DOSSIER

Childhood(s), social movements and the city: curriculum(s) and teacher training

Decoloniality and early childhood education: to think of a pedagogy of childhood

Decolonialidade e educação infantil: para pensar uma pedagogia da infância

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ABSTRACT

The thematic focus of this theoretical essay, anchored in language, thematizes the child and early childhood education from a decolonial discourse. Problematizing the colonial perspective of education, children and early childhood education is announced as its intentionality. The problem can be formulated as this: What are the implications of a decolonial attitude in the education of early childhood education children? The path of reflection is organized into three movements. The first focuses on conceptual discussions of colonial terms, decolonization, postcolonialism and decoloniality. The second visits the modern colonial discourse of children and the pedagogical heritage that sustains it. And, finally, a third movement that weaves considerations about the decolonial discourse and its implications for a pedagogy for early childhood education. The reflexive path allows us to visualize that the dominant pedagogical idearies in the education of children are colonizers. Thus, it is maintained that a rupture in the colonizing perspective requires decolonizing power; knowledge; the being; the predominant life, gaze and thought of children's education, to think about a decolonial pedagogy of/to/with childhood.

Keyword: Decoloniality. Early Childhood Education. Child. Childhood.

RESUMO

O foco temático desse ensaio teórico, ancorado na linguagem, tematiza a criança e a educação infantil desde um discurso decolonial. Problematizar a perspectiva colonial de educação, criança e educação infantil anuncia-se como sua intencionalidade. A problemática pode ser assim formulada: Quais as implicações de uma postura decolonial na educação das crianças da educação infantil? O percurso da reflexão se organiza em três movimentos. O primeiro centra-se nas discussões conceituais dos termos colonial, descolonizar,

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pós-colonialismo e decolonialidade. O segundo visita o discurso colonial moderno de criança e o ideário pedagógico que o sustenta. E, por fim, um terceiro movimento que tece considerações acerca do discurso decolonial e suas implicações a uma pedagogia para a educação infantil. O percurso reflexivo permite visualizar que os ideários pedagógicos dominantes na educação das crianças são colonizadores. Assim, sustenta-se que uma ruptura na perspectiva colonizadora requer decolonizar o poder; o saber; o ser; o viver, o olhar e o pensamento predominante da educação das crianças, para pensar uma pedagogia decolonial da/para/com a infância.

Palavras-chave: Decolonialidade. Educação infantil. Criança. Infância.

Introduction

The thematic focus of this theoretical essay is the decolonial conception of childhood and its implications for early childhood education. It assumes that early childhood education practices are guided by conceptions of childhood. In contemporary times, this discussion was introduced by Ariès (1981) and Postman (1999), creating the concepts of "the sense of a feeling about childhood" and "disappearance of childhood", respectively, referring to the modern conception of childhood, linked to secrets and taboos. cultures that separated modern children from adults until the 1950s. Since the audiovisual means of communication have made information about the adult world and the diversity of moral demands imposed on them accessible to children, adults have found themselves forced to justify their points of view. In almost every home and classroom, Mafalda, Armandinho and Maximilien, among countless children resistant to normalization, are asking questions, arguing and demanding explanations and justifications (Lavado, 2014; Beck, 2014; Pennac, 2009).

In different social conditions of life, children exercise power over adults that cannot be reduced to the demands that they meet their physiological needs. Their precocious knowledge, in particular, of "[...] offers and advertising appeals on the market makes them demanding with parents and teachers" (Pennac, 2009, p. 196-197). At the same time, from an early age, from multiple sources in the adult social world, they obtain criteria based on which "[...] they are authorized to express their needs, select models of behavior and reinterpret the demands of adults" (Charlot, 1983, p. 244). For this reason, children's desires must be interpreted, not as the voice of nature, but as being activated and directed by economic, social and cultural conditions (Snyders, 2001). Currently, "[...] the most influential pedagogues and child policy makers are the corporate producers of kinderculture", in which education is intertwined with entertainment and commerce (Steinberg, 1997, p. 113-114).

Children's access to the adult world, through the electronic means of hyperreality, has subverted their perception of themselves, a perception that "they do not fit with institutions such as the traditional family or the authoritarian school, both institutions founded in a view of children as incapable of making decisions on their own" (Steinberg, 1997, p. 125). Exploring fantasy and desire, employees of the corporations that produce kinderculture "created a cultural perspective that merges with corporate ideologies and free market values" (Steinberg, 1997, p. 103). Disney, for example, "now provides models and prototypes to families, schools, and communities" (Giroux, 1995, p. 55). From a curricular point of view, corporate education reforms do not seem to distinguish

themselves from this cultural perspective, which can be considered as having a clearly colonizing character of children's subjectivities.

The critical discussion of the influence of business pedagogy in the formation of the symbolic environment in which we and our children live, to which Giroux (1995 p. 72) invites us, takes us to the field of thought in the concepts of "colonizing", "decolonizing", "post-colonial" and "decolonial" early childhood education. The idea is to think about possibilities for a decolonial pedagogy of/ for/with childhood. One of the assumptions is that the decolonial perspective does not only target children's cultures, but also the teaching cultures of adults, responsible for children's education. Given the above, it is worth asking: what are the implications of a decolonial stance for early childhood education, considering the diversity of social conditions in which young children who access education and care institutions live?

From a theoretical-methodological point of view, this theoretical essay dialogues with the understanding of children/childhood as producers and produced by language. Language announces itself as a horizon and possibility of understanding and constituting the human being. The child thus announces themselves as beings who are constructed as human through multiple languages, which does not exclude the possibility of dehumanization.

The reflection path is organized into three movements. The first focuses on conceptual discussions of the terms colonial, decolonize, post-colonialism and decoloniality. The second visits the colonial discourse of children and the pedagogical ideology that produced and sustains it. And, finally, a third movement that makes considerations about the implications of decolonial education/ teaching with children in early childhood education based on a childhood pedagogy based on a decolonial perspective. It becomes clear throughout the reflective movement that the dominant pedagogical ideas in children's education were constructed from a colonizing perspective. It is argued that a rupture in the colonizing perspective requires decolonizing the power, knowledge, being, living, gaze and thought that predominate in the discourse on children's education.

Colonize, decolonize, post-colonialism and decoloniality

The distinction and articulation between the terms "colonize", "decolonize", "post-colonial" and "decoloniality" is announced as a key to reading the phenomenon of political, economic, cultural and religious domination, characteristic of modernity, but which extends to a plurality of phenomena of our time. From this terminological horizon, one can think about identity, difference and contradiction towards class, gender, ethnicities, generations, which include conceptions of childhood. Thinking about childhood pedagogy from a decolonial perspective implies lucidly positioning yourself in relation to convergent and dissonant discourses about the identity, difference and contradiction of children's conditions today and the implications of this for childhood education.

Colonization is a phenomenon inherent to the expansion and territorial and spiritual conquest of the modernizing process (Dussel, 1993). It concerns the multiple forms of domination of peoples colonized by metropolises. Since the beginning of the modern era, it has presented itself as a form of political, military and economic domination of States, and companies endorsed

by them, over other ethnic-cultural communities, their own territory and others. More or less predatory, plundering and destructive in relation to the ways of life of the indigenous peoples of America, Africa and Asia, colonization constituted a necessary condition for the European civilizing process. Regarding its violent and plundering character, the (neo)colonialism that dates back to the post-industrial revolution period is only "new" because it is more sophisticated. The system of capitalist accumulation, supported by European and North American states and prone to crisis, is only sustained through "a continuous confiscatory process", through the "expropriation of racialized 'others'", persistently intertwined with imperialism and racial oppression (Fraser; Jaeggi, 2020, p. 60).

The term "colonialism", therefore, refers to ways of exercising power (and/or practicing violence) by a certain center that subjugates and instrumentalizes different socio-cultural communities. It seeks to legitimize it with salvior-type allegations, with the intention of convincing "backward" peoples that the civilizing process is or will be economically, politically and culturally beneficial to them. Thus, colonizing and colonized thinking is understood as an invention of modernity, an invention "of the European dominant classes, which intended to universalize European ethnocentrism, Eurocentrism, generating relations of coloniality and subalternization of conquered peoples" (Koch; Fleuri, 2019, p. 42). In the Brazilian case, colonization was guided by the intention of "demarcating and conquering the territory, dominating and exploiting its resources" (Koch; Fleuri, 2019, p. 51).

In the 16th century, the colonizing discourse was directed, successively and cumulatively, to the original peoples, the enslaved Afro-descendants, the mestizos of the land and, finally, the colony as a whole. Whoever it is addressed to, colonial discourse classifies and hierarchizes populations based on race criteria, with the intention of civilizing "inferior" races, in this case, natives and black people (Koch; Fleuri, 2019, p. 51). In this way, the civilizing process is understood in conceptual articulation with the (its) reverse of colonized identities.

The expression "colonized identities" requires the terminological distinction between "colonialism" and "coloniality. The first term designates a relationship of an economic and political nature in the domination of one people over another"; The term "coloniality" denotes relations of domination extended "[...] to intersubjective relations from a racial point of view between dominant and dominated" (Souza; Gouvêa Neto, 2021, p. 21); alludes to "[...] diverse situations of oppression, defined based on gender, ethnic or racial boundaries" (Costa, 2006, p. 117); denotes that racial/ ethnic (de)classification as a criterion of domination "[...] operates on each of the plans, scopes and material and subjective dimensions of everyday social existence and the social scale" (Quijano, 2000, p. 342).

Thus, the Eurocentric worldview established itself as a parameter to subjugate and remedy other cultures in all their dimensions and details. In relation to what others say is declared "primitive" or "backward" by the colonizing discourse, it proclaims itself capable and benevolent to accelerate its development. By the way, aiming at socio-cultural homogenization, this discourse points to Brazilian ethnic miscegenation and cultural diversity as delaying factors.

Another component of the constellation of terms discussed in this section is "decolonization". This term suggests an overcoming of colonialism. Therefore, its meaning differs from that of

"decoloniality" (Walsh, 2009, p. 14). Decolonizing aims at something like undoing or dismantling the colonial, or asepsis of the colonizing process. Now, it does not seem possible to erase everything that colonization imposed. As one of the dark faces of modernity, coloniality "remains operating today in a global pattern of power" (Koch; Fleuri, 2019, p. 39). As such, coloniality did not disappear.

The adjective "decolonial" adheres to the multiform set of efforts to transcend the remaining and operative colonial. It indicates that what is sought is a constant struggle, a construction, the search for alternatives, in order to chart a new course for the people" (Koch; Fleuri, 2019, p. 39). It means recognizing colonial states and, based on them, resisting and transgressing. Thus, decolonial denotes "a continuous path of struggle, in which one can identify, make visible and encourage 'places' of exteriority and alternative constructions" (Walsh, 2012, p. 25).

A term that adds to these discourses of epistemic rupture is "post-colonialism". For Santos (2008, p. 20), it expresses a critical stance in relation to universalism and historicism, placing the West as the center of the world under suspicion and announcing the idea of the exhaustion of Western modernity, which "[..] facilitates the revelation of the invasive and destructive nature of its imposition in the modern world." In this sense, postcolonial studies break with the epistemological bases of modern scientific disciplines: welcoming and amplifying the voices of the excluded, the others absent from dominant discourses, deconstructing the "disciplinary boundaries, articulating History, Sociology, Anthropology, Literature and Art" (Faria *et al*., 2015, p. 12). Post-colonialist thought "promotes the deconstruction of essentialisms, diluting cultural borders and criticizing the process of creating scientific knowledge"; thus, the Eurocentric and ethnocentric colonial discourses that subject and dominate peoples, nations and subjects. "It seeks to create spaces through which subordinate subjects can speak whenever they wish and be heard." The postcolonial approach theoretically works "against subalternization, creating spaces in which different subjects can articulate themselves and, as a consequence, can also be heard" (Faria *et al*., 2015, p. 13).

Among the terms mentioned and defined, "decolonial" is assumed to be fundamental for the following reflections. This term calls into question the processes of domination arising from the economy, politics, religion, culture and seeks to affirm the local, the traditions of the people subjugated by centuries of domination. It is announced as a critical stance. Corroborating this understanding Walsh "[...] uses the term 'decolonial', as it implies a commitment, an incessant diligence with the objective of resisting and overcoming" (*apud* Koch; Fleuri, 2019, p. 39). It is understood, therefore, that, in the thematization of conceptions of childhood, it is not a question of decolonizing or post-colonialism, since both terms present limits of understanding, and we live in a contemporary world deeply marked by contexts still colonized, even with the constant presence of criticism, resistance and ruptures in colonizing discourses.

Children and childhoods: colonizing pedagogical ideas

The school we know is an invention of modernity. It was invented to manufacture the subject designed by the creators of this new time; in other words, to transform human beings "from savages to civilized" (Veiga-Neto, 2007, p. 98-99). The modern organization of work demanded a new culture

of the time, different from the medieval one and which would have to be learned. To this end, the educational strategy of subjecting people, from childhood, to experiences registered in timetables, in force in walled spaces, proved to be effective. Thus, the school carried out the "social regulation of time", aiming to "obtain certain moral and cultural results in new generations" (Petitat, 1994, p. 91). It shaped bodily subjectivities for the ways of socially experiencing space and time required by modern forms of work organization. In other words, the modern school served to teach children how to spend their time in a simultaneous, standardized and disciplined way, as will be necessary in their future jobs. In particular, in this way, the school institution contributed to bringing new people into the common world of modernity. The question that arises is: how has this process been conducted in the Western world?

Different matrices of thought were and are references for thinking about children's pedagogical and educational processes. In this sense, as Faria *et al*. (2015, p. 15) consider, the child "[...] is subject to the mechanisms and devices that produce their place of being and socially being". In other words, it is subject to ideas, values, customs and beliefs produced and transmitted by the adult world. It is, therefore, an object of investment and not a subject. The pedagogical processes that subject children to the exercise of power by adults, legitimized by discourses about childhood, are called into question by the decolonial perspective. These discourses that legitimize the objectification of children have been produced from modern theoretical frameworks, including religious, naturalistic and evolutionary.

In the work of João Amós Comenius (2006), the religious and naturalistic matrices of childhood are intertwined. The patron of modern didactics attributes to pedagogy and the educator the task of helping to guide the child on the paths of salvation. In this way, the education of an infant, like a little tree, requires to be cultivated, improved in their rational and moral capacities that lead them to God. Just like a fruitful plant that, to produce good fruit, requires shaping, cultivating, irrigating and pruning. The human being needs to be cultivated, that is, "[...] he will not be able to become a rational, wise, honest and pious animal if the sprouts of wisdom, honesty and piety are not first grafted into him" (Comenius, 2006, p. 77).

Understanding the child as a plant to be cultivated guides, in turn, a psychological and pedagogical perspective. Each degree or stage (childhood, youth and adulthood) of development corresponds to a certain pedagogy. Comenius (2006) emphasizes that educational activity needs to be ordered, directed; cannot remain free, depending on what happens; nor should it be governed by chaos, nor by apprentices. For Narodowski (2001, p. 45), Comenius considers childhood from the notion of lack and, therefore, as "a place that exists because it must be completed"; From this, Comenius "installs, in Pedagogy, immaturity as a necessary and obvious inference of the existence of maturity". And, in addition, itestablishes the authority of the adult (adultcentrism) over the immature.

Deniz A. Nicolay (2011, p. 11) corroborates that, starting with Comenius, the child's body was transformed into a pedagogizable material, an object of instruction. Through school, modern pedagogical action assumes "[...] a form of control over children's instinctive forces, a way of inculcating moral values", Christian and/or secular. In effect, the Western and modern civilizing process was conceived based on the (Platonic) notion of virtue as control of passions through reason.

This criterion of civility and social distinction is validated both by rationalist ethics, which emphasized the dignity of the useful worker, and by romantic philosophy, which emphasized the sensitivity of the expressive personality. In Comenius' work, the body "[...] is always an uncomfortable presence, as it has not yet received the principles of virtue, of Christian moral instruction" and "excesses can be better suppressed at a 'young age'" *apud* Nicolay, 2011, p. 116). This announces a pedagogy of control, of training, a pedagogy that dominates the body and likewise the mind.

From a pedagogical point of view, the educator is the possibility of cultivating this small plant. As a pedagogue, Comenius "[...] created a space for the production of childishness, since he developed a teaching modality adapted to the age range of children", placing "children exactly in a situation of dependence on adult values" (Nicolay, 2011, p. 133). Thus, the control of time, space, knowledge, and the learning process confines children to the spatial walls and temporal grids of school institutions, dominated by adults. Children are at the disposal of adults and their devices for body training and inculcation of beliefs and norms, so that learning is reduced to assimilating adults' ways of thinking and acting.

Putting things in order constitutes the foundation on which all of Comenius' teachings are built. Cultivating human plants is equivalent to inserting them into the natural order of the world. Thus, Comenius' didactics proposes that the school be governed "by order, by the uniformity of methods, by the synchronization of times, by the gradation of school stages – the objectives will simply be achieved" (Narodowski, 2001, p. 48). The order is prescribed for the content (curriculum), for the ranking (degrees, series), for the pedagogical action (method), for the relationship between the subjects (example-imitation, behavioral discipline, compliance with orders), for the relationship with the transcendent (natural and divine order of the universe), etc. This Renaissance and inaugural motto of modernity is intrinsically linked to the principle of productivity: obtaining maximum results, in the minimum amount of time and at the minimum cost. It is not necessary to go into the details of this pedagogical model to realize that it colonizes children. Just think about the consequences and implications that arise from the repudiation of any and all disorder.

Modernity produced pedagogical, religious and secular discourses, converging regarding the colonization of children. Bruna Ribeiro (2022, p. 48) states that "[...] children have historically been subjected to the generational power of adults". Children's voices were not heard in the childhood story told by adults. But in today's world, where the disciplinary logic is surpassed by the logic of control and the school experiences a certain disconnect in relation to the society of control (Veiga-Neto, 2007), it is worth asking whether monological, transmissive and reproductive pedagogies, in that children are seen as submissive beings, still make sense for children's education?

The question asked assumes that traditional schooling still has an influence on early childhood education, even though the Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (Brasil, 2009) expressly recognize the specificity of early childhood education, which is in no way identified with adult-centric pedagogical perspectives that, in their pedagogical processes, they deny the actions (playing, studying, organizing) carried out by children's activities. Pedagogical practices that do not recognize children as active subjects in the reception and re-elaboration of culture operate within the framework of a colonial educational model, which discusses the protection and need for adult care, under the pretext of children's supposed immaturity and fragility. Furthermore, under the pretext

of protection and care, we prevent them from living their own lives fully; according to Ribeiro's statement (2022, p. 45), "in order not to let them die, we don't let them live"; we prevent them from "[...] exploring their multiple languages, developing their ability to argue, decide and choose [...]".

In this sense, colonial perspectives on childhood and pedagogy did not welcome children with their differences and singularities. Ribeiro (2022, p. 49) suggests that the contemporary concept of childhoods, lived in multiple ways, "[...] is accompanied by the institution of mechanisms and practices that provide spaces that legitimize the child's voice, both in the macro scope of public policies, as well as in the daily practices of early childhood education units". It is about taking the child to the status of social actor, to participate, to be heard, to be involved in different social practices. She is not a "miniature adult", or someone who trains for adult life, since the time of being at school is also the time of life, which suggests that the child is beyond school. Cohn (2005, p. 21) suggests that children, "unlike incomplete beings, training for adult life, playing social roles while being socialized or acquiring skills and forming their social personality", in this new perspective, "begin to have an active role in defining their own condition. Full social beings gain legitimacy as subjects in the studies carried out on them".

As active and producers of culture, children participate in society, recreating it at all times. For Cohn (2005, p. 28-29), the active child "[...] plays an active role in the constitution of the social relations in which he or she engages, and is therefore not passive in the incorporation of social roles and behavior". More than that, he/she "[...] actively interacts with adults and other children, with the world, being an important part in consolidating the roles he/she assumes and her social relationships". In this sense, children are not only produced by culture, but also producers of culture. The sociology of childhood, as pointed out by Faria *et al*. (2015, p. 13), understands the child as "a historical subject, an active participant in the construction of social reality, a product and producer of culture, a creator of knowledge and wisdom". In this way, the perspectives of children that consider them as lacking or immature are problematized. Thus, pedagogies that assume education as a "[...] means of disseminating ideals, values, customs, beliefs and the child, treated as inferior and incapable, is subject to the mechanisms and devices that produce his place of being and being socially" (Faria *et al.*, 2015, p. 15) announce themselves as colonizing pedagogies.

Abramowicz (2011, p. 32) suggests that "[...] early childhood education is capable of composing a post-colonialist education, taking advantage in an anthropophagic way of what is seen as inventiveness and difference in the field of education", inventiveness, as a characteristic of the child as a subject who is imbued with a creative impulse, precisely because he is starting out in life. Salva, Schütz and Mattos (2021, p. 173) suggest thinking about children from this perspective, as a "mirror of novelty", mainly because "[...] they have their own ideas and inaugurate ways of being in the world".

Miguel (2015, p. 39) points out that, from the 19th century onwards, due to the proliferation of so-called "scientific" and, therefore, supposedly "adult" and "serious" discourses, produced by different epistemologies, psychologies and pedagogies", produced if a discourse about the child, seen as an infant, this "small being", this "toy being", "incomplete", "not serious", this still "non-being", which marked and still deeply marks the pedagogical work with the children. Problematizing the colonizing perspectives on children's education means putting their socialization processes on

the agenda. The body is colonized taking as parameters Western Judeo-Christian religiosity, modern heteronormative biomedical discourse, biological explanations based on human physiology, the stages of human development, etc. These guidelines are present, in contemporary times, in the way teachers educate young children. Therefore, it is not surprising that efforts are made to educate the bodies, wishes, desires, and games of girls and boys.

In "Techniques of the Body" Marcel Mauss (2003) explores how culture constructs or colonizes bodies. Drawing on Mauss's understanding, Daniela Finco (2015, p. 117) recognizes that "[...] the body, in this way, is an object of culture to the extent that it is produced, shaped, modified, trained and adorned according to the parameters of each culture." To problematize this colonizing perspective, the contributions of anthropology and sociology of childhood were fundamental, as they gave new meaning to the concept of socialization, breaking with the deterministic model, moving away from a perspective in which children merely adapted to society and molded themselves to it, for the constructivist perspective, in which the child is part of society, an active subject, who learns and "actively builds their social world and their place in it" (Corsaro, 2011, p. 19).

Based on his studies with children in early childhood education contexts in Italy and the United States, William Corsaro (2011, p. 31. Highlight of the Author) created the concept of "interpretive reproduction". The notion of "[...] interpretative encompasses innovative and creative aspects of children's participation in society" and that of "reproduction" includes the notion that "children do not simply internalize society and culture, but actively contribute to cultural production and change". Both notions broaden the understanding of children, incorporating their understanding as an actor, as a producer of culture. What are the implications of a decolonial stance towards education and teaching in early childhood education?

Dealing specifically with our country, a fundamental point regarding this question concerns understanding that there is a pressing need to listen to all children, indigenous children, black children, children from all social classes, ribeirinhas, quilombola, rural, and different cultural contexts, and legitimize their cultures. As school is one of the few democratic institutions, a place where all children can be, regardless of their class, race, gender, it is necessary to establish "a pedagogy of childhood [...], a pedagogy of difference, of listening, of relationships, we would say, a macunaímica pedagogy" (Faria; Finco, 2011, p. 3).

According to the authors, this is a pedagogy that differs from classical pedagogy, which breaks with the idea of a child as an incomplete being, immature in relation to adults. A pedagogy that does not refuse to discuss the multiple forms of oppression that exist in society. A pedagogy that admits that different forms of discrimination exist in our society (class, gender, ethnic-racial relations), which strips children of their rights, and, by admitting them, places them in the debate. According to Faria *et al*. (2022, p. 9), a pedagogy for childhood "[...] is an education that is not school-based, that does not anticipate schooling, but that has the specificity of educating an age group in a different way from what is educated other age groups", whether in preschool or daycare.

Decolonial education/teaching: pedagogical implications

A decolonial education perspective announces itself as a critique of transmissive pedagogies, current largely prescriptive curriculum policies and pedagogical practices based on previously commercialized materials, now proposed from early childhood education to the other stages of basic education. A decolonial, decolonizing education for Miguel (2015, p. 50), "[...] should not see schooling processes guided by and for a purpose of national unity or unity in diversity in the name of any argument." This applies to pedagogical propositions guided by standardized evaluation processes that do not open themselves to the emergence of diversity, nor to adversity or transgression. Thus, curricular propaedeutic proposals for babies, toddlers and very young children restrict their creativity, curiosity and inventiveness. What is stated in the Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (Brasil, 2009, p. 12) is reiterated, which considers children's experiences in the design of curriculum understood as "a set of practices that seek to articulate children's experiences and knowledge with the knowledge they make part of the cultural, artistic, environmental, scientific and technological heritage, in order to promote the integral development of children from 0 to 5 years of age".

Miguel (2015, p. 51) understands that an "[...] education guided by desires for unity, consensus, unity in diversity and inclusion of diversity in the great meta-narrative of liberal humanist discourse means liberal colonization". In this sense, for Macedo *et al*. (2016, p. 38), decolonizing pedagogies propose "[...] perspectives that subvert the current school order that transform experiences into practices, activities, disciplines, that classify and evaluate languages and subjectivities, that standardize designs, the bodies, the dreams." So, what does it mean to take a decolonial stance in the education of children in early childhood education? Some demarcations will help decolonial thinking and doing in education. Among them are: decolonizing power, knowledge, being, living, looking, thinking with a view to thinking about a pedagogy of decolonial childhood.

Decolonize power – Power is expressed in multiple forms, subordinating different subjects to the colonizing logic of thinking, acting, access to rights, imposing ways of life and recognition. It manifests itself in the form of ethnic, racial, religious, cultural, political, social, economic subordination, etc. In this sense, the school curriculum announces itself as an instrument of power (Silva, 1999; Louro, 2000; Arroyo, 2014), as it conveys knowledge of specific interests that aim to concentrate and maintain control over individuals and /or social groups. A decolonial perspective of power highlights the need to deconstruct the "logic of the market and capitalist hegemony", aiming at "the construction of participatory democratic relations, based on social justice and coherent with the interests of humanity as a whole and with the autonomy of each group sociocultural" (Koch; Fleuri, 2019, p. 40).

A hermeneutic approach to early childhood education would not imagine decolonizing colonized bodily subjectivities without helping them to regain their voice and make themselves heard in science, morals, aesthetics, health, politics, economics, urban planning, religion, etc. Decolonizing power over children's bodies implies recognizing the demands expressed by children themselves in all dimensions that affect their lives. It also involves encouraging and helping them to express their points of view, in their respective sociocultural and historical conditions of life. The counter-powers to be built with children will have to take into account their experiences, desires, knowledge and

values. Thinking about power in human relationships in terms of multipolarity, Norbert Elias (2008, p. 80-81), considers that, if "[...] children exercise power over their parents, it makes sense to think that it is possible for them to do something analogous in the relationship with the teacher". But for this to happen, the condition is that they are valued as conversation partners.

Decolonize knowledge – Among the many challenges of a decolonial education of children, dominant epistemologies require to be interrogated, that is, to open fissures in the modern Western scientific monoculture. More broadly, according to Koch and Fleuri (2019, p. 40), "[...] an epistemological resignification of knowledge becomes necessary, which deconstructs the modern colonial assumption of the 'universality' of 'sciences' and considers the complexities and ambivalences produced in the encounter between different knowledge and cultures". It means interrogating the matrices of power and Eurocentric knowledge that guide our intelligibility.

The admission of other knowledge, according to Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2006, 2007), means proposing a rupture in the Western epistemological monoculture. He states that "[...] there are social practices that are based on popular knowledge, indigenous knowledge, peasant knowledge, urban knowledge, but which are not evaluated as important and rigorous" (Santos, 2007, p. 29). The non-recognition of this knowledge is "[...] termed by the author as a waste of social experience and which could be asserted as alternatives to a more sustainable life and society" (Kuhn; Kuhn, 2018, p. 310). In this sense, suggests Santos (2006, p. 814), "[...] create constellations of knowledge and practices strong enough to provide credible alternatives to what is today called neoliberal globalization and which is nothing more than a new step in the global capitalism in the sense of subjecting the inexhaustible totality of the world to mercantile logic".

In the case of children's education, it means thinking that early childhood education is a place for learning, without being a place for teaching, a place where educational activities have a pedagogical intention. In other words, according to Infantino (2022, p. 73), it is about "[...] cultivating knowledge and a pedagogical culture with which to feed, [...] an empathetic, open relational climate, capable of soften and attenuate the institutional rigidity of services, to make them light and flexible, in the relationship with children and families".

It means interrogating the curriculum, as well as the way in which it is transmitted, requires recognizing children as subjects of knowledge, as authors and producers of culture. As participants in the production of senses and meanings about the world. It is about interrogating the dominant narratives and affirming the narratives that have had their histories denied, subjugated, such as those of women, black people, indigenous people, gender, class, ethnic-racial relations, etc. From a decolonial perspective, as Aquino (2015, p 101) understands, the "issues of age, gender, race", children, development, learning are questioned, which colonize families, children, denying them the construction of their identity, placing them in a condition of subalternity. As Ribeiro (2022, p. 49) suggests, it requires creating "[...] spaces that legitimize the child's voice, both in the macro scope of public policies and in the scope of everyday practices in early childhood education units". It means decolonizing the monological discourse of adult knowledge and giving children a voice. As suggested by Macedo *et al*. (2016, p. 40), it means recognizing children as "producers of culture and participants in social life".

Decolonize the being – The adult-centric perspective has predominated in the spaces and times of early childhood education. The child's being understood as miniature, as corrupted, as immature, as incapable, as a little plant to be cultivated, as becoming are some of its forms of this manifestation. We colonize children's beings from birth. We colonize their body, their forms of expression, their gender condition, their beliefs, their understandings about the world. In addition to the strong concern with "children's masculine and feminine behaviors", "their clear gender identification", announced by Finco (2015, p. 114), we colonize children's beings in multiple ways throughout the educational process.

The processes of schooling, classification, hierarchization, ordering, and disciplining of bodies are forms of colonization, marks present in pedagogies of modern heritage and in current neocolonial pedagogies. Using Elias (1994), who recognizes the body as one that "[...] eats, drinks, has sexual intercourse, cleans itself, runs, walks, swims, medicates, decorates itself, sleeps, rests, gestures and speaks" (Elias, 1994), adds Finco (2015, p. 118), to this body as being "[...] socially classified and hierarchized – black, white, childish, homosexual, adult, female, heterosexual, strong, masculine – in order to determine social roles and establish power relations". In this sense, the decolonial perspective challenges educators and pedagogy in their content and pedagogical practice. The need to recognize the child's being in their inventiveness, in their creativity, in their aesthetics, in their discursiveness about the world is announced.

Decolonize living – Points to other worldviews and ways of living life. Koch and Fleuri (2019, p. 41) understand that decolonizing living points to "[...] recognition and coexistence between cultural and religious matrices of different peoples who live in a multicultural context". No matter how much school and adults impose ways of being and living on them, children resist, confront and transgress. Its capture by established and instituting structures is always partial, as they interrogate and challenge what is established. In this sense, the power relations that establish ways of living are also strained and the socialization process takes on another tone in which children become active, protagonists and producers of their own way of looking at existence.

By resisting, children question cultural uniformity, and it is already an emancipatory act. In this way, when experiencing the condition of a child, they not only resist, they constitute themselves. Thus, early schooling may have the meaning of aligning with time. But what time? *Chronos* time, understood as "[...] continuity of a successive, progressive and sequential time, which in human life is represented by the stages of baby, child, youth, adult, elderly and many more that are created" (Aquino, 2015, p. 98). This is the time of productivity, the time of logical organization, ordering and sequentiality of the curriculum and school learning. In contrast, the child moves in *kairos* time, "[...] a time that is neither numerable nor successive". It is the time of the child to resist, to play, to create, to invent, to subvert, etc. For the educator, kairological time is eventful due to the encounters, in each case surprising, with students who express themselves.

Thus, the schooling of children, their pedagogization in formatted pedagogical material, suggests their inscription, their living, increasingly precocious in a chronos time, a time of productivist logic. For this reason, we support a non-prescriptive childhood pedagogy, which embraces the unpredictable, the child's curiosity, from an open, interested perspective addressed to children in their respective socio-cultural living conditions. It is proposed to organize the pedagogical action,

of "[...] thinking, planning pedagogically and acting educationally" (Infantino, 2022, p. 39) starting from the child, with the child and with the responsibility of an adult who has a ethical, aesthetic and political commitment to children's education as set out in the Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (Brasil, 2009).

Decolonizing the gaze – Rethinking children's education from a decolonial perspective requires, above all, breaking the monological and adult-centric outlook with which we have viewed childhood. According to Guacira Lopes Louro (2000, p. 15), "[...] adult men and women tell how certain behaviors or ways of being seem to have been 'recorded' in their personal stories". For these brands to become effective, "[...] a significant investment is put into action: family, school, media, church, law, participate in this production". Fundamentally, these marks, impressions determine the way we look at and understand the world, they produce a certain worldview. In this sense, the institutions mentioned assume a pedagogical task, therefore, of power and contribute to the production of certain ways of seeing the world and of subjects relating to it, either of disciplining or self-government.

Decolonizing thought – Requires building a new conception of children, childhood and education. An education of/for/with children based on listening, accompanying, proposing, "offering quality contexts for development and learning in the first years of life" (Infantino, 2022, p. 72). The intention is to break with the dualistic way of thinking and embrace the temporal difference in its potential, to see the child from its potential, its creative capacity. To be purposeful and welcoming, to be listening, but also capable of mobilizing thought, of challenging, of letting be. Understanding that early childhood education is a place for learning, but not teaching, an exercise in looking "upside down", as Ana Lúcia Goulart de Faria tells us. For the author: "Promoting conditions for children to invent is the starting point so that together, adults and children, we favor the difficult birth of this other world that is to come" (Faria, 2022, p. 7) . It means not giving up on the child, as they are only children for a very short time and do not allow us the right to give up the fight for a decolonial childhood pedagogy.

Ultimately, we are also products of culture. We build our identity and subjectivity by reproducing and incorporating ways of being and existing, as well as questioning and transforming them. As Ribeiro (2022, p. 47) considers, "[...] our lives carry a tradition, are conditioned and can generate prejudices, stereotypes and intolerance of all kinds". Decolonizing our gaze announces the possibility of recognizing in each gaze, not a unique gaze, but one among other possible ones. Thus, "[...] the child, through its countless and multiple languages, through its communicating, feeling, doing, relating, being and being in the world, invites us to see the world in another way" (Ribeiro, 2022, p. 34).

Decolonizing our gaze implies activating and privileging the most noble sense of the human being, the ear. It requires auditory openness to how the child sees and interprets the world, seeing (listening), through their eyes, the novelty through their way of relating to the world. It is the child's gaze that reflects the world, still seen as a novelty that breaks through in spite of what exists. Proposing a decolonial narrative suggests interrogating the modern epistemic assumptions that accompany discourses about children and pedagogy. Producing new narratives about children and childhood and their socialization/education process announces itself as an auditory opening

(listening) to other logics of organizing the world, including that of the child, which brings with it newness.

Among the announced epistemic ruptures, decolonizing power, knowledge, being, living, looking and thinking, who knows, will be another challenge to education and teaching with children. As Ribeiro (2022, p. 47) suggests, "[...] listening to others means opening space to seek to read the world with different eyes". With eyes that hear. The educational act is configured as a dialogical act, of creating spaces and times for speaking and listening. To produce emancipatory pedagogies that oppose the advancement of new colonizing pedagogies. It requires recognizing in each child an epistemic, ethical and aesthetic subject. A subject who constitutes its identity in coexistence with others, with human diversity and with nature. Ultimately, it is imperative to think about a childhood pedagogy that embraces difference. It is this look that can influence a process of decolonizing thought and understanding the world through some of the rhizomatic and plural logics of children, and which can be logics of relationship and creation, such as the logic of Manuel de Barros (2013, p. 266):

> *When the boy crossed rivers*
> *He walked slowly and darkly – half formed into silence.*
> *I wanted to be the voice in which a stone speaks.*
> *Landscapes lingered in his eyes.*
> *Corners of it were full of springs.*
> *He preached about things like scents.*

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