EDUCATION, CURRICULUM AND CRITICAL THEORY IN TIMES OF PANDEMIC: WHAT TEACHERS AND THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY THINK

EDUCAÇÃO, CURRÍCULO E TEORIA CRÍTICA EM TEMPOS DE PANDEMIA: O QUE PENSAM DOCENTES E A COMUNIDADE ESCOLAR

EDUCACIÓN, CURRÍCULO Y TEORÍA CRÍTICA EN TIEMPOS DE PANDEMIA: LO QUE PIENSAN LOS MAESTROS Y LA COMUNIDAD ESCOLAR

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ABSTRACT: This text aims to establish a critical dialogue, in view of the context of a pandemic that also affected education, about curricular practice in the remote format of teaching. In this context, the curriculum also seems to have been contaminated by the virus of inaccessibility and social inequality, mischaracterizing the democratic rule of law. We understand that managing critical perspective in this format is not easy, but it is possible. Our vision is proclaimed as critical, to the extent that we position ourselves in the group of theories of education and curriculum, close to Marxian thought of explaining the concrete world through dialectical historical materialism. For this, we used as a methodological instrument the bibliographic research to support our reflections, and the semi-structured interview with teachers, students and mothers, in order to understand education/teaching in the context of the pandemic, in the range of elementary school of Basic Education. The article outlines an overview of the context of remote teaching during the pandemic and then presents, through the analysis of questionnaires applied to research interlocutors, possible ways to think of a critical curricular organization more humane and emancipatory with a view to the scenario of returning to educational work in the post-covid19 scenario.

KEYWORDS: Education. Remote teaching. Pandemic.

RESUMO: Este texto tem como objetivo estabelecer um diálogo crítico, diante do contexto de pandemia que também acometeu a educação, sobre a prática curricular no formato remoto de ensino. Neste contexto, o currículo também parece ter sido contaminado pelo vírus da inacessibilidade e desigualdade social, descaracterizando o estado de direito democrático. Compreendemos que gerenciar a perspectiva crítica neste formato não é fácil, mas é possível. A nossa visão se anuncia como crítica, na medida em que nos posicionamos no grupo das teorias de educação e de currículo, próximas ao pensamento marxiano de explicar o mundo concreto por meio do materialismo histórico dialético. Para tanto, utilizamos como instrumento metodológico a pesquisa bibliográfica para fundamentar as

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nossas reflexões, e a entrevista semiestruturada com professores, estudantes e mães, no intuito de compreender a educação/ensino no contexto de pandemia, na gama do Ensino Fundamental da Educação Básica. O artigo traça um panorama sobre o contexto do ensino remoto durante a pandemia e em seguida apresenta, por meio da análise de questionários aplicados aos interlocutores de pesquisa, possíveis saídas para pensar em uma organização curricular crítica mais humana e emancipadora, com vistas ao cenário de retorno aos trabalhos educacionais no cenário pós covid19.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Educação. Ensino remoto. Pandemia.*

RESUMEN: *Este texto tiene como objetivo establecer un diálogo crítico, en vista del contexto de una pandemia que también afectó a la educación, sobre la práctica curricular en el formato remoto de la enseñanza. En este contexto, el currículo también parece haber sido contaminado por el virus de la inaccesibilidad y la desigualdad social, caracterizando el Estado democrático de derecho. Entendemos que gestionar la perspectiva crítica en este formato no es fácil, pero es posible. Nuestra visión se proclama como crítica, en la medida en que nos posicionamos en el grupo de teorías de la educación y el currículo del terreno cercano al pensamiento marxista de explicar el mundo concreto a través del materialismo histórico dialéctico. Para ello, utilizamos como instrumento metodológico la investigación bibliográfica para apoyar nuestras reflexiones, y la entrevista semiestructurada con profesores, alumnos y madres, con el fin de entender la educación/enseñanza en el contexto de la pandemia, en el rango de escuela primaria de Educación Básica. El artículo describe una visión general del contexto de la enseñanza a distancia durante la pandemia y luego presenta, a través del análisis de cuestionarios aplicados a interlocutores de investigación, posibles formas de pensar en una organización curricular crítica más humana y emancipadora con miras al escenario de volver al trabajo educativo en el escenario post-covid-19.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Educación. Enseñanza remota. Pandemia.*

Introduction

Education and pandemic, adapting is necessary. Difficult times that brought about changes in education and in the quality of basic education, this due to the new coronavirus that spread rapidly throughout the country and the world. Lethal proliferation, if not diagnosed and treated quickly, characterized as a pandemic, once control of the spread and/or infectious outbreak is lost.

Remote education, an alternative found to continue the academic year, was the procedure adopted by most institutions following the guidelines of their respective state education departments, legally supported by higher institutions and the State itself. Format that leads to discussions and debates, mainly on issues of access, curriculum organization and

quality in teaching. It is in this sense that we seek to reflect education in times of pandemic: a dialogue about curricular practice from a critical perspective.

Thus, we contextualize the covid-19 pandemic and its consequences in the education scenario linked to a critical view, based on the perspective of Saviani (2013), from a practice to struggle, emancipation and social transformation, establishing a relationship with other authors who immerse in the same source.

To better understand this context, we adopted the semi-structured interview as a methodological instrument, with teachers, parents and/or guardians and some students of basic education, to understand their perceptions about the remote teaching format. In view of this, based on Silva (2020), when envisioning the face-to-face return to education, we present some curricular adaptations for the organization of pedagogical work so that this "new normal" can be faced with more serenity.

A necessary dialogue: education in times of pandemic

At first, it is worth highlighting the struggle for a public education, equitable, secular and of quality, envisioning the dissemination of a critical curriculum theory through the dialogicized interaction between teacher-student and student-teacher, which motivates us to remain, although in constant dialogue, in critical theories. We defend, like Saviani (2013), a critical curricular practice, focused on struggle, emancipation and social transformation. In this constant, we aim for the desired quality in the field of education, a quality not restricted to the quantification of results, but that directs, or redirects, the paths, improving processes and results in order to promote social quality education. Regarding this aspect, Almeida and Betini (2016, p. 55) tell us that the perspective of social quality is the search for broad formation of subjects, which should reach various aspects of the social being from the perspective of an omnilateral formation, in the intention to build a less exclusive and unequal society. We also understand that this quality permeates a series of demands, whether in human, didactic and economic resources, which is why we ratify the need for greater investments in the educational area. This is the opportune moment for the State to guarantee the accessibility and conditions of a public education of excellence to all students in the country.

In Brazil, with the covid-19 pandemic installed in early 2020, it was possible to notice that, as in the field of health, education, more specifically in the curriculum, proved to be fragile and precarious due to the educational strategy adopted by most of the education systems, namely, remote learning. This is demonstrated by a survey commissioned to

DataFolha by Itaú Social, Lemann Foundation and Imaginable Futures, published by Correio Brasiliense, a local newspaper in Brasília/DF, which shows in percentage the form of access to education via remote, by elementary school students, both stages, and High School, as shown below:

Figure 1 – Remote accesses during 2020 by Brazilian region
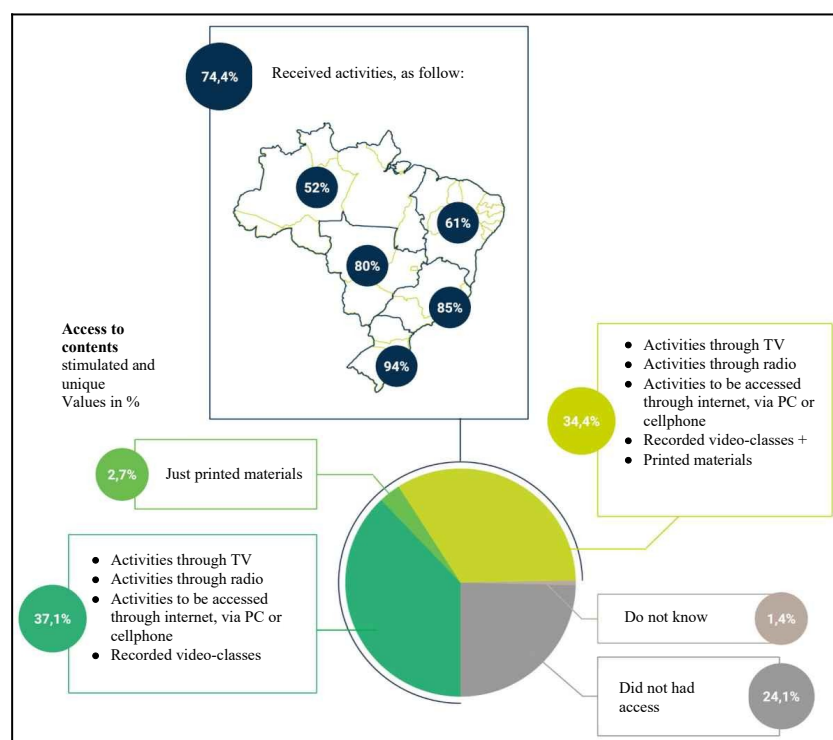
Source: Correio Braziliense (s/a)[3]

This image is consistent with the educational proposals of the "partners" of education and ratifies another survey carried out by *Todos pela Educação*[4], which presents how education was disseminated throughout Brazilian states and municipalities. The data refer to the year 2020, and although it is praised that 74.4% of students received activities, covering different mediums, and this is good, we must not forget the ways that there was no interaction between teacher and student, when the only medium was printed material, and we cannot disregard yet the percentage who do not know and those who did not have access to remote classes. These surveys are initial data, dated from April and June 2020, so the numbers may be even higher, given the breadth of the national territory.

In this context, it seemed to us, as Silva and Borges (2019) have already pointed out, that the "*curriculum is no man's land*", it is dispute, it is conflict. In a fierce arm-wrestling

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[3] Available: https://www.correiobraziliense.com.br. Access: 22 Feb. 2021.

[4] For more information, visit the *Todos pela Educação* website. Technical Note: Distance learning in basic education in the face of the covid-19 pandemic.

match, in which the State and its supporters stood on one side with the proposal to implement remote education. On the other, some subjects in their resistance, such as parents, teachers and the academic community, being overcome by sensitive and intentional speeches from the former, which will probably emerge during and after the pandemic. Here we can infer a possible institution of homeschooling in education, among other measures that can be implemented from this experience with remote learning.

Considering these introductory questions, we highlight that covid-19 is an infectious disease caused by the new coronavirus, officially identified for the first time in December 2019, in Wuhan, China. It is a respiratory disease whose transmission is mainly from person to person. The spread of the disease occurred rapidly around the world, leading the World Health Organization, in January 2020, to declare that the outbreak of the new coronavirus constituted a Public Health Emergency of International Importance, and to characterize it, in March, as a pandemic.[5]

In Brazil, these declarations led the heads of states, at the federal, state and municipal levels, to adopt preventive measures to contain the spread of the virus, including quarantine or social isolation in various areas, such as education. Thus, first the education systems paralyzed or suspended their face-to-face activities, and then they adopted remote learning, mediated by digital technologies, as a strategy to continue the academic activities planned for the 2020 academic year.

Despite social, regional and economic disparities, educational systems had to seek particular ways to minimize the impacts brought by the pandemic and, with the apparent absence of articulated actions by the central federal administration, the education systems could only rely on a normative axis legal from the performance of the National Council of Education (CNE), through Opinion n. 05/2020, which deals with the reorganization of the school calendar and the possibility of computing off-site activities for the purpose of complying with the minimum annual workload, which, as a result of this pandemic, provided guidelines for the organization of education, from Kindergarten to Higher Education. Among them, we highlight the guidelines for Basic Education, as it is the focus of discussion in this text:

Table 1 – MEC propositions for teaching during social isolation

Stages	Sugestions
Child education	For children from day care centers (0 to 3 years old), the guidelines

Elementary School - Early Years	for parents should indicate activities to encourage children, reading texts, games, plays, children's songs. To help parents or guardians who are not fluent in reading, it is suggested that schools offer caregivers some kind of concrete guidance, such as video or audio reading models, to engage young children in activities and ensure quality of reading. As for preschool children (4 and 5 years old), the guidelines should also indicate activities to encourage children, reading texts by parents or guardians, drawing, games, plays, children's music and some activities in digital media when possible. The emphasis should be on providing games, conversations, playings, drawings, among others for parents or guardians to develop with the children.
	At this stage, there are difficulties to follow online activities since children from the first cycle are in the formal literacy phase, requiring adult supervision to carry out activities. However, there may be possibilities for remote pedagogical activities with children at this stage of basic education, even considering the more complex situation in the early years. Here, the activities must be more structured, so that the acquisition of basic skills in the literacy cycle can be achieved. Therefore, the following possibilities are suggested here for the activities to be carried out: recorded classes for television organized by the school or educational network according to the planning of classes and content or via digital platforms for content organization; evaluation system carried out at distance under the guidance of networks, schools and teachers and, when possible, with the supervision of parents on their children's learning; list of activities and exercises, didactic sequences, learning paths by flow of complexity related to skills and learning objects; guidelines for parents to carry out activities related to the learning objectives and skills of the proposed curriculum; guidance for parents and students on the organization of daily routines; suggestions for parents to read for their children; use of open TV schedules with educational programs compatible with children of this age and guides to parents to what they can watch; preparation of printed materials compatible with the child's age to carry out activities (reading, drawing, painting, cutting, folding, pasting, among others); distribution of educational videos (short duration) through online platforms, but without the need for simultaneous connection, followed by activities to be carried out under the supervision of parents; performing synchronous online activities, regular in relation to knowledge objects, according to technological availability; offering regular asynchronous online activities in relation to content, according to technological availability and user familiarity; studies conducted with parental supervision; exercises and homework according to the teaching materials used by the school; organizing parent groups, through instant messaging and other apps, connecting teachers and families; and guidance to families and student accompaniment.
Elementary School - Final Years and High School	In these stages, cognitive difficulties to perform online activities are reduced over time with greater autonomy for students, and adult supervision can be done through guidance and monitoring with the support of plans, goals, hours of study in person or virtually. Here, the possibilities of non-presential pedagogical activities gain greater space. In this sense, it is suggested: elaboration of didactic sequences built in line with the skills and competences recommended by each area of knowledge in the BNCC; use, when possible, of open TV schedules with educational programs for teenagers and young people; distribution of educational videos, of short duration, through digital platforms, but without the need for simultaneous connection, followed by activities to be carried out under the supervision of parents; performing synchronous online activities according to technological availability; offering asynchronous online activities according to technological availability; directed studies, surveys, projects, interviews, experiences, simulations and others; conducting tests online or through printed material, delivered at the end of the period of suspension from classes; and the use of far-reaching social media (WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram etc.) to encourage and guide studies, as long as the minimum ages for using each of these social networks are observed.

Source: Brasil (2020)

According to the CIEB (2020), based on these recommendations, the strategies adopted by state and municipal education networks were as follows: digital platforms, social networks, digital materials, online classes, classes via TV, guidelines and schedule of activities for parents and availability of printed materials.

A question that arises in this new school format is: how is the curriculum structured and embodied in a perspective of full and critical formation of the individual, as established by the Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education (LDB)? And the question is: what type of education is this that is developed in such socioeconomic inequality in Brazil, in which only 67% of households have access to the internet, and 93% of them access it by cell phone (CETIC, 2018)? Can we speak, then, of an excluding and uncritical education?

In this context of crisis, it was possible to see that the pandemic opened up inequalities in various sectors, especially the educational, social and economic sectors, as we can see in the words of Mendes, Llamas and Maia (2020, p. 362). We are experiencing a serious economic inequality that permeates Brazilian society and, in the current scenario, there are many social sectors in which these historical disparities are sharpened and evident. Assuming that everyone can access and develop school activities remotely, whether by computers or mobile devices, is a great injustice. Students are not on the same level. This is exclusion!

We realize that this school system is not in line with what is recommended by the Federal Constitution, in its Article 206, which provides that education will be provided based on principles, including the equality of conditions for access and permanence in school. It also goes against the LDB when it establishes the principle of education for all, with equity.

It is unquestionable that we are in an extremely atypical moment, lived outside the educational "normality". Schools, teachers and parents are reinventing themselves and doing whatever they can to continue the student's educational process. But, in this process of reinvention, have schools maintained the minimum standard of quality necessary for learning, especially for critical learning? Has the practiced curriculum made this possible? Are the "weapons" or knowledge for a critical view of reality, especially this reality in which the pandemic revealed inequalities and socioeconomic problems, being built by students from school and adults at home? These are questions that disturb us and certainly disquiet many educators.

To answer these questions, we initially consider the assumptions of Historical-Critical Pedagogy, in which education:

> [...] the task of overcoming both illusory power (which characterizes non-critical theories) and impotence (resulting from critical-reproductive theories) is imposed, placing in the hands of educators a weapon of struggle capable of allowing the exercise of real power, albeit limited (SAVIANI, 2008, p. 25, our translation).

We believe that this school format and the strategies adopted restrict access to knowledge, empty the curriculum and critical education, in which the knowledge constructed is configured as an instrument in the struggle for social transformation. Quality remote education demands a series of efficient technological resources so that knowledge, in fact, is propagated and built. To clarify the context of education in times of pandemic, we will demarcate the difference between remote teaching, hybrid teaching and distance education, since we observe some mistakes despite this. Decree 9,057/2017, considers in its Article 1 that:

> [...] distance education the educational modality in which didactic-pedagogical mediation in teaching and learning processes occurs with the use of information and communication means and technologies, with qualified personnel, with access policies, with monitoring and evaluation compatible, among others, and develop educational activities by students and education professionals who are in different places and times. (BRASIL, 2017, n/p, our translation)

Hybrid teaching, on the other hand, is a pedagogical approach that combines face-to-face activities and activities carried out through digital information and communication technologies – DICTS (BACICH; NETO; TREVISANI, 2017, p. 13). Remote teaching is an alternative for the maintenance of the teaching-learning process, until recently performed in the face-to-face mode, where classes take place synchronously (video classes, lectures via web conference, etc.) and asynchronously, through activities in a virtual learning environment – VLE. We know that in public schools many families do not have this access. It also demands a systematic follow-up and support from parents or family members in student activities. We know that this does not happen because of the schooling and the many types of families that we have in Brazil.

Managing pedagogical work in times of remote classes is a Herculean challenge, as it demands a true reorganization of pedagogical work, from the design and curriculum structure, through didactics, methodological strategies and evaluation forms. But, now more than ever, we need to understand the importance of distinguishing between family education and school education. Libâneo (2013) shows us that educational activity takes place in the most varied spheres of social life, including in the family environment. However, school education is

systematized, has a pedagogical and democratic character, aiming at the full development of the individual. In it, the student has access to a wide range of historically constructed and socially legitimated knowledge. Consequently,

> [...] the pedagogical character of educational practice is verified as a conscious, intentional and planned action in the process of human formation, through objectives and means established by socially determined criteria and which indicate the type of man to be formed. [...] The teaching-learning process is, fundamentally, a pedagogical work (LIBÂNEO, 2013, p. 24, our translation).

It is necessary to remember that we are experiencing a new abnormality in the contemporary world and we should not suggest that, at this moment, the pedagogical work becomes the responsibility of the family members responsible for our students. It is known that education is also a duty of the family and that its importance and participation in this educational process for students is unquestionable. However, it is the school's duty to play its role, especially in the context of the social perspective – granting formation for citizenship from a critical perspective – and to delegate to parents the monitoring and guidance in this process. As recommended by Saviani (1996, p. 3, our translation),

> [...] considering that every relationship of hegemony is necessarily a pedagogical relationship, it is important to understand education as an instrument of struggle. Struggle to establish a new hegemonic relationship that allows the constitution of a new historical bloc under the direction of the dominated fundamental class of capitalist society – the proletariat.

Considering the contradictory history of formation and reality of our country, the author emphasizes the need to educate the citizen in a political perspective, from the perspective of the dominated and not the dominant. For that, he points out as a social function of the school the critical formation of the student from the access and mastery of school knowledge, which depart from the social practice of this subject. For Saviani (1996), there are three elements that are preponderant in this process: the elevation of the cultural level of the masses, the criticism of the dominant conception and the validation of common sense, which is the elevation of the person's philosophical awareness. In other words, this means that the role of the school is to provide the student's cognitive advancement, starting from their daily social practice, questioning them and equipping them so that the constructed knowledge becomes an instrument for social transformation.

This methodical and intentional process does not occur through the education of the family, but in an institutional way, as Cunha (2006, p. 444, our translation) points out,

describing the educational action as being the "[...] intentional exercise that employs human energies capable of producing a pedagogical effect, moving from the project to its realization". And this intention is reflected in the curriculum itself, when planning and applying it, as well as when evaluating.

Thinking on the curricular issue in this context in which education started to happen according to the conditions that schools and students have. If in the face-to-face regime the critical teaching perspective is hardly effective, imagine now, via remote teaching. We already have a minimum curriculum "guaranteed" by current legislation, and this minimum in this pandemic period can become even more minimized or emptied through selected, reduced and decontextualized activities. Do institutions have valued the quality of teaching and the selection of valuable content for the critical formation of students? Or is it that they have been based on the content available on digital platforms or social networks, without considering the prescribed curriculum (SACRISTÁN, 2000) and its aspects?

With these questions presented, we are not generalizing remote learning as something that did not work, on the contrary, we understand that this was the way found to alleviate the impacts of a school year, and we also know that there was and there is validity in this new teaching modality. Therefore, our reflections are so that, in return, we can resume a posture of building new knowledge based on historical and critical epistemologies, leaving the prescription and putting it into practice, even through the devices used in remote education.

Considering this, it is worth talking about the importance of the curriculum in action, the one that takes effect in practice, starting from the prescription, since this is what prevails, implying values and intentions to the educational practice. To this end, Sacristán (2000, p. 201, our translation) highlights that:

> [...] the value of any curriculum, of any proposal for change in educational practice, is evidenced in the reality in which it takes place, in the way it takes place in real situations. The curriculum in action is the ultimate expression of its value, because, finally, it is in practice that every project, every idea, every intention, becomes a reality in one way or another; manifests itself, acquires meaning and value, regardless of declarations and starting purposes. Sometimes, also, apart from intentions, practice reflects very different assumptions and values.

In this way, we understand that pedagogical practice is "[...] a living network of exchange, creation and transformation of meanings" (GÓMEZ,1998, p. 85, our translation), always seeking the autonomy and emancipatory character of the subject. Therefore, the role and presence of the teacher are extremely essential. In this context in which students study at

home, the school cannot delegate this responsibility to family members. We are not, in any way, underestimating the performance of family members or guardians or taking away from them the role of educating. We are just emphasizing that systematic work, based on pedagogical and curricular assumptions, is the responsibility of the school, in general, and the teacher, in a specific way. It is the practice of this professional that leads or not the student to develop the skills and abilities provided for in the curriculum.

In the current context, we denote some concerns, including the minimization of content, which we correlate with the narrowing of the curriculum addressed by Freitas (2018), in which it emphasizes certain disciplinary contents and makes others secondary. For the author, the meaning of this narrowing is related to policies that,

> [...] they reduce the concept of education to learning Reading and Mathematics on standardized tests, usually multiple choice, and induce the school to focus on these subjects, they deflate the school's emphasis on other subjects such as Arts, History, Philosophy etc. (FREITAS, 2018, p. 139, our translation).

The fact that we consider that "educational and curricular narrowing" can occur in remote learning – also synonymous with reductionism or emptying of education and the curriculum – refers to the issue that in the current school reorganization and, given the limitations of digital technologies and the teaching through printed materials to students puts into question the access to concepts and theoretical and critical foundations, which we debate so much and, as far as possible, put into practice.

Freitas (2018) also warns that the effect of this process of emptying/narrowing brings a perverse effect that becomes open in the factor of inequality of access to various instruments of knowledge and future perspectives. There is no doubt that a dualistic or differentiated education between the most varied social groups takes place in this process: an intellectual or academic formation for the rich, and a shallow, minimal education for the poor.

In addition, what can occur are intellectual losses, since most Brazilian students, via precarious remote education, will have an emptying in the training process because of the curricular practice put into action; we are not claiming, however, that remote learning is a total failure or that we should have stayed "arms crossed" at all! It so happens that the pandemic has sparked yet another important alert regarding the urgency of protecting public schools and the need to raise debates about public policies for access to information and communication technologies embedded in the most modern teaching and learning processes, in order to prevent the gap of social inequality that plagues our country from becoming

vulcanized in the curriculum, and to consolidate the dualism, which Libâneo (2012) appropriately classified as perversity in our educational society: a school of knowledge for the rich and another of reception for the poor.

Amidst the pandemic, we find ourselves in different situations of distancing, not only social, but also knowledge or intellectual. Perhaps the knowledge built in this context in which students are at home lacks a scientific and critical perspective. Many of them are built through media resources loaded with disorganized ideological precepts or by people who are unaware of the ways in which learning is triggered, such as the importance and need for didacticization. For Bezerra (2008, p. 135, our translation), didacticization is,

> [...] the process of transforming a given subject of a knowledge area into a teaching object, to be presented in the classroom. [...]. Thus, didacticization refers to the reformulations that knowledge undergoes, so that the learner can be introduced into the field of that knowledge.

In this didactic-pedagogical dimension, teachers have reinvented themselves to do the best they can offer, adapting as they can and with the scarce resources available. And in this process of reinvention, Libâneo (2010, p. 140, our translation), based on Vasquez (1977), states that it is necessary to think about the (re)organization of pedagogical work while, "[...] education of consciences, of organization of material resources and concrete action plans; all of this as an indispensable passage to resolve real, effective actions". In this sense, one cannot lose sight of the triad of the organization of pedagogical work, as recommended by Lima and Silva (2020, p. 18-19, our translation):

> It is about aligning the curriculum (the way knowledge is structured) with didactics (how the school will organize itself methodologically in the consolidation of its actions) and with evaluation (an essential process where it is possible to see how the OTP itself is being put into practice).

In addition to the viral danger, we run a serious risk that, given such didactic-pedagogical limitations, inequalities will widen or deepen in this context, as learning may not take place for some. In addition, it is worth noting that the context is quite opportune for homeschooling enthusiasts to take advantage of the situation to make their "pedagogical" interference, characterized in their economic ambitions to propagate educational packages and reduce the appreciation of institutions alleging that the quality of the educational system is within the family sphere, using technological and consumer ideology to make precarious education in schools. In this sense, Silva (2020, p. 3, our translation) argues that:

> [...] trying to force an "almost normal" situation, even under the discourse of complementing studies at home, can generate perfectly suitable arguments for a new educational design much more unequal than the one we have: the obsolescence of the teaching and of the school as a material and physical institution for human emancipation.

Another issue or danger perceived in this pandemic context is the implementation or even the imposing suggestion of Distance Education over face-to-face teaching. Can remote education be considered an introduction to the implementation of distance education in Basic Education? Finally, these are some issues that we bring as concern and reflection since this level of education demands a systematized organization and a well-directed and well-developed didactic-pedagogical processes so that the student's learning and full development can take place. In this sense, Saviani (2020) reinforces that distance education already has a regulated existence, coexisting with face-to-face education as a distinct modality, offered regularly. And yet, in line with our thoughts and reflections, the author confirms that remote teaching is seen as a substitute for face-to-face teaching, exceptionally in this period of the pandemic, in which face-to-face education is banned.

What do our research partners think

In order to better understand education in the context of the covid-19 pandemic and to ratify or refute the assumptions listed above, we conducted a survey with some subjects who experienced this phenomenon, namely: six Basic Education teachers, including five from public network and one from the private network; six students, one from private Higher Education and the other from Elementary School – Final Years from the public network, whose age range is between 12 and 16 years old; and five mothers. The definition of these subjects is justified by the diversity in terms of experiences, roles and socioeconomic and cultural levels among them.

Our objective when conducting the semi-structured interview with the research participants was to know their perceptions about this new school format, implemented in the country in an exceptional context. We know that there are other views and conceptions about the subject, so what we present is just a snippet of a different universe. What we present expresses the meaning of the phenomenon or the reality experienced by these subjects

residing in the Federal District and surrounding areas[6]. It should be emphasized that within these perceptions we are interested in the curricular dimension of the teaching developed.

The interviews were carried out during the period when the remote classes were taking place, specifically in August 2020, via cell phone/WhatsApp, considering the moment of social isolation. The group of students were asked the following questions: a) What is your conception of remote classes and/or activities? b) How is the work carried out by the school? c) Is there a problematization of the content worked on by the teacher? d) Does it relate the content to the problems of the reality in which the school is situated? To the group of teachers, we asked: a) What is your conception/perception about remote teaching developed at the school where you work? b) Does this format make it possible to develop practices as recommended by the curriculum adopted in terms of learning and formative principles? c) For you, is critical formation effective in this school format? And to the mothers, we asked: a) What is your view about the education that your child is having during this social isolation?

According to the students' reports, there are exaggerations of activities, lack of preparation by some teachers to deal with the digital platforms or applications adopted by the school and lack of guidance regarding the development of certain activities available. This is evidenced in the speech of student 4: "[...] sometimes the teacher tells us to work a bunch of pages in the book, take a picture and send it, some tasks I can't even do. Sometimes we get kicked out of the classroom and the teacher doesn't put us back" (our translation). This leads us to reflect on the specifications of a curriculum with a view to critical and emancipatory formation, which may not happen, because as Saviani (2008, p. 53-54) envisions, New School reached the traditional method not in itself, but in its mechanical application crystallized in the bureaucratic routine of the functioning of schools. In this sense, we deduce that the school, at times, has failed to fulfill its function, especially the function of fully developing the student in its multiple dimensions, including formation for citizenship.

In addition, four of the students, who may perfectly represent most students in public schools in the country, reported that remote teaching is very tiring and presents some problems, such as access, as the connection does not always favor accessibility; place not suitable for studies, since in home environment there are noises and movements that deprive them of concentration. However, they say they are adapting to this regimen and developing a study routine in whatever way they can. It should be noted that this complaint regarding access came from students in the public school system. We perceive quite different realities

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[6] There are 34 municipalities in Goiás and Minas Gerais that make up the RIDE (Integrated Development Region of the Federal District and Surroundings), established by Complementary Law n. 94/1998. These are municipalities that maintain metropolitan relations with the DF.

among the group of students. This was already foreseen, as detailed in the methodology above. While those say that access and study conditions are not favorable, the students in the private network does not experience such issues, due to the favorable conditions they have.

This first information can be evidenced in the following statements: a) "[...] classes are tiring and the contents difficult to assimilate. Access to classes is easy, but I find it easier when the teacher explains in person than by video" (STUDENT 1, our translation); b) "In my view, remote classes are essential. I'm very privileged, I have a quiet corner without interruptions, internet and printing possibilities" (STUDENT 2, our translation); c) "I'm finding remote learning a little difficult, but I'm doing it little by little. I leave the house and go to my grandmother's house to connect to the internet, because at home the internet is not good, but now it's possible to do everything well" (STUDENT 3, our translation).

From the students' reports, we realized that the teaching developed may be lacking, and that the curricular issue is uncritically centered on content or activities. All students reported the lack of criticality and observance of the reality experienced in the teachers' classes. By associating this complaint with the assumptions of Historical-Critical Pedagogy, it is possible to think how much the initial social practice and problematization may be neglected, which can lead to problems in the process of instrumentalization, catharsis and in the development of more conscious and transforming social practices.

Considering this pedagogy, Saviani (2013, our translation) asserts that "[...] knowledge is a specific object of school work" and an instrument for social struggle. Therefore, it must be built starting from the students' social practice and turning to it. Two of the students stated that: "The content is neither explained nor problematized, as you asked. We usually read and answer the activities" (STUDENT 6, our translation); "The contents have been explained according to our book. Generally, as it is on the platform there is no conversation. We don't talk about our reality, nor does he talk about the problems that exist where we live" (STUDENT 4, our translation).

In the teachers' reports, it was possible to notice discontent with remote teaching, although they recognize that, in the context of a pandemic, this regime became necessary for the continuity of academic activities. In short, the teachers' reports fall into quality, control, inequality, challenge, access aspects. One of the teachers says:

> *In my view, it's very challenging, it's even sad in some situations. I'm a night-time high school teacher and the students are uninterested. But when I talk about sadness, I mean the lack of economic conditions to access the activities. I will confess that sometimes I cried with some situations experienced by them. But, at the moment we are living, it is a way to not stop*

> *everything. So, I think it's valid, however I believe that if they made free internet available it would make a lot of difference* (TEACHER 3).

Other teachers stated that: "[...] the difficulties in dealing with remote teaching were many, as many teachers did not even know how to transform a Word document into PDF and this made the work of many of us difficult" (TEACHER 5, our translation). "This remote learning does not replace face-to-face teaching, there is no way to achieve quality learning, there is no way to know if the students are doing the activities and if they are understanding the contents, as the activities are not online" (TEACHER 2, our translation).

For one of the teachers, the curricular concern centers on the work aimed at large-scale assessments that are to come, as he says they have been working with a focus on the contents and subjects that are demanded in these tests. He says: "The curriculum continues to be followed, with minor changes to the assessment instruments. I live in a reality of two private schools in the Federal District, where evaluations are carried out via a remote system, with objective questions in ENEM format (A-B-C-D-E)" (TEACHER 3, our translation). As for another teacher, "[...] the remote learning format is not managing to follow the curriculum properly, as we are unable to work the way we should. I see that many colleagues are working with a low difficulty level. The explanations are being made in a reduced way, different from the face-to-face regime" (TEACHER 6, our translation).

As for the work developed in a critical perspective, the interviews carried out showed that remote teaching limits the teacher's pedagogical work. There is also the reality of two schools that are delivering printed materials to students who do not have internet access. These two realities, according to the teachers, except for the private school teacher, are configured as obstacles to dialogue with students and a closer approach, making it difficult to discuss and consider their realities and experiences.

Parents, as well as teachers and students, reported concern with the teaching-learning process mediated by digital technologies, as can be seen in these statements:

> *I am concerned about the exact disciplines, as it is very difficult to understand them without a face-to-face teacher. And I can't help my daughter in these subjects. In other subjects it's ok, my daughter can do it without my help* (MOTHER 1).
> *Online activities require us to follow up, as my son cannot do it alone. First because he doesn't understand some content, second because there is an accumulation of activities. Even watching videos produced by teachers, there is an uncertainty of right or wrong in the execution of tasks* (MOTHER 2).
> *Although I recognize that schools are doing the best they can and that remote learning is the resource for continuing classes, I consider it*

> *ineffective. I am very concerned about my child's learning this year* (MOTHER 3).
> *As a mother of a child in literacy process, I feel that my child will be severely harmed because the school is going through the activities, we are following the booklet, but the grandmother and I are trying to teach literacy in the matter of reading, but it is not the same thing as in the school. So there will be harm in the future* (MOTHER 4).
> *I have been following my son in online classes from Monday to Friday, but we do what we can, as I have to go to my sister's house to access the internet. Besides, there are things I don't know, other times the school sends a lot of homework without explaining the content or keeps repeating content from previous grades* (MOTHER 5, our translation).

Analyzing the mothers' reports, we realize that remote teaching has made learning difficult for students even though it has also made it possible in parts. Sometimes because it has been just by content or reductionist of these contents, sometimes because the teacher has not been able to develop his role as a mediator of the teaching-learning process and mothers are unable to help/teach their children at home. In addition, it was possible to notice that the internet access factor and the strategies made available in them, such as videos or digital materials by themselves, also constitute obstacles to the development of students.

According to MEC guidelines via Opinion n. 5/2020, it is up to schools to guide families to monitor the resolution of activities by students. However, it highlights that these constitute mediators in the development process of school activities at home and that their work does not replace the teacher's professional activity. What to do in this case where, according to the eyes of mothers and students, the school has not been able to develop its primary function? Those responsible for students, whether fathers, mothers, grandparents and others, may not really understand the main function of the school, since for many of them, the function is merely teaching and/or transmitting the content, but the role of the teacher as an institution is beyond that, as we can observe in the propositions of Saviani (2013) when he says that the school's function is the socialization of systematized knowledge. And it contributes even more by stating that the starting point of teaching is not the preparation of students, whose initiative is the teacher's (traditional pedagogy), nor the activity, which is the initiative of the students (new pedagogy). The starting point would be the social practice, which is common to teachers and students (SAVIANI, 2008, p. 56). The findings of these mothers confirm, in part, our initial assumptions when we state that remote education presupposes exclusion, loss of quality and deepening of inequalities.

As for curricular practices, we note that the focus of teachers has not been on the student's critical education, but on achieving the minimum learning or learning required for good performance in standardized assessments. In this sense, Santomé (2016) confirms that a

neoliberal education will be oriented to prepare consumer beings, critical of their interests as consumers, but not to be able to imagine and reflect on which models of society are fairer and more respectful of collective interests. Along the same lines, Sacristán (2000, p. 44) understands that the concern for strictly curricular themes arises in part for administrative convenience, rather than an intellectual need. And he adds that this situation has accompanied a whole tradition of cultural and uncritical psychological and pedagogical thinking and research (SACRISTÁN, 2000, p. 47). Together with the authors, we realize that the curriculum, under these conditions, fails to fulfill its function as a social object and as a practice around itself, to serve the interests of capital.

About this formation for such assessments, we consider that the school develops a pedagogy of results, so, even online, it is necessary to maintain the ranking of the "best minds" (SAVIANI, 2007). In addition to this issue, it is worth noting that, for some teachers, those from the public network, remote teaching, especially because of the access or digital resource used, hinders the development of critical pedagogy methodologies: dialogue with the student and listening to their knowledge, the problematization of these, among other issues that involve the development of awareness of these subjects, which is fundamental to intervention and social transformation.

By analyzing these reports, it was possible to see that antagonistic contexts permeate the reality of these subjects and the educational organization in general. Inequalities lead us to question: What education policy is this that segregates students and contributes to the deepening of disparities between them? In this dual context, Saviani (2008, p. 39, our translation) asserts that: "[...] the abandonment of the search for equality is justified in the name of democracy, and it is in this sense that so-called democratic procedures are introduced within the school". We know that the issue of equity in education is a historical problem, because since its inception, education has been marked by duality in the light of the socioeconomic dimension.

For a "*transition curriculum*" (SILVA, 2020)

With the contradictions already in place, we think about the post-pandemic period, about the work of education systems and schools, about the pedagogical and curriculum reorganization for each grade/year/modality. There is no doubt that the work will be arduous and must be humanely rethought, with a view to remedying these deficiencies or problems caused by the teaching developed in the context of the pandemic. Institutions must organize

themselves in such a way that they do not further harm students and education professionals, especially teachers, with an overload of the day, content and school activities. The moment will be for the organization and development of work aimed at the development of the individual in its multiple dimensions, considering the level and cognitive and psychological conditions of each one, with a focus on overcoming unleashed inequalities and the construction of scientific knowledge.

From this perspective, Silva (2020, p. 5-6) suggests that, in order to return to face-to-face activities, some adaptations should be made to the curriculum and the pedagogical work in general. According to him, it is possible to think of a "*transition curriculum*" with the following characteristics:

a)   We will need a collective and solidary effort to adapt the Pedagogical Work Organization (curriculum, didactics and evaluation); it is not about developing a "minimum curriculum", one in which only some content is picked out and considered relevant, usually without extensive discussion; it is also not just about an adaptation/adaptation of what cannot be worked, that is, the curriculum needs to overcome the view merely as a content grid;

b)   We must rethink hours and workload, in addition to working methodologies that are more dynamic, flexible and safe;

c)   It is necessary to implement more humane and efficient forms of assessment at the same time;

d)   It is necessary to prioritize a pedagogical proposal that does not cause more suffering than has already been in this year, in which the collaboration of all subjects involved with the pedagogical practice is extremely important. This includes the families of the students;

e)   A good solution is the so-called "work by projects", by themes, by integrating/structuring and transversal axes;

f)   It is necessary to invest in media and technologies (provided access to 100% of users) so that the school remains a democratic space for access to knowledge;

g)   It is essential to streamline materials, themes, excessive tasks and optimize time, space, content and form.

By suggesting curricular adaptations, as we have already pointed out in the so-called "transition curriculum", we differ from the curricular adaptations that involve special education, as well as the homogenization of the curriculum: it is about thinking about remote

education, the form how it was offered and/or made available, access to student learning, the difficulties faced by all involved, and also think about the possibilities of learning, making use of technologies, not as a sole means, but as another teaching-learning instrument. It is necessary to reflect on these points, among others, and rethink the organization of the pedagogical work, permeated by didactics, curriculum and assessment, as we are returning from a path in which the obstacles of some were not those of others. Collective thinking in this face-to-face and curricular resumption is essential to try to repair some damage caused by remote education, as well as by the devastating virus that causes Covid-19.

In this sense, like Silva (2020), we defend a project to return to face-to-face classes aimed at overcoming the inequalities that the current excluding education project has provoked. However, the research revealed that education developed in times of pandemic is segregating, inefficient, of low quality, uncritical, and contributes strongly to the deepening of educational and social differences in the country. We reiterate that it is up to the school to disseminate systematized, methodical and scientific knowledge, develop the individual's critical thinking and enable their integral development.

Final considerations

The pandemic will leave scars along the way, scars sometimes painful, but also victories. In the case of education, we can reap some bitter fruits from the neoliberal use of this context: the defense of homeschooling, by some enthusiasts and "entrepreneurs" of education, the emptying and strengthening of curriculum narrowing (FREITAS, 2018), as well as the demonstration of control and power of the pedagogical action.

The perceptions presented by the research interlocutors showed us some aspects that corroborate our perspectives, namely: the awareness that teaching is not ideal, but it is what we have for the moment; proof of the narrowing of the curriculum in which activities are centered on subjects assessed in external exams. The concern with learning and social inequality and access is also unveiled, as well as the limitation found by teachers to disseminate a more critical and transformative teaching.

Within our reflections, we understand all the obstacles and/or difficulties found in remote education, but it is not because we have this understanding that the critical look towards these purposes will be absent. On the contrary, it is necessary to reflect on all these issues to alleviate these side effects caused by the pandemic process to the educational system. In this sense of mitigation, we reiterate that face-to-face feedback needs to be thought

of to overcome the inequalities caused by this excluding format of education, which in its essence was characterized as teaching for a few, although we have noticed continuous efforts by the working class to be kept inserted in this process. But it is known that many got lost and can still get lost, that is, falling behind. It is also known that by establishing a transition curriculum for face-to-face return from classes, there are great possibilities for strengthening the student bond with the process of knowledge, learning and education itself.

As for data analysis, it gave us the opportunity to understand and recognize the difficulties that exist in this remote teaching format, as evidenced by the interlocutors of this research, namely: teachers, mothers and students. We also had the possibility to visualize the Herculean effort of the teachers to transform themselves into "super heroes/youtubers" overnight, many of them with no prior knowledge of the digital age. Mothers and students, with all the uncertainty and criticism, believed in the learning possibilities offered by the institutions through media technology. That's not why we're going to avoid criticism, because they must be made to improve teaching and subsequent use of these work tools, because through them it is also possible to promote Education.

Given the picture outlined, we believe in the possibility of a curriculum that establishes dialogue and debate as a methodological strategy, to favor critical thinking and human education in all its social, cultural and economic nuances. Although we assume that, in part, this did not happen, due to pandemic circumstances that affected not only those who acquired the disease, but everyone's emotions, because if we were not affected by the virus, we know someone who was. Especially in this sense, we are betting on a "*transition curriculum*", humanly designed to strengthen the student's bond with the school, and consequently to rescue, little by little, the ideal of an inclusive and quality public education.

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