenology and critical theory studies, existentialism and structuralism, in which the dichotomy between objectivity and subjectivity are widely discussed, supported and positioned differently in each of these chains.

Among the perspectives discussed by the researchers are the cultural theories, which explain how symbolic structures constrain and inhibit the agents to interpret the world according to specific ways by behaving in a manner (RECKWITZ, 2002). From this standpoint, we can assign to the individual an ability to reflect on himself, about the people and the world. That allows us to understand that individual no longer as conditioned to structures and systems, but also considering his aptitude to transform reality through his unconscious and social, historical and cultural forces that permeate his behaviour.

The knowledge produced by González Rey (2002, 2003, 2004, 2005), quoted by Paes de Paula and Palassi (2007) has provided important elements for organizational studies, pointing to a dialectical view of the subject and his action. In addition, it contributes to the elaboration of a theory of subjectivity that considers the systemic, dialectical and dialogical nature, integrating the individual, social, historical and cultural aspects to it.

The historical-cultural approach proposed in this paper corroborates with Paes de Paula and Palassi

(2007), which foresees organizations as spaces for production of subjectivity as well as subjects inserted in them as capable of questioning the intentional claims of subjectivity imposed by these organizations. Our approach also supports Reckwitz (2002), in relation to the social order not being the result of mutual and regulatory expectations but being plunged into the collective cognition and into the symbolic structures.

In addition to the subjectivity perspective in organizations, it is appropriate here to highlight the contributions of the historical-cultural vision to the strategy studies. Such studies have focused on the individual and his interaction with the practice in the organizational environment. This perspective of strategy as practice, aims at detailing the activities that comprise the day-to-day corporate life, rather than directly worrying about the content or strategy process. The strategy is then seen as a flow of activities in a continuous construction and reconstruction process (JARZABKOWSKI, 2005).

Accordingly, from Vygotsky's cultural-historical perspective and Yves Clot's theoretical and methodological proposal, which seeks to reveal the work psychological function, we discuss the genre and style elements in a specific directed and situated activity, as it follows.

Historic-cultural approach by Yves Clot

The selected author as a reference for this paper leads to the core of discussion the role of labour in the subject's development and in building, preserving and transmitting the historic-cultural heritage (CLOT, 2010). This has to do with the rupture between pre-occupation and occupation, that is, the ability to accomplish useful things, keep commitments and work with the other and to the other (CLOT, 2012). It reaffirms the centrality of labour in modern society, continuing to play an important psychological function, since "(...) labour is where the painful and decisive experience of the real unfolds, understood as something that – in organization of work and task – opposes to his ability, to his skills, to his control" (CLOT, 2007, p. 59).

Clot (2007) recalls that the world witnesses a historic moment of change in the method of industrial production, automation, structural unemployment and changes in society, and ends up suggesting a

reduction in the importance of work in achieving the social integration of the individual. The author perceives this reality in another way, opposing to the concept of labour as an activity among others, and reaffirms that this has a psychological function. Even with an exacerbated plurality resulting from the accelerated social division provided by the social and economic development, for him work occupies a core position. While acknowledging a possible paradox, being less at the centre, and at the same time at the centre. Less for the many pre-occupations – mother, husband, volunteering, among others – that are part of a whole and at the same time compete with the traditional professional occupation in time and space. More at the centre, however, due to the possibility of providing the subject with the power to do something of his life, that is, of starring his own history.

Directly connected to intention, the action is formed in an environment saturated with heterogeneous activities, freeing itself from its contradictions. This medium is not an external environment to action. It is populated by "strange" intentions, to which the professional must submit himself, thus imposing a kind of deviation with reference to his intention. After all, action cannot be understood out of itself. Its onset should be linked to activities that are interchanged in certain contexts to their working and operations that are exercised in relation to others.

In dialogues with Mauss and Escuret-Guille, Clot draws attention to a cultural historical psychology. According to it, labour relates recursively with nature, with the world, producing pictures of symbolic worlds. That leads to effects that become causes of their collective actions, serving as social conventions and organized signs. Thus, it follows the human species, more and more human, generation after generation, building its world, which must always be resumed. Labour is presented thanks to the traces it leaves to the succeeding generations. Even through social alienation, all the impersonal characters of a memory whose strangeness would be to the subject a condition of freedom. This collective and impersonal memory is an arbitrary prosthesis for each subject, who designates the stability of the sign meanings. "Because there is a strangeness of the works, they always attract collective projects or social divisions that overcome or not themselves with others, while here is the foundation for the psychological function that establishes labour. In this sense, labour is the most human existing activity" (CLOT, 2007, p. 77-78). Unlike

animals, man is not tied to an internal program, rather there is an indeterminacy that allows the subject to be author of himself through relationships with others.

The cultural-historical psychology, according to Clot's (2007) epistemological option, assigns a core place for material and symbolic realities of the "outside" world. By repeatedly rescuing Vygotsky's concepts, the author presents learning as effective only when it previously became a real development of the individual.

In the author's viewpoint the object is never directly reached, but always through the mediation of material and symbolic techniques. Objects act something in the subject, "they are not limited to being overhead projectors and screens of our social life. They project the possibilities of the subject (...)" (CLOT, 2007, p. 103-104). The relationship of others with the object constitutes the subject's activity, the subject's exchanges with others animate the life of the object. Finally, the activity is also fashioned by the relationships of each subject with the object.

For Clot (2007), labour is a situation that calls for the subject, leaving it to others, to himself, to the object of his work and to his instruments of action and to the expected generics of his activity. The analysis of directed and situated activity flows to a possible development of objects, of artifacts, of the subject, the subject's instruments and of the collective activity. "The reality of activity is also that which is not done, that which cannot be done, that which is tried to be done without success – the failures – that which would have been desired or could have been done, that which is thought or is dreamt of to be done somewhere else." (CLOT, 2007, p. 116).

For the subject, all the objects, tools, signs and activities of others toward him, taken in the context of genre are the first source of his development. Then they become means for the service of personal activity, and this in contrast, offers him a "second life".

In this approach there are two assumptions of human action. The first assumption Vygotsky calls the "historical experience" in the signs and tools. The second assumption is the "social experience" in the living exchanges among subjects (CLOT, 2007). The former is equipped with an active character of power and virtue. It summarizes, prepares or triggers acts. It has the effectiveness of these in a somewhat latent and concentrated manner. While for the subject, signs and tools exist in three aspects/modes of existence:

as a word of the neutral language; as a word strange to others; and as a word of oneself. The latter, the social experience, provides an operative assumption, which depends on the appropriation of activities - the difference between stimulus and response - sustained by the exchanges among people, mediated by the expected ones of the genre. The activity of others and their activities are a call to action or incitement that this action meets in the system of activities of the subject.

In Clot (2007), the objective of an action is the formed intention, the conscious representation of the result to be achieved, which is embodied in the techniques and procedures of accomplishment. It reports to the motivations of other subjects and to other motivations of the subject himself/herself.

For the subject, development is putting the social world at his/her service while making it a world for himself/herself in to integrate within it. That is, it is his/her reformulation in participating in the preparation of new meanings. Clot (2007) proposes two zones of potential development: intellect and affection. He argues that it is necessary to refer intellect and affection to the conflicts of thought. However, this is not enough. The key is the imperative of returning thought to life. Far from being a mere parallel between a cognitive exercise and an emotional transfer, thought is defined mainly because it acts upon the world.

In his opinion, thought participates as an inner activity within the processes of activity outside the subject, determining the way of life, behaviour, change of action, guiding and releasing from concrete situations. It keeps the proposal that it is the course of activity in the world with other people that calls for, but without coincidence, the cognitive and affective (both cause and effect) development. In addition to the zones of potential development, Clot (2007) also offers two psychological development zones: i) through the zone of development of cognitive abilities of subjects, and ii) through the mediation of the other who expands the field of exercise of efficiency of the subject.

He maintains the thesis of an action dynamics alternatively submitted to two distinct physiological prerequisites: efficiency and meaning. These two psychic tensions are resolved by crossing different areas of potential development, although both have in common the fact of upholding the activity of a subject through the activity of another subject or several other subjects.

The action may be seen reduced or necrotic when the subject cannot get rid of the two assumptions in which he is entangled, like it or not. Oddly enough, the operational-technical-and the subjective-social aspects cause advancement and at the same time prevent action. Insisting on the possibilities given to action by the skills is never enough. The condition to be liberated from techniques, so abilities do not degrade into automatism. The action arises out of a conflict with reality, be it technical, social or personal. It is a release either from automatism or from the social or personal activities system. Action “comes out” of the activity and takes hold of its media. It is a production of the subject concurrently with the help of and against these assumptions, in a sort of detachment from these programs, not by denying them, but through their development. In other words, efficiency must also get rid of the cognitive “burden” through the economy of media. It is here that a number of catachresis come from. What is left aside in this way provides the subject with room to manoeuvre thanks to the very incompleteness of his action.

It is necessary to get loose from pre-occupations which are a subjective burden upon withdrawing from specific activities with which the subject is involved and invest in other activities that the subject recovers. This is where the development is always at the same time suppression. Action reworks its instrumental assumptions when the subject gets rid of knowledge of the object that is too hermetic. Something common to the present and the past is more essential than each of them separately, the so-called recurrence. Thanks to this, action is once imaginative and empirical, evocation and direct perception, real and not just current.

The formation of an action corresponds to an accurate process. It has to do with the work over its assumptions partially incorporated – the activity and the operations – to which it is structurally connected. These assumptions make up the action, though it is not possible to deduce it from them. On the other hand, only action can feed the development of the subject’s personal and social activities system, as well as those of his operational and subjective instruments. By means of his style, he leaves traces in his personal memory and in the social memory of genres.

Action only exists in the open circle of the vital activities of the subject, appearing three times in his history. First on the social level (inter-psychological), then within the subject (intrapsychological) and on the social-personal level (strange-personal), which

constitutes the living triad. Action is the time over which the subject is freed from the course of his activities not by means of his negation, but through the development of these activities.

The paradox of action is if the action that is produced is the arena of a necessary freedom of the activities in which the subject is entangled, it is not by abolishing it that he is able to get free. It is by moving the dependencies and constraints that shape it in the world of men and objects. It is through the transformation of these dependencies into behaviour of release that he gives himself a second life. Therefore, action renews its assumptions, but never suppresses it. On the other hand, it is by means of the subjective distance revealed in a style that a genre renews the subject’s relations.

In another end, Labour is action and has a psychological function precisely because it tests the subject concerning his practical and vital obligations towards others and towards the world. Nevertheless, conversely, action is a work because it needs to be freed from action during activity. This release takes place, if applicable, through the development of the subject’s activities. These take the subject from himself, giving him the opportunity to start his subjective history.

This act involves the co-analysis of styles of action with the workers themselves, by means of methods such as self-confrontation, which reproduce and amplify workers’ habitual directed and situated activity. The multiplication and the disagreement of styles of the same genre make it visible and able to be discussed. It is important to consider what workers do, what they say they do and what they do of what they say a variety of levels of development of the professional experience.

Analytical categories: genre and style

The analysis of labour proposed by Clot (2007) lies before the mutual interiority of styles and genres in the activity. He suggests that styles are the reformulation of genres in a directed and situated activity, while genres are the opposite of physical states. Genres are always unfinished. They are shaped in particular contingent and unique traits that define each work situation experienced.

It is worthy to remember that the activity is not only a personal attribute. Within organizations, one actor’s

activity is part of a collective activity (LORINO, 2007). The prescribed task is defined by collectives that make up and transform the social genres of activity associated with real situations. They delimit genres of work situation, impersonal memory and instruments by which subjects act simultaneously in the world and among them. In other words, the Semiotic mediations fulfil several functions. They enable actors to abstract activity from the singular here and now situation, and to link it to generic classes of activity, or activity genres (DEWEY, 1938; BAKHTIN, 1986). An actor is never alone in his/her activity, since he/she dialogs with professional “genres”. The actor “converses in acts” with process partners, who, in the same process, mobilise other genres of activity. Even works which seem to be very lonely are haunted by interactors with whom the subject dialogically interacts through space, time and social structures. It would otherwise be impossible to learn and to capitalize experience (LORINO, 2007).

On one hand, one focus of labour, the genre, also called the social draft, is the intermediary body between subjects, a social shelter situated between them. On the other hand, it is between them and the object of work. A genre always binds together those who take part in a situation as co-authors who know each other, understand and evaluate the situation in the same way. Genre is an open system of impersonal rules, written or not, which defines the usage of objects and exchange between people in a given moment. It is a flexible system of regulatory variants and restrictions that include various scenarios and a set of indeterminacy saying how those who work act with whom they work. In addition, it defines how they act or fail to act in specific situations, as well as how they perform transactions among co-workers, which are required for the common life organized around goals of action. It represents the symbolic system in which individual action must relate. “Genre is made for action, it takes place in the experience, or rather, it takes a breakover at that time” (CLOT, 2007, p. 153).

The inclusion of the experiential dimension in the experienced situation is a differential with reference to the field of organizational studies. Since the subject is thought of as “mixed” with the activity, it does not demarcate the individual from one side and the social aspect on the other side, and similarly is the case with an understanding between behaviour and labour.

Personal activities and exchanges among subjects achieve a durability in which they may be anchored,

crystallized, frozen in independent features of relations among men, procedures, time management, work language, organization charts, technical tools, plans, implicit rules, gestures and verbal metaphors, retaining the memory of the emotions of a working environment (CLOT, 2007). An inseparable element of the genre, the individual style becomes the transformation of genres, by a subject in resources to act on his actual activities. The development occurs through the release of the expected course of activities, not through the denial of accomplishing them.

Labour lends its vitality as an object of self-realization to moments that transcend the professional space. It is one of the most important genres of social life, the vacancy of which brings a sense of social void, because in short labour requires “(...) the ability to do useful things, establishing and maintaining commitments, to predict with others and for others something that has no direct relationship with itself” (CLOT, 2007, p. 73). We also need to consider the important role of the other in the meaning of labour as a social, collective activity being the very labour the register the subject in the social context. According to Lorino, Tricard e Clot (2011), dialogism conceptualizes the production of meaning through the situated interactions of actors. The interaction between distinct genres may destabilize professional worlds and make us question solid beliefs. Conversely it is a permanent challenge for the coherence of collective activity. Compensatory mechanisms are carried out, such as norms and procedures imposed by a central authority and the regulation of interactions through instruments (LORINO, 2007). Based on these concepts, the work structuring does not happen as the organization of interests, obligations or similar habits. It is also organized as the structuring of different cohesion activities around a common object and distribution of tasks in different genres. According to Clot (2007), labour combines the attributes of the medium and of the groups, while genders are crystallized sorts of labour division. This, in addition to social and historical forms that permanently reconfigure it. Consequently, it assumes the originality that puts it a level of equivalent to the language in the psychological development of the subject. The subject who works is conceived as a rejection and an emancipation of the activities that submit him to the test.

Recurrent in Clot’s work (2007) are the concepts of work as a directed activity in real situation. That is because there is no activity without a subject, and of

genre as mediation in which the subject acts on the object and on the others in the flow of activity directed in situation. As far as the author is concerned, labour is a symbolic and material activity of the outside world that constitutes the subjective life. "Labour is part of a constellation of personal activities in inter-meaning" (CLOT, 2007, p. 95).

In addition, labour is an activity directed by the subject for the object and for the activities of others with the genre mediation. Labour activity is addressed to others after having been addressed and their activities before being again. It is always response to the activity of others, like an echo of other activities. Souto, Lima and Osório (2015) emphasize that in the activity the workers are confronted with the conflicts. Consequently, they have to search the desired paths among the possible ones of the activity and to create new ways, to face what would be impossible. This creation takes place in the dialogues, between subject, work object, and work colleague (s), which constitute the activity, conceived as directed activity.

Thus, the unit of analysis of the directed activity is composed of what Clot calls the living triad, which is the conflicts in the object, the conflicts of others, and the subject's own conflicts.

The need to propose a new method of analysis of activity is because it is not possible to explain the subject's activity from itself. It is important to consider that the subject's action has its source in opposite activities of others and of his own. The object of labour does not directly embody the social schemes to its use. It is the domain of the genre that will enable the individual to leave the level of perception. It is in interaction with others, with oneself and with the object that the subject should penetrate to work, while the effective action on the object and the meaning of the activity for the subject unite and divide in every concrete work. In the action, what comes first - the constituted subjectivity and pre-occupations - is obviously the starting point, but not the source of what comes after. Of course, highlights Clot (2007), the past (that of genre and that of the subject) promotes the present and makes it possible. The style is the distance a subject can leave between himself and his work through his development. This distance is the action that intervenes between the subject and his own instruments.

Style of action participates in a genre that it rebrands, keeps alive, extends or even perpetuates. The ability

to create and/or invent and/or break, called stylistic invention, always implies a very deep inventory of repertoires of the same genre and of various genres. More than that, the stylistic invention assumes no doubt that a subject belongs to several genres at the same time. Being able to see a genre through the eyes of another genre, being able to act in a genre with features of another genre is surely the key resource of stylistic invention. It is by mobilizing the resources of a strange genre to get out of a deadlock situation found in the genre of the situation in which one is that it is possible to get out of this genre. The subject does not live within a single genre, and this condition is often the source of a style, of a tone, of an enhancement in the exercise of the genre considered, which is full of nuances that can sometimes lead him to undergo structural changes.

The style is the creation to which the subject must address to master the game of genre changes, that is, the passages between genres. This process of metamorphosis of genres, promoted to the status of an inventory of objects imperceptible during action, calls the stylistic creations and keeps genres alive. The situated activity is the activity that takes place between two memories, one personal and one impersonal. Labour does not create, it recreates. Labour analysis comprises what the activity within itself can overcome the activity.

Methodology

The method proposed by Clot and used in this case study as a resource for data collection and data analysis, considers the work in an assortment of linked situations. It is based on Vygotsky's consideration "I know me only to the extent that I am myself another one for me" (VYGOTSKY as mentioned by CLOT, 2007, p. 137), to which the movement/act of thinking, which goes from the idea to the word, is the history of a development.

Through the language addressed to the other – by means of self-confrontation – the subject performs/organizes his activities. Under these conditions the worker can find something new in himself, by himself. He sees his activity "with the eyes" of two other activities that are otherwise discordant. The experience has a history and its analysis transforms that history. One cannot consider that the meaning is constant for the subject. The analysis is an action

that enriches the activity of the subject but does not reduce it to a result of the cyclical and social exchange among subjects.

The enrichment provided by the sense to the contextualized experience in action and analysis is the fundamental law of activities dynamics. It enables to the worker the appearance of goals among other objectives of work, and that under the co-analysis brings up the optional dimension of work, which is inseparable from its operational dimension. For Machado (2009), it is relying on the planning of the action, based on his experiences, that the worker develops the so-called work performed. That is, the set of behaviours (verbal or nonverbal) effectively observable in the situation, with some distance from what was prescribed. Through this confrontation, it is possible to cause a breakup with alienation. This is a possibility that the worker may become aware to other engagements that were and are conceivable to him.

This is a primary postulation of the method - the reflection on the activity performed in the presence of others who can break up with alienation. On reflection, one witnesses a chance for the worker to wake up. An emphasis should be given to the “internal” activity or rather, cognitive, situated cognitive, for example, the activity of the analysis of reflection mainly mediated by the other. The consciousness category is important, but goes through the other, by sharing, by dialogism. That is, the actor “converses in acts” with process partners, who, in the same process, mobilise other genres of activity. Even works which seem to be very lonely are haunted by interactors with whom the subject dialogically interacts through space, time and social structures. It would otherwise be impossible to learn and to capitalize experience (LORINO, 2007).

This study, which has exploratory-descriptive and qualitative methodological guidance, is based on the assumptions of the cultural-historical approach, as known from Vygotsky’s researches. Our study is also based on the methodological strategy of the Clinic of Activity, developed by Yves Clot. We tried to be immersed in the work context to be aware of the activity of Food Handlers engaged in the group of the school organization. Such immersion contributed to the purpose of gathering and observation, data analysing, interviews, document analysis, document generation - images taken from photographs, descriptions acquired by recording and transcribing the interviews - identification, selection and examination of documents.

The interviews proved to be necessary, because besides elucidating aspects obtained through observations and analysis of existing documents, they allowed us to prepare a detailed description of the activity, being one of the elements from which the following steps of collecting, and another of data analysis unfolded. The goal was to carry out a search with the participation of the school Food Handlers, and not simply a survey about them.

It must be stressed that data analysis took the view that the language practices are action methods, identified in the elements of communication or situated verbal behaviours and significant and in such situations.

In data analysis we tried to know, besides the descriptions and significance of the Handlers and other people related to this activity, the normative factors (social standards), the regulatory factors, resources and mediating factors (linguistic elements, artifacts and others), the description of the activity, and the situation themselves. Accordingly, we investigated the space between the real ones.

The procedures appear as “Simple Self-confrontation”, that is, more than a moment of data collection was employed. The self-confrontation is not meant to be a simple return of acquired experience, but rather, to produce an experience.

In its first phase, the case study relied on semi-structured interviews with an open-question script for two FHs. For an improved reliability of the information, the interview performed by one of the investigators was recorded and later transcribed. Upon data collecting, the script was adapted to accommodate the object of this study. In this first occasion, the use of the interview technique allowed us to rescue particularities of the relationship between the FHs and their work. Thus, it characterized the attempt for a detailed understanding of the meanings and situational characteristics presented by the interviewees.

According to Clot (2007), spontaneous concepts sought in the interview are designed to allow workers to organize the labour experience from subjective descriptions prepared in a vocabulary with metaphorical frequency. “Scientific concepts” and “Spontaneous concepts” are two sources of intelligibility that can get together, but never identify themselves to each other.

After analysing the data collected in the first interview, which considered speeches, expressions, images,

odour, clothing, posture, symbols, instruments, rules (formal and informal) norms and statutes, the second phase of data collection was conducted. We also collected photographic images taken both from the environment and the daily work of the researched subjects and analysis of relevant documents. The nutritionist in charge of feeding the students was also interviewed regarding the school norms concerning the function of FHs. All these phases contributed to explain which genre and style were present in the activities of FHs.

The logic of analysis went through the comparison of Yves Clot's theoretical assumptions with the collected data that helped explaining which genre and style were present in this activity in the daily work of preparing food for students.

Data analysis

In order to situate this analysis, it is worth taking into account that the researched school was opened in 1960, in the outskirts of Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil. It attends 120 children in pre-school and elementary school levels in the morning and afternoon shifts. This school has its foundation rooted in a deeply humanistic-spiritualist philosophy of education with a holistic view of the human being: Body, Mind and Soul.

For the preparation of school lunches, there is a nutritionist and two FHs who take turns in activities over the shifts. These FHs are responsible for providing four daily meals for students in the basic and elementary education in the investigated school.

Dealing with genre, it is worth mentioning, according to ANVISA, that the Food Handler, also known as School Lunch-Person, is the person who washes, peels, cuts, grates, cooks, that is, he/she prepares food. Compliant with the Food and Harvest Bank he/she is any individual who works in the production, preparation, processing, packaging, storage, transportation, distribution and sale of food. In Brazil, standards set forth for the care of school meals to basic education students are described in Resolution CD/FNDE 38, July 16, 2009 of the National School Feeding Program (PNAE).

According to a statement made by the responsible nutritionist, the FHs follow the norms of two manuals produced by trainees of the Nutrition course: the Good Practice Manual and the Food Handler's

Manual. The first provides details about the pre-preparation, preparation, distribution, packaging and disposal of waste and debris. The second includes information about the FHs day-to-day life, such as personal hygiene, uniforms, utensils and kitchen equipment, pre-preparing food, cooking process, food distribution and waste disposal. The menu follows the PNAE's recommendations. According to the nutritionist the menu is defined "in accordance with the seasonality of food and due to the school philosophy, once a week we do not have meat. Hygiene rules are also included in the manuals (...)".

As also described by the nutritionist, the FHs "do exactly what is on the menu, since they hold regular meetings when attention is called as to the procedures that are not followed. To Lorino (2007) the activity which provides terms of reference for one actor's activity appears as process. "They can change the menu only with my permission! If I notice in the day-to-day routine that they did something that was not scheduled, I make my remarks at once. Besides, I have lunch at school on alternate days. However, at the beginning it was hard to get discipline in this sense. When I realize that something is wrong I go there and undo what is inadequate that's why they realized that they should not try to change. Also, whenever I can stay after my leaving hour and check the manipulation locations". These are mechanisms such as norms and procedures imposed by a central authority and the regulation of interactions through instruments (LORINO, 2007).

In FH1's words, the description of the genre appears as "it must be like that, it must be quite clean and tidy, otherwise you will not be able to [sic]. We must wear a cap, an apron or a smock, we must wear a smock or those who wear an apron, must wear gloves, right? [sic], we must wash our hands carefully. If we are not wearing gloves, we must always do a good hand washing to be always clean".

In the same direction as suggested by Clot (2007), the genre proposed as an element of analysis in this paper refers to an open system of impersonal rules, written or unwritten, which define the use of objects and exchange among people. It is a flexible system of regulatory variants and restrictions on how to act or refrain from acting; performing transactions among co-workers required by life in common organized around goals of action. It also represents the symbolic system with which the individual action must relate. Genres are crystallized forms of labour division.

The norms and regulations system of both legislation and local rules inferred from the nutritionist's speech, and the statements of FHs express the genre inherent to the activity as being a restrictive, standardized and task-prescribing genre. It also demonstrates a high degree of mechanicity expected from these workers through a constant surveillance. It also denotes an extreme lack of autonomy of FHs while performing their daily tasks.

However, according to Clot (2007), the more static, restricted and fixed a genre intends to be, it is always subject to a motion that reconfigures and changes it in the interchange among subjects, subjects with themselves, with objects and with activities. Thus, those involved in the activity recreate/reshape the genre when they print on it new meanings and new forms of shared actions.

The investigated school has two kitchens, each of which is occupied by one of the interviewed food handlers. As we could observe from photographs and by visiting the place, this space was furnished with cupboards, tables and chairs, industrial stove, refrigerator, sink, counter, shelves, water cooler, supply of food and household items. Walls and floor are covered with white ceramic tiles. As reported by FH1, neither the physical space available is consistent with the activities performed there, nor the furniture meets the needs of the food handlers. Despite the fact that FH1 has already reported to the school supervision about the demand for changes, those have not yet been implemented. "I'd enlarge this kitchen, this cupboard is not suitable for an industrial kitchen, we say... It cannot be this cupboard, we need a short one. We must change this table, the sink has to be closed too. That cupboard has to be bigger than the pantry and we must have a pantry in the kitchen because there is no pantry in the kitchen (...). While the cupboards cannot be like those, and they must also be closed, too." However, according to FH2, the few problems are only poor ventilation and the need for a counter for cutting meat.

This comment points to the genre of activity from other previous experiences obtained by FH1. That is because she reported on her previous work experience in the kitchen of a restaurant and she has already been a food handler in the studied school four years.

From the interviews it is possible to characterize FH1 as a 45-year-old lady, protestant, single mother, education up to the fourth grade of elementary

school. She lives with her daughter in a city of the metropolitan region of Curitiba. She comes from a family with four brothers, born in Paraná, but with interspersed periods of residence between that State and Bahia. Having lost her mother at the age of thirteen and being the eldest daughter, she felt responsible for taking care of her siblings in addition to the functions required by her father's business – a bar. Every day she used to get up at a 05:15 am in the morning to get to work on time and went back home at 05:00 pm.

FH2 is forty years old, Catholic, born in Bahia, educated up to the fourth grade of elementary school. She has been married for twenty years and has a couple of children. She also lives in a city in the metropolitan region of Curitiba. She has been working in the researched school for thirteen years, being five years as a janitor and eight years as a food handler. The school was her first formal job. Her working hours are from 7 am to 5 pm and she showed dissatisfaction by having only one hour for lunch. She is responsible for feeding three groups of children of different ages, from nursery, with a total of forty-three children, to employees. This FH has her entire family in some way connected to the school where she works. Her married daughter works in the nursery, her husband works in the maintenance sector and her son is a scholarship student.

Despite denying the influence of work on her health, she says she went to the doctor, who prescribed her wearing socks for her varicose veins. "Just because I felt a pain in the legs prescribed socks. But this has nothing to do with my work here, because I only deal with the food, I don't do the cleaning, nothing, the keepers do it." Her gratitude for the school founder was obvious at different times in her speech, chiefly when she recalls the sadness with his death.

Given the dialogues extracted from the interviews, we tried to identify which were the statements of the FHs that showed a change in the prescribed genre. One of the recurring statement in the interviews was the expression of love and affection for the children, found in phrases like that of FH1: "We must give good food, give love, talk to them because they are away from their parents, right?, (...) and so far, I haven't left because of them, right? (...) [sic]" and of FH2: "We gotta love it [sic], right?, as in our case working with children. We gotta love [sic] children, love, we must always be fine to show them."

Another expression found in the analysis was a sense of responsibility for good nourishment. FH1 said, "(...) if we do not handle well, do not give a good food, it is hard (...). We gotta give good food [sic] (...)" and FH2 "(...) it's delicious and it makes the hair grow, look good, have a beautiful skin".

Also, the FHs feel responsible for these children because they stay away from their parents for much of the day: FH1 "(...) we must treat the children nicely, right? [sic], because, poor kids, they stay here all day, there is no parent (...)" and FH2 "(...) they stay here all day long, we take care of them [sic] (...) suddenly the child has a normal weight, then he/she begins to lose weight, he/she stays here all day long, we are responsible people" [sic].

It was found that expressions about how feelings influence the act of cooking were often present in the speeches of the FHs, for example FH1: "The feeling goes (...) the food will not be good (...) I don't know... suddenly I start to cook ... then suddenly I start to sing, so I think it's better (...)" and FH2 "if we have a nervous trouble things end up spreading (...) we gotta do with love and serve with love, right? And if you have any kind of problem, so you shouldn't because it [sic] doesn't work, understand? (...) Because... love and desire are what we must have, because otherwise it would not work [sic]".

The preparation of tea for children with physical ailments was reported by both FH1 and FH2, showing that such practice, like those previously reported, became part of the genre of these FHs regardless of prescriptions. For Machado (2009), it is relying on the planning of the action, based on his experiences, that the worker develops the so-called work performed, that is, the set of behaviours (verbal or nonverbal) effectively observable in the situation, some distant from what was prescribed.

The other element present in the situated activity, the style ensures possession of the psychological genre. It also ensures flexibility and plasticity of the action performance. The style is inseparable from the effectiveness of the action. It is functional and at the same time it is subjective image. To this end, a style always refers to the removal of the subject, not due to the denial of the assumptions of his action, in the social genre or personal memory, but by means of his generic and subjective development. Styles of action are not structures or types, yet modalities of structuring and restructuring of the action by subjects within a

specific genre. Lopes and Carrieri (2010) emphasize the need to recover the subjectivity and its importance for understanding the labour activity, in which the action is not situated only in the present circumstances. It is likely situated within the personal and social history of the psychological subject and even in his body.

Consequently, in the quest of identifying the style in the activity of the surveyed FHs, we found a few expressions that provided the perception of two possible styles within the same genre. FH1 showed less attachment to rules and prescriptions than FH2. When asked if they changed the menu, FH1 replied "Oh I vary quite a lot! But there is some stuff that children don't eat, we gotta do something different" and FH2 "I obey the nutritionist. She explains that, kind of, we gotta follow things because she knows what is the best for the children".

Sentences like "Sometimes when I'm inspired I sing, I pray, I sing a hymn. I like singing (...)", taken from FH1's interview expressed a particular level of freedom of expression. Besides relationship difficulties with the school board, this FH also reported problems in the physical structure of the kitchen. It does not have a water tank, which forced her to use water from the bathroom sink when there is a supply breakdown. Another complaint indicated by FH is the need to "pay hours" that were not actually worked when she mentions the postponement of school activities in the state of Paraná because of H1N1 infection. Consequently, her rest time was reduced. Rebelliousness was also noticed when she admitted being helped by an unauthorized employee for kitchen activities, because that employee was in charge of cleaning the school bathrooms.

The nutritionist confirmed that FH1 demands the services of this employee, against her instruction, even though she is wearing the blue coat used in cleaning activities. A further exhibition of disagreement with the conventional standards is when she reports: "I start thinking about other things, what I'm gonna do, I'm gonna look for other things for me to do [sic], another menu, I'm gonna change the menu, right? Because it's not possible. I think of other possibilities". Despite the nutritionist's strict instruction that the FHs should not ignore her prescribed menu, this FH is not subject to the imposed rules.

FH1 implied in her speech that there were loads of activities to be performed within a short time and without any help and that those tasks have caused her

severe fatigue and back pain: “The everyday life here is hard. I get here and I start preparing the morning snack for the children. At half past seven it must be ready [sic] because they come in at a quarter to eight, then it must be ready [sic]. I’m alone here. These days I had a helper, but now she left and I’m alone. And then I have double work... I have dishes to wash and there are more than 50 people to feed (...). Today I was complaining: my back is aching badly! We feel our back burning, you know? [sic]. Staying there we gotta wash this and wash that in that sink, right? [sic]... oh God, it’s too tiresome!”. This Food Handler also considers that her salary is not proportionate to the workload she has “because we don’t make much money here. We just, work, work, work and don’t make much money, we get little [sic]. We should be better paid for the work we do [sic].” Regardless of this low pay, the Food Handler reported bringing small items to help her out in the kitchen activities. “(...) Because, now and then, when we order something, it takes long to come. So, we end up buying. But it isn’t much.” Unlike FH2, who when asked the same question, put the following answer: “The director sees what’s missing and she takes action herself”, thus it seems there is one more contradiction in the same genre.

On the contrary, FH2 repeatedly expressed herself more conditioned to norms, rules and constraints of the genre. The interviewer found that during the interview FH2 had a strong odour of bleach, reinforcing the impression of her attachment to the cleaning prescription rather than concern for her personal appearance. This fact shows that this cleaning material, belonging to the work follows her beyond the workplace. She also showed some fear expressed in the statement “(...) if I do [a non-prescribed task] the other day there the nutritionist comes, and I tell her... and tomorrow I tell her ... I skipped that... because it wasn’t possible...”. This feeling of devotion may be related to the report that she lived with her family in a house given for free by the school founder for many years. Furthermore, her husband and daughter are also school employees, and her son has a scholarship.

The confrontation moment of the photos taken from the workplace with images of the FHs while performing their activities was carried out on an individual basis. A sequence of photos was presented aiming that the FHs could describe what the images contained and what these images conveyed. In a photo, the FHs were cutting food in a kitchen sink and very close to them there was a detergent bottle, soap and a sponge.

FH1 was the only person who commented that the standards stipulate that bottle should not be close to food, so reinforcing the statement given during the interview that there was neither furniture nor space suitable to perform her activity. At this point the self-confrontation technician allowed FH1 to reflect on her activity, while elucidating to the researcher and to herself the issues that arose during the development of activities with images.

A foremost feature in Clot’s work (2007) is the possibility of emancipation of the worker, not by denying the activity, but within the activity itself. This reflection occurs through the removal of the subject in relation to the prescribed genre. The removal takes place when the act involves the co-analysis of styles of action with the workers themselves. Methods such as self-confrontation, which reproduce and amplify the workers’ habitual directed and situated activity, are suitable for this purpose, as can be seen in the following account of FH1’s experience.

In the first interview FH1 was questioned about some of her everyday work practices while cooking, such as singing and praying. Her reply was confirmatory for such practices. Faced with the question whether these practices improve the food, she answered “I’ve never thought straight about it, I’ve never thought.” In the second interview, when confronted with this response, FH1 stated that she began to consider the influence of her daily practices on the quality of food: “I started thinking about it, because it seems that the food comes out better. We can pass on, right? A good improvement! The food becomes really good (...)”.

Concluding Remarks

As proposed by Clot, “in any case, labour analysis always aims at understanding in order to transform (...), discussions are intended to adjust the action, to feed the wisdom that our practice requires.” (CLOT, 2007, p. 11). Above all, his approach corroborates with the exhaustion of a strictly cognitive model of the subject. It is affiliated to the historical-cultural approach. Among the perspectives discussed by the researchers are the cultural theories, which explain how symbolic structures constrain and inhibit the agents to interpret the world according to specific ways by behaving in a manner (RECKWITZ, 2002). The action is situated as well on the personal and social history of the psychological subject, and even in his

body. This article is an empirical approach between the theory of genre and style of action to the FHs' directed and situated activity. While contributing to new perspectives on organizational studies and new possibilities to understand the subject within her work environment, we achieved the proposed goal of revealing the genre and style of the FH's activity.

As seen from the norms and regulations of both the legislation and local rules inferred from the nutritionist's speech and the speeches of the FHs, the genre inherent to the activity of the FHs showed to be restrictive. In addition, it was standardized and task-prescribing, with a high degree of mechanicity and constant surveillance, denoting a strong lack of autonomy of FHs in performing their everyday tasks. Machado (2009) points out that, in fact, in any work activity the worker is faced with restrictions coming from the institutions, which give an initial configuration to their action, often explained in their procedural plans. When reporting that the physical space and furniture available were not consistent with the activities performed by the Food Handlers, FH1 showed to have brought to the genre of the activity a previous work experience. Despite being in a different environment than a restaurant kitchen, this helped the Food Handler to notice aspects, which for FH2 were not relevant. That was because only FH1 complained with the school direction. This distinction in discernments also points to the existence of two styles within the same genre. It was confirmed as well that in relation to disparities in styles the fact that FH1 has less attachment to rules and prescriptions than FH2.

The incidence of a stylistic invention that became evident through the preparation of tea for the children with physical ailments emerged from the reports of the FHs. Likewise, love and affection for the kids were beyond the perception of responsibility for their proper nourishment. At first, what were individual and independent practices of each Food Handler became part of the genre notwithstanding the prerequisites.

As a moment for reflection afforded by the self-confrontation method, the report made by FH1 about singing and praying while cooking stands out. In addition, after the first interview she began to think about the influence of her daily practices on the quality of food. Such reflection can only be understood in the second stage of data collection, so the researcher's opportunity to return to the field is

appreciated by the method.

Another feature provided by the self-confrontation was the unveiling of the presence of emotions and feelings in the relationship of the workers to their activity. That was possible even if it presented a restrictive, standardized, prescribing, mechanical, and under constant surveillance genre. In this sense, we demonstrated that the method contemplates the possibility of breaking the worker's alienation and his awakening to other engagements. In Furthermore, it considers that the action of the subject has the possibility to arise when opposite activities clash, while these activities may belong to the subject and to others in relation to his.

In the intervention scenario in clinical of activity, the generated dialogical movement creates new possibilities of relationships and meanings. Thus, it is possible to emphasize that the dialogical motricity is one of the conditions of production of the new, since the movement promotes the favourable conjuncture to the discursive development by which the activity can be reworked, revisited and re-signified. There is a new combination of elements that is present in the workers' speech. (SOUTO, LIMA and OSÓRIO, 2015).

Methods such as self-confrontation allow for disclosing some paradoxes of the organizational objectives. For instance, the fact that when managers try to keep a given genre without the stylistic invention practiced by the subjects within the activity, the burden will be the annihilation of the genre itself. Nonetheless, the research field on subjectivity still has room for the development of methods and theoretical proposals. Categories aiming at disclosing elements of subjectivity through the study of the activity, such as genre and style, are difficult to understand. That is because they do not have a clear delimitation, and even with the results obtained there is always the intermingling within the human activity.

Finally, the present work advances in the understanding of action, the work as action and its psychological function in the constitution of the working subject, bringing a theoretic referential until then little discussed in the Brazilian Organizational Studies. In addition to contributing to science, this way of doing research based on cultural-historical assumptions and method of self-confrontation contributes to the opening of development possibilities for the worker.

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