

“What kind of student is this?”: psychology, pedagogy and teacher training

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ABSTRACT

The paper analyzes the explanations about individual differences and personality in educational psychology books used for training teachers in Brazil, between 1920 and 1960. This is a study that shows how such explanations aggregate and prioritize knowledge and philosophical, biological, psychoanalytical or religious perspectives in different situations. Also noteworthy are the characteristics of recommendations to teachers and the establishment of requirements for the teaching processes. The links between psychology and pedagogy throughout the study period can be seen in the discourse of those publications, in which the deductive character of the educational consequences of the knowledge of human development gains a progressive character.

KEYWORDS

textbooks; educational psychology; individual differences; teacher training.

“QUE TIPO DE ALUNO É ESSE?” PSICOLOGIA, PEDAGOGIA E FORMAÇÃO DE PROFESSORES

RESUMO

O texto analisa a presença das explicações acerca das diferenças individuais e de personalidade em livros de psicologia educacional utilizados para a formação de professores entre as décadas de 1920 e 1960 no Brasil. Trata-se de estudo que permite mostrar como tais explicações agregam e privilegiam saberes e perspectivas filosóficas, biológicas, psicanalíticas ou religiosas, em momentos diversos. Destacam-se também as características das recomendações dirigidas aos professores e a constituição de prescrições relativas aos processos de ensino. Os vínculos entre a psicologia e a pedagogia ao longo do período estudado podem ser observados nos discursos dessas obras, nas quais o caráter dedutivo das consequências educativas baseado nos conhecimentos sobre o desenvolvimento humano ganha caráter progressivo.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

manuais de ensino; psicologia educacional; diferenças individuais; formação de professores.

“¿QUÉ TIPO DE ALUMNO ES ESE?”: PSICOLOGÍA, PEDAGOGÍA Y FORMACIÓN DE PROFESORES

RESUMEN

El texto analiza la presencia de explicaciones acerca de las diferencias individuales y de personalidad en libros de psicología educacional utilizados para la formación de profesores entre las décadas de 1920 y 1960 en Brasil. Se trata de un estudio que permite mostrar cómo esas explicaciones agregan y privilegian saberes y perspectivas filosóficas, biológicas, psicoanalíticas o religiosas, en diferentes momentos. Se destacan también las características de las recomendaciones dirigidas a los profesores y la constitución de prescripciones relativas a los procesos de enseñanza. Los vínculos entre la psicología y la pedagogía a lo largo del período estudiado pueden ser observados en los discursos de esas obras, en las cuales el carácter deductivo de las consecuencias educativas a partir de los conocimientos sobre el desenvolvimiento humano adquiere un carácter progressivo.

PALABRAS CLAVE

manuales de enseñanza; psicología educacional; diferencias individuales; formación de profesores.

The new way to propose the issue comes down simply to this: we shall study the raw material before adjusting the machines that will work with it.

LOURENÇO FILHO, 1954, p. 15
[referring to the issue of individual differences in school performance]

The teaching profession is therefore the permanent management of heterogeneous groups, these groups in which it is necessary to make the recurring scandal of injustice bearable: because some know how to do it after a few minutes and almost effortlessly, while others are only able to master it at the cost of endless work. It is not surprising that this issue has become so urgent in a society in which school profitability is spontaneously thought of in terms of an industrial model, even if it is agreed that students are not exactly raw materials to be processed, and in relation to which a precise comparison of the value added by schooling could be made with production costs.

CHARTIER, 1990, p. 35-36

INTRODUCTION: TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE FOR GOVERNING STUDENTS

Teachers in training often ask: how can we meet each child's needs considering we are responsible for the entire class and sometimes for several classes in a school? How should we take into account students' different interests and learning rhythms, given the heterogeneity of the individuals in a classroom? These questions about how to deal with diversity are not new, but they revive the issue of individual differences, and relate to the historic formation of pedagogy and psychology. Considering the contributions of several previous analyses of the historical background of these disciplines in Brazil, we sought to understand how explanations of personality differences appeared in books used for teacher education in Brazil between the 1920s and 1960s.

The second half of the nineteenth century was characterized by the confidence of Brazilian intellectuals in the possibility to improve individuals and society through education. According to Gondra (2004), several theses about education produced during the Brazilian Imperial period in the Rio de Janeiro College of Medicine advocated the hygienic reform of schools, by developing a pedagogical model that would be suitable to the physical, intellectual, moral and social development of mankind. To achieve this, it required the adaptation of school routines and requirements to the possibilities of children of each sex and age. In addition, it was considered imperative that science, religion and civilization be treated in conjunction in the education of new generations.

The second half of the nineteenth century witnessed an intensification of the global diffusion of free and compulsory public schools for the entire population. In Brazil, this movement occurred in the transition from the late nineteenth century

to the twentieth century, and coincided with the institution of the First Republic, which broke with the Church and sought to establish a new identity for citizens that would be more adequate to a secular vision of mankind and society. The formulation of a new national project was influenced in this period by the introduction in Brazil of racial theories that sought to explain differences between individuals. According to Schwarcz (1993), these theories were opposed to Rousseau's humanism, according to which freedom and perfectibility were attributes of all mankind.

In the nineteenth century, new ways of thinking emerged that rejected the unitary conception of humanity of the Age of Enlightenment, placing the concept of race as central to explaining differences between human groups. Two different perspectives were developed for explaining the origin of humanity; monogenism and polygenism. According to monogenism, the different human groups have a common origin, and the distinctions among them are due to the degree of improvement or degeneration noted in each case. For polygenists, human groups were created from different branches, corresponding to the racial differences. The polygenists affirmed that human behavior and capabilities are determined by immutable biological laws, and the association between the appearance of individuals and their psychological and moral attributes.

A deterministic view of humanity was thereby established, rejecting the principles of human equality and free will. The controversy between monogenists and polygenists was attenuated by the publication of Darwin's *Origin of the Species*, in 1859. The theory expressed in the book was adopted by each opposing trend. It satisfied the monogenists by affirming the common origin of humanity, yet was also accepted by the polygenists, who accepted the idea of a single origin in the distant past, emphasizing, however, the progressive distancing between human groups, which justified the irremediable differences in heritage and skills (Schwarcz, 1993). The approximation between the polygenist perspective and evolutionary theory favored the emergence of the "social Darwinism" doctrine that was opposed to miscegenation:

This new perspective, denominated "social darwinism" or "theory of the races," had a pessimistic view of miscegenation, as it believed that 'acquired characteristics would not be transmitted,' not even through a process of social evolution. That is, races were final phenomena, immutable results, and any crossbreeding would in principle be considered a mistake. There were two logical derivations of this postulate: it emphasized the existence of 'pure types' – which therefore were not subject to miscegenation processes – and understood miscegenation as synonymous with racial and social degeneration. (*idem*, p.58)

Among those who idealized the new Brazilian nationality was a group of Brazilian intellectuals who supported the controversial ideas of eugenics, which, according to Schwarcz "became a kind of advanced practice of social Darwinism," dedicated to promoting the biological improvement of the human species (*idem*, p. 60). The eugenicists were convinced of the superiority of the white race over the black, yellow and indigenous races, and attributed the backwardness of Brazil

to racial miscegenation. They advocated the imposition of legal restrictions on reproduction by alcoholics, the “alienated,” and those with other deficiencies and vices. Therefore, the implementation of public education systems coincided with the diffusion in Brazil of theories that attributed individual capacities to heredity and race, and a limited role was attributed to education in the transformation of human behavior.

This should be considered when analyzing how, in the early decades of the twentieth century, attempts were made to explain and manage individual differences among children attending schools. Brazil’s transition to a secular Republica was not without conflict. The creation of *A Ordem* (The Order) magazine in 1921, an initiative of Jackson Figueiredo, is emblematic of the resistance of Catholic intellectuals to the new regime. Education was a main theme in the magazine, with articles arguing that schools could not be reduced to a technical science-based process, but required a philosophical, cultural and ethical reflection about its objectives (Massimi, 2004).

In the last decade of the nineteenth century, the republican school concept took shape in primary schools, which being organized to enable simultaneous teaching, imposed as an operating condition the homogenization of classes by dividing students by age and level of knowledge. As classes came to have children of the same age, individual differences among them began to stand out. For this reason, specialists understood that it was not enough to expand access to primary education to the entire school-age population. It was necessary to create the “made-to-measure school”, in the words of Claparède, an author whose works were widely known in Brazil in the first decades of the twentieth century. Claparède affirmed that it was necessary to identify students’ natural capabilities, to be able to offer each one the teaching most consistent with his or her abilities and inclinations.

The question of how teachers acquired psychological explanations and classified students by type, and decided how to treat and teach them, is, of course, an important aspect for analysis. It is certainly more difficult to retrieve information and testimonials from more distant periods. However, this link to understanding the effects of professional training could greatly enhance the production of content for teacher education. To try to understand how efforts were made in various periods to help teachers accept and respect individual differences among their students, educational psychology manuals used in teacher training published in Brazil from the 1920s to the 1960s were examined. The aim was to clarify the following questions: How did the authors define personality? How did they explain personality differences? Which authors and psychological theories did they use to explain these differences? What personality categories did they propose for classifying individuals? An effort was also made to identify the educational guidelines that the authors derived from their knowledge of personality differences.

The educational psychology manuals, which are listed at the end of the paper, were the core sources for this study. As materials for teacher training, these books sought to meet the official programs and requirements. In addition to promoting a legitimate version of psychology for educators, they focused on the aspects considered most relevant for the work of future teachers. The authors of

the teaching manuals provided their own reading of the literature produced in the scientific field, adjusted to their own representations of the teaching profession, schools and students. (Silva; Correia, 2004). Due to their characteristics as materials used in education that were intended to explain and synthesize the ideas of the great theorists, the manuals were considered “minor” works that were generally not highly regarded or recognized. According to Vivian Batista da Silva (2005, p. 24):

We could therefore point to the hierarchy built into the educational literature that divides the texts into two levels: a more legitimate one - linked to the production of theoretical knowledge - and another one more related to teaching practices. This division was used to organize the contents of teaching manuals, and was recognized in statements such as that of Rafael Grisi (1956), himself a manual writer, according to whom there was a “pedagogy of heaven” created by theorists in academies and libraries, and a “pedagogy of earth” conducted by teachers in their daily activities.

It is precisely because they are a type of literature that is closer to the teacher training routine that these manuals should be valued as a source of pedagogical studies. Considering the role of educational psychology textbooks in teacher training courses, their authors sought to demonstrate the applications of knowledge about psychology to school life. For this reason, these manuals are an excellent resource for understanding explanations about personality differences and of the practical guidelines derived from these explanations that specialists provided to teachers.

In the educational psychology manuals, concern about differences between individuals appeared in several chapters. The authors engaged in explaining the origins of these differences and in most cases attribute them partly to heredity and partly to the environment. They presented psychological tests as instruments for quantifying differences in intelligence and aptitude. They addressed psychological differences between sexes, ages, and individuals from different geographical regions. They made distinctions between normal and abnormal psychological development. They made considerations about personality differences, which were understood as the unity resulting from the composition of all organic and psychological characteristics, the individual’s “self” or “way of being.” Based on the knowledge presented, they formulated pedagogical recommendations to teachers in training, to help them manage diversity in the classroom.

In the article “Os livros didáticos de psicologia educacional: pistas para análise da formação de professores(as) – 1920-1960” (Educational psychology textbooks: clues for the analysis of teacher education), Maria Madalena Assunção (2007) analyzed the content of educational psychology textbooks, four of which coincide with those now being examined. She reviewed different editions of the selected titles, grouping them by decades. According to the author, the books published in the 1920s identified consciousness, the spirit and the immortality of the soul as objects of psychology.

In the 1930s, the manuals became more numerous, showing the relevance the discipline had in teacher training courses at that time. During this period,

psychology, which was already moving away from “the ideas of essence and soul,” was oriented more strongly to the scientific perspective, closer to biology (*idem*, p. 74). The main novelty noted by the author in the forties was the emergence of the guide *Noções de psicologia educacional* (Notions of educational psychology) by Theobaldo Miranda Santos, which formulated practical guidelines for the education of children and introduced content related to *adolescents*. In 1958, the book *Psicologia educacional* (Educational Psychology) by Afro Amaral Fontoura was published. The first chapter is dedicated to the subject of “educational psychology,” and no longer “psychology.” This is also the first manual that extensively addresses child development, dedicating specific chapters to each stage of childhood and adolescence (*idem*, p. 75-76).

A detailed analysis of the manuals’ discourses about individual personality differences contributes to understanding the ways in which the psychological information was organized, and how the books reflect the appropriation of different theories. The use of these materials also allows observing how the manifestations of individual differences in schools were understood. Hence, it is worth examining the explanations and recommendations about differences among students and the classification mechanisms (including typologies) and practical interventions that could result from them.

PSYCHOLOGY, EDUCATION AND THE STUDY OF INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

It is the study of individual differences that shows us today that it is not possible to adopt the same educational process for all individuals in a single class, since each one’s mental rhythm is different. Teaching should respect each one’s possibilities as much as possible. (Penteado Junior, 1949, p. 177-178)

During the First Republic, school psychology practiced in Brazil gave priority to the application of psychological procedures and theories produced in the United States and France in the medical and educational domains. In North America, school psychology advanced with the creation of publications and institutions dedicated to conducting research in experimental psychology and psychometrics (Barbosa; Marinho-Araújo, 2010, p 394.). In France, in 1904, the Ministry of Public Education asked Alfred Binet to develop a resource for identifying children who would have difficulties in the regular school and require specialized instruction to prevent failing. To meet this demand, Binet organized a series of tests that supposedly did not presume any school learning such as reading, but consisted of everyday life tasks that required varying capacities such as ordering, understanding, inventing and criticizing. The goal was not to evaluate a specific capacity, but to discover the child’s full potential for learning. This gave origin to intelligence tests, which would spread worldwide in the following decades (Gould, 2003) and would be widely disseminated in Brazil as a specialized instrument for the identification of a student’s intelligence level.

In addition to classifying the students' intelligence, the psychology that was developed in the early decades of the twentieth century was interested in identifying childrens' special skills. In the book *A escola sob medida* (The made-to-measure school) first published in 1921, the influential Swiss psychologist Édouard Claparède argued that schools should bring out the differences between students, rather than try to compensate for them. It defined aptitude as "a natural disposition to behave in a certain way, to have a preference for understanding or feeling certain things or performing certain kinds of work (an aptitude for music, for calculation, for foreign languages etc.)" (Claparède 1959, p.140-141). For Claparède, teachers should try to encourage students to improve the skills that they have revealed naturally. In his view, it was not worthwhile to encourage children to undertake activities for which they did not show aptitude. He said:

In the obstacle course that is a school year, our children are pushed, trampled, and exhausted by a kind of quite natural apprehension, they direct all their concerns, if not all their energies, to areas of study for which they feel no particular disposition. They tire themselves out in the thankless work of cultivating barren soil, and leave uncultivated precisely that which promised to be a beautiful harvest. (*idem*, p. 147-148)

This understanding of the facts led the author to recommend that educators should learn to identify the students' innate talents, to encourage their development. In this manner, Claparède's "made-to-measure school" contributed to reinforcing the differences between individuals that were perceived as natural. In the text "The ideology of natural skills," Noëlle Bissertet pointed out that Claparède's effort to scientifically define the concept of aptitude sought to meet the practical need to conduct the educational and professional selection of students. It also involved, according to Bissertet, making the best use of individuals' natural abilities to benefit society. However, as Bissertet shows in her work, the specialists in charge of investigating students' natural skills tended to value those with attributes similar to their own and to disqualify characteristics perceived in others, who were considered less apt: "In this manner, the hierarchy of skills was established in the image of the social hierarchy: general intelligence (factor G) is the natural attribute of leaders; specific and limited capabilities characterize those who execute" (Bissertet, 1979, p. 50).

A study of the historical transformations in psychology in Brazil, undertaken by Regina Campos and others (2004), proposes its division into five periods: First, the early twentieth century to the early 1930s is designated the "heroic phase" when, according to Lourenço Filho, a small group of pioneer scholars decided to disseminate psychological theories in the country and explore their possibilities within the realm of mental health and educational institutions. In that period, several books and articles in educational journals on the use of psychological tests to identify natural abilities were published in Brazil. These texts saw tests as an innovative feature, with which it was hoped to identify the most suitable occupation for each individual, one that would allow the best possible contribution to society

and simultaneously provide maximum personal satisfaction, because it would correspond exactly to the inclinations of each individual. (Margotto, 2004).

In the second period, from 1930 to 1940, specialists committed themselves to promoting the application of psychological knowledge to the Brazilian reality, working in institutions dedicated to promoting mental health and education. They sought particularly to promote the adjustment of individuals to school and work. The next period, which extends to 1960, was defined by the beginning of university education in psychology and its most outstanding feature is the significant development of scientific research in the area, most of which focused on the relationship between cognition and culture within Brazilian culture. From 1960 to 1990, the interests turned to the exploration of the hypothesis of cultural deprivation and its potential impact on school failure and mental illness. The last period began in 1990 and is still in course. It is marked by the influence of genetic and functional theories based on the works of Piaget and Vygotsky, and characterized by the expansion of graduate courses in psychology (Campos et al., 2004, p. 157-158).

Although the authors characterize the first phase as a period mainly dedicated to the dissemination of knowledge generated by experimental psychology abroad, the first experimental psychology laboratories appeared at that time in Brazil. The first experimental psychology laboratory was established in the country in 1906 at the Pedagogium, an initiative of Medeiros e Albuquerque, who was at that time the director of public instruction of Rio de Janeiro, and Manuel Bomfim, a pioneer in disseminating in Brazil the experimental psychology developed in France by Binet and in Switzerland by Claparède (*idem*, p. 162-163). In 1914, the first experimental psychology laboratory was created in São Paulo at the Escola Normal Caetano de Campos, for research on students. Fausto Ramalho Tavares (1995), in a study on the major events that marked the relationship between psychological knowledge and school culture in São Paulo during the first republican period, describes the opening of the first laboratory. The initiative to create the office, and to establish a course in psychology applied to education, represented the effort of educators to promote the scientific development of pedagogy. Investigations, measurements and tests performed in that laboratory focused on the discovery of children's characteristics and the study of individual differences. Tavares describes how teachers and psychologists produced the school biography of students since 1914, when the model of the “Carteira Biográfica Escolar” [School Biographical File] was presented as an attachment to *O Laboratório de Pedagogia Experimental* [The Experimental Pedagogy Laboratory] brochure, published at the time of a course administered in São Paulo by guest scholar Ugo Pizzoli, director of the Escola Normal and professor at the University of Modena. Marta Carvalho (1997, p. 273), in an article on school discipline and hygiene, analyzes the event and describes the organization of the registration proposed by Pizzoli. The file would combine annual photographs of the student and historical data about their anthropological and physio-psychological features.

Psychology was thus the field of knowledge that gained prominence among those that produced knowledge about children. According to Oscar Thompson,

director of the Escola Normal de São Paulo when this office was created, psychology should guide the methodological reformulation of education, favoring its adaptation to students' characteristics. It was the science that was able to unravel children's development at each stage, distinguishing normality from abnormality (*idem*). Many of the foreign and Brazilian authors who published books and articles for teachers at that time and in the following decades would express the same point of view.

In turn, the primary school was seen as a privileged space for the development of psychology, since it brought together a large number of individuals from the same age group and served as a laboratory. In addition, it was believed that it was possible at schools to observe the first signs of a child's personality and aptitudes in a more pure state, closer to nature. In this manner, it can be said that the introduction of psychology in Brazil, since the beginning, was linked to pedagogical practices and knowledge, and to the research of individual differences (Antunes, 2008). An analysis on the transformation of children into students and the classification of those students according to psychological science can be found in the work "O governo dos escolares: uma aproximação teórica às perspectivas de Michel Foucault" [Governing students: a theoretical approach to the perspectives of Michel Foucault] (Ó, 2001).

Other initiatives followed the first experimental psychology laboratories installed in Brazil. Isaías Alves, in Bahia State, devoted himself since the 1920s to the adaptation of Binet and Simon's intelligence scale to Brazilian children. In the city of Recife, Ulysses Pernambucano created the Instituto de Orientação e Seleção Profissional - ISOP [The Professional Guidance and Selection Institute] in 1925 and the *Escola para Anormais* [School for Abnormal Children] affiliated to the Escola Normal [Teachers' College]. (Campos et al., 2004, p. 169). The work of, Russian psychologist and educator Helena Antipoff, who settled in Minas Gerais in 1929 was also noteworthy. She had served as an intern at the Psychology Laboratory of the University of Paris from 1909 to 1912, where she participated in the standardization of IQ tests, and later served as an assistant to Claparède in Geneva, where she earned her university degree as a psychologist. At the Sociedade Pestalozzi de Belo Horizonte, which was led by Antipoff, a medical-pedagogical practice was created in 1934 for providing care to exceptional children and to those with problems of adaptation to school (Campos; Lourenço; Antonini, 2002, p. 26).

As the director of Education in São Paulo in 1930 and 1931, Lourenço Filho created the Serviço de Psicologia Aplicada [Applied Psychology Service], which was organized into four sections: mental measuring, schoolwork measuring, career guidance, and statistics. To lead the new service he named his former student at the Escola Normal de São Paulo [Teacher's College of São Paulo] Naomi Silveira, who had conducted a fellowship at Columbia University in New York supervised by J. Dewey. (Monarcha, 2009; Campos et al., 2004, p. 168). It was up to this service to check the Binet-Simon and Dearborn intelligence tests and to apply Lourenço Filho's ABC tests, to identify the students' degree of maturity for learning reading and writing. The tests were applied to first-year students, to enable the homogenization of the classes, dividing the students into strong, medium and weak (Monarcha, 2009, p. 221; Lima, 2007, p.145-152).

In the same period, Arthur Ramos, a physician graduated from the Bahia Medical College, focused on the study of problem-children under the Mental Hygiene Service of the Orthophrenology and Mental Hygiene Section of the Institute for Educational Research of the Federal District) and published *A criança problema: higiene mental na escola primária (1939)* [The problem-child: mental health in primary school], one of the first books to present results of an empirical study on learning problems carried out in the country (Patto, 1990, p. 80; Lima, 2004).

Psychology came to be increasingly needed by educators to meet school problems related to learning difficulties and behavioral problems. Since then, an asymmetric relationship between psychologists and educators was established, as teachers assigned authority to specialists in psychology to explain the causes of school problems and guide their work at school (Barbosa; Araújo-Marinho, 2010, p. 395).

EXPLANATIONS ABOUT PERSONALITY DIFFERENCES AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO TEACHERS FOUND IN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY TEXTBOOKS

We believe that the statements about personality found in educational psychology textbooks should be understood as formulations that follow their own production and distribution rules. That is to say that they obey the rules that impose qualifications on the position of the subject that states and set limits on what can be said and on what terms.

By focusing on chapters dedicated to the study of “personality,” we found that they are usually the final chapters of the books. The decision to treat this theme last was justified by the understanding that personality was considered to integrate all the factors constituting individuals, or according to the definition of Morton Prince, quoted by Fontoura (1966, p. 375, emphasis by the author) as the “total sum of all *congenital* biological dispositions and tendencies of the individual and of all *acquired* dispositions”.

Despite the variations, it is possible to identify a typical structure of educational presentation in the textbooks, which is characterized by a movement from the analysis of each of the elements that compose the psychology of the individual to a synthesis, represented by the concept of personality. In this manner, there is a first chapter dedicated to presenting psychology as the field of study, followed by several chapters that examine specific factors of school psychology or of the child, such as intelligence, motivation, perception, language, character etc., and finally a chapter or section of a chapter dedicated to the subject of personality. The length of these final chapters varied considerably, as did the number of pages in the books as a whole. The books considered here include that written by Guerino Casassanta (1955); that of Theobaldo Miranda Santos (1955) and Afro Amaral Fontoura (1966) have longer texts and feature more didactic concern. The chapters of those textbooks have a greater number of subdivisions, and feature frameworks or schemes that summarize the subject. In those compendiums, more references are made to the work of teachers. In the works of Santos and Fontoura, the end of each chapter is dedicated to pedagogical guidance.

Foucault's (2004, p.121-122) analysis of statements is useful to the understanding of these issues:

Describing a statement does not mean isolating and characterizing a horizontal segment, but defining the conditions under which the function resulted in a series of signs (that are not necessarily logically or grammatically structured) an existence, and a specific existence. This makes it appear not just as a simple trait, but as a relation to a domain of objects; not as a result of an individual action or operation, but as a set of possible positions for a subject; not as an organic, autonomous whole closed in on itself and capable – on its own – of making sense, but as an element in a field of coexistence; not as a passing event or an inert object, but as a repeatable materiality.

In agreeing with Foucault, one of the requirements for the proper characterization of statements is to identify the positions of subject assumed by their authors. The psychology textbooks examined in this article were written by prestigious professors who worked at teachers colleges or universities in the states of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, Pernambuco, and Ceará. A reading of their texts indicates that these scholars were studying the knowledge of psychology produced by foreign researchers. More than a hundred authors are mentioned in the textbook chapters dedicated to the study of personality. Théodule Ribot, a French psychologist who published a book about diseases of personality, is the most quoted author, followed by Ernst Kretschmer, a professor of psychiatry and neurology at the Marburg Neurological Institute in Germany; and Carl Gustav Jung, the Swiss psychiatrist who founded analytical psychology.

The quoted Brazilian authors include the New School educator Anísio Teixeira; Henrique Geenen, a professor of philosophy at the Instituto de Ciências e Letras and author of the *Compêndio de Psicologia* (1925) examined here; Franco da Rocha, a physician and promoter of psychoanalysis in São Paulo; and Júlio Porto-Carrero, an important promoter of psychoanalysis in Rio de Janeiro. The texts also present the ideas of Catholic priests Father Leonel Franca, founder of the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio) and Father Bastos D'Avila, who created the PUC-Rio School of Political Sociology and Economics.

The compendium written by Sylvio Rabello (1943, p.VI), professor of psychology at the Escola Normal de Pernambuco [Teacher's College of Pernambuco] at that time explains the aim of gathering a variety of knowledge about psychology into one volume for use by educators:

The author of *Psicologia da Infância* (Childhood Psychology) sought to offer that knowledge about the child - which was dispersed across doctrines, books and magazines - in Portuguese, with a constant concern for conducting a Brazilian work, i.e. adjusted to our culture and tradition. (...) the results of studies and research conducted over a decade can be found in *Psicologia da Infância*.

The educational psychology textbooks were dedicated to future teachers, students at teacher colleges, educational institutes and colleges where the authors

were teaching, including several Catholic institutions. In some cases, there was a note under the title stating that the textbook's content was appropriate for official programs. The authors of the educational psychology textbooks examined positioned themselves as specialists in the field, as intermediaries between foreign psychologists – who they read – and their colleagues and disciples. That said, it must be verified what knowledge of psychology of personality differences and what advice was offered to the teachers in training.

Foucault recommends that discursive formations not be taken as independent, closed units, as if they were the result of the meeting between the thought of an author and a domain of reality. He understood that statements are elements in a field of coexistence that needs to be considered. The analysis of texts on personality in educational psychology textbooks allows realizing that their statements are associated with other discourses, among which stand out the Catholic religion, psychoanalysis, experimental psychology, and the New School. The association with religious discourse appears in the idea that “personality is an exclusive attribute of man” (Casassanta, 1955, p 358.) and in the valorization of a perennial individual essence, independent of experiences.

The Catholic reference is also expressed in the definition of personality as consisting of two basic elements: body and soul, and in the emphasis on freedom of choice of human beings, endowed with reason and the ability to judge and take responsibility for their actions. We also observe the religious tone in the way that Catholic authors refer to the teachers' mission, which contributes to form the student's personality through education and love: “All your heart and all your love must therefore be put into educational work. Love knows how to devise means to penetrate a child's heart” (*idem*, p. 369).

The discourse of experimental psychology was mobilized when it described the efforts of researchers to build measuring instruments to capture the various aspects of personality: “In general, these (very complex) tests, which seek to measure personality as a whole, receive the name of psychodiagnostics, to differentiate them from tests that measure only a single mental phenomenon” (Fontoura, 1966, p. 405). In some cases, the authors present examples of existing personality tests. In the *Manual de psicologia educacional* [Educational psychology manual], Guerino Casassanta presents Rorschach's projective psychodiagnostics and Mira y Lopez's miokinetic psychodiagnostics, among other tests.

A better understanding of existing personality types was expected from the studies undertaken by means of psychodiagnostics, as well as a better ability to trace the individual profile of each person, to identify their aptitudes and promote the maximum development of their potential through education. This expectation was expressed by the French psychologist Henri Piéron, in a lecture at the Escola Normal de São Paulo and transcribed in *Psicologia e psicotécnica* (1927, p. 67): “There is obviously a need to use education for the development of the aptitude of individuals', rather than leveling them to obtain a mean or mediocre type that would bring no advantage to the community.”

Statements derived from psychoanalytic discourse speak of the existence of the unconscious, value the experiences and relationships of childhood, and explain

the dynamics between contradictory impulses of an individual, which are expressed through his or her personality. Rabello (1943) formulated a typology of personalities based on the psychoanalytic concepts of introversion and extroversion. He further resorted to psychoanalysis to explain certain features of individual behavior, such as negativity, hypochondria, and neurosis etc., defined as results of the repression of desires that remained unfulfilled, leading to frustration.

While offering support to the production of statements about personality in several textbooks, psychoanalysis was also sometimes ignored or even explicitly rejected. In his *Manual de psicologia educacional* [Educational psychology manual], Guerino Casassanta (1955, p. 13-14, emphasis added by the author) writes “Freud marked his time on earth promoting a cruel doctrine, which raising the *libido* into an absolute divinity, used it to explain the facts of human consciousness”.

The authors of educational psychology textbooks resorted to the New School’s discourse to express the idea that the main purpose of education was to make every child a person able to offer his or her best contribution to society. In addition, several statements defended the right of all children to education and respect for individual differences in schools. It was recommended that teachers be dedicated to the identification of differences among their students and adjust teaching to individual needs as best as possible:

The New School recognized that each student has their own personality, and that it must be respected. A child cannot be punished because it has less ability to learn mathematics than its colleagues. This would be the same as punishing a child because it is only 1 meter and 30 centimeters tall, while its colleagues of the same age are 1 meter and 50[...]. (Fontoura, 1966, p. 376)

How was “personality” defined and characterized in the discourses of these authors? To answer this question, we sought to identify how the statements found in the textbooks intended to establish personality as an object, by means of its definition, description, and an investigation of its origins in individuals. It also sought to follow the attempts to explain personality differences and establish their typology.

It should be noted that statements on personality are not singular events, the results of discovery or of individual reflection of the authors, but they turn to and reappear in other texts, mobilizing statements issued in other circumstances. The formulations of personality present in the various textbooks examined often repeat or reproduce scientific psychology texts on which their authors based their work. As an example, the following excerpts are presented that define personality as the core of the individual, or simply as the “self”:

We have within us a center around which all phenomena that concern us are grouped: it is the *self*; it is our *personality*. (Mendes, 1943, p. 230, emphasis in the original)

Personality is the complete synthesis of man's psychic activity. It represents all the innate and acquired physiological and psychological, trends, dispositions and characters, forming a unity around the *self*. (Santos, 1955, p. 309, emphasis in the original)

On the other hand, the existence of different definitions in the statements indicate that personality was not perceived in the same way by all the scholars, and did not appear as a sharp, fixed object before them, quietly offering itself to being described. Instead, personality seems to be the concept employed by specialists to name the resulting complexity of the meeting of the biological elements in each individual, the elements derived from experience and, in some cases, the transcendent element, that is, something that defied the attempts of grouping, sorting and standardization.

According to Henrique Geenen (1925, p. 225), a philosophy professor at the Instituto de Ciências e Letras de São Paulo, “Individual personality is a vast system that embraces all the psychic, psycho-organic, conscious, semi-conscious and unconscious elements: it is the synthesis of a group of syntheses”. For Geenen, the concept also referred to the sensation experienced by the individual to be one, to be the same over time. Djacir Menezes (1933, p. 147), a psychology professor at the Escola Normal Pedro II in Ceará, expressed the same understanding, saying. “The Self comprehends all of our individual experiences, our memories, the feeling of our present situation, our identity in time. Memory and personality cannot be conceived separately”.

The concept of personality therefore referred to perceptions of unity and continuity experienced by individuals. According to João de Sousa Ferraz (1957, p. 261), in the book *Noções de psicologia educacional* [Notions of educational psychology], “Wheeler defines personality as the total organization of the individual's reactional tendencies. It is a kind of unitary standard that reflects the balance of mental traits, or the sum of psychic characters of each one, which makes it particular”.

Among the many attempts to define personality, it is worth highlighting those conducted by authors with a Catholic orientation. For Justino Mendes, the pseudonym of Monsignor José João Perna, the Chair in Psychology at the Faculdade de Filosofia, Ciências e Letras Santo Tomaz de Aquino in Uberaba, and the author of *Psicologia educacional* [Educational Psychology] (1943, p. 231), personality was “the power to know oneself, to possess and to govern oneself”. Theobaldo Miranda Santos (1955, p. 309), professor of philosophy at the Faculdade de Santa Úrsula do Rio de Janeiro, the author of *Noções de psicologia educacional* [Notions of educational psychology], said that having a personality meant being an “individual endowed with reason and freedom,” therefore distinguished from things, a category in which the author included stones, plants and animals. More than just the core of individuality or the resulting composition between innate and acquired tendencies, these definitions added a moral dimension to personality.

This dimension was also present in Nelson Cunha de Azevedo, head professor at the Escola Normal Santa Rita, in São Paulo, and Onofre de Arruda Pentead

Junior (1949), a professor at the Faculdade de Filosofia, Ciências e Letras of the Universidade de São Paulo, for whom the “manifestation of personality” was called character. Theobaldo Miranda Santos (1955) considered character to be a part of personality, in the same manner as physical constitution and temperament. He referred, however, to a concept that not all individuals developed an authentic personality. According to this way of thinking, personality was a goal, a result to be achieved from the individual’s work on himself/herself:

There are those who still distinguish *person* and *personality*. The person would be an attribute of every man, while personality would be an acquisition of certain people upon reaching the summit of man’s spiritual prerogatives. In this manner, the person would be a metaphysical *substratum*, and personality would be a moral achievement; the first, a gift of nature, the other, a conquest of effort, over there is the starting point, and right here is the ideal that is never completely reached in this lifetime. (*idem*, p. 310)

There were variations in the definitions and explanations of the origins of personality in the individual, and of the relationship between personality and character. The authors attributed more or less importance to biology, the environment, and will. Nelson Cunha de Azevedo emphasized biological factors in the determination of personality. He wrote “Organic factors play a major role in regard to character. These factors particularly result from the vegetative nervous system and the endocrinal balance” (Azevedo, 1936, p. 247). João de Sousa Ferraz, a São Paulo psychologist, the author of several books on the subject, attributed a preponderant role to biology, while admitting the possibility of transformation of innate tendencies by the natural and social environment (Ferraz, 1955, p. 73). Afro do Amaral Fontoura (1966), a professor at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro, and Theobaldo Miranda Santos understood that personality was the result of the combination of all biological and cultural factors that participated in the formation of individuals. For Santos, “Organic, psychological, social and cultural factors come together in a global structure in the organization of personality” (1955, p. 309). Fontoura (1966, p. 378) explained: “We can say that personality is the structure resulting from all the elements of *nature* (nature, all the innate phenomena in an individual) multiplied by all the elements of *nurture* (nutrition, learning, education, influences from the environment and social groups)”. Because these elements were numerous, the formation of personality was a complex problem. However, it was possible to synthesize it in a formula with a “mathematical appearance”: “Personality = Co x T x Ca x V x I”. In this formula, “Co” refers to constitution; “T” - temperament; “Ca” - character; “S” - feelings; “V” - will, and “I” - intelligence (*idem*, p. 379.). The participation of the will or “personal effort” as a constituent factor of the personality was also present in the texts of Justino Mendes (1943) and Theobaldo Miranda Santos (1955), representatives of the Catholic thinking.

João de Sousa Ferraz and Sylvio Rabello resorted to psychoanalysis to explain the formation of personality. Quoting Freud, João de Sousa Ferraz (1957)

wrote that personality resulted from the integration of three sectors of activity in the human spirit: conscious, preconscious and unconscious. Sylvio Rabello, who taught psychology at the Teachers' College of Pernambuco, used Adler's ideas to explain that the manifestation of personality depended on a balance between two opposing trends in the individual: the zeal for control and the sense of community. He also stated that there were “qualitative” differences between the sexes:

This sense of control or affirmation of one's own personality is more aggressive in males - which allows them to a certain extent to protect themselves. From there, the sense of community arises later in them. In women, the sense of control fails to manifest itself in such a remarkable manner so that it can compensate for their natural weakness; and therefore they resort early on to the sense of community in the need for protection that they are not able to achieve by themselves. In one, aggressiveness is the instrument of defense; in the other, defense comes from the community. It is from this initially adopted lifeline that stems the differentiation of mental physiognomy and of the attitudes assumed by the sexes.

The authors presented personality or character types based on the works of Ribot; Alfred J.E. Fouillée, the author of works on temperament and character; Gerardus Heymans, a Dutch psychologist who conducted research linking heredity and character; Spranger or Jung, whose works he had read. At times they presented distinct proposals for classification, without expressing preferences, as in Fontoura's case. According to this author, the variations were very numerous, so that the typologies took only dominant personality traits into account.

Personality, being what it is, an extremely complex whole in which there are hundreds of factors, elements and formative traces, evidently it is not possible to establish a *classification* of personalities, because the possibility of combining all those factors results in millions or billions of different personalities. (Fontoura, 1966, p. 390)

Depending on how personality and its formation process were understood, biological or social aspects were favored in establishing personality types. In Ribot and Fouillée's classifications, the psychological characteristics appeared associated to physical factors and their multiple combinations, such as the circulation of fluids in the body (blood, bile); temperature; muscle stiffness or relaxation; the metabolism rate etc. The Spranger classification, on the other hand, was based on “cultural values”, while Jung's typology emphasized an individual's inclination to isolation (the inner world) or expansion (toward the outside world). Djacir Menezes (1933), Nelson Cunha de Azevedo (1936) and Onofre de Arruda Penteadó Junior (1949) presented - in paragraphs that practically repeated it - the Ribot classification, which divided characters into three types: sensitive, active and apathetic. Penteadó Junior also cited the Fouillée classification in addition to Ribot's model:

As for the types, he says: “The sanguine type, (sensitive, alive and quick) is characterized by a predominance of integration due to excess nutrition, with a fast, not intense and short-lived reaction; the nervous type (sensitive, deep and passionate) is characterized by a predominance of the integration due to nutritional needs, with a slower, more intense and longer reaction; the bilious (or ardently active) type is characterized by a rapid and intense disintegration; the phlegmatic (or coolly active) type is characterized by a slow and less intense disintegration”. (Penteado Junior, 1949, p. 179)

Justino Mendes, in turn, understood that there were two typologies to consider. The first was the typology of temperaments – the physical substrate of the personality, consisting of categories that coincided with those of Fouillée: sanguine, lymphatic or phlegmatic, melancholic and choleric (Mendes, 1943, p. 232.). The second was the typology related to character, understood as a set of “salient moral qualities that constitute individuality” (*idem*, p. 231). Character types were divided into affective, apathetic, intellectual, active, willful and tempered. (*idem*, p. 232).

Theobaldo Miranda Santos and Afro do Amaral Fontoura presented Spranger’s categories based on six cultural values: science, art, the economy, society, state and religion (Santos, 1955, p. 324.). Fontoura (1966, p. 391) explained that each of the six structures was present in every individual, but one of them was predominant in each type: “There are, therefore, six types of man: 1. the homo theoreticus (theoretical); 2. the homo economicus (economic); 3. the homo estheticus (aesthetic); 4. the homo socialis (social); 5. the homo politicus (political); and 6. the homo religiosus (religious)”. João de Souza Ferraz used Jung’s typology, which divided personalities into introverts, extroverts and ambiverts (people who oscillate between introversion and extroversion). Sylvio Rabello (1943, p. 364) also resorting to psychoanalysis, formulated his own typology. Based on Freud, Adler and Jung, he divided the character types into aggressive, curious, gregarious and sexual. (1943, p. 364)

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS: CLASSIFICATIONS FOR CONTROL, DIFFERENCES AND INTERNAL JUSTICE OF SCHOOL LIFE

The examination of the psychology textbooks considered here shows that the definition of personality varied widely among the authors in the period considered. It was an object with an imprecise boundary, which allowed a variable number of elements, depending on the specialist’s perspective. Similarly, there were different ways to investigate and explain its formation, as well as various ways of proposing the classification of individuals according to their personality, some closer to philosophical reflection, others based more on experimental research. In addition to the characterization of knowledge about personality and its typologies, we tried to identify the educational guidance formulated by the authors of the manuals to deal with differences in the classroom. In other words, how they sought to link psychology’s knowledge about personality to the power exerted by teachers on

their students. In this case, we turned to Foucault's concept of governmentality to support the analysis.

In *Governing the Present* (2008), Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose propose that “governmentality” should be considered not only as a concept, but as a research field, a specific way to study issues related to the transformation of behavior, to the “action on action” of others or of oneself (self-government), to achieve certain goals.

Firstly, Miller and Rose suggest that research in the field of governmentality should identify a problem or how a particular type of action or behavior becomes, in a specific context, to be considered problematic, subject to intervention or correction. This is because, from the government's perspective, there is little point in formulating a problem, without simultaneously seeking ways to resolve it (Miller; Rose, 2008, p. 15). Secondly, studies of governmentality should consider two closely related aspects of the art of governing: rationalities and technologies, that is, on one hand, ways to formulate and understand the problems, and on the other hand, ways to intervene in reality in order to solve them. It is understood that this is a fertile analytic perspective for understanding the issues raised here, which refer to the following problem of government: how to teach a class of students simultaneously considering the personality differences among them?

The first aspect to be noted is that, unlike what can be seen in the teaching textbooks from the period, in the educational psychology manuals the prescriptive portion is much smaller, than the explanatory one, at times consisting of only one or two paragraphs in the chapters on personality. This is the case of the manuals by Nelson Cunha de Azevedo (1936), Sylvio Rabello (1943), Justino Mendes (1943), Onofre de Arruda Penteado Junior (1949) and João de Sousa Ferraz (1957). These authors suggested an attitude, a frame of mind in the face of personality differences, but did not actually formulate a set of practices to be implemented in schools. There were authors who used democratic principles and those of the New School to affirm that different personalities should be respected and find space to express themselves at school: “Respect for human personality is the most profound idea of this great modern current,” Azevedo maintained (1936, p. 250). The recommendations of other authors gave priority to students' adjustment to society and recommended that teachers should be careful to prevent the maladjusted or deviations. *Noções de psicologia educacional* concludes with the following recommendation to teachers, formulated from a psychoanalytic reading:

The difficult task imposed on educators is to prevent students from being deformed or maladjusted through practices of mental prophylaxis, and by cleansing attitudes to find corrective compensation and desirable substitute activities. (Ferraz, 1957, p. 266)

The textbooks that were dedicated more widely to the guidance of educators were those of Theobaldo Miranda Santos (1955) and Afro Amaral Fontoura (1966), authors who also wrote didactic manuals. Fontoura, using the ideas of the New School, advocated the implementation of automatic promotion as the most legitimate way to deal with diversity in schools: “It is more logical and fair: each

student learns all he or she can in school, but only to the extent that he or she can. And they would not get stuck, repeating the school year as punishment for the crime of being born with less intelligence than their peers” (Fontoura, 1966, p. 377). The author also expressed the belief that it was up to religion to play an important role in forming solidary personalities, in this manner suggesting the limits of psychology’s contribution to education. For Fontoura, the moral education of students was inseparable from religious education (*idem*, p. 384). Theobaldo Miranda Santos thought along the same lines, and believed that psychology studies dedicated to discerning personality types pointed to a possible and desirable adjustment of educational methods to individual differences among children. Nevertheless, the author outlined a proposal but did not actually describe a set of practices that would enable its implementation.

In examining the relationship between knowledge about personality and the recommendations made by the authors of textbooks dedicated to guiding teachers on how to deal with individual differences in the classroom in the period considered, it is noteworthy that the understanding of personality did not seek a formulation of objective guidelines for educators about how to respond to the diversity of human types. Given this imprecise consensus about what they called “personality,” specialists found themselves faced with the modern difficulty of formulating a positive science about humans. How was it possible to understand them? To lead them? If personality went beyond the possibilities of available knowledge, no techniques could be deduced for governing it. Nevertheless, trust was placed in psychology in its future developments, which would produce the knowledge needed for an informed and efficient pedagogical practice that would finally be appropriate to the individual characteristics of students. It was decades away from the critique of the psychologizing of education.

The mission of making the personality of individuals “bloom” was assigned to educators (Santos, 1955, p.336) to bring to light their innate potential. It was also expected that schools would help prevent personality deviations. In any case, it was a question of contributing to the best possible expression of aptitudes that children brought to school, not to form or transform their personality through education. A notable exception was the statement of Guerino Casassanta (1995, p. 368), for whom a student's personality was the result of the teacher's sacrifice: “To see the teacher in the personality he or she shaped with the sweat of his or her blood is already a reward”.

Much of what today is recurrent in debates on education brings into play the issue of internal justice in school life. It must be recognized that the ideal of what is fair in the school routine should include respect for diversity of all types: any differences in the pace of learning, which so concerned psychology, persist as an issue to be faced by teachers in their work. If today, perhaps more than in other times, there is a profusion of classifications that pedagogy and psychology seek, at the frontiers of medicine to deal with the differences in behavior that can hinder learning, this does not place us in a more comfortable situation than that of teachers

for whom “typologies” were offered for classifying their students since the beginning of the twentieth century. The price of comfort in classification may currently be in medication, which, by suppressing “different” behavior, can also produce other manifestations and effects. How long can we maintain that the paths of knowledge, classification and control, should continue to be followed in the manner that they have been in terms of educational issues?

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