

Teacher insurgencies in the curriculum and the production of the thought of difference¹

Insurgências docentes no currículo e a produção do pensamento da diferença

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to show that reflections/actions produced by teachers in their pedagogical practice contribute to the production of a kind of thought in the school curriculum that goes beyond the captivity of the representation. The analysis has stemmed from research conducted through semi-structured interview with teachers from a state public school. The analysis of the teachers' statements is aligned with the post-structuralist perspective and shows how the reflections/actions produced by them give rise to/rise up a thought of difference in the curriculum, as they put us face to face with the limits of essentialism and universalisms of the representational thought.

Keywords: representational thought, curriculum, difference, school.

RESUMO

O artigo tem como objetivo mostrar que as reflexões/ações produzidas por professores/as no fazer pedagógico contribuem para a produção de um pensamento no currículo escolar além do claustro da representação. A análise é fruto de uma pesquisa realizada mediante entrevista semiestruturada com professores/as de uma escola pública estadual. A análise dos enunciados dos/as professores/as aproxima-se da perspectiva pós-estruturalista e mostra como as reflexões/ações produzidas por eles/as fazem surgir/insurgir um pensamento da diferença no currículo, na medida em que nos colocam de cara com os limites dos essencialismos e universalismos do pensamento representacional.

Palavras-chave: pensamento representacional, currículo, diferença, escola.

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Introduction

Michel Foucault begins the preface to the book *As palavras e as coisas* (The words and the things) by referring to a text by the Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges, who mentions the existence of a certain “Chinese encyclopedia” whose contents would have caused him laughter, since it presents a rather incongruous classification of animals. The French thinker says that the reading of such a text disturbs all the familiarities of our thinking: “of that which has our age and our geography, shaking all the ordered surfaces and all the planes that make sensible for us the profusion of beings, making vacillate and disturbing, for a long time, our millenarian practice of the Same and the Other” (FOUCAULT, 1999, p. 9). In the sudden impossibility of understanding such classification, Foucault (1999) says that it is the limit of Western thought - our thought - that is in question.

Hence, the perplexity of the author of *The Words and Things* demonstrated by the long laughter when he came across such a writing. Such a reading placed him considerably far from the familiarity of Western thought, based on logical, rational ordering. At the same time that the text in question provokes a sudden impossibility of understanding the incongruity of the classification of animals - it may generate apathy, disconsolation, immobility - Foucault (1999) says that it also serves as a motor of thought, enabling a widening of our understanding beyond the cloister of representation, opening gaps in our rationality, and potentiating other ways of thinking and knowing. After all, according to Kohan (2016), the impossibility of grouping the animals in the enumeration contained in the Chinese encyclopedia “confronts us to that unthinkable space of our thinking and of ourselves that, from reading Borges’ fiction, one cannot inhabit, but also cannot help but try to inhabit” (p. 53).

Moved by the reflections of Foucault (1999) on the text by Jorge Luis Borges, we propose, in this article, to analyze enunciations² of teachers - obtained by semi-structured interviews - who work from the sixth to the ninth year of elementary education in a public school located in the Midwest Region of the country. The intention is to show that the reflections/actions produced by teachers in their pedagogical practice contribute

² We understand with Foucault (2012) the statements as “[...] things that are transmitted and conserved, that have a value, and of which we seek to appropriate; that we repeat, reproduce and transform, for which we prepare pre-established circuits [...]” (FOUCAULT, 2005, p. 147). The statements, in this perspective, mark what is considered true in a certain time and space. Veiga-Neto (2003), based on Foucault, says that enunciations are not every day, they are always rarer, more rarefied. “The enunciation is a very special type of a discursive act: it separates itself from the local contexts and trivial meanings of everyday life, to build a more or less autonomous and rare field of meanings that must then be accepted and sanctioned in a discursive network, according to an order - either in function of its truth content, or in function of the one who practiced the enunciation, or in function of an institution that welcomes it” (VEIGA-NETO, 2003, p.114).

to the production of a thought in the school curriculum that goes beyond the cloister of representation, that is, they contribute to the production of a thought of difference in educational institutions.

To do so, we approach the post-structuralist theoretical field and present, at first, contributions from theoreticians such as Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, Jaques Derrida, and Michel Foucault, among others, in the construction of a thought of difference. These theorists, by criticizing representational thinking, contest and destabilize the notions of identity and similarity. In a second moment, through the analysis of the interviews of the teachers who participated in the research, we show how their reflections/actions make a thought of difference emerge/emerge in the curriculum. In a certain way, these teachers contribute to the critique of the representational model of thinking, with the privilege of identity in the school context, to the extent that their reflections/actions put us face to face with the limits of the essentialisms and universalisms of representational thinking.

The state school where the teachers who participated in the research work offers Primary Education from 1st to 9th grade and is located in the Midwest Region of the country. During the year 2018, nine teachers from this school who teach from 6th to 9th grade and work in different knowledge areas were interviewed. However, considering the objectives proposed in this article, we will only refer to the statements of eight teachers, because the statements of the unnamed teacher are included in the cited statements; to preserve anonymity, we will use fictitious names whenever we refer to them.

The limits of representational thinking and the power of difference

Jorge Luis Borges' text, referred to by Foucault (2000), places itself at a considerable distance from Western thought, based on the representation model and with the claim of building a universal discourse capable of judging all other discourses and, consequently, all behaviors. The representational model of thought believes in the possibility of a subject that a priori possesses the capacity to know, to represent the essences of things, their essential identities. This knowing subject, by being naturalized, guarantees the natural exercise of thought, and makes thought and truth coincide. In other words, according to the Western philosophical tradition, thought, in the framework of the philosophy of representation, supposes that man has the most varied ideas and that these represent the true order of the world.

Dreyfus and Rabinou (2013) say that in the classical period, which for Foucault (2000) corresponds to the 17th and 18th centuries, "the project of constructing a universal method of analysis was established to produce perfect certainties through the perfect ordering of representations and signs, capable of mirroring the order of the world and being"(p.24). Cartesianism, a very representative figure of that time, by seeking certainty through the search for a method that would guarantee it, meant that all questions of identity and difference could be reduced, through the method, to questions of order. The central idea, according to Dreyfus and Rabinou, (2013) was that the support of representation should be secure and transparent.

Deleuze and Guattari (1992) offer their criticism of this way of thinking. In What

is Philosophy, when referring to the history of philosophy, the authors highlight Western epistemology as an agent of power that plays the role of repressor of thought, an apparatus of power in thought itself. In the same direction, in *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze (1988) says that what characterizes thought within the philosophy of representation is a dogmatic image of thought, an image that is of the Same and the Similar and that deeply betrays what it means to think. In this case, thought always starts from presupposition, making the beginning always a new beginning. According to Gallo (2010), this makes “that, in thought, the beginning, which would be the affirmation of a difference, [is] already a repetition, insofar as one does not originally begin, but rather resumes presuppositions” (p. 52). Recognition makes it possible to reach the main element of the model of representation: identity. The primacy of identity, says Deleuze (1988), “in whatever way it is conceived, defines the world of representation” (p.15). That is, in this image of thought, to know, across time and space is nothing more than to recognize that which remains identical to itself.

The philosophical discourse, for the French philosopher, “has always been in an essential relation with the law, the institution, the contract, which constitute the problem of the Sovereign, and which cross sedentary history from despotic formations to democracies” (DELEUZE, 2006, p. 327). The author highlights the need for a discourse or counter-philosophy, such as Nietzsche’s, “first of all nomadic, whose enunciations would not be produced by an administrative rational machine that has philosophers as bureaucrats of pure reason, but by a mobile war machine” (DELEUZE, 2006, p. 327). A war machine³ that does not reproduce a state apparatus, nor its internal despotic unity, but that makes thought a nomadic power⁴.

Deleuze (1988) says that philosophy ends at the moment when representation enters the scene; where the consensus about certain terms - such as thought, reason, consciousness, I, among others - makes any further explanation and conceptual production unnecessary, since their meanings are taken as evident; where thought closes in itself its action by making itself natural thought. Already the maturity of philosophy, not its renunciation, nor its infancy, Deleuze (2018) points out, lies in “the pluralistic idea that a thing has several meanings, in the idea that there are several things, and ‘this and then that’ for the same thing” (p. 13, emphasis added). The author sees this as the

³ Deleuze (2013) defines war machine “as a linear agency built on vanishing lines. In this sense, the war machine does not have, in any way, war as its object, it has as its object an incredibly special space, smooth space, which it composes, occupies, and propagates. Nomadism is precisely this combination war machine-smooth space” (DELEUZE, 2013, p. 47).

⁴ The nomad, for Deleuze (2006), “is not necessarily someone who moves: there are journeys in one place, journeys in intensity, and even historically nomads are not those who move in the manner of migrants; on the contrary, they are those who do not change, and set out to nomadize in order to remain in the same place, escaping from the codes” (DELEUZE, 2006, p. 328).

highest achievement of philosophy and, we might also say, the highest achievement of education and curriculum.

Deleuze's (1988) intellectual endeavor was in the constitution of a thought of difference that was opposed to a thought of representation. According to him, it is image-less thinking that makes it possible to think difference-no longer difference represented or related to the identical, but difference itself. Thought without image, for the French philosopher, is that "which is born in thought, the act of thinking engendered in its generality, neither given in innatism, nor supposed in reminiscence" (DELEUZE, 1988, p. 273). This means that thinking without a previous model of what it is to think opens up to creative thinking. Therefore, Machado (2009) says that Deleuze's philosophy, "when it puts itself in intrinsic relation with knowledges from other domains - with other modes of expression -, the goal is not to found them, to justify them, but to establish connections or resonances from one domain to another" (p. 12).

In this sense, we can say that Deleuze (1988), when elaborating a critique of the thought with image - "the traditional image that philosophy projected, built in thought to submit it and prevent its operation" (MACHADO, 2009, p.25) - makes us think about the limits of thought based on the representation model and opens possibilities for a thought without image, an extemporaneous thought, in the Nietzschean sense.

Derrida (1973) also contributes to the critique of representational thinking. According to the author, the Western philosophical tradition in its entirety could be referred to as metaphysical since it would aim to establish a foundation for reality. The phono logocentrism of Western thought, for the French philosopher, has in the rationality of discourse and in the instituted meaning a belief of language as meaning, as the grantor of the foundation, of identity and homogeneity. The author criticizes this focus on the unity between voice and logos and points to the primacy of writing, showing that there is no original meaning by which writing has always been demeaned.

Derrida (1995) dedicated himself, in his intellectual *démarche*, to stripping language of its naturalized and essentialized character. He pointed out that, throughout history, Western philosophy has sought both a "transcendental signifier" - a sign capable of giving signification to all others - and a transcendental meaning - an unquestionable signification to which all signs must turn. Marked by logocentrism, Western philosophy has dedicated itself to "the belief in a 'word,' presence, essence, truth, or ultimate reality, which will function as the basis of all our thought, language, and experience" (EAGLETON, 2003, p. 180, emphasis added). In Derrida's (1995) analysis, language is no longer conceived as a neutral and transparent bond of representation of reality, but as an integral and fundamental part of its very constitution. The elements of social reality are not external to language, bound to a fixed order, but considered in semantic terms as discourses, signifying an anti-realism, an epistemological position that, according to Peters (2000), "refuses to see knowledge as an accurate representation of reality and refuses to conceive of truth in terms of an exact correspondence with reality" (p. 37).

For this reason, in *The Writing and Difference*, Derrida (1995) understands discourse as a “system in which the central, original, or transcendental meaning is never absolutely present outside a system of differences” (p. 232). The philosopher departs from Saussure’s linguistics to show that every act of signification is formed within a system of differences. The sign, for not having essential properties, is defined by the difference that distinguishes it from other signs. Since it does not have a full identity, because this identity constantly escapes it, the sign will always depend on the differential position within the system of significations. Castro-Goméz (2020), based on Derrida, says that:

[...] in a system of this type one cannot think of something like a “pre-established harmony” among the elements, that is, a principle that regulates the position that each one of them occupies in the system and establishes beforehand the type and number of relations that it enters into with all the other elements. If this were to happen, what we would have would be a closed system, free of differences, but then the possibility of signification would also be closed (p. 15).

Thus, meaning is always unstable, it cannot be controlled; there are always other meanings that come to disturb the attempts to create fixed and stable worlds. By understanding that meaning is inherently unstable, that there are always other meanings that escape any and all attempts at control, the French philosopher deconstructs transcendental meanings by showing their status as fiction and illusion.

Derrida (1995) also shows that the Western will to fix the signifier and the signified, to define concepts without any ambiguity, makes thought/language operate with essentialisms expressed in binary oppositions - subject/object, soul/body, intelligible/sensible, essence/appearance, nature/culture. It makes one believe that in each term of the opposition resides an essence that is opposed to another essence.

The author severely criticizes the binaristic way of thinking. According to him, this way of thinking demands that each of the terms be simply exterior to the other, that is, “that one of the oppositions [...] be immediately credited as the matrix of all possible opposition” (DERRIDA, 2005, p.50), which demonstrates a hierarchy among conceptual orders. In this hierarchy, the second term of the opposition is always subordinated to the first. In this sense, binary thinking tends to “draw rigid boundaries between what is acceptable and what is not, between the self and the non-self, truth and falsehood, meaning and absurdity, reason and madness, the central and the marginal, the surface and the depth” (EAGLETON, 2003, p. 183). By drawing these boundaries in an absolute way, he forgets that they are always crossed - what is outside can be inside, what is strange can be intimate - and, therefore, they have nothing absolute.

In his critique of the naturalized and essentialized character of language and the binary model of thought, in which terms are organized from dichotomous and unified identities, Derrida (2005; 1995) also creates chinks in the representational model of

thought and enables an opening for multiplicities, an opening for the event. This is because, in the absence of transcendental meanings, we can think of difference no longer as derivative power, but as first power.

Foucault (2000) also contributes with his critique of thinking based on the representational model of the Western philosophical tradition. Among the many issues analyzed by the philosopher, we emphasize the question of the subject. Instead of considering the idea of a subject that a priori has the ability to know, to represent the essences of things, their essential identities - as in the philosophy of representation - Foucault (2000) proposes to deconstruct the idea of a constitutive subject by showing how the subject is constituted in the plot of history. Through a genealogy, the author intends to show a form of history “those accounts for the constitution of knowledges, discourses, object domains, etc., without having to refer to a subject, whether transcendent with respect to the field of events, or pursuing its empty identity throughout history” (FOUCAULT, 2000, p.7). In this way, he breaks with the modern, Enlightenment conception of subject, provoking a decentering of identity and the modern subject. Abandoning the idea of a subject that has always been there, he seeks to show how this subject is constituted. He proceeds his investigation by analyzing the various modern institutions, not to trace a history of social constructions, but in search of their action on the men of that period.

Foucault’s (2000) critique of the subject of humanism and the philosophy of consciousness calls representational thinking into question. For him, the emphasis on absolute self-consciousness and its supposed universalism implies processes that tend to exclude otherness, that is, all those social and cultural groups that act from different criteria. Instead of self-consciousness, theorists such as Foucault, Deleuze, Derrida, among others, emphasize “the discursive constitution of the self - its corporeality, its temporality and finitude, its unconscious and libidinal energies - and the historical and cultural location of the subject” (PETERS, 2000, p. 36). This represents a critique of humanism, the rational and autonomous subject, the universal claims of reason, and the scientism of the human sciences; therefore, also, these theorists assume an anti-foundationalist and perspectivist epistemology. Thus, they move away from modern assumptions - of universality, unity, and identity - and assume difference as an important category in their thinking.

Difference is a constant theme in the works of Jacques Derrida and Gilles Deleuze. In *Margins of Philosophy*, Derrida (1991) introduces the term *différance* and seeks to show that the movement of differing is irreducible to any attempt to realize difference. In this regard, Peters (2000) says that *différance* can be understood as a movement that, through delay and delegation, consists in deferring, suspending, diverting, postponing, withholding. In Derrida’s own words (1991):

The difference is what makes the movement of signification possible unless each element called “present” that appears on the scene of presence relates to

something other than itself, keeping in itself the mark of the past element and letting itself already be shaped by the mark of its relation to the future element, the trace relating itself less to what is called present than to what is called past and constituting what we call present through this very relation to what is not itself: absolutely not itself, that is, not even a past or a future as modified presents. It is necessary that an interval separates him from what is not himself in order for him to be himself (p.45).

Derrida points out that nothing exists outside relations of differences and divergences⁵, because any and all signification is only possible in the relation with what is not the same. In this sense, nothing is sufficient to itself, everything depends on the track of the other, and this other is also the track of other tracks - indefinitely, there are only tracks of tracks⁶.

Also, Deleuze (1988), in *Difference and Repetition*, proposes to think beyond the philosophy of representation, which kept it tied to the principle of identity. While tied to the principle of identity, difference has always been presented as a negation of being or as a concept of a derivative power. In Deleuzian thought, difference releases all its force and places itself as a first power.

In this way, difference is a central category for these theorists and makes it possible to decenter the power of modern metanarratives, opening spaces to emphasize multiplicities through indeterminacy and the play of difference.

So, thinking about education and curriculum from the point of view of multiplicity and difference implies questioning the model of thinking based on the philosophy of representation of the Western tradition. It implies questioning the master narratives, such as the subject-centeredness, the binary solutions, the transcendental meanings, that is, the universalisms and essentialisms that still mark educational processes. However, this is not always an easy task - but it is possible - at least for the teachers who participated in this research and who work from the sixth to the ninth grade in a public school located in the Midwest region of the country.

On a thought of difference in the curriculum

In a context where, in the current curriculum policy, the universalist and essentialist

⁵ Derrida (2001) says that the differences are by reason of the very principle of difference, “which wants an element not to function and not to signify, not to acquire or supply its ‘meaning’ except by referring it to another element, past or future, in an economy of traces” (DERRIDA, 2001, p.35).

⁶ With the concept of trail, Derrida (1973) shows the movement of *différance*. The trace announces something and at the same time differs, postponing and preventing its absolute realization. Therefore, “the trace is not only the disappearance of the origin, but it also means here (...) that the origin has not disappeared, that it has not been constituted except in counterpart by a non-origin, the trace that becomes, thus, the origin of the origin” (DERRIDA, 1973, p. 75).

discourse tend to operate, according to Lopes (2018), with a mandatory homogenizing and negative image of school, to analyze/present, through what teachers said in the interviews, the insurgence of a thought of difference in the school curriculum, a thought that goes beyond the cloister of representation, seems to be something quite appropriate. After all, “the art of presenting is not just the art of making something known; it is the art of making something exist” (MASSCHELEIN; SIMONS, 2015, p. 135).

Although the school has accumulated, throughout history, serious criticism to its homogenizing and little or no plural way of dealing with the difference, and the school context is still marked by the primacy of representation, making it difficult for teachers to break with the supremacy of identity over difference to think about education and curriculum, when we analyze the interviews of the teachers who participated in the research, we realize that in that school context the difference, in many cases, arises, or rather, insurges against the representational thinking. With this, we mean that many teachers, through the reflections/actions produced in their daily pedagogical practice in the classroom, also contribute to open cracks in the representational thinking model of the Western philosophical tradition that persists in educational institutions and potentiates a curriculum where difference is less and less subordinated to identity.

This points to a fact already highlighted by Skliar (2019), that schools are not made, that there is no school interiority from exteriority, that schools need to be made. This is what the teachers who participated in the research do, through their gestures, words, actions, and pedagogical work. They know that “from a certain hegemonic past to a certain plural present, something has weakened in the process of pedagogical construction” (SKLIAR, 2019, p.29). At the same time that they perceive the excluding and homogenizing past of school institutions, they wish/make schools that listen to singular lives.

Perhaps this is why teacher Luiz, when referring to the school curriculum, says that “it should be just a base, you have to try to work on those aspects, but you need to work on other subjects as well. He also says that it is necessary to “adapt the curriculum to the student’s reality, bring his reality, bring the academic knowledge to the student’s reality”, and that the curriculum should be thought considering “the context of each school unit”. Teacher Jorge, in turn, characterizes the curriculum as “plastered” because “it comes ready, you can add to it or remove it, but the demand is that it is all done, so it is a bit plastered”. Teacher Ana considers that her classes “are based on the student’s knowledge”, arguing that the school curriculum is “very ornate”. She defends a curriculum that is “more open for the teacher to decide what to work on, to have that freedom to work. Similarly, teachers Thomas, José and Irineu position themselves in relation to the curriculum. According to Thomas, the curriculum “should be improved according to each region. Teacher José says that one should analyze “[...] the context of each school unit,” and teacher Irineu observes: “I change, sometimes I put related subjects to try to develop more.

The teachers' positions presented above question, to a certain extent, a curriculum established with the pretension of having an official seal of truth. They make us see that there is no discourse, including about the curriculum, which can be considered neutral or that can represent a synthesis, the center, a supposed unity, or universality; they reinforce the impossibility of a supposed neutrality when we propose to feel and think about education. They also question the contents that, due to certain power relations, are placed as essential knowledge to be taught and learned by everyone. In this way, they put under suspicion the current proposals, which, according to Lopes (2015), "aim to build a foundation, a standard, a curricular base, a set of basic contents or even a set of consensual criteria to define once and for all an identity for the curriculum of basic education" (p. 447). The teachers also question the educational processes that seek the formation of an ideal of subject that cannot be guaranteed, because it is illusory, calling into question the credibility of the metanarratives of Western reason.

With this, the teachers weaken the bet on a universal reason to achieve the success of humanity, a universal moral, the progress based on a scientific reason capable of promoting an education based on universal methods applicable equally to all peoples and cultures. They show that "the reason that assists us to define once and forever the other subject has faded almost completely, pulverized in its arguments and tattered in its naturalization" (SKLIAR, 2019, p. 59).

We can also say that the teachers' positions question what Lopes (2015) calls curriculum consensus. The author understands the curriculum policy as a struggle for the meaning of what is curriculum, and this is not possible outside the contextual political dispute.

When teachers Luiz and Thomas highlight the need for a contextualized curriculum they are questioning, in a way, the current curriculum policies. When referring to the new Common National Curriculum Base (BNCC), Lopes (2018) says that "it is possible to argue that there is always a radical contextualization of the curriculum that cannot be solved by the pretension of associating a national common curriculum part and a local curriculum part, as recent policies have proposed" (p.27). Although our intention at this point is not to deepen the discussion about the BNCC, we agree with Lopes (2018) about the impossibility of calling a national or global curricular part pure, a pure local context, because there are always relations between these supposed parts and their supposed meanings. So, what teachers said in the interviews about the school curriculum shows that "it is not possible to stabilize the translation of the curriculum and stanch, in a moment prior to the political action of the curriculum, the conflict that constitutes the knowledge" (LOPES, 2015, p. 458).

In their own way, the teachers who participated in the research are untangling an idea of curriculum still marked by universalisms and essentialisms; they are building a thought and a language in relation to the curriculum "that listened first, that saw before and that does not impose itself to these perceptions, nor does it do so with a loud and

proverbial voice” (SKLIAR, 2019, p. 20); they are gestating a thinking beyond the cloister of representation to the point of opening pores in the reason of the Western philosophical tradition to vent the breaths of a thinking of difference in educational institutions.

Facing the tranquility that the identical offers - the same thought, the same face, the same voice - difference promotes disturbance, undefinition, strangeness. That is why, in the proliferation/affirmation of difference, says Foucault (2005), we feel more fear and repugnance, less passion and commotion. It is as if “we experience a singular repugnance to thinking about difference, to describing the distances and dispersions, to disintegrating the reassuring form of the identical. [...] It is as if we were afraid to think the other in the time of our own thinking” (p. 13-14).

However, for teacher Luiz, it is necessary that a thought of difference proliferates increasingly in the school, because the difference today is “much more visible inside the school, and the school has to know how to deal with these situations without imposing a standard but knowing how to work with these differences. Not wanting to change the student, the way he thinks, the way he feels, or the way he calls himself. He stresses the need to “adapt the curriculum to these realities. Teacher Gloria realizes that she has “quite a bit of difference in the classroom.” She says that the “cultural differences are visible, the way they look at things, the cultures.” She highlights the religious differences - “we notice them a lot” - and stresses the need to “learn to deal with the differences. Professor Irineu says that, in a school context where differences are increasingly present, it is necessary to consider that “everyone has their own learning time. Professor Carlos, when questioned about the production of difference as something that inferiorizes, attributes this to “the colonization process itself.

The fact that these teachers perceive the difference and emphasize the need to work without imposition of standards and considering the singularities of each student in the learning process shows a movement towards a thinking of the difference leaving the element of a difference already mediated by representation, that is, “submitted to the identity, the opposition, the analogy, the similarity” (MACHADO, 2009, p. 49). They are unleashing a movement of thought that criticizes the subordination of difference to the problematic of representation, to the privilege of identity, and are thus displacing the meanings commonly attributed to it. They no longer simply seek the common under difference but think of it differently. After all, as Silva (2002) says, if “identity is of the order of representation and recognition [...]. Difference is of the order of proliferation; it repeats, it replicates” (p.66).

Deleuze (1988), as a philosopher of multiplicity, has severely criticized the way of thinking that seeks the common under difference. For him, identity has always tried to reduce difference to a common element, and so Deleuze strove to show difference itself, variation, multiplication, dissemination, and proliferation. Paradise (2010) says that in Deleuze’s philosophy, difference is thought of “not as a relatively general characteristic in the service of the generality of the concept, but rather as pure event”

(p. 588). So, Deleuze (1988) and, in a certain way, also the teachers who participated in this research experience a thinking beyond the one, the whole, the origin - that is, beyond representation -, since they value rhizomatic⁷ multiplicities instead of arborescent representations⁸.

We are led to think, based on what the teachers said in the interviews, that in that school context there is a reasonable disruption of the established image of curriculum - an image that, according to Corazza and Tadeu (2003), bases and underlies the curricular thought as “a true-thinking, like the Whole of the logos or the policy, and makes the curriculum thus represented something safe and fixed” (p. 20). In fact, it is a curriculum without image that is being potentiated, and, who knows, we may soon glimpse in the school context “the pure game of differences, endless unfolding of perspectives and interpretations, endless masquerade that never stops to finally show the ‘true’ face of the dancers and guests” (CORAZZA; TADEU, 2003, p. 520, emphasis added).

It is visible, therefore, that the teachers who participated in this research contribute with their reflections/actions to the proliferation of a thought of the difference, a thought that goes beyond the cloister of representation in the school curriculum even in the face of educational policies such as those of the curriculum that excel in homogenizing practices. Just as Deleuze and Guattari (2011) say that “it is impossible to exterminate the ants, because they form an animal rhizome of which most can be destroyed without it ceasing to reconstruct itself” (p. 25), we say that it is impossible to exterminate the thought of difference that arises/emerges from the teachers’ reflections/actions on the school curriculum, that leaps from the cracks of the model of thought based on the philosophy of representation of the Western tradition, that tingles in the cracks, that emerges at the edges, constantly coming and going and, like the ants, composing itself in a thousand ways. So, imagining, reimagining the world, the school, the curriculum in every gesture, word, relationship with the other, with another way of existing, is possible, as Rolnik (2018) says, every time life demands it.

Some considerations

Moved by the reflections of Foucault (1999) on the text by Jorge Luis Borges and

⁷ While rhizomatic multiplicities are, for Deleuze and Guattari (2011), the mode of being of thought, society, history, and life, arborescent representations are a form of thought that strives to block the free development of multiplicities.

⁸ Regarding the traditional arboreal - Cartesian - metaphor of the structure of knowledge, Gallo (2008) says that knowledge, in this perspective, “is taken as a large tree, whose extensive roots must be planted in firm ground (the true premises), with a solid trunk that branches out into branches and more branches, thus extending to the most diverse aspects of reality” (GALLO, 2008, p. 76). The tree perspective refers to unity, all branches refer to the same (root/stem). Rhizome, on the other hand, refers to multiplicity.

by the enunciations of the teachers who participated in the research, which, in a certain way, shake what is familiar to the thought, we affirm the presence of a thought of difference in the school curriculum. Even in times of imposition of a Common National Curricular Base (BNCC), of discourses on education that go against a curriculum of difference, many actions/reflections of the teachers who participated in the research seek to break with the logic of homogenization, characteristic of the representational thinking that governs the schools since modernity.

Much of what the teachers said in the interviews makes us think of things happening in the daily life of the school, knowledge/practices being produced and used, others being discarded or reproduced, without producing any kind of totalization. These singular experiences that happen at school, even if they are small and still fragile, challenge the representational thinking by investing in a thinking of difference, a creative thinking that questions what pretends to be universal, stable, and true in the curriculum. Teachers are erecting a new image of thought and curriculum, freeing them from the burdens that crush them.

Just like Jorge Luis Borges' Chinese encyclopedia enables an encounter with what we don't think, with what seems impossible to think, the teachers who participated in the research produce/offer elements capable of questioning what we are being in school institutions; they produce other thoughts with strength to stretch, branch the curriculum, and even abandon curricular constructions, because something more interesting has emerged. If we lose sight of this, we will be losing the most essential thing about educational institutions, especially schools: the incessant restlessness between identities and differences, the permanent tension between the plurality of ways of life, the possibility of transforming certain existences. As Skliar (2019) says, we will fail to realize that "possibly, schools are the only place where, for many individuals, the invention of another language and the achievement of different destinies are at stake" (p. 52).

What we must, then, understand, driven by the statements of the teachers who participated in the research, is that each mode of existence has its point of view, and that the curriculum needs to be composed of as many forms as there are new ways of being. This is fully possible, because if the representational thought of the Western philosophical tradition spread everywhere and extended over the world, as Lapoujade (2015) says, "it happens that, 'under' the world of representation, resonates and has never stopped resonating the bottomless, the world of free and unbounded differences" (LAPOUJADE, 2015, p. 48, emphasis added).

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