Teaching History in vulnerable high schools in Araucanía, Chile: a qualitative research

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Abstract
Nowadays, History and Social Sciences teaching in high school level is oriented from a training based in competencies to generate different levels of achievement and learning outcomes. Wise knowledge of Historiography as idiographic-hermeneutic social science and didactic knowledge organized from pedagogy are juxtaposed. For this reason, we created a qualitative research design from instrumental studies of cases with the purpose of describing the process of didactic transposition and didactic knowledge of disciplinary content of History teaching in vulnerable high schools from Araucania Region in the South of Chile. The theoretical and methodological approaches used were: The Constant Comparative Method (CCM) and the Methodological Triangulation of Techniques (MTT). The sampling was constituted by teachers who teach History in High Schools. The data analysis was developed through open coding from which emerged five categories: a) Difficulties in teaching practice, b) material and human resources, c) planning and evaluation strategies, d) teaching-learning strategies, e) requirements and characteristics.

Keywords: Didactic Transposition, Teaching History, Didactic Disciplinary Knowledge, high school teaching, qualitative research

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Problematization

Currently, professionals training in higher education challenge teachers to incorporate into their teaching practices not only the domain of pure disciplinary content,

but also they required competences related to the deep appropriation of didactic knowledge, in that way conveying the disciplinary knowledge from the epistemological matrix from where it was born toward the didactic knowledge of pedagogical art with the objective to archive the educative act.

This implies some transformations in pedagogical practices of university teaching. This transformations are a particularly important issue in teaching contents in a discipline as complex as History where converge theoretical activities, practices and integrated, which complicate teaching, every time that time and space are sinking in the next past. For example, how the following St. Agustin's sentence can be understood? : *"The time" If you don't ask me, I know what it is; if you ask me, I just don't know what it is[1]*.(Saint Agustine, 2010).

Opposite to the classical positions focused in the classroom and teacher's activity a teaching focused in student's self-study is discussed in these days; and this means changes in the curriculum planning and teaching design.

To the arid heritage that teachers possess in relation to the knowledge that they teach which often is understood as objective and with some axiological neutrality[2] increasingly strong theoretical frameworks are imposed which reveal that there is not a dominant technocratic rationality, and it is within the social relations where the process of knowledge production take place (Habermas, 1966).

The complexity of social sciences teaching is given by the convergence of a plurality of disciplines: sociology, economy, anthropology, law, geography and history. For this reason, it results unavoidable- at the moment of reflecting on methodology of teaching idiographic social sciences-, first ask for the ontological and epistemological status and then ask about the methodical –micro technique question. In our view it not possible to understand aspects of didactic nature such as: selection of knowledge object (disciplinary contents), materials and resources (teaching instruments), and didactic transposition (teaching object) without asking for the scheme's characteristics which articulated the social and historical knowledge (Rossi, 1977).

After that, being the social field so multiform, there are not criteria and demarcations very precise to delimitated the diverse fields of each wise knowledge (Chevalard, 1987). Therefore, it is necessary to understand the sense of social knowledge and the contributions made by diverse approaches from a transdisciplinary perspective, because each social science possess its specific disciplinary matrix . It has lived its periods of normal science, anomalies, crisis and scientific revolutions, and finally its nomenclatural authentication[5]. (Khun, 1962). The key of understanding is found in the well-ordered mind thesis by Edgar Mori. (Morin, 2000).

Then, the following research question emerges: How the frontiers of didactic transposition and didactic knowledge of content are expressed from teaching speech in History and Geography Teachers at Araucanía?

1. Theoretical Discussion

If we had to organize teacher's knowledge in a handbook, encyclopedia or some other kind of format for ordering knowledge, which will be the headlines for each category? At least they will include[7]:

1. Content knowledge
2. General didactic knowledge (general principles and strategies for teaching organization and management)
3. Curriculum knowledge (special management of materials and instruments which are useful as "tools for teaching job and teaching art"
4. Didactic knowledge of content (amalgam between subject and teaching: teacher's exclusive sphere, it is their special way of professional understanding)
5. Students' knowledge and their characteristics
6. Knowledge educational context
7. Knowledge of objectives, purposes and educational values (from their philosophical and historical fundamentals, it means the episteme, disciplines teleology). (Shulman, 2005)

In 1990 Pamela Grossman (1990) redefined these categories in four general areas: general pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and context knowledge.

There are at least four main sources of knowledge base for teaching:

1. Academic training in the discipline taught.
2. Materials and context of the institutionalized educational process.
3. Research about education, human learning and development, and the socio-cultural phenomenon in teachers' task.
4. Wisdom that gives the practice itself.

a. Academic training in the discipline taught. The first source of knowledge base is the knowledge of contents: knowledge, understanding, skills and dispositions that students must acquire. This knowledge is supported in two bases: *bibliography and accumulated studies in each discipline, and academic historical and philosophical knowledge about knowledge nature* in this study fields. A teacher must radically understand the struc-

tures of the subject taught, principles of conceptual organization and terminological, as well research principles which help to answer two types of questions: Which are-in this knowledge field- the important ideas and skills? And, in which way new ideas are incorporated and faulty ideas are dismissed by those who create knowledge in this area? That is to say, which are the rules and procedures in a good academic knowledge and research knowledge? These questions can be compared with what Schwab (1964) defined as knowledge of fundamental and syntactic structures, respectively. This vision of the sources of subject knowledge contents necessarily involve that teacher must not only deeply understand the specific subject he teaches, but also he must possess a broad humanist formation which must be useful as a framework for learning acquired previously and as a mechanism which makes easier the acquisition of new understanding. Teachers have a special responsibility with regard to knowledge of the subject content, because it is the main source in subject understanding by students. The way that this understanding is communicated to students is the key at the moment to distinguish what is essential in a subject (metropolitan knowledge) and what is peripheral (satellite knowledge) (Gunder Frank, 1966). In front of the students' diversity, teacher must have a flexible and versatile understanding which allows him to provide alternative explanations of the same concepts or principles. Above all, in realities which show low indexes of human development and show unpresentable conditions of educability in the post-modern era. Teachers indicate, unconscious or not, ideas about the way to obtain knowledge in a field, besides a series of attitudes and values which noticeably influence on their students' understanding. This responsibility explains demands in a special way of a deep understanding of structures of the subject by the teacher, as regards attitudes and teacher's enthusiasm in front of what is being teaching and learning. Then, these diverse knowledge's perspectives of contents are understood exactly as a fundamental characteristic of knowledge base for teaching.

 b. Didactic structures and materials. In order to promote objectives of the organized education, material and structures are created for teaching and learning, because teachers inevitably act into a matrix which consists in these elements, using them and being used by them. It is natural that principles, policies and circumstances of its running form an important source of knowledge base. It is not precise to say that this source is supported by a specific bibliography. Although in most of these areas, there is certainly a broad collection of research work. In this sense, teacher must "know the territory" of teaching, then it is the scenery composed of such materials, institutions, organizations and mechanism. It is something with what teacher must be familiarized. These constitute the job tools and the contextual circumstances which will make easier or inhibit the teaching initiatives.

c. Specialized educative literature. The third source is the important and increasing caudal of academic bibliography which is dedicated to the understanding of education, teaching and learning processes. Findings and empirical research methods in the areas of teaching, learning and human development, as well as normative, philosophical and ethical fundamentals of educations are included in this works. Maybe, the most important are the normative and theoretical aspects of academic knowledge about teaching while this research findings are important and deserve being object of an exhaustive study, they only represent a facet of the academic world contribution whose more lasting and powerful influences about teachers are probably which enrich the picture they form about what is possible to long for: their view about what constitute a good education, or how a well-educated student will perform if suitable opportunities and encouragements will be offered to them. For example, in their works, Platon, Dewey, Neill and Skinner express their conception about what must be a good educational system. As well, many works whose purpose is spread the results of empirical researches are also useful as important sources for these concepts. Among them are included studies as Bloom's (1976) about learning for the sphere, and Rosenthal and Jacobson's (1968) about teacher's expectations. Independently, if the empirical affirmations formulated in these books can be supported, it results undeniable its impact in teachers' conceptions about the possible and desirable purposes in education. So, works of philosophical, critical and empirical nature which can inform teachers' objectives, views and dreams are an essential academic knowledge base component for teaching (Bloom, 1976).

A most frequently cited type of academic knowledge is derived from empirical study about effective teaching. This research has been recently summarized by Gage (1978, 1986), Shulman (1986a), Brophy and Good (1986), and Rosenshine and Stevens (1986). The essential objective of this research program has been to identify those behaviors and strategies of teaching profession which are going to cause a progress in students' academic level of achievement with most probability. In other words, effective teaching principles have relation with the fact of converting classrooms in places where students can address themselves to learning tasks, learning-oriented with a minimum of disruption and distraction, and receive an equitable and adequate opportunity to learn. At the same time, pedagogical objective so that these research findings result more applicable is teaching skills.

d. Wisdom gained through practice. The last source for knowledge base is the least coded of all. This is the wisdom that gives the practice itself, maxims that guide the practice of competent teachers (or they provide the reflexive rationalization for it). One of the most important task for educational research consist of working to-

gether with teachers to develop coded representations of practice didactic wisdom of competent teacher and exceptional teachers. (Bain, 2005). Mostly of teaching conception derive from the task of gathering together, analyzing and starting to codify the wisdom which is going to arise from the practice of inexpert teachers and expert teachers.

To Chevalard (1986), didactic transposition belongs to the work (the road) which makes possible the transformation of a knowledge object into an object to teach, and finally it will be possible a teaching object. Therefore, starting from this definition and its corresponding schematic explanation emerge the idea of existence of an knowledge object which is exposed to a process of interdisciplinary conversion which has as result the existence of a teaching object. Nevertheless, - and despite the author's explanatory clarity-, this concepts

must necessarily suggest a variety of questions about it, for example: Which are the mechanisms by which a knowledge object is transformed in a teaching object? Does the resulting teaching object belong to the same knowledge object from which it has arisen? Or , does the didactic transposition imply that unavoidable "collateral effects" are produced in the process of transformation and finally these make that the initial knowledge object doesn't necessarily belong to the final teaching object? Which spurious elements intervene in the didactic transposition process and how these elements affect it?

Although Chevalard himself conceived his definition about didactic transposition since a particular view of science, closer to mathematical-logical positivism, it could be considered that this concept has the virtue of being able to reinterpret itself from a different attitude. Therefore, the answers to the questionings, which were expressed before, will find argumentations which are oriented to different directions, almost as the logic of the metaphor where gardens paths are forked, from the metaphor proposed by Borges. (Borges, 1941)

It has just been explicit, from the social-historical model, so that occur the reconstruction of the teaching object in the learning activities context as part of the didactic transposition process, it is essential the participation of those who orient teaching, it means, the teacher and those who carry out the learning process, it means students. The competition of implicit theories of one and the previous conceptions of the other make the reconstruction of the teaching object possible to become meaningful for both of them. Because their mutual contributions from their own knowledge elaboration experiences are organized in a common process of resignification, and they culminate in a process which have intersubjective validity plans for both teachers and students.

Central aspects that must be considered are the views from where history and social sciences teaching in high vulnerability contexts and difficult educability conditions accounts for. (Navarro, 2004). One possibility is the linear pedagogical ap-

proach. In this approach the type of relationship between teachers and students show that in one hand, the influence source is situated in the teacher, and in the other hand it has a linear nature, because it is based in the assumption of one direction relation which is going from the teacher towards the students. It is based on the onto-epistemological assumption of the neopositivism objective reality, because the explanation for it by the teacher determine its appropriation in the students, the teacher expects that the things said or shown by him cause changes in his students.

Furthemore, the teacher assumes that school objects, concepts and relations have an objective, nomological and static sense which is the only sense given by scientific knowledge which has been formalized from hypothetical, deductivist logics. Students' participation is limited to the recreation of one type of authenticated knowledge by the teacher, where students' answers to the teachers' questions represent the evidence of the capturation of stimulus presented in the class. The students' competition is materialized in discursive execution that assumes the same meanings teachers passed on, and the interaction between both actors is characterized by the lack of negotiation in the acceptation of such meanings. This linearity can also be observed in the curriculum area, between the curricular project design and its development, specifically. Because, the existence of an objective and independent reality of someone who knows it, the meanings of the curricular contents are inherent to them, and they are not attributed to educative actors, so they are passing on from the design to curriculum development literally, without thinking in the teaching question.

Instead, in the so-called dialogical pedagogical relation the source of influence is not only the teacher, but also the students. It means that it assumes the reversibility of the social influence given by the intersubjectivity of the mutual symbolic interaction, so it promotes the exchange, especially the discursive exchange in the classroom as a way to state the semantic matrixes which activate, regulate, direct and organize the person's act. It is based in the assumption of existence of multiples and complex realities. Consequently, the senses are co-constructed in holographic interrelation with the cultural, historical, social and subjective manners to crate and see the reality as a scheme. This implies that "dialogical persons learn and grow in the difference, above all in its respect, an eternal respect"[18]. (Freire, 1998). This kind of relation implies a social practice since and for an interior diversity. That is the real diversity. Students' participation means to have an access to the rules that regulate the social interaction and the construction and attribution of senses that legitimize the school knowledge. It is characterized for a discursive execution in which is included negotiation and intersubjetivation of the senses attributed o built. At the curricular level, this kind of relation means that the attributed senses to the curricular contents in the curricular project design will not

necessarily find its correspondence in its development, because the contexts of formulation and curricular execution, as well as the assigned intentions to the curriculum in such context can change. Then, that which has been planned for teaching is not necessarily what is actually taught by the teacher or learned by students. For this reason the real learning is not which is expected, but which is not expected: authentic serendipity pedagogy.

Equally, in this kind of pedagogical relation the interaction between teacher and students is the construction of curricular senses, it must necessarily mean the negotiation starting from the senses built previously and respectively for each one of the actors. So, this process assumes a special importance to the intersubjetivation of those which will finally be the taught and learned senses in the classroom. This makes an indispensable review of the negotiation process in the interaction of the speeches between teacher and student.

In the initial points have been clarified the conceptual matrix from which is looking at the didactic transposition process. It has also been specified the importance of language as a regulating entity in the relation between teaching and learning in which didactic transposition is finally defined. It has been shown as students' participation by means of the competition of their previous knowledge which are linguistically expressed and formed. They make easier the construction of meaningful knowledge from their own experience. However, this knowledge preparation must be given in the development of a dialectical learning process that is organized as a central element to the creativity, because the education is demanding it as protagonist entity for the development of our society.

2. Method

The method of research is qualitative descriptive and hermeneutic since it has specific importance for the social relations study. To Flick (2007) due to the fact of vital worlds of pluralization[19] we used a design of multiple case studies and we used the principle of triangulation and convergence as a quality control method of verbal data produced. (Denzin, 2004)The sampling was theoretical –intentional and it was constituted by thirty classroom teachers who teach History and Social Sciences in vulnerable high schools in the Araucanía region. From the point of view of the kind of population they teach, the social spatial context presents the following characteristics:

a) Students' home has an average salary income of $106.000, in a level among $57.000 to $128.600.

b) These high schools don't exceed 225 point as average score in SIMCE. By an average of 6% students in Language and 4% in Mathematics. They are in the higher quartile of the scores of this measuring system. The 76% of

the students in every high school in Language and the 79% in Mathematics are below the national average on both tests.

c) With regard to internal faults, they are high school which represent a higher rate of school failure reaching an 17% (it include withdraw from school and repetition)

d) They belong to high schools which teach three teaching modalities, being homogeneous the distribution between scientific-humanist, technical-professional and multipurpose high schools. The largest percentage of them belongs to high schools located in urban areas and a smaller percentage in rural areas.

e) With respect to their institutional conditions they are school institutions that present practices of directive administration and damaged teaching. It means, there is weakness in their directive teams, technicians and teachers for the development of the task. It means a decentralization of the pedagogical task which is shown in the lack of daily routine of school job and in some cases characterized by a high number of permanent conflicts between teacher-students and between teacher- directive team.

f) There is neither technical leadership nor pedagogical leadership; there is a lack of credibility in the presence of the community and a relationship with the school holder that passes through indifference, suspicion and permanent conflict.

g) An expressed characteristic is the lack of teachers and directives expectations about students' learning ability which added to the difficult conditions of the professional performance don't let it visualize possibilities of institutional change. (Mansilla, 2008).

3. Techniques used to verbal data collection

For data collection we used the following techniques: semi-structured interviews, focus groups and ethnographic observations. The focus group permits to the researcher "to align with participants and find how they see the reality". At the same time, the interview permits that interviewee's meanings and values hierarchy will be expressed spontaneously. (Flick, 2007) In the stage of "theoretical saturation" the theoretical sampling was developed where the data became repetitive. Flick defined Theoretical Saturation as: "(…) the sampling and integration of new material is finished when Theoretical Saturation of a category or case groups has been reached. It means, when nothing new emerges". (Ruíz, 2003)

According to Strauss and Corbin (2002), they pointed out the criterion that guarantees the richness and explicative density and theoretical relations between categories and the theoretical saturation of them. For this reason, the only criterion to
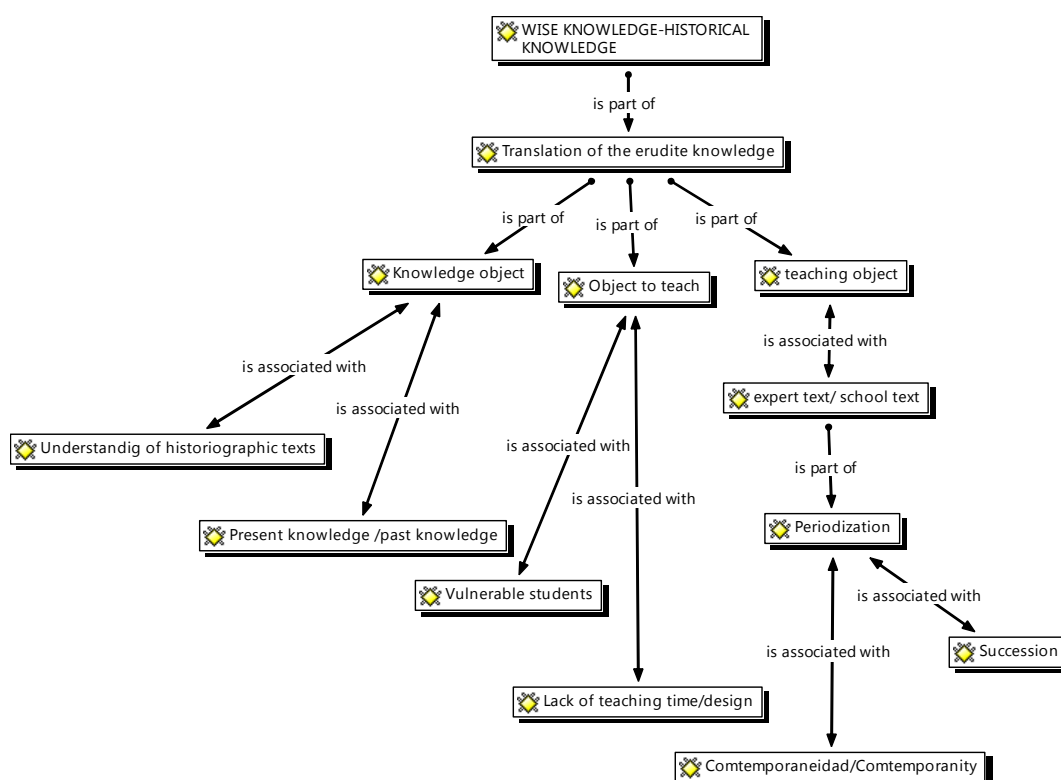
finish the process of data collection is the saturation of them. Finally, this will explain the variability of the categories.

In order to this research, we made an open coding for the process in which the researcher raise the text, with the purpose of revealing concepts, ideas and senses that it has. On this matter Strauss and Corbin said clearly that "to find and develop concepts we must open the text and put forward thoughts, ideas and meanings which are contained in it" (Strauss, 2002). During the open coding process the data were broken up, examined and compared in terms of their similarities and differences. Under the protection of an inductive rapprochement to the reality, so it does not require a theory to apply its concepts, laws or dimensions in text which is being coded. Otherwise, the researcher must immerse himself in the text in order to identify concepts, dimensions and construct categories and subcategories appropriate for the research.

4. Results

Once the methodological triangulation of data is done, from the lift codes aroused two large categories: (1) wise knowledge of the historiographic knowledge and (2) translation of the erudite knowledge. These categories are grouped in three subcategories: (1) Knowledge object, (2) Object to teach and (3) Teaching object. The subcategory knowledge object produced the following codes: (i) Understanding of historiography texts, (ii) complexity of temporality, (iii) present knowledge/ past knowledge. The subcategory object to teach displayed the following codes: (i) vulnerable students, (ii) lack of teaching time/design. Finally, the subcategory teaching object generate the codes: (i) expert text/ school text, (ii) periodization, comtemporaneity and (iv) succession.

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Fig. 1. Network Wise knowledge of the historiographic knowledge

This network summarize the fundamental process of historical understanding, this tackle aspects related with teacher's speech about disciplinary teaching contents in the high schools' classroom in Temuco. In this context erudite knowledge translation appears as a specific key competence which must be developed by History and Social Sciences teacher when he must convey the minimum compulsory contents demand by Education Minister.

The subcategory *knowledge object* is defined from the conceptual-discipline matrix which is created in the bosom of scientific communities, in this case specifically in the historiography field. It is observed that teachers have knowledge of the knowledge object they teach, but fundamentally from an informational level. It is shown when they say "(…) *I think that I know what I am teaching, because when I teach, I feel secure and the students tell me that they learn. Therefore, I always remember the subject well. Therefore I spend money on books. Then, I am updating myself, permanently*" (E7, [116:121]). Likewise, in this subcategory appears the code understanding of historiographic

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text, which is shown in the following textuality: *"we -history teachers- are obliged to know more than any other discipline. For that reason, I cannot stay with what is said in the Mineduc school text, because there are many things that provided guidelines by the current government, and the interpretations change, it doesn't happen in chemistry classes (I don't want to devalue this subject), but the periodic table will always be the same".*

In this sense is appropriated to cite what Mattozzi (1999) states, he says that the expert text is written for enrich the knowledge and ideas patrimony of the reader-model. It has to work both being understood by an inexpert reader and as for building basic knowledge or increasing what it has already had, both mold or develop concepts and elemental knowledge schemes and in that way making easier the development of cognitive structures (p.9).

Another code that is reflected is the complexity of temporality, which is explained because history teaching has the past as study object, in which is situated in a time gone. In this sense, this makes clear when study subjects expresses: *"there are some students who don't care about history. They just live their present. They are not interest with what happened yesterday, and that has a relation with the time they are living in. This is serious because some of them have lost their identity, I can say that many of them. They have no idea about the importance of History and they study just for the mark, and not for learning"* (E21,[123:132]). This is complemented by the lack of time for teaching design which is expressed in the following account: *"I have few hours and I know that the person who has forty hours… I have classes two days, so I have the feeling that the bosses or someone here can say: Well she has the rest of the week for planning, but the rest of the week I care my baby. Of course I have others timetables, so it is impossible. I started planning what I am going to teach after ten, eleven at night when my babies fell asleep. So, I am not fine because I am tired the all day to being able to planning* (E27, [149:149].

On the matter Zabalza (1993) emphasized that text books have not only been intermediary between teacher and the official design but also they have fully exceeded this function to become authentic teaching guides conditioning what, how and when each step to give in it. According to the subcategory object to teach the most important code is the presence of vulnerable students. In this context one of the interviewee says: *"students are very pour, and I don't know if that affects them. But you think about what is talked in their houses, many of them are flaites and students who are really interested in learning sometimes they share with them and finish with the same kind of interests. Everything is weak here as you can realize"* (E25, [147:165]).

In our view vulnerability is closely connected to the idea of hospitality which is explained by Lévinas, this hospitality is which must be practiced by teacher-without distinction of the discipline he teaches-, with this otherness embodied in the student's person. Like this Lévinas (1998) wrote (…) the hospitality is that one

that is opened towards the face, which it receives the face always submits to a reception and the reception receives only to a face. But the face cannot thematize, and this irreductibility to the topic. It that exceeds the thematized formalization or description, it is what the face has in common with the hospitality.

In this sense it is necessary to say that in the last time the idea of vulnerable has been a recurrent explicative category in the speech of who are naively approaching to the poverty issue, exclusion and inequality in the high schools' classroom. The idea of "vulnerable" appears in the teacher's speech, but it not clearly different of the concept "damaged". Although, it is related with exposition to any risk that come from the relation between internal and environmental which define the conditions of vulnerability. The internal is understood, in general words, such as the different levels of grouping which has its temporal and territorial expression they can be the subject, home, groups, community or region. The environment offers a set of opportunities which are directly connected to welfare levels, so the subjects can gain access to a territory and certain time. (Sen, 1999)

5. Findings

Yves Chevallard's fundamental assumptions are proved in teaching History: didactic transposition of disciplinary contents can cause some didactic substitutions of knowledge objects whose epistemological characteristics made them inappropriate or even pathological in regard to the original object. Even though, we also know that didactic transposition gives rise to real didactic creations of knowledge and teaching objects which allow creating appropriate coordination of the triad: requirements of the national prescriptive curriculum, students' socio-cultural characteristics and visibility of the disciplinary epistemological debate of the knowledge in question. Thanks to these creations it is possible to form students' historical thought and influence on experts' historical production itself.

Didactic transposition calls the epistemological legitimacy of the taught knowledge into question for the teachers as it questions the identity with the knowledge to teach. The particular reason of discussing this difference to question this legitimacy that operate as objective support of the subjective action that constitute the act of teaching theoretical knowledge of the present sinking into the past. The teacher does not play a leading role in the taught knowledge legitimacy and this has worked through the identification way with the knowledge to teach. The teacher is legitimized as transmitter, he teaches a knowledge that he has not produced and how the producer is not visible it seems that it belongs to nobody. These facts express that the institutional transposition processes which operate over teachers as a deeply ideological and sometimes violent hegemony which are not visible for teachers.

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This political invisibility of the Noosfera is part of a discursive process that is legitimized from the Government and raises technical nature of the activities of the same one, and as such it is subordinated to political nature necessities of who govern education or it is adapt to teachers' demand. In this way increasing activities of the Noosfera are private or organized by means of marker mechanisms which increase its non-public nature.

It is important to emphasize that one of the critical knots that exist to develop didactic transposition in an optimums way is the creation of structures and process inside the highs school which allow to teacher to have "technical times of teaching design" in order to truly develop the complex and rigorous act of the transposition and it is not only placed in a mere theoretical formalism. Time management for teaching is despite of being coordinated for the curricular directive administration, it is influenced by the financial recourse of administration that the directive team makes, thus teachers express in their speech they do not have addressed time for the teaching design and if they have it, these are used in other activities such as substitute a teacher or administrative acts. Therefore, they do not have time, then they must work at home, making this professional job a job of the proletariat.

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