

**DOSSIER**

*Literacy and Curriculum: between the establishment of meanings and the experiments that create fissures and make other ways of life possible*

**Curriculum, literacy, and intersectionality in the education of deaf people*****Currículo, alfabetização e interseccionalidade na educação de pessoas surdas***

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**ABSTRACT**

This article focuses on reflecting on and discussing the intersections of disability, gender, social class, work, and race in processes of teaching reading and writing to deaf students, in the light of post-critical theories of curriculum. The text questions classroom reports and situations, carried out in a public school for Youth and Adult Education in the city of Belo Horizonte – MG. Methodologically, we held discussions with teachers and participant observation in the daily life of a class at the school in 2021. Based on curricular teaching practices observed, the short story Circuito Fechado (Closed Circuit) by Ricardo Ramos was chosen for theoretical questioning from an intersectional perspective. The investigation revealed challenges in teaching Brazilian Sign Language and Portuguese as a second language. The results indicate the importance of considering the context of the student's life and the prior knowledge of each student in learning processes. Finally, the study reveals how different social markers can cross curricular practices, providing opportunities for other compositions and other readings of the world.

*Keywords:* Curriculum. Human Rights. Education. Intersectionality. Deaf People.

**RESUMO**

O presente artigo tem como foco a reflexão e a discussão dos atravessamentos interseccionais de deficiência, gênero, classe social, trabalho e raça em processos de ensino da leitura e da escrita para estudantes surdos(as), à luz das teorias pós-críticas do currículo. O texto problematiza relatos e situações de sala de aula, realizados em uma escola pública da Educação de Jovens e Adultos na cidade de Belo Horizonte/MG. Metodologicamente,

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foram realizadas rodas de conversa com docentes e a observação participante no cotidiano de uma turma da referida escola, no ano de 2021. A partir das práticas curriculares docentes observadas, foi escolhido o conto “Circuito Fechado” de Ricardo Ramos, para problematização teórica pela perspectiva interseccional. A investigação apontou desafios no fazer docente durante o ensino da Língua Brasileira de Sinais e da Língua Portuguesa, como segunda língua. Os resultados indicaram a relevância em considerar o contexto de vida discente e o conhecimento prévio de cada estudante nos processos do aprender. Por fim, o estudo revelou como diferentes marcadores sociais podem atravessar práticas curriculares, oportunizando outras composições e outras leituras de mundo.

*Palavras-chave:* Currículo. Direitos Humanos. Educação. Interseccionalidade. Pessoas surdas.

## Introduction

They came to tell me that I disrupt language. Do I disrupt language? Let’s see: I’m sitting in a place. The word comes and takes the place out from under me. I didn’t do anything to make the word dislodge me (...) By removing the place from beneath me, I unplumbed it (...) Now I ask: Who disrupted the language? Was it me or was it the words? (Barros, 2021, p. 59).

Words, sounds, languages, breathing, silences, pauses, language, and gestures! Who structures and who disrupts language? Is it structured for hearing people or deaf people? Is it unstructured for people of which social class? Which race? Which gender? In which territory? Based on the provocations from the poet Manoel de Barros (2021), we added some rhetorical questions inherent to the multiple communication processes that take place in the curriculum.

In post-critical studies, curriculum can be read as a “cultural artifact that teaches, prescribes knowledge, governs conduct, and produces subjects” (Paraíso, 2019, p. 56), which takes place in different territories and spaces. Curriculum is the *locus* by excellence of possibilities, the improbable, the said, forbidden, and unsaid. According to Paraíso (2023), “it is decisive for the school to move (...) exist and is fundamental for the society that we want to build” (Paraíso, 2023, p. 7). It is worth saying that “the curriculum does not only exist at school (...) it is practice, it is policy, action, road, path, language, text, and discourse” (Paraíso, 2023, p.8). The curriculum is a place to disarrange, as Barros (2021) would say, to leave its place and look for other possibilities in the world.

If curriculum is also language, how can we structure and/or disrupt it? Considering the diversity of subjects and bodies present in educational spaces, the act of teaching and the act of learning becomes an aesthetic, ethical, and political challenge being carried out “leaving no one behind.” Therefore, the concept of inclusion in education needs to be expanded to include the diversity of subjects present in schools. This inclusion is approached from an intersectional perspective (Crenshaw, 2002; Collins; Bilge, 2016), that is, at the intersection of social markers such as race, gender, social class, territory, disability, age, among others. A deaf person, for example, is crossed by other markers that dialogue with hearing impairment, since this person has a gender identity, ethnic belonging, sexual orientation, religious choice, social class, etc.

As a fundamental right, the act of inclusion demands a rethinking of differences, as well as a rethinking of the school institution itself. From an inclusive education perspective, Khater and Souza

(2018) point out that it is important that curricular practices recognize that students “have different origins and life stories, therefore, we cannot deny these differences that make them concrete human beings, social and historical subjects, citizens with rights” (Khater; Souza, 2018).

In a broad and inclusive conception of the curriculum, the coexistence of two literacy approaches in the classroom – the Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) and the Portuguese Language, taught as a second language – may present challenges for the teaching practice. Freitas (2020) points out situations in which deaf children “think in Libras, establish face-to-face relationships in Libras with their interlocutors who talk Libras, but, when it comes to writing, they are instructed to do so in Portuguese” (Freitas, 2020, p. 4). Such disagreements in the literacy process can disrupt the language (Barros, 2021), demanding other compositions and other dialogues in the curriculum from teaching. In this sense, Perlin and Miranda (2003) state that “the writing of deaf people will always be in the border language” (Perlin; Miranda, 2003, p. 220).

In the field of language, the word equity is present in the text of several educational public policies covering human rights. Equity can be read as a sense of justice and impartiality (Albrecht; Rosa; Bordin, 2017). Developing equitable educational practices presupposes the search for guaranteeing access and permanence for everyone at school. Equity is one of those words in education that can take us out of place, move us and unbalance us (Barros, 2021). It can produce fissures and leaks in exclusionary and hierarchical ways of thinking that permeate curricular practice and, therefore, it can also disrupt classist, racist, sexist, and ableist language.

The main argument of this article is to discuss how the teaching curricular practices in literacy training for deaf people can be intersected by disability, social class, gender, work, and race social markers. Such practices take place in the day-to-day life of the school, in compositions and meetings (Tadeu, 2002), with the diversity of bodies and subjects of students and teachers at the school.

To this end, methodologically, the article presents and questions some reports and classroom situations involving the literacy of deaf people in a public school for Youth and Adult Education (EJA), in the city of Belo Horizonte – Minas Gerais, in the year 2021, in order to highlight curricular strengths and possibilities in expanding the reading of the world. It is worth mentioning that the reports were obtained through conversations with teachers, and the problem situations were collected through participant observation of everyday classroom life. Based on the observed teaching curricular practices, we chose the short story “Circuito Fechado” (Ramos, 2012) for theoretical questioning, from an intersectional perspective.

From this point onwards, this article is organized into 4 more sections: In the section “Human Rights and intersectionality: Other possibilities in the curriculum,” conceptions from the field of human rights that impact curricular practices are articulated, with intersectionality as the main theoretical and methodological crossing. Next, section “Literacy for deaf people: From the major to the minor curriculum” questions the specificities of the literacy processes for deaf people, highlighting the limits, challenges, and curricular potential. Section “Reports and classroom situations: curricular dialogues” presents two classroom situations involving literacy processes for deaf people. Both situations are discussed in the light of post-critical theories and conceptions of curriculum. And, finally, section “Final considerations” systematizes the main ideas presented in the article and indicates other possible paths and investigations.

## Human Rights and intersectionality: Other possibilities in the curriculum

It is important to highlight that this writing is based on a sociopolitical situation of political, economic, health, and, above all, human crisis, in a post-pandemic context. The world is still trying to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic period, in which only some parts of the world's population were able to resort to social distancing. During the pandemic, for most poor people, there was just one more daily fear, which was added to their daily challenges. Writing in sociopolitical contexts of crisis allows us to understand that Human Rights and Education are still understood as border fields in different sectors of society, where it is possible to perceive difficulties in establishing connections that are expressed by the lack of recognition of the theme, at the same time in that we perceive an "outbreak of historical awareness of human rights" (Comparato, 2017, p.53), added to an agenda of reflections centered around the foundations and significance of human rights education.

In Brazil, we have a history marked by colonialist influence, where only a portion of the population still has access to privileges. Access to rights – which should be available to everyone, regardless of who they are or where they are – still excludes many subjects. Thus, a concept that can help in understanding the need to expand access for all people is the concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 2002; Collins; Bilge, 2016). Intersectionality can be understood as an analytical tool capable of contributing to the solution of problems that are often invisible when it comes to access to human rights, as "Intersectionality is a conceptualization of the problem that attempts to capture both the structural and dynamic consequences of the interaction between two or more axes of subordination" (CRENSHAW, 2002, p. 177).

Therefore, when we bring the intersectionality concept to the field of education, we agree that the social markers of class, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age group, disability, territory, and education cross subjects and, therefore, grant greater or less access to a dignified life. The exclusion of people from a dignified life translates into numbers in Brazil that surpass most countries in the world ranks, when studies denounce the violent deaths of women, the low income concentration in a significant segment of the population, the homicides of young black people, the access difficulties for people with disabilities and the LGBTQIAPN<sup>1</sup> population to public policies (Brasil, 1967; 1983). By enhancing exclusionary processes and the lack of access to rights, typical processes of colonial Brazil still resist, such as class division, patriarchalism, sexism, ableism, and racism.

There are many subjects of law, excluded from dignity, precarious, and who, in their condition, do not enjoy the equity to which they should also have access. And, faced with this reality, where the mass of the population is unable to achieve a dignified life, we ask: Are these subjects aware that they are also recipients of human rights? To what extent do policies or legal instruments that point out such issues have the potential to restructure the ways of thinking and expand the consciousness of these people, so that they can assume themselves as subjects of law?

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<sup>1</sup> Although there is a political dispute in academia and the social movement regarding the use of different versions of the acronym, in this article we chose to use the one that refers to: Lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transvestites/transsexuals, queers, intersex, asexuals, pansexuals, and non-binary (Alves, 2017).

In our efforts to facilitate reflection on possibilities that operationalize equity processes in public policies, we agree with Flores (2009), who points out the need for a change in perspective, suggesting that we should talk about human rights based on the processes of struggle for human dignity, because there is an understanding that every person is unique, but that they still necessarily live in the collective, where they maintain social relationships. Therefore, every person must exercise their right to have rights (Arendt, 2007), which means: giving a person a place in the world through access, thus, beyond the benevolence or assistance of the State.

In this regard, Lafer (2015) points out the complexity of the challenges for the affirmation of human rights, due to the unequal distribution between the different subjects, but he is optimistic in giving, to the pedagogical action and the dissemination of knowledge about the value of human rights, one of the most important instruments for the formation of subjects of law. The act of educating about rights can contribute to the reframing of different social contexts, especially the most vulnerable, based on humanist precepts. Democratic and collective action, based on rights, as indicated, substantiates human rights in the face of violating phenomena, while “it is the key to the effective construction of democratic citizenship” (Osorio, 2004, p. 91).

Contemporary politics demands mapping interrelations that connect, in a complex way, different dynamic and relational positions within the political field and points out that it is equally essential to find a way to occupy political spaces while they are subjected to a democratizing contestation whose exclusionary conditions of its production are constantly re-elaborated. Thus, there is a glimpse of the existence of conditions that locate different bodies in areas more or less exposed to vulnerability and precarious conditions.

The term precariousness (Butler, 2018) lives in all of us as an innate vulnerability of all bodies that are always subjected to the final destiny of death. The precarious condition translates a situation that is politically induced, which operates through a differentiated geopolitical distribution of vulnerabilities. Such locations are referenced based on those mentioned in intersectionality, through social markers, such as gender, class, territory, race, age, disability, and education. Butler (2018) proposes thinking about the division of lives between “livable” and “killable” (Butler, 2018 p.75), based on a broad and fluid map, as a movement that follows the critical demands posed by intersectionality. This context explains the limitation/exclusion of subjects and puts into perspective the experiences at crossroads, lives that are cut out by various conditions of precariousness, which constitutes a challenge for public policies.

Alliance, resistance, and cohabitation are strategies in the face of precariousness; therefore, there is no choice about who we will live with, since cohabitation is compulsory and interpellation by the other that we do not choose is inherent to life (Butler, 2018). Since coexistence is not something to be chosen and determined by individuals freely, it would be necessary to think of healthy ways of coexistence for survival, and such survival must take place in a sustainable, broadly healthy way. At this point, the author returns to ideas of equality to state that “everyone would have the same rights to live on earth and that escalations and differentiations effectively constitute policies of death and genocide” (Butler, 2019, p. 98).

The construction of these alliances and the respective locations that can be constructed would necessarily involve recognizing the limitation of identity movements in signifying and

representing subjects in their various forms of precarious conditions, recognizing that, in addition to identities, there are diverse movements that, as a group, are subject to regression in political and civil rights. The alliance in this context appears as a strategy capable of displacing policies based on identity, since the identity thought of as an alliance will be in constant transformation, being at all times affected by intersecting demands that require negotiation and accommodation, recognizing at its core the cohabitation compulsory need.

Given the need for cohabitation of all bodies in school spaces, we propose the debate on the right to education, specifically for deaf people, in the possible construction of alliances, through the bias of post-critical theories of the curriculum, in which the analysis of the power relations and learning subjects are highlighted, according to their perspective – identity and differences (Tadeu, 2010, p. 17). This conception imprints a sense of belonging in school spaces, contributing to learning and socialization, in dialog with an inclusive education that welcomes and guarantees the rights of people with disabilities.

Thinking about a curriculum in action, present in everyday relationships between teachers and students, means proposing inclusive and multicultural pedagogical discourses and practices, focusing on the learning subject and their specificities. Such a curricular perspective demands to aggregate or alliance people who are considered excluded, dissident, precarious, or even abject (Butler, 2018) in education. Socialization and understanding of their identities and stories increase the possibility of recognition, helping to undo stigmas and prejudices, as well as stimulating social inclusion (Moreira; Candau, 2013, p. 23).

A curriculum permeable to the diversity and potential of its subjects needs to promote: 1. Student self-recognition, thus, students would recognize themselves as subjects of rights to be required and achieved for a more dignified life; 2. Critical thinking, based on themselves, also done by students, and their circumstances when facing injustice and discrimination; and 3. The establishment of alliances between subjects, in search of other possibilities in education. Hooks (2013) states that a possible practice of freedom is learning to transgress. In this sense, intersectionality can be understood as a theoretical and methodological proposal for overcoming identity politics for the intersections between them. When teaching reading and writing to deaf people, the object of reflection in this article, it is necessary to pay attention to intergroup differences between students in the same school context, in order to make the diversity of bodies and subjects visible.

### **Literacy training for deaf people: From the major to the minor curriculum**

In the intersectional field (Crenshaw, 2002; Collins; Bilge, 2016), the world of work consists of another important social marker that crosses bodies and subjects in education. In this context, deaf students in Youth and Adult Education, the majority of whom are workers, seek better teaching conditions at school so that they can effectively learn to deal with reading and writing in functional language situations, promoting themselves as participating and critical citizens, through reading and communicating in Libras.

The strangeness regarding the Portuguese language for these students is because, normally, a second language (L2) is only acquired when one already has a first language (L1). However, for

deaf students, this does not happen in the same way as it does for hearing students, since the latter arrive at school with prior knowledge of the Portuguese language. In this case, the deaf students find themselves in the situation of learning both languages at the same time in the classroom (Freitas, 2018).

From the perspective of a major curriculum, one that is official, formal, and prescribed by public policy (Paraíso, 2023), as in the National Common Curricular Base (Brasil, 2018), it is established that the use of “different languages – verbal (oral or visual-motor, such as Libras, and writing), corporal, visual, sound, and digital” (Brasil, 2018, p. 70) should take place in teaching as a form of expression and sharing of information, experiences, and sensations in favor of dialogue, cooperation and resolution of problem situations and mutual understanding. On the other hand, a smaller curriculum, that of everyday school life, teaching practices, and interpersonal relationships (Paraíso, 2023) can provide opportunities for visibility of linguistic diversity and the diversity of bodies and subjects, making adjustments, agreements and rethinking in the processes of teaching and learning.

In the case of teaching Libras, it is worth highlighting that it has been gradually occupying its space in education. Pereira (2009) describes that, over time, language teaching stopped obeying determining and normative standards, by expanding its curricular practices, based on the conception that students learn the language through interaction, in meetings and in compositions (Tadeu, 2002) with colleagues and teachers. Pereira (2009) also adds that the systematization of grammar occurs in the use of the language, when students are practicing the language. Thus, we can question, rhetorically, whether the compositions made when learning the language make different subjects visible, when considering the curricular crossings of social class, ethnicity, gender, territory, work, disability, among others.

Portuguese language teaching methods for deaf people are still based on a phonetic-based concept (Freitas, 2018). This can become a problem, because, unlike hearing students who arrive at school with prior knowledge of a mother tongue used in their social, family, and school context, deaf students find themselves at a disadvantage when it comes to teaching this language, which is oral in nature, as, frequently, they are unable to make the connection between letter and sound, compromising the entire development of reading and writing in L2.

The teaching and learning processes for teachers of deaf students are challenging, as the situation of a significant portion of these students is that of an audience that arrives at the school environment with little or no knowledge of the language. Portuguese, with the school having the responsibility of teaching it. Furthermore, teachers with experience in teaching their mother tongue, which is based on oral literacy methods, have difficulty thinking about teaching Portuguese without the relationship between letter and sound – which is still very common in teaching for deaf students, such as performing repetition and memorization exercises (Pereira, 2009).

In the practice of a minor curriculum in the classroom among deaf people, it becomes necessary to create and organize activities that do not have an emphasis on coding/decoding, although this is important, but with the purpose of literacy, that is, the reading of the world. In this sense, for Kleiman (2004), in addition to the reading activity being diffuse and confusing for hearing students and mentioning the motivation for reading, autonomy, and the student’s ability to learn,

it is necessary to use it to reach a purpose and set goals for reading and writing. This would be no different for deaf students, mainly because they are exposed to the teaching and learning process, in accordance with teaching conceptions.

According to Souza (2018), “when teaching deaf people, the process is facilitated when there is first knowledge of the deaf world of the characteristics that differentiate it from the hearing” (Souza, 2018, p. 40). Therefore, it is worth highlighting that deaf students need to seek prior knowledge to read texts of any textual genre, as what will determine learning to read and write the Portuguese language is the interaction of these subjects in the contexts of textual and world reading.

This perspective dialogues with Freire’s (2009) classic notion about the themes that generate learning, that is, about the importance of considering the life context of the subject being educated – whether deaf or hearing – in educational processes. By singularizing teaching discourse and practice, the plurality of the curriculum is glimpsed based on human diversity. The differences here stop becoming obstacles and become a powerful pedagogical approach strategy. In the curricular territory of differences, Perrenoud (2000) points out the relevance of a reflective curricular practice in which “reason and debate, respect for the expression and thought of others are much more important issues” (Perrenoud, 2000, p. 149) than regulations prescribed by the major curriculum. When dealing with the diversity of subjects and bodies inside and outside the school, Butler (2018) points out that, more than respect, it is the recognition of the other – different from me – as a subject with rights who can establish alliances, cultivate bonds, open paths, and produce other possible ones.

## **Reports and classroom situations: Curricular dialogues**

For the writing of this article section, the reports and classroom situations involving the literacy of deaf students – aged between 18 and 63 years old – were collected during conversation circles held with Youth and Adult Education teachers in the year 2021. The conversation circles were articulated with moments of participant observation and field records in a night shift classroom, present in a public school in Belo Horizonte. Such methodological strategies are part of a research and academic extension investigation scope that has focused on intersectional crossings in teaching curricular practices.

The guest teachers who participated in the conversation circles at the public school used the didactic sequence methodology (Machado; Cristóvão, 2006) in their classroom activities. In conversation with them, the pedagogical focus on doing and practicing became evident, in addition to just using teaching material. The activities were designed to expand the possibilities of teaching in meetings and compositions with students, leaving spaces to air the curriculum (Paraíso, 2019) and opening gaps for other uses of the teaching material. No matter how much a class is thought out, prepared, and planned, in practice, it is porous and lacking, as it is susceptible to the unusual and uncontrollable in the curriculum.

The elaboration of a didactic sequence involves the action of thinking about an appropriate didactic transposition that can serve as an object of teaching and learning, as suggested by Machado and Cristóvão (2006). For the authors, in a didactic transposition, it is important to have a space



between the students' prior knowledge and what can be evidenced about the teaching and learning processes.

Among the various teaching materials used by teachers in the classroom, we chose, due to their power in expanding the curriculum in affirming life (Paraíso, 2019), the short story "Circuito Fechado," by Ricardo Ramos (2012), to question it from an intersectional perspective (Crenshaw, 2002; Collins; Bilge, 2016). The text, read as a cultural artifact, is structured with a single paragraph, made up of nominal phrases, formed only by commas, full stops, common nouns, and some articles organized into semantic groups that together suggest everyday actions and that, combined, represent a sequence narrative about a person's daily routine.

The text was presented by the teachers to the students in three ways: 1. A video (Dias, 2011) available on the *internet* with images of the nouns that made up the story; 2. A second video, produced by the teachers, with images of nouns and their signaling in Libras; and, finally, 3. The short story itself, in the Portuguese language, in written form. Due to the particularity of the aforementioned story, we can glimpse, in teaching curricular practice, an example of language disrupting (Barros, 2021), since the same text was discussed in different modes of meaning production – images, Libras, and words. In multimodal production (Kress; Van Leeuwen, 2001), reducing the distance between the understanding of the Portuguese language and Libras, by using written, signed, and drawn words, can produce fissures or imbalances (Barros, 2021) in the normative order of the language, (un)doing and (re)doing the text and, thus, making it inclusive and accessible to the widest audience possible.

The absence of cohesion elements in the text, such as connectives, does not interfere with the development of Libras, and therefore, deaf students should be clarified the reason why such connectives are used in the Portuguese language (Souza, 2018). According to studies by Fernandes (2006) in the field of literacy in bilingual education, deaf students usually demonstrate difficulties in dealing with reading and writing texts with complex linguistic structures. Therefore, the textual structure of the chosen story, as it only contains terms of trivial use, is close to the way they conceive reading, not requiring the text to have connectives to produce the meaning of what is being read. We emphasize that the text in question, even though it only contains nouns and some adjectives, allows the reader, whether deaf or not, to conceive, mentally, through the way in which the sequence of words described is organized, the composition of scenes and actions from real life, from a person's routine.

Despite being a completely verbal text, the story allows the reader to experience a multimodal reading experience. Researchers Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001) indicate that it is unfeasible to propose texts that emphasize only written language, since this is just one of the modes of representation. According to the authors, we must consider the multimodal character of texts, all modes of meaning, uniting image with text and social context.

The encounter with two fragments from the text "Circuito Fechado" (Ramos, 2012) provided powerful compositions and reflections with the students, from an intersectional perspective. The first fragment is "Slippers, toilet, flush. Sink, soap. Water. Brush, toothpaste, water, foam, shaving cream, brush, foam, razor, water, curtain, soap, cold water, hot water, towel. Hair cream, comb" (Ramos, 2012, s/p). The second fragment is "Table, chairs, cup and saucer, plate, teapot, cutlery, napkins" (Ramos, 2012, s/p).

When analyzing students meeting such words, arranged in specific contexts – which can be inferred in the first fragment as hygiene habits and bathroom use and, in the second fragment, as use of the kitchen and its utensils in eating –, it becomes important to think about whether such terms integrate the reality of all of them. Based on the story, the teacher who coordinated the activities in the classroom questioned the students: *What is the bathroom like in your house? And the kitchen? Do they have all these objects and equipment? Is there an object in your bathroom or kitchen that is not in the text?* (Field Report, 2021).

A rhetorical question arises here: Could the absence, for example, of a flush toilet in the bathroom or a teapot in the kitchen make it difficult for certain students to learn these words? From an intersectional perspective, the social marker of social class becomes an important vector of pedagogical and curricular reflection. Social inequalities, especially in public schools, must be considered and questioned when carrying out activities in the classroom (Khater; Souza, 2018).

The social marker of work was also considered in the teacher's practice when, after discussing the text collectively, she asked the students: *What could be the profession of the person portrayed in the story? And what profession does not suit this person? Why?* (Field Report, 2021). By bringing the world of work into the classroom debate, the teacher expanded the text scope and broadened the curriculum, provoking students to reflect on their own lives. As a backdrop to the curricular discussion, we could think: What would be the limitations of deaf people in entering the job market? And which professional areas have social inclusion policies in their companies? Despite the class being made up exclusively of deaf students, during the reflections carried out based on the text *Circuito Fechado* (Ramos, 2012), the disability social marker did not play a prominent role in the dialogues, touching on the discussion of the deaf people inclusion in the business market.

Other markers cross bodies and subjects at school, such as race. According to data from the 2022 School Census, in Brazilian public schools for Youth and Adult Education, 77.5% are black students (Acesso dos estudantes..., 2023), which reveals the majority social context of this portion of the population, if we compare it to private schools that have, for the most part, white students. Therefore, the EJA public school has a social class and a color.

In her doctoral thesis entitled "Black Youth in EJA: The challenges of a public policy" (Passos, 2012), researcher highlights the relevance of "an approach that adds both the dimension of singularity (ethnic-racial belonging, recognition) and the dimension of equality (redistribution), so that EJA becomes truly emancipatory" (Passos, 2012, p. 189). This pedagogical conception of EJA is in line with the post-critical curricular perspective that proposes "interrogating identities defined as solid, structured, unified locations (...) in which people fit socially and culturally" (Paraíso, 2023, p. 76).

And does the EJA public school have a gender? During participant observation in the classroom, another fragment of the same story allowed reflections with the students, this time, using the social marker of gender. The fragment is "Underwear, shirt, cufflinks, pants, socks, shoes, tie, jacket. Wallet, coins, documents, pen, keys, handkerchief. Watch, pack of cigarettes, box of matches, newspaper" (Ramos, 2012, n/p). A teacher asked: *What do you think: Do these objects belong to a man or a woman?* (Field Report, 2021). After a while of conversation, there was a consensus among most students in the classroom that these objects belonged to a man.

The words presented in this fragment constitute, in common sense, what is called the male universe. The clothing items listed belong to what is socially normalized as a man's clothing. However, it is up to us to reflect on one of the great fallacies pointed out by post-critical gender studies, which consists of the generalization or universalization of the female subject and the male subject (Butler, 2018). There are different ways of being a man, which involves performativities called male. Clothes are part of this performative set that can determine, but not terminate, subject positions in the world (Butler, 2018). An object does not have a gender, we socially assign it, for example, the male gender to a tie and the female gender to a skirt.

Agender fashion has shown other possibilities in the clothing industry, in the construction of masculinities and femininities, by highlighting other uses of clothing that are not fixed in normative binary gender standards. According to Alves (2022), "the so-called agender fashion has been increasingly gaining space for debate in professional and technical design courses, in academic research, and even in fashion programs on television" (Alves, 2022, p. 199). Corroborating this point of view, Netto (2016), in his research *Fashion without gender: A study for the search for breaking paradigms related to clothing* (Netto, 2016), gives a brief history, from the 1920s to contemporary times, of how some designers use the language of fashion to break stereotypes in search of other gender aesthetics in fashion.

A single text, with an unconventional format, as it only used nouns, led to diverse compositions with those students in the group studied, from the architecture of the house, through ordinary household objects, to the use of clothes and fashion accessories. As a background, the intersectionality with disability, social class, race, and gender stands out, which provided the opportunity for fruitful debates, by transposing, to the student context, some social, political, and economic issues of Brazilian society.

Discussing citizenship and human rights fits into the curriculum. Reflecting on disabilities and reading the world fits into the curriculum. Promoting debates about human diversity fits into the curriculum. According to Paraíso (2023), "we can look at any text in our curricular practice and think: What can I do with it? Therefore, this thought is based on a minor curriculum created by teachers who are involved in the pleasure of teaching and the joy of learning" (Paraíso, 2023, p. 127).

According to the teacher's reports, there was difficulty on the part of the students in understanding the text. She commented: *The text format felt strange to the students. A text with only words, without connectives, even though it is a second language (...) it was possible to notice that students, in general, are used to texts in Portuguese, organized with subject, verb, object, articles, and prepositions* (Field Report, 2021). The teacher also highlighted that some words were more complex for students to understand, such as "nickels" and "cufflinks," as they are dated and out of use nowadays. A historical review of the language was necessary during the discussion of textual vocabulary.

We take the opportunity to return to Barros' epigraph (2021), to exemplify how words disrupted language, displacing teaching pedagogical certainties and upsetting student ways of thinking about the world. And, thus, opening space for other curricular practices and other perspectives on learning and teaching.

Despite the initial difficulty, the teacher saw a substantial opportunity to expand the students' vocabulary and, therefore, broaden their understanding of the world. In order to illustrate the potential of using a text in teaching curricular practice, the teacher added: *we had the possibility of producing texts in Libras about each student's routine, thus, it became evident the ease of producing texts in Libras and, even in adulthood, the student's difficulty in expressing written Portuguese* (Field Report, 2021). Multimodality in education, such as the use of videos in the classroom, brings languages closer together – image and sounds – and provides opportunities for other curricular practices. As Pereira (2009) states, in the case of deaf students, the student's prior knowledge and the contextualization of knowledge are crucial factors in the literacy processes that seek to establish image and sound connections. Teaching diversity can produce effects on the curriculum, such as the inclusion and visibility of differences, expanding access to education and expanding awareness about the world.

## Final considerations

Returning to the effects of disrupting language through words, proposed by the poet Barros (2021) at the beginning of the article, we can reflect on which words would have the power to unbalance us and remove the ground from beneath us. In this poetic look, the words – intersectionality, equity, disability, gender, deafness, race, and social class – can be read as words that disrupt language. And the word curriculum? Would it also be a word capable of disrupting language? We believe so. In the scene of post-critical studies, curriculum can and must disrupt the normative, exclusionary, classist, sexist, racist, and ableist educational language. And replace it with an educational, inclusive, equitable, civil, fair, and democratic language.

In the short story “Circuito Fechado” (Ramos, 2012) – which, in this article, was the object of reflection on literacy teaching practice in a class of deaf students at EJA – words circulate, repeat themselves, create sequences, group together, regroup, and come to life. They suggest routines, hygiene habits, eating practices, leisure moments, dressing, work activities, among other daily actions. Word-images that expand forms of communication and reverberate in silence, producing meanings and evoking memories. Words made by hands (as in the use of Libras), words made with colored pencils (as in a drawing), words made on the computer (as in a typed text), silent words (as in reading with the eyes), noisy words (as in oral reading), words read with the hands (as occurs when using Braille), among many others.

In the compositions and meetings held with the aforementioned story in the classroom, we were able to understand how social markers intersect the reading and writing processes. Such a multimodal exercise with the text, in a class of deaf students in the literacy process, can be understood as an invitation to leave the place, untangle certainties, denaturalize looks, undo manuals and travel to other places of teaching and learning.

The act of curriculum at school “demands the permanent exercise of the art of estrangement at school, that is, asking differently, looking from another point of view, repeating the question, shifting the focus of attention, moving away, and perceiving the scene from afar” (Alves; Lloyd, 2022, p. 46). When teaching, “it is necessary to organize meetings (...) with the unusual that forces thought

and works as resistance” (Paraíso, 2023, p. 127). After all, disrupting language can be a powerful and necessary way to design a curriculum that is alive and in action, permeable to diversity, nomadic, and accessible to everyone.

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