

DOSSIER

*Internationalization of educational policies within the framework of human rights***The influence of UNESCO's ideas on public education policies for the effectiveness of the right: to education in Brazil*****A influência do ideário da UNESCO nas políticas públicas educacionais direcionadas à efetividade do direito à educação no Brasil*****Dirleia Fanfa Sarmiento^a**

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ABSTRACT

This article is the result of a documentary research and its analytical-discursive focus is the influence of the ideas of the United Nations Organization for Science, Education and Culture (UNESCO), since the nineties, on public education policies aimed at the effectiveness of the right to education in Brazil, in the context of Elementary Education. It highlights that, as a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) and, aligned with the purposes of this organization, UNESCO emphasizes the relevance of education as a means of building a culture of peace and tolerance, eradicating poverty, promoting and protecting human rights, and fostering equitable and sustainable economic development. Under the aegis of education conceived as a right for all, UNESCO works through technical cooperation agreements with Member States, public institutions, the private sector, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), universities and networks. This study addresses education policies based on Stephen Ball's assumptions, understanding them as strategic regulating devices that represent the conceptions and interests of those who develop them. Based on the documentary analysis proposed by Cellard, it describes the main dimensions covered in the Declarations resulting from the Conferences and World Forums held by UNESCO, within the established time frame, concerning the right to education in Elementary Education. It also highlights the presence of such dimensions in in-depth Brazilian educational policies, corroborating the fact that internationalization and technical cooperation are at the heart of UNESCO's constitution and, therefore, the influence of UNESCO's ideas on the policies of the Member States starts, to a greater or lesser extent, at the moment each of these States joined this organization.

Key words: Right to Education. Education Public Policies. Elementary School. Policy Cycle. UNESCO.

RESUMO

O texto, decorrente de uma Pesquisa Documental, tem como foco analítico-discursivo a influência do ideário da Organização das Nações Unidas para a Ciência, a Educação e a Cultura (UNESCO), a partir dos anos noventa,

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nas políticas públicas educacionais direcionadas à efetividade do direito à educação no Brasil, no contexto do Ensino Fundamental. Destaca que, enquanto uma agência especializada da Organização das Nações Unidas (ONU) e, alinhada aos propósitos desta organização, a UNESCO enfatiza a relevância da educação como um dos meios para a construção de uma cultura de paz e de tolerância, para a erradicação da pobreza, para a promoção e a proteção dos direitos humanos, bem como para o desenvolvimento econômico equitativo e sustentável. Sob a égide da educação concebida como um direito de todos, a UNESCO atua por meio de acordos de cooperação técnica com os Estados-membros, as instituições públicas, o setor privado, as Organizações da Sociedade Civil (OSC), as universidades e as redes. Aborda as políticas educacionais a partir dos pressupostos de Stephen Ball, compreendendo-as como dispositivos regulatórios estratégicos que representam as concepções e interesses daqueles que as elaboram. Por meio da análise documental proposta por Cellard, descreve as principais dimensões contempladas nas Declarações decorrentes das Conferências e dos Fóruns Mundiais realizados pela UNESCO, no espaço temporal delimitado, atinentes ao direito à educação no Ensino Fundamental. Evidencia a presença de tais dimensões nas políticas educacionais Brasileiras aprofundadas, corroborando que a internacionalização e a cooperação técnica estão no cerne da constituição da UNESCO e, desta forma, a influência do ideário da UNESCO nas políticas dos Estados-membros inicia, com maior ou menor intensidade, no momento que cada um desses Estados aderiu a esta organização.

Palavras-chave: Direito à Educação. Políticas Públicas Educacionais. Ensino Fundamental. Ciclo de Políticas. UNESCO.

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations (UN) is an international organization that works with the participation of the Member States, with a representation in each of these countries. Since its foundation in 1945, one of its purposes has been “to achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all [...]” (ONU, 1945, Article 1). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was founded the same year as the UN. As a specialized agency of the UN system, and aligned with the purposes of the UN, UNESCO aims to

[...] contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations (UNESCO, 1945)

Therefore, under the aegis of education, UNESCO operates instituting technical cooperation agreements with Member States, public institutions, the private sector, civil society organizations (CSO), universities and networks, including the areas of Education, Natural Sciences, Social and Human Sciences, Culture, Communication and Information. Conceived as a right for all (ONU, 1948; UNESCO, 1990; UNESCO; CONSED; Ação Educativa, 2001; UNESCO, 2016) throughout their lives (UNESCO, 2016), UNESCO emphasizes the relevance of education as one of the means to build a culture of peace and tolerance, for the eradication of poverty, for the promotion and protection of human rights, as well as for equitable and sustainable economic development (UNESCO, 2016).

By briefly contextualizing the origin of UNESCO, we intend to show that the perspectives of internationalization are at the heart of its constitution. According to UNESCO (2003, p. 154), internationalization “may involve international cooperation, but it also refers to changes that occur within a given institution, through political initiatives of specific character”. According to Knight (2004, p. 8), “Internationalization is not a new term. It has been used for centuries in political science and governmental relations but its popularity in the education sector has really only soared since the early 80s. For Libâneo (2016, p. 43):

In the field of education, internationalization means modeling educational systems and institutions according to supranational expectations defined by international organizations connected to the major world economic powers, based on a globally structured agenda for education, which are reproduced in national educational policy documents such as guidelines, programs, bills of law, etc.

According to Gacel-Ávila (2000, p. 122), “although internationalization and globalization are two different concepts, they are united by the same dynamics. Globalization can be understood as the catalytic element, while internationalization would be the proactive response to such a phenomenon”. Knight (2012, p. 65) explains that “globalization focuses on the worldwide flow of ideas, resources, people, economy, values, culture, knowledge, goods, services, and technology” and “internationalization emphasizes the relationship between and among nations, people, cultures, institutions, and systems”.

Based on that, this study presents an analytical-discursive focus on the influence of UNESCO's ideas in public educational policies aimed at the effectiveness of the right to education in Brazil, in the context of Elementary School. Ball (1998, p. 124) explains that policies cannot be considered linearly, statically and superficially, because “they are both systems of values and symbolic systems; ways of representing, accounting for and legitimizing political decisions. Policies are articulated both to achieve material effects and to manufacture support for those effects”. According to the author:

[...] policies can be seen as representations intricately coded (by debates, agreements, interpretations and reinterpretations of public authority) and decoded (by the actors' interpretations and meanings, according to their stories, experiences, abilities, resources and context in an equally complex way (BALL, 2002, p. 21).

Therefore, policies can be understood as regulatory devices that represent the conceptions and interests of those who elaborate them. According to Agamben (2005, p. 10), “the device always has a concrete strategic function and is always associated with a power relationship”, as it is “anything that has the ability to capture, guide, determine, intercept, model, control and ensure human gestures, behaviors, opinions and speeches” (Agamben, 2005, p. 13). For the author, although these devices have always existed, there is currently “no single moment in the individuals' lives that is not modeled, contaminated or controlled by some device” (Agamben, 2005, p. 13). As institutions are composed of people, the devices also regulate the *modus operandi* of these institutions.

The right to education is specified in the 1988 Brazilian Constitution (Brasil, 1988), along with a set of other rights essential to human dignity. This Constitution establishes the Democratic Rule of Law and, from this point of view, it is a national reference in terms of the primacy of human rights

guarantees. Since the 1988 Constitution (Brasil, 1988), in the legal system, education is considered a subjective public right. According to Carlos Roberto Jamil Cury (Brasil, 2000, p. 21), such a right is understood as “the one by which the holder of a right can directly and immediately demand from the State the fulfillment of a duty and an obligation. The holder of this right is any person, of any age, who has not had access to compulsory education at the appropriate age” as well as “people who, even having had access, could not complete education” (Brasil, 2000, p. 21). The author also explains it is “a subjective right, that is, a person is the holder of a prerogative of their own, essential for their personality and citizenship (Brasil, 2000, p. 21). Likewise, “it is called public law because, in this case, it is a legal rule that regulates the competence, obligations and fundamental interests of public authorities, explaining the extent to which citizens enjoy public services” (Brasil, 2000, p. 21).

We assume that, to a greater or lesser extent, the influence of UNESCO's ideas on Member States' policies starts when each of these countries joined this organization. Brazil is one of the countries that signed the Constitutional Chart in 1945. However, only in 1964 Brazil started to have a representation of UNESCO. In 1982, the Decree n. 8.522, of August 25, 1982, enacted the Technical Cooperation Agreement in Education, Science, and Culture between the Federal Republic of Brazil and UNESCO in Paris, on January 29, 1981 (Brasil, 1982). Among the objectives of the Agreement, we highlight the following: “to strengthen and enhance cooperation between Brazil and UNESCO in technical areas within the scope of the organization's competence” and “to develop the exchange of experiences and information with developing countries in educational, scientific and cultural matters” (Brasil, 1982, art. 1st). Therefore, in this article, we make an analytical selection from the nineties, and focus on the main dimensions related to the guarantee of the right to education in Primary Education, which are part of the World Declarations disseminated by UNESCO (UNESCO, 1990; UNESCO, 1994; UNESCO; CONSED; Ação Educativa, 2001; UNESCO, 2016), showing the relations between these dimensions and what is proposed in Brazilian educational policies in that period.

After these considerations, we presented the analytical-discursive focus of this article. After that, we describe the methodological approach used for the study. Then, we concentrate on the results and the discussion. In the final considerations, we resume the main aspects addressed throughout the text and, finally, we list the references used.

Methodological Approach

This study is based on a documentary research (Flick, 2013; Cellard, 2014), developed within the Research Group “Right to Education and Public Education Policies”, whose research subject is the Right to Education and its means of implementation in Basic Education. We make a selection, sharing reflections regarding one of the objectives of this research, which is to analyze the influence of UNESCO's ideas on public education policies aimed at the effectiveness of the right to education, in the context of Elementary School, which were proposed between 1990 and 2023. Flick (2013, p. 233) points out that “documents are not only a simple representation of facts or reality. Someone (or an institution) produces them for some (practical) purpose and some kind of use (which also includes the definition of who is meant to access these data”.

We adopted Cellard's guidelines (2014) for the document analysis. The author states that, when choosing and selecting documents to compose the research *corpus*, it is essential "to locate the relevant texts and evaluate both their credibility and their representativeness" (Cellard, 2014, p. 296). Therefore, to compose the research corpus, we selected the World Declaration on Education for All: satisfaction of basic learning needs (UNESCO, 1990), the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994); The Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All (UNESCO; CONSED; Ação Educativa, 2001), and Education 2030: Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all (UNESCO, 2016). We selected these Declarations because they establish education agendas and goals to be fulfilled by member states, focusing on the proposal and/or revitalization of legislation and/ or public education policies. Akkari (2011, p. 17) emphasizes that "regardless of the country, national education policies can no longer be considered and implemented without considering international debates".

Results and Discussions

In 1990, the World Declaration on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs (UNESCO, 1990), organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank, highlighted the difficulties faced by less developed countries in ensuring quality basic education; the expansion of education financing in countries with growing economies and the fund cut-off in some industrialized countries. The Declaration reaffirms that "education can help ensure a safer, healthier, more prosperous and environmentally sound world, while simultaneously contributing to social, economic and cultural progress, tolerance and international cooperation" (UNESCO, 1990). Therefore, it is proposed that the Member States focus on their educational systems regarding the following aspects: "Universalizing access and promoting equity; focussing on learning; broadening the means and scope of basic education; enhancing the environment for learning; and strengthening partnerships" (UNESCO, 1990). In this context, "education must be seen as a fundamental dimension of any social, cultural and economic design" and, therefore, it requires funding, reallocation and the appropriate use of resources. This purpose "is a common and universal human responsibility. It requires international solidarity and equitable and fair economic relations in order to redress existing economic disparities" (UNESCO, 1990).

In light of the proposals of Education for All (EFA), the Ministry of Education signed a cooperation agreement with UNESCO in 1993, aiming to draw up a Ten-Year Education Plan (Brasil, 1993). In the introduction, the Ten-Year Plan points out that, as a signatory member of the World Declaration, "Brazil has a significant responsibility in the global efforts to ensure its population the right to education - a commitment also reaffirmed and expanded in its 1988 Constitution" (Brasil, 1993, p. 11). It is also pointed out that the Plan

[...] is an international commitment, on the one hand, to the extent that Brazil is part of a community that transcends its borders; and, on the other hand, for taking a national

commitment to offer quality basic education for all, with no discrimination and with ethics and equity (Brasil, 1993, p. 15).

Thus, Brazil takes on a set of global goals to be achieved within ten years, namely: fostering learning and skills development in the curricular components that are part of the common basis of the school curriculum; expanding services for the school-age population; improving school flow by reducing failure; expanding the provision of Early Childhood Education and education service for young people and adults; increasing investment in education; improving school management and enabling financial, administrative and pedagogical autonomy; qualifying basic teacher training; establishing career plans and increasing public school teachers' wages; and decentralizing book and textbook programs and school lunch programs (Brasil, 1993). By specifying this responsibility, it is clear that the country is aligned with EFA commitments and is willing to undertake efforts to achieve universal equitable education, enabling the achievement and maintenance of appropriate levels of learning; to encourage financial resources for maintenance and investments in educational quality; to expand cooperation and educational and cultural exchange of a bilateral, multilateral and international nature (Brasil, 1993).

The Ten-Year Education Plan (Brasil, 1993 p. 57) highlights that "international cooperation is a source of contributions of undeniable reach for the formulation and implementation of an education policy for all", which can help assist in the challenge of providing "universal quality basic education". Therefore, it is important to "transfer and adapt methods and technologies through the exchange of knowledge and information by means of cooperation agreements".

In 1994, representatives of 88 governments and 25 international organizations endorsed the Salamanca Statement: On Principles, Policies and Practices on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994). The Statement reaffirms "the commitment to Education for All, recognizing the necessity and urgency of providing education for children, youth and adults with special educational needs within the regular education system" (UNESCO, 1994). It proposes that all governments "adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise" (UNESCO, 1994).

In 1996, under the chairmanship of Jacques Delors, the document "Learning: the treasure within: Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century" (Delors *et al.*, 2010) was written. Delors *et al.* (2010) highlights that

[...] the Commission affirms its belief that education has a fundamental role to play in personal and social development [...] as one of the principal means available to foster a deeper and more harmonious form of human development, and thereby to reduce poverty, exclusion, ignorance, oppression, and war (Delors *et al.*, 2010, p. 5).

In this sense, "this elementary duty needs to be constantly brought to mind, so that greater attention is paid to it, even when choosing between political, economic and financial options" (Delors *et al.*, 2010, p. 6). This report presents the so-called four pillars of education that are the foundations of lifelong education, namely: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be (Delors *et al.*, 2010), which are developed in the area of education to this day.

In 2000, the objectives set by the World Declaration on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs (UNESCO, 1990) were assessed. Given the little progress made, the Dakar Framework for Action reaffirms its commitment to Education for All (UNESCO, 1990), when it points out that “the view of Jomtien remains pertinent and powerful. It provides a broad and comprehensive view of education and its critical role in empowering individuals and transforming societies”. It also affirms that:

Education is a fundamental human right. It is the key to sustainable development and peace and stability within and among countries, and thus an indispensable means for effective participation in the societies and economies of the twenty-first century, which are affected by rapid globalization. Achieving EFA goals should be postponed no longer (UNESCO, 1990).

Six objectives were set, including the expansion and improvement of early childhood education and care; the access for all children to a full, free, compulsory and quality primary education; equitable access to adequate learning and life skills programmes for young people and adults; increased literacy levels and equal access to basic and continuing education for all adults; and the eradication of gender disparities, ensuring full and equitable access for girls (UNESCO; CONSED; Ação Educativa, 2001). According to the Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2015a), only one third of the Member States have achieved the six education goals set for the 2000-2015 period.

In 2015, as a result of the World Education Forum, the document ‘Incheon Declaration: Education 2030 – towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all’ (UNESCO, 2016) sets out the educational agenda until the year 2030.

Education 2030 (UNESCO, 2016) reaffirms the assumptions of the Declarations that preceded it (UNESCO, 1990; UNESCO; CONSED; Ação Educativa, 2001). It highlights the recognition of “unfinished business” of the EFA agenda and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) related to education (emphasis in original). Consequently, “it is inspired by a humanistic vision of education and development, based on human rights and dignity; social justice; inclusion; protection; cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity; and shared responsibility and accountability (UNESCO, 2016). The document states that “our vision is to transform lives through education, recognizing the important role of education as a main driver of development and in achieving the other proposed SDGs [Sustainable Development Goals - emphasis added]”. It also claims that “we commit with a sense of urgency to a single, renewed education agenda that is holistic, ambitious and aspirational, leaving no one behind”, because “education is a public good, a fundamental human right and the basis for guaranteeing the realization of other rights (UNESCO, 2016).

By taking actions regarding the ‘Sustainable Development Goal 4: Quality Education’, the educational agenda emphasizes Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), aiming at the effectiveness of the right to a balanced environment for all. In line with ESD, it proposes Global Citizenship Education (GCE) and Lifelong Learning as essential to ensure a quality and inclusive education for all.

ESD “has to be understood as an integral part of quality education, inherent to the concept of lifelong learning” (UNESCO, 2017, p. 8). Therefore, “all educational institutions – from pre-school to tertiary education and in no-formal and informal education – can and should consider it

their responsibility to deal intensively with matters of sustainable development and to foster the development of sustainability competencies" (UNESCO, 2017, p. 8). In line with ESD, the GCE "aims at developing competencies that empower individuals to reflect on their own actions, taking into account their current and future social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts, from a local and global perspective" (UNESCO, 2017, p. 8).

According to UNESCO (2015b, p. 15), "the GCE is not and should not be a promotion of citizenship models of a particular country or region. Global doesn't necessarily equal international". Thus, "many projects promote global citizenship education through exchanges and contacts between schools and teachers. [...] GCE encourages people to open up to different cultures, think, act and connect more widely in different ways" (UNESCO, 2015b, p. 15).

The concept of Lifelong Education, according to Delors *et al.* (2010, p. 32) is considered "the key that gives access to the 21st century", because "it goes beyond the traditional distinction between initial and continuing education". The authors clarify that "in its new guise, education [...] is conceived as something going far beyond what is already practised, particularly in the developed countries, i.e. upgrading, with refresher and conversion or promotion courses for adults" (Delors *et al.*, 2010, p. 32). Therefore, "it should open up opportunities for learning for all. [...] offering them a second or third chance, satisfying their desire for knowledge and beauty or their desire to surpass themselves, or making it possible to broaden and deepen strictly vocational forms of training, including practical training" (Delors *et al.*, 2010, p. 32).

According to Akkari (2017, p. 941), "what was tried and carried out in Incheon [...] was to create a common international agenda between the countries of the North and the South. [...] the 1990-2000 and 2000-2015 agendas were mostly focused on the countries of the South, especially on basic education". The author states that "for the first time, the world is focused on the same international education agenda," and "the symbolic value of a common agenda is important to all stakeholders in education, including researchers. A common agenda opens up for more partnerships and different perspectives on education and training" (Akkari, 2017, p. 941).

Considering the main dimensions addressed in each of the Declarations, between 1990 and 2023, we identify the influence of UNESCO's ideas, especially on the following educational policies, based on the National Education Bases and Guidelines Law (Brasil, 1996a): the Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Basic Education and the Valorization of Education Professionals (Brasil, 1996b); the National Policy for the Integration of Disabled People in Brazil (Brasil, 1999); National Education Plans (Brasil, 2001; 2014); the Basic Education Assessment System (Brasil, 2005); the National Human Rights Education Plan (Brasil, 2006a); the expansion of Elementary School to nine years (Brasil, 2006b); the Education Development Plan (Brasil, 2007a); and the Goal Plan Commitment All for Education (Brasil, 2007b); More Education Program (Brasil, 2007c); The Assessment of Literacy: "the Provinha Brasil" (Brasil, 2007d); The National Policy of Special Education in the Inclusive Education Perspective (Brasil, 2008); the National Curriculum Guidelines for 9-year Elementary School (Brasil, 2010); the National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age (Brasil, 2012a); the National Policy for the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder (Brasil, 2012b); the New More Education Program (Brasil, 2016a); the Brazilian National Common Core

Curriculum (Brasil, 2017); the Literate Brazil Program (Brasil, 2022); and the National Commitment to Literate Children (Brasil, 2023).

We now present some evidence that illustrate the influence of UNESCO's ideology in the aforementioned documents, indicating the recurring themes in such documents that are highlighted in the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) and in the Declarations (UNESCO, 1990; UNESCO; CONSED, Ação Educativa, 2001; UNESCO, 2016) that deal with the educational agenda: the right to education; quality education; access to and retention in school; universalization; improvement of learning outcomes; improvement of basic education; skills and abilities; basic learning needs of children, youth and adults; educational technologies; reduction of illiteracy rate; valorization of the education professional; ethnic-racial diversity; human, linguistic, cultural and identity diversity of deaf, deaf-blind and hearing impaired people; lifelong learning; human rights; human rights education; gender equity; inclusive education; education financing; tolerance; culture of peace; sustainable development; social justice; among others.

In light of the above, it is possible to see that, since the nineties, the alignment of goals and strategies in education in Brazil with UNESCO's ideas has increased, emphasizing the internationalization of education policies in our country. As an organization of a universal nature, although it is criticized in face of the need for reforms, it plays a significant role, since it is a forum and instrument of global governance. UNESCO mobilizes Member States to search and find the balance between particular interests and global problems, articulating the most varied sources of action and agents in the international scenario (Pinto, 2014).

Shiroma (2020, p. 2) points out that "the growing participation of multilateral organizations in the formulation of national policies promotes reflection on their role as organizations that foster reforms [...], becoming important actors in the transnational governance of education". In this perspective, Bortot, Scaff and Souza (2023, p. 3) show that multilateral organizations "in the context of global governance, both provide financial support, and include advice, coordination of common agendas and move policies of international issues that affect the countries' national policies". Therefore, "it is a permanent game of interactions, in constant adjustment process and/ or imposition from the global to the local, where there is no political issue that is discussed internally that is not treated simultaneously in some international body" (Bortot; Scaff; Souza, 2023, p. 3). Scaff (2007, p. 338) claims that "it must be considered that underdeveloped and developing countries have little political and financial autonomy to refuse external resources at lower interest rates than those of the financial market, such as the ones the World Bank offers".

De Wit and Hunter (2015, p. 48) highlight that in "the second half of the 1990s, the political logic of internationalization gradually gave way to economic logic". According to Diniz Júnior (2021, p. 345), "changes in the economic order and work organization were configured as forces to enhance the necessary transformations for education in the perspective of globalization of capital". According to the author, "this need did not arise in the logic of the search for the guarantee of education as an inalienable right, but as a strategy to consolidate the *modus operandi* of neoliberalism". It is clear the progress in partnerships among the public sector, private companies and/or for-profit economic educational groups, making education a "business to be treated by the logic of consumption and

commercialization, making room for the commercialization of education in a global scope” (Libâneo, 2016, p. 44).

According to Ball (2018, p. 11), “educational services offer attractive alternative investment possibilities”. Therefore, “the companies invested in are ambitious, expanding, global businesses, working across national settings, bringing standardised practices – curriculum, pedagogy and assessment - to bear” (Ball, 2018, p. 11). Thus, they “take up roles within the discourse and infrastructure of education reform, converting education policy into a different sort of language, invested with different sorts of relationships, interests and purposes”. Consequently, “the roles and structure of the state are changing. Increasingly states are monitors, contractors and target-setters rather than responsible for service delivery” (Ball, 2018, p. 11).

Ball (2002, p. 21) argues that policies are “representations intricately encoded (via disputes, agreements, interpretations and reinterpretations of public authority)”, which are “decoded (via interpretation and meaning of the actors, according to their stories, experiences, skills, resources and context) in an equally complex way”. Therefore, according to the author, there is “a difference between the control of the agenda and ideological policies and the processes of political influence and text production in the State. Only certain influences and agendas are recognized as legitimate and only certain voices are heard at any time” (Ball, 2002, p. 21).

In an interview with Mainardes and Marcondes (2009, p. 305), Ball draws attention to the complexity of the process of “translating policies into practices”, once “policies are written, whereas practice is action, which includes doing things”. Consequently, “people who put policies into practice have to convert/transform these two modalities [...] which involves an action process, the implementation of a policy into practice and through practice”. The author clarifies that “practice is made up of much more than the sum of a set of policies and is typically invested with local and personal values [...], and it involves resolving, or struggling with, conflicting expectations and requirements - agreements and secondary adjustments are necessary” (Ball *apud* Mainardes; Marcondes, 2009, p. 305).

Ball (2001, p. 62) discusses the “gradual disappearance of the conception of specific policies of the Nation State in the economic, social and educational fields [...] and [...] the inclusion of all these fields in a single conception of policies for economic competitiveness”, which, from his perspective, entails “the increasing abandonment or marginalization (not in comes to rhetoric) of the social purposes of education”. Another of his considerations is “if we are currently walking towards what could be called ‘the end of politics’”, given the growing problem of establishing distinctions between “educational policies of rival traditional political parties and that, in many cases, national policies are currently defined in terms of different manifestations of globalization” (Ball, 2001, p. 62, emphasis in original).

In the context of globalization, Ball (2001, p. 101) discusses whether Nation States can have political and economic autonomy in the face of the growing breadth and influence of supra-national organizations”. In his view, “it is possible that no State has control over its nation” (Ball, 2001, p. 101). He also points out the impacts on national policies, since the creation of these policies is

[...] inevitably, a ‘bricolage’ process; a constant process of borrowing and copying fragments and parts of ideas from other contexts, of using and improving the already tried and tested

local approaches, of cannibalizing theories, of research, of adopting trends and fashions and, sometimes, of investing in everything that can work. Most policies are fragile, the product of agreements, something that may or may not work; they are reworked, refined, rehearsed, with a lot of nuances and modulated through complex processes of influence, production and dissemination of texts and, ultimately, recreated in the contexts of practice (Ball, 2001, p. 102, emphasis in original).

Ball also expresses his concern about the consequences of these impacts on education and about “generic reform strategies that, in turn, rely on the installation of a set of technology policies that ‘produce’ or promote new values, new relationships and new subjectivities in practice (Ball, 2001, p. 102, emphasis in original). In regard to such concern, he makes two statements:

The first is that at the micro level, in different Nation States, new technology policies have produced new forms of discipline (new work practices and new subjectivities of workers). The second is that, at the macro level, in different Nation States, these disciplines generate a basis for a new “pact” between State and capital and for new modes of social regulation which operate in the State and in private organizations. Although there is clearly a variation in the cadence, intensity and hybridity of the implementation of these new technology policies, they are generally part of the same flexible set of policies, some of which are emphasized and implemented differently in different circumstances and locations [...] (Ball, 2001, p. 105, emphasis in original).

Ball (2001, p. 112) explains that national education policies cannot be “entirely considered a transposition of the global educational agenda” and it is also not possible to state “that the Nation States have lost total control over their political decisions, which are taken within the logic of the global market”, because “education has a complex set of relations with and within the processes of globalization”.

Finally, in the author’s perspective, two political agendas can be recognized: the first articulates “education for national economic interests”, reaffirming “the state functions of education as a public good” and the second “involves a dissociation of education from direct State control”, subjecting “education to the disciplines of the market and the methods and values of business and redefines it as a competitive private good” (Ball, 1998, p. 121).

Based on the reflections throughout the text, we present the final considerations.

Final Considerations

In a globalized world, it is no longer possible to consider local dimensions disconnected from global dimensions. As a result, as Brazil is a Member State of UNESCO, and according to the evidence collected through documentary analysis, it is possible to affirm this organization’s ideas influence education issues in our country. Therefore, we understand that the documents disseminated by UNESCO need to be historicized and discussed, especially in the academic-scientific field and in the context of education institutions, because their goals and assumptions are part of the regulations that control our education system and in the public policies derived from them.

In a context where international society is changing and where there is criticism regarding the need for reforms of the main international institutions, especially the United Nations within the global governance system, international cooperation now must be seen as an essential dimension. The practice is a channel by which many countries are connected with prevailing economic and social patterns worldwide, and with the main ongoing trends in science and knowledge, as well as their applications for the benefit of societies, even though there is a clear understanding of how hard it is for these benefits to reach everyone.

Moreover, we must be aware that the development of cooperation mechanisms also means both new opportunities and new problems that, in turn, demand from societies the construction of more coherent and compatible systems in their productive practices and in their political and social institutions.

Despite living in times of nationalisms, of questions about the effectiveness of current international institutions and multilateralism, it is evident that, at the current stage of international relations, international cooperation is still relevant for States and for the local governments. Although globalization can be criticized in view of the advances and setbacks brought to society, in essence, it has become deeply integrated with international and local reality.

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