



GEOPOLITICS ON CONSTRUCTING BASIC-EDUCATION GEOGRAPHIC KNOWLEDGE¹

A GEOPOLÍTICA NA CONSTITUIÇÃO DO CONHECIMENTO GEOGRÁFICO ESCOLAR

LA GEOPOLITICA EN LA CONSTITUCIÓN DEL CONOCIMIENTO GEOGRAFICO ESCOLAR

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Abstract: This article aims to analyze Geopolitics in the context of teaching Geography in basic education. Regarding the methodology, we dialogue with the assumptions of the Theory of Discourse, authored by Laclau and Mouffe (2015). We conducted interviews with teachers working in different segments of basic education and interpreted their answers using the corresponding bibliography, addressing the discussions presented in the text. We concluded that there are articulations responsible for keeping school subjects in curricula and that basic education in Geography, particularly its identification with Geopolitics through subjects of Current Affairs, plays the aforementioned role reaffirming the educational relevancy of this school subject. Considering the contents of Geopolitics, we concluded that the concept of *territory* emerges as the great organizing element of the construction of Geography as school-level knowledge. In this sense, the scale notions become pertinent in teaching Geography, in which the relations between the local and the global are constantly mobilized as the great markers of the possibility of comprehension of social reality.

Keywords: territory, current affairs, scale, curriculum.

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Resumo: Este artigo tem o objetivo de refletir sobre a geopolítica no contexto do ensino de Geografia. Metodologicamente, dialogamos com os pressupostos da Teoria do Discurso de Laclau e Mouffe (2015), a partir dos quais interpretamos entrevistas realizadas com professores de Geografia da educação básica de diferentes segmentos e instituições e relacionamos com a bibliografia referente às nossas discussões. Chegamos à noção de que há articulações que são responsáveis por manter as disciplinas escolares nos currículos. No caso da Geografia Escolar, a identificação com a geopolítica, sobretudo em uma relação de contiguidade com os conteúdos de “atualidades”, cumpre esse papel, reafirmando a relevância educacional dessa disciplina escolar. Concluimos que o conceito de território emerge como o grande organizador da construção do conhecimento geográfico escolar a partir dos conteúdos de geopolítica. Neste sentido, as noções escalares igualmente se tornam pertinentes no ensino de Geografia, no qual a relação entre o local e o global é constantemente mobilizada como o grande demarcador da possibilidade de compreensão da realidade social.

Palavras-chave: território, atualidades, escala, currículo.

Resumen: Este artículo tiene como objetivo analizar la Geopolítica en el contexto de la enseñanza de la Geografía en la educación básica. En cuanto a la metodología, dialogamos con los supuestos de la Teoría del Discurso, de Laclau y Mouffe (2015). Realizamos entrevistas a docentes que trabajan en diferentes segmentos de la educación básica e interpretamos sus respuestas utilizando la bibliografía correspondiente, abordando las discusiones presentadas en el texto. Concluimos que existen articulaciones responsables de mantener las materias escolares en los planes de estudio y que la educación básica en Geografía, particularmente su identificación con la Geopolítica a través de las materias de Actualidades, juega el papel antes mencionado, reafirmando la relevancia educativa de esta materia escolar. Considerando los contenidos de Geopolítica, concluimos que el concepto de territorio emerge como el gran elemento organizador de la construcción de la Geografía como conocimiento a nivel escolar. En este sentido, las nociones de escala se vuelven pertinentes en la enseñanza de la Geografía, en la que las relaciones entre lo local y lo global se movilizan constantemente como los grandes marcadores de la posibilidad de comprensión de la realidad social.

Palabras-clave: territorio, actualidad, escala, currículum.

Introduction

When we speak of school geography, we need to reflect on the aspects that help to shape the imaginary of what constitutes school geographic knowledge and, consequently, what the contents, concepts and methodologies that guide teaching practices in geography might be. As far as this imaginary is concerned, we believe that it is constructed within the discursive chains in which the foundations of any school discipline are established, in other words, by defining the structures of school disciplines and, consequently, of school knowledge.

One of the identifications built around school geography is its association with so-called "current affairs" content. Current affairs, understood as content that tends to circulate and remain in the media longer, given the construction of its social expression, usually enters classrooms in relation to traditional school content. As discussed in Cecim (2021), it is possible to affirm the existence of three main elements that authorize the teaching of current affairs in relation to school geography: i) the present as a time frame for geographical studies, ii) interdisciplinarity as a constituent of geography and, finally, iii) geopolitics as a geographical claim based on the mobilization of a need for constant updating through the notion that territories are always changing.

These identifications were mainly outlined by analyzing the materials and test items of the National High School Examination (Enem) and the exams of the Permanent Commission for the University Entrance Examination (Comvest-Unicamp) of the State University of Campinas from 2011-2021. We chose Comvest and Enem because we wanted to compare the importance of school geography knowledge required by the selection tests for higher education, whether at the federal level (such as Enem) or at the state level (such as Comvest). In conjunction with the tests, we conducted semi-structured interviews with primary geography teachers, curriculum studies, and a bibliographic survey on the epistemology of school geographic knowledge.

Thus, the aim of this text is to discuss school geographic knowledge based on geopolitics, considering its studies, permanence and claim as school geographic content. The aim is to discuss geopolitics in the context of school geography, highlighting the links that allow these disciplines to be associated.

The article is divided into an introduction, methodological paths - a section in which we will emphasize Laclau and Mouffe's Discourse Theory (2015) as a way of interpreting reality and interviews as a methodological resource -, a discussion on geopolitics associated

with school and academic geography and, finally, the scalar mobilizations of school geography when linked to geopolitics.

Methodological paths

In methodological terms, we can divide our assumptions into two main aspects: i) our worldview in terms of how we interpret reality and, consequently, our object of study and results; and ii) the methodological actions used to cut out and construct the research.

With regard to method, we used the studies of Laclau and Mouffe (2015) and Laclau (2011; 2013). Based on these authors, we understand that our ways of existing are based on discursive political games. This is an interpretation of reality in which social demands are organized in chains of equivalence and difference, so that particularisms can achieve universal status, which would transform them into hegemonic discourses - albeit in a contingent and precarious way. In this logic, projects end up carrying a certain identity obfuscation, which allows them to reach a greater number of particularisms and seems to meet a greater number of demands, strengthening their universal status.

When we consider school subjects, it is possible to reflect on how they open up their chains of equivalence in order to maintain their status as a hegemonic discourse. In other words, it would be thinking about the way in which subjects are organized in the discursive sphere with the intention of gaining social legitimacy and thus remaining in school curricula. This organization is always political and therefore concerns the different social interests that claim a place of hegemony.

So when we consider geopolitics in relation to geography teaching and, therefore, to the constitution of school geographic knowledge, we ask ourselves to what extent this articulation works to validate school geography in curricular terms. It is always important to point out that, within the assumptions discussed so far, affirming the discursiveness of a political project (such as the permanence of a certain subject in the curriculum) does not refer to a practice of value judgment or accusation of a fallacy of this or that school subject, but rather to affirm that discursiveness is proper to the social field and, in this way, acts in the functioning of political games.

In terms of methodological actions, with regard to Enem and Comvest, the tests and other publications in the 2011-2021 timeframe were analyzed. The article also includes quotes from four geography teachers who agreed to participate in semi-structured interviews about their work. The teachers' names are fictitious to protect their identities.

At the time of the interview, Professor Francisco had been teaching for five years in a popular pre-university course in the state of Rio de Janeiro. Professor Luiza has taught in both public and private schools, but at the time of the interviews she had only worked in the secondary school segment for seven years and in private educational institutions in the state of São Paulo. Professor Marcos had worked as a teacher in the São Paulo state school system for eight years, first as a "category O" teacher and later as a permanent teacher. Finally, Ana Clara had taught at the elementary and high school levels, but at the time of the interview she was teaching exclusively at a federal institute in the interior of São Paulo.

Geopolitics as a geographical claim

During the analysis of the Enem and the entrance exams, and especially during the interviews, geopolitics was shown to be a very recurrent term in the tests and often in conjunction with current affairs. In the analysis of the Comvest items, for example, it was possible to see the presence of a series of contents that we classified as current affairs (due to the current debates and projection achieved), while the Permanent Commission classified them as geopolitics. Geopolitics, having been identified as a component of school geographic knowledge, is present in Geography classes, especially in the third year of secondary school.

Geopolitics is required in the entrance exams and tests, on websites aimed at the entrance exam universe, as well as in the speeches of geography teachers as geographic content. Bearing in mind that the agreements, disputes, tensions and relationships established between different countries and independent groups bring new information and elements every day and are intensely propagated by the media, this content ends up presenting a disposition of equivalence with current affairs and therefore authorizes the identification between these recent events and Geography classes as their preferred place of discussion.

I have included fragments of interviews that helped guide the analysis. During the conversation with teacher Ana Clara, we talked about the specificities of each curriculum component in the Humanities in relation to the approach to certain content. We got into a discussion about the election of Donald Trump in the United States in 2016 and, based on this theme, I asked her what the difference would be between a Geography lesson and a Sociology lesson about this event.

I think that the sociology teacher will be more concerned with the representation in society of a person like him being elected, while the geography teacher is concerned with the relationship between nations and

the representativeness of this for the territories. The Sociology teacher is concerned with how this reflects on North American society and its relationship with other societies, but he doesn't, for example, analyze imports and exports, commodities and such things (interview fragment - teacher Ana Clara).

Likewise, Professor Francisco was asked about the supposedly ideal way of organizing a lesson on the subject of the Syrian War.

I start from what's happening in the Syrian War, I try to make a geographical science of what's going on and link (sic) it to their reality. So, in this case, maybe I'd go into the territory by asking: "What does a war mean?". Starting from what they have as a reference, from their geography and their knowledge, in order to be able to discuss it (interview fragment - teacher Francisco).

Teachers Marcos and Luiza, on the other hand, when talking about what they think about the relationship between teaching current affairs and Geography, bring up the geopolitics associated with this subject.

They ask any humanities teacher they see who works with these issues about current affairs. I imagine that Geography ends up taking part in this discourse because current affairs have to do with the transformation of space, the territory at that time, and I think that as this is a Geography issue - landscape, territory, space - it ends up being through Geography that this is discussed. These are also geopolitical issues. In the state, in general, it's twofold, because sometimes they bring the demand, sometimes we do. Because they see something in the media and come to ask; they come to ask about the impeachment, if it was a coup, if there's going to be a third world war or not, if China is going to dominate everything... But they don't just come to ask me, they also ask the other teachers, because the Humanities teachers are more open, sometimes a more left-wing line makes them come to you, even if they don't agree with you (interview fragment - teacher Marcos).

I don't think current affairs are Geography's responsibility. I think all areas can work with it. But I think they end up being more our responsibility because we have all the geopolitical discussions. Where I work, we used to have the subject "Current Affairs" which was taught by the History teacher and other areas, but now that the subject is over, it has been left to Geography, because some subjects coincide with geopolitics and that makes it easier (interview fragment - teacher Luiza).

According to Becker (2012), geopolitics was founded on Ratzel's work "Political Geography" (1897 apud Becker, 2012), which emphasizes the relationship between territory and the nation-state. For years, his legacy was neglected by the geographical field because it was associated with a conception considered deterministic. His studies were then appropriated by another discipline, also created in the 19th century: geopolitics.

This process led Geography to distance itself from a set of techniques and knowledge that conceived space through the actions and structure of the State and, more recently, through the study of large companies. For Becker (2012), to deny strategic practices - whether in the origins of the discipline, in Ratzel's theorizations or in the geopolitics of the Estado Maior - would also be to deny Geography itself. In the same way, rethinking geography would necessarily involve understanding geopolitics, with geographic studies being responsible for the theoretical construction of its strategic practices.

In Geography, there is a discussion that both distances and brings geopolitics closer to geographical analysis. For Giroto and Santos (2011), an analysis of geography textbooks from the first half of the 20th century makes it possible to reflect on the relationship between geography teaching and geopolitics. This was a time when Geography was trying to become institutionalized as scientific knowledge, and the publications of Aroldo de Azevedo and Delgado de Carvalho were part of the Geography teaching materials. In their works, what the authors consider to be an inheritance of political geography of German origin appears: the concepts of territory, people and nation. In the discourses that constructed an ideology of nationality as an educational imperative, geopolitics was articulated as a necessary knowledge for territorial control and expansion, so that Geography would be fundamental in the construction of national identity.

Especially around the 1930s, the social relevance of geography was constituted by the importance given to knowledge of the land for the elaboration of a national project. This rapprochement between geography and geopolitics was rightly opposed by the renewal movement of the 1970s and 1980s, which led to the rejection of the works of Aroldo de Azevedo and Delgado de Carvalho and the geographical teaching they contained - regional geography in the French or Lablachean tradition - which was called, or simplified, traditional school geography. The criticism was based on the adaptation of school geography and geographic knowledge to the authoritarian state of Vargas and, later, to the military regime of 1964.

According to Riceto (2017), Aroldo de Azevedo's educational proposal conceived geopolitics as a branch of political science, not just geography. Even assuming its proximity to other fields, such as history and philosophy, Riceto (2017, p. 387) seeks to highlight how geopolitics is "deeply linked to the geographical sciences". According to the author, geopolitics refers to an understanding of socio-spatial reality that helps to articulate strategies for future action. He defines as theoretical baggage the knowledge of "processes, facts and

historical contexts, in addition to the daily analysis of events, projects, isolated actions and articulations of the most diverse global actors" (RICETO, 2017, p. 389). Geopolitics, then, would be the result of the materialization of power relations between different actors in international society.

In the words of the author, even if it is "viscerally" closer to other sciences, "to think geopolitically is to carry out a geographical analysis" (RICETO, 2017, p. 390). Defending the identification of geography with geopolitics is therefore linked to a way of thinking and a direct involvement of geographical space with the power relations that constitute it, which would distinguish the link that geopolitics establishes with geography from the kind of association it maintains with other fields.

Vesentini (2000) is one of the authors who studies geopolitics, and in his work to understand the meaning of the term and to position it historically, he echoes the definitions of Rudolf Kjellén (1864-1922) - who is credited with creating the nomenclature "geopolitics", defined as a science that analyzes the state as a geographical organism. Today, however, geopolitical analysis is not limited to state power and action, but also includes the actions of large transnational corporations, as well as non-governmental organizations and supranational entities. For Riceto (2017), all these actors use a strategic reading of space and share the leading role in international geopolitics with states. The author outlines some situations in which non-state entities articulate with the aim of controlling spaces, information and knowledge.

Areas with privileged locations, favorable to transport routes and with reserves of strategic natural resources, potential consumer markets and fragile legislation that allows for a reduction in production costs, strategic data on where and when to invest, technological development in the most different segments, among others, are among the targets coveted by these new actors/entities within the new world order (RICETO, 2017, p. 391).

The examples presented by the author reiterate the proximity between geopolitics and the geographical approach, given their relationship with what he considers the object of study of geography: geographical space. He returns to the analysis of Yves Lacoste, for whom geography is primarily a strategic knowledge, to affirm that geographical space is still closely related to geopolitics. With regard to the value of information in the contemporary era, in his text it is possible to see the connection between physical and human aspects as a strategic attribution of space, whether based on information about physical elements (such as the

location of natural resource reserves) or socio-economic factors based on demographic profiles and spatial production arrangements.

According to Riceto (2017), historical knowledge is also essential for geopolitical analysis, and in secondary education there is even a lack of precision about which subject should be carried out - history or geography. With the contributions of Khanna (2011), an attempt is made to delimit the attributions of each discipline. Thus, geopolitics would be a discipline that, unlike history, looks back in order to look forward. Using the analogy that compares international relations to today's meteorology, geopolitics is metaphorized with the role of climatology, as it would be the profound science of the evolution of the world (KHANNA, 2011). Despite the recognition that geopolitics is the field that comes closest to these two sciences (history and geography), which are considered by many to be "sisters", the connection between geopolitics and geography is latent:

However, assuming that geopolitical analysis seeks to understand and explain the agreements and articulations of power that end up materializing the structures and arrangements of the most different spaces, and that it is on this spatial basis that the different interests fall and clash, once again the integration of this area with geographical knowledge is latent (RICETO, 2017, p. 395).

The geographical dimension is thus presented as that which results from the materialization of processes, as a spatial basis on which the various interests or power games are established. In this sense, the author constructs a definition of geopolitics that identifies it with geography, conceiving it as a field of human sciences that, even if it uses other fields to constitute itself, is highly dependent on geographical knowledge, understanding the power relations between different actors in the international system and taking as a reference the construction of geographical space at different scales.

Concepts derived from geopolitics are related to geostrategic hypotheses about world power based on two principles: nation-states and the power of the geography of places. Becker (2012, p. 121) argues that space and society are not only the expression of technological and economic processes, but also the product of political decisions and organizational strategies. The author argues that the tendencies to restructure space need to be counterbalanced by alternative projects coming from society and territorial space.

For this reason, the territorial issue is also key today, because it opens up the perspective of the multidimensionality of power in relation to the strategic spatial practice of all social actors and at all levels, escaping the totalitarian

conception of a one-dimensional power, whether of the state, capital or the war machine (BECKER, 2012, p. 121).

The author's emphasis on the territorial dimension is the main meeting point between her thinking and the statements made by the teachers interviewed when they talk about the ways of approaching content conceived as geopolitics that arise when they are asked about current events. In the statements made by Ana Clara, Francisco and Marcos, territory appears as a link between geopolitics and a "geographical analysis" of phenomena. Territory is therefore the dimension that seems to validate the identification between these two fields, and I also interpret from the speech of the teacher Marcos that the current dimension given to the geopolitical content is based on the concept of territory as a space in constant transformation, since it is always the result of new disputes and organizations, so that it is always necessary to keep up with the events that are somehow related to them.

The topics most often identified as geopolitics in teaching materials, or even discussed by teachers in interviews, make up many of the lists of newspapers, magazines, websites and platforms intended for the entrance exam, which select the most prominent current events of a given period. In the publications of the " Student Guide News²", for example, the covers, as well as the other topics of the magazine, are permeated by this content³. The guides in question are no longer produced in print by the Abril publishing house, but continue to be published online, following the same logic. For example, the main article at the time of writing is titled "Why do Israelis and Palestinians live in conflict?" with the headline "The creation of Israel in 1948 drove 750,000 Arabs from their land. Today, there are 5.9 million Palestinian refugees. Understand the Historical Context of the Conflict⁴." The highlight comes

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² According to the Guia do Estudante: "GE Atualidades summarizes the main facts about Brazil and the world that may be included in university entrance exams. It presents the most important topics in the news in easy-to-understand language, ideal for those who are not used to following newspapers and magazines on a regular basis". Available at: <https://guiadoestudante.abril.com.br/edicoes/ge-atualidades-2018-1/> Accessed on November 1, 2023.

³ In the issue for the first half of 2016, in addition to the cover photo, the magazine features the following topics: "Dilma under threat: the government faces unpopularity and the risk of impeachment"; "Zika epidemic: a virus worse than dengue exposes Brazil to microcephaly"; "And more: Mud in Mariana, Rio Olympics, Refugees, Cop21 Review, Argentine Elections, Oil Down". In the issue for the first half of 2017, the magazine presents: "Violence: factionalism explodes in Brazil's prisons"; "Car Wash: the death of Minister Teori Zavascki and the Odebrecht plea bargain"; "And more: Fidel leaves the scene, changes in the pre-salt, drama in Syria, yellow fever, peace in Colombia, PEC spending". The first half of 2018 edition also includes: "Violence: Temer government intervenes in Rio de Janeiro"; "Elections 2018: the threat of fake news on social networks"; "And more: Russia at the World Cup, chaos in Myanmar, yellow fever, #metoo, art x censorship, Spain divided".

⁴ Available at: <https://guiadoestudante.abril.com.br/atualidades/>. Accessed on: 1 Nov. 2023.

at a time when Israel and Hamas are entering a new wave of conflict, with attacks since October 2023 that have left thousands dead and wounded, mostly in Palestine.

Figure 1 - Covers of the magazines *Guia do Estudante Atualidades*: vestibular + Enem (2016; 2017; 2018).



Source: Publisher Abril - The Student's Guide.

In its association with current affairs, geopolitics has a close relationship with the media. Often, when talking about geopolitics or even current affairs, which are not necessarily linked to a more specific geopolitical discussion, the media is the source of questions from students to teachers. It also generates discussions promoted by the teachers themselves in class as a way of mobilizing school content. This relationship will be better discussed in the next topic.

The scalar dimension in geographical studies: relations between the local and the global in territorial analysis

In defense of a geographic study that reapproaches geopolitics from a school perspective, Giroto and Santos (2011, p. 144) point out associations between geopolitics, Geography and Secondary Education, stating that in the 21st century we live in a scenario in which "the world invades students' lives". This same assertion was also made by Callai (1998) and Straforini (2008) when they discussed the relationship between Geography teaching and the ways in which local-global scales are constructed with students.

Callai (1998) and Straforini (2008), when discussing the notion of concentric circles, point out that, in recent years, information about events on different scales has reached students regardless of their age group and, therefore, it is no longer possible to restrict teaching and learning to just one scale. Thus, in a conception in which space is conceived as a totality, the order in which the different scales are introduced would not be detrimental to geography education.

Giroto and Santos (2011, p. 145) problematize the meanings surrounding "information" and "knowledge", since they are constantly taken as synonyms. In this context, at the level of common sense, the media has gradually replaced the school as the producer of valid knowledge. In this sense, there is a question mark over how this content reaches the classroom, especially when it comes to teaching geopolitics. They argue that the theoretical-methodological framework of geopolitics is fundamental in broadening students' knowledge of certain phenomena and, for this reason, geopolitical knowledge should not be thought of only for understanding current world phenomena.

I would highlight the authors' thoughts on the scale commonly given to geopolitics, namely the global scale. Based on an identification between geopolitics and current affairs, this observation helps us to consider the relationships between current affairs and their scales of occurrence, as well as how their content in the classroom does or does not mobilize the

students' reality. For now, the authors' analysis considers that geopolitical knowledge does not need to be restricted to just one scale of study.

Students should understand that relations between power and territory are present on a daily basis. They serve to explain the conflicts between rival groups over a territory with an associated economic interest, as well as the relationships within the school and the different territories that exist within it (GIROTTTO; SANTOS, 2011, p. 146).

The authors attempt to deconstruct the notion that the knowledge developed in the field of geopolitics is limited to the global scale, arguing that it is possible to mobilize understandings of power relations and territory on a daily scale, in such a way that "daily" and "local" seem to be understood as synonyms. In this way, they try to strain conceptions that contrast the operating logics of global phenomena with the logics that operate at the level of students' daily lives.

This point in the discussion leads us to reflect: is it possible to define the scale of everyday life? In the interviews with the teachers, I interpret that this search for a relationship with the everyday life of the students is present in some of their speeches, so that the approximation between what happens in the world and everyday life - the reality of the students - would take place through the territory. Everyday life is then mobilized through a concept that is seen as structuring geography and, according to Girotto and Santos (2011), can be brought into the daily lives of students.

In this way, everyday life, conceived in opposition to the global scale, seems to be activated through the development of knowledge based on the territorial dimension. Thus, what happens at the global scale would be related to the everyday sphere, so that, for example, territorial conflicts involving the Islamic State or the election of Donald Trump in the United States would be related to students' lives through the ways in which the territorial perceptions involved in these events are articulated to the territorial dimensions of situations present in students' everyday lives.

For Riceto (2017), the main responsibility of the geography teacher in teaching geopolitics is to develop students' ability to have a critical understanding of facts and processes that go beyond their immediate environment. Once again, a scalar question is raised when referring to geopolitics, but from a perspective that goes beyond Girotto and Santos's (2011) discussion, which aimed to establish a relationship between "geopolitical knowledge" and students' everyday lives. In Riceto's (2017) line of argument, this construction is also about going beyond the field of the immediate neighborhood in the critical understanding of

certain events. For both Giroto and Santos (2011) and Riceto (2017), geopolitics and its understanding in high school is also anchored in the news published daily by the media, as mentioned above. For Riceto (2017), although the understanding of events related to the current human organization of space requires a search for historical causes, the information and news disseminated by the media is also taken as a reference.

According to the author, "the modernization and pulverization of the media make geopolitical actions and their consequences truly global" (Riceto, 2017, p. 403). In this sense, the teaching of geopolitics should not be limited to providing information and exposing the contexts of conflicts and tensions between states, but should develop tools so that students can "critically interpret the facts related to their daily lives" (RICETO, 2017, p. 406) and, by relating the facts, not make a fragmented reading limited to the reality that surrounds them. Here, the scalar question shows that while students are expected to develop tools to analyze facts associated with their daily lives, the reality that surrounds them is articulated to the notion of a fragmented view that can only be overcome by building congruence between facts.

A critical reading of reality, therefore, is one that goes beyond the reality close to the students and, at the same time, enables them to develop their knowledge beyond the local sphere. It would thus be in mobilizing the local-global association that students would be closer to the notion of a world totality.

Final considerations

Given what has been discussed, it is possible to imagine that geopolitics is identified with the geographical knowledge of the school, mainly through the signifier territory as a nodal point that involves different conceptions of geography teaching around geopolitics, as we interpreted in the statements of teachers Francisco, Ana Clara, Luiza and Marcos. In this construction, there is an intention to bring geopolitical discussions (such as the Syrian war) closer to the reality of the students through territory, as highlighted by teacher Francisco's comment: "What does war mean? Starting from what they have as a reference, from their geography, from their [students'] knowledge, to be able to discuss it".

This reality of the students can be conceived and mobilized in different ways, both by the teachers and by the students themselves. In terms of its meanings, sometimes there is a close relationship between what happens in the world on a daily basis and the daily lives of the students, so that, according to Riceto (2017), in this connection with daily life, geopolitics

must be thought in its relations and not in a fragmented way. At other times, the proximity is due to the concept of territory as a link between processes on a global scale and those present in the daily lives of students. In terms of current events, there is a convergence between contents traditionally linked to geopolitics and those identified as current affairs. According to teacher Luiza, who teaches in a school where current affairs has already become a separate subject, current affairs has been incorporated into geography classes and is close to this curricular component, precisely because the geopolitical content coincides with geography, which makes it easier for the teacher to work with this material.

For teacher Marcos, for whom current events are not necessarily the responsibility of the geography teacher, the association between current events and geography may be due to the fact that space, landscape and territory are constantly changing. From the teacher's comments, it is possible to understand the association between current events and geopolitics (when he gives examples of issues that students bring to the classroom) and also the concept of the present time discussed by various authors in the field of Geography epistemology - more specifically, in articulating this concept in relation to school geography, Cecim and Straforini (2022) are mobilized when they state that space in constant transformation produces a continuous updating of the processes and relationships that make up territories.

Still in the words of the teacher Marcos, the content of current affairs - geopolitics - is put up for discussion by the teachers, but also by the students, who ask questions about events that circulate mainly in the media and find space in the classroom, either because of their proximity to the teachers to whom they direct their questions, or because of a previous approach to the content similar to that triggered by the students. Current events are thus close to geopolitics and use students' daily lives, their reality, both to understand global events and so that the logic of global events mobilizes an understanding of phenomena on the scale of students' experience.

In light of these discussions, I would like to reaffirm the existence of links that allow the identification of current affairs content with school geographic knowledge. These links don't necessarily occur in isolation, which means that the notion of geography as a science of the present, interdisciplinarity as part of geographic knowledge, and geopolitics as content associated with geography can form the same chain of equivalences that identifies current events content identified as geographic. Geopolitics, when associated with school geography, gives the latter a relevance in terms of monitoring the main socio-spatial transformations on a global scale, but it is also capable of activating the local scale, mainly by mobilizing the

concept of territory. In turn, school geography knowledge makes it possible to think about geopolitics beyond the understanding of current phenomena within a journalistic logic, as it allows the development of reasoning that contributes to a broader interpretation of social reality.

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