

The Hybrid Education as a Methodology and its Mercantilist Face in Brazil

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ABSTRACT – The Hybrid Education as a Methodology and its Mercantilist Face in Brazil. This text analyzes the country's recent hybrid education standardization policy to identify the concept established in the legal instruments and the possible implications of hybrid education in Brazilian education. With a qualitative approach, this study starts from the document analysis of the instruments issued by the Ministry of Education and the theoretical basis of Hybrid Education and technology-mediated education. In conclusion, it is evident that the documents forward a proposal of the hybrid as a “methodology” of the distance modality incorporated into face-to-face education without the specific regulation of follow-up and evaluation policies.

Keywords: Hybrid Education. Methodologization. Regulamentation. Mercantilization.

RESUMO – A Educação Híbrida como Metodologia e sua Face Mercantilista no Brasil. O presente texto analisa a recente política de normatização da Educação Híbrida no país, a fim de identificar o conceito estabelecido nos instrumentos legais e as possíveis implicações do híbrido na educação brasileira. Este estudo, de abordagem qualitativa, parte da análise documental dos instrumentos emitidos pelo Ministério da Educação e da base teórica da Educação Híbrida e da educação mediada por tecnologias. Como conclusão, evidencia-se que os documentos encaminham uma proposição do híbrido como “metodologização” da modalidade a distância incorporada à educação presencial, sem a regulamentação específica das políticas de acompanhamento e avaliação.

Palavras-chave: Educação Híbrida. Metodologização. Regulamentação. Mercantilização.

Introduction

The present study presents one of the results of the ongoing research “Research Network Quality and regulation in the context of open, flexible, or distance education in Brazil and internationally”¹ and analyzes the instruments that regulate the insertion of Hybrid Education² in Brazilian public education policies. To this end, it focuses on understanding the trajectory and intentions of this policy based on the interpretations of concepts and indications of structuring Hybrid Education contained in the analyzed legal texts.

Considering the qualitative approach of the analysis, based on documentary research, the study is based on historical-dialectical materialism, as it allows an understanding of the relationship between the whole and the parts through concrete analysis. As Marx (2008, p. 218) points out,

The concrete is concrete because it is the synthesis of multiple determinations, thus, a unity of diversity. That is why it is for thought a process of synthesis, a result, and not a starting point, and therefore also the starting point of immediate observation and representation.

Therefore, the analysis of the opinions, guidelines, ordinances, and resolutions aims to understand how these documents materialize Hybrid Education in the Brazilian legal and normative scope. That is, it seeks to understand the necessary intervention of the State as a definer of public policies and to unveil the educational purposes that come to be assumed in a project of a nation that is economically dependent and governed by the aegis of neoliberalism.

For such action, it becomes necessary to establish which conceptions and concepts of Hybrid Education have been constructed in current research that uses the expression and the implications that its use in normative documents brings to Brazilian Education. Therefore, understanding the instruments that regulate hybrid education depends on a more accurate analysis of the socio-historical conditions under which these regulations' development occurred and the intentions that underlie their organizations and political instrumentalizations. It is in line, therefore, with what Shiroma, Campos, and Garcia (2005, p. 427) state: We take texts as products and producers of political orientations. The meanings are not given in the documents, they are produced; they are beyond and beyond the words that compose them.”

Based on the legal instruments and the texts that theoretically support the analyses, it was possible to interpret that Hybrid Education is a concept under construction, multifaceted and, therefore, that highlights the trends, educational purposes, and contradictions that underlie it. This is the understanding of Moreira and Horta (2020) when they indicate that Hybrid Education varies according to the approach and focus attributed to it and its alignment, which can be

more centered on technological aspects or focused on pedagogical potential.

In this analysis, therefore, different understandings were found regarding what constitutes Hybrid Education, which is attributed from a more methodological facet (Andrade; Monteiro, 2020) to a "reengineering of teaching processes and cultural changes" (Moreira; Horta, 2020, p. 1). It is understood, however, that the hybrid, as an educational concept, goes beyond these two aspects. This article considers that Hybrid Education focuses on integrating pedagogical activities mediated by teaching action, which aim to expand times and spaces in the educational process.

It is recognized, therefore, that this process occurs between teacher-students, student-students, student-environment, and student-teacher-technologies, whether in person or virtual, whether using the cultural framework produced by the human relationship, through digital or analog technologies. The present text also addresses the perspective of *methodologization*³ that has been attributed to the modality of distance education, as a way to deregulate DE, thus enabling technology-mediated education to be used freely to serve the interests of capital.

The article is divided into three sections, each analyzing the documents from the same number of dimensions: the proposition of the hybrid in Brazilian education and the proposals for higher education and Basic Education.

From concept to trajectory

Until the publication of the normative documents inaugurated in 2021, the inclusion of Hybrid Education in Brazilian legislation, the term "hybrid" appeared as a synonym for blended education and, consequently, as the implementation of distance learning hours in face-to-face courses. In the works listed in the bibliographic survey by Rodrigues (2021), it was observed that Hybrid Education is often used as a synonym for the blended modality. This confusion of terminology is also found in analytical documents prepared by the Brazilian Association of Distance Education (Abed), as evidenced by the then-director of the entity:

We observe the beginning of a new era of methodological innovation and growth in the offering of high-quality courses in the modality. However, not fully mediated by distance, but rather in hybrid and semi-presential modalities. In these modalities, students can study and practice in virtual learning environments (VLEs) and periodically have face-to-face meetings in innovative environments or laboratories, in which learning practices and experiences are built with active methodologies and face-to-face group experiences (Longo, 2018, p. 18).

As Lencastre (2013) clarifies, if at the beginning of the use of the concept, there was an understanding of Hybrid Education as a result of the intertwining of face-to-face and distance moments, currently,

this perspective of integration extends to a diversity and variety of combinations of educational actions and places, provided by the insertion of educational technologies in schools. This link between Hybrid Education and semi-presence is well-marked in the highlighted sections and throughout the EaD_BR census (Abed, 2018).

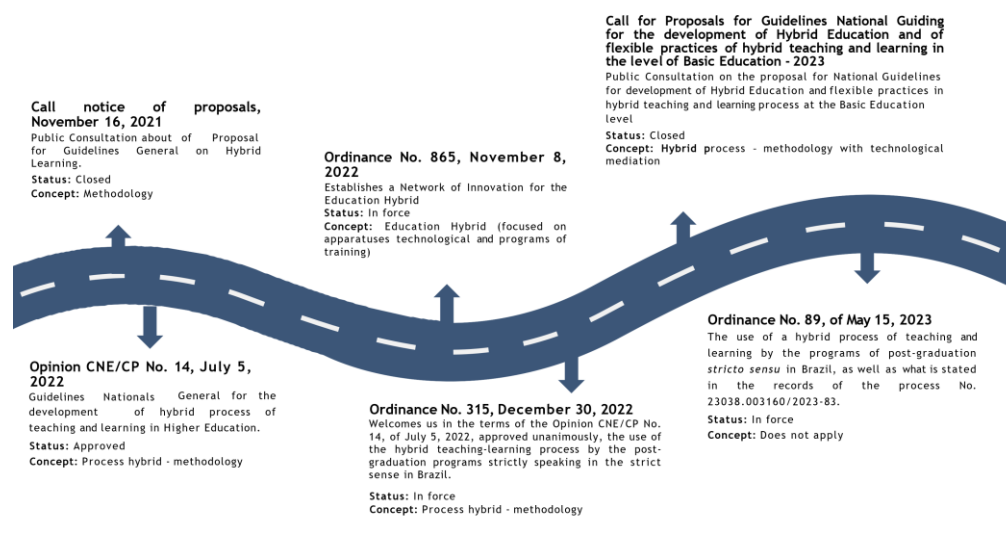
In the normative documents regulating Hybrid Education, there is a movement to separate the offer of distance learning hours in face-to-face courses and the distance modality from what the documents have called the "Hybrid Teaching and Learning Process." All documents published to date on Hybrid Education in Higher Education are unanimous in defending that this proposal does not constitute the implementation of the distance education modality in face-to-face or fully distance courses, and, therefore, cannot be monitored and evaluated according to the instruments that regulate one and the other, that is, neither the modality itself nor the percentage of distance education in the curriculum of face-to-face courses.

In Brazil, there is a movement of regulatory flexibilization governed by market logic and characterized by the absence of the State in the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of public policies, characteristics stemming from the ultraliberal policy discussed by Pochmann (2017), Amaral (2019), Dourado (2019), and Leher (2019). Notwithstanding, Dourado (2008) states that the regulatory flexibility applied to the distance learning modality follows a privatist logic of the processes of regulation and management of higher education, and greatly impacts the expansion process of private higher education institutions (HEIs).

A central issue in this discussion focuses on the understanding of Hybrid Education indicated in the analyzed documents and deals with the methodological aspect of the concept. Not only is Hybrid Education treated as a methodology, but its understanding for regulation and evaluation purposes is vehemently defended, in a movement that the authors here call *methodologization* of the distance learning modality. Thus, the documents present epistemological confusions that permeate what teaching, education, learning, and methodology associated with the hybrid, focusing each of them on one of these elements but without the organicity of the proposal of the normative instruments as a whole.

Figure 1 below presents the trajectory of the implementation of legal documents published to date, which aim to regulate Hybrid Education within the scope of Brazilian Education, observing the focus of the concept in each of them.

Figure 1 – Trajectory of normative instruments on Hybrid Education



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

The first document issued on the subject was the proposal of the National Education Council (CNE) entitled "General Guidelines on Hybrid Learning" (Brasil, 2021), published simultaneously with a call for public comments on these, which was attached. Several research institutions and associations responded to the public call, issuing analyses and opinions about the document's content.

Although many issues have been pointed out as sensitive and mistaken topics in understanding the text of the Guidelines⁴, the content of Opinion CNE/CP No. 14/2022, issued eight months later, was not changed. The concept of methodology was replaced by that of hybrid teaching and learning processes, but the indication present in the text continued to deal with methodology and, more than that, with the process of *methodologization* of distance education. However, the main change observed in the direction of the Hybrid Education implementation policy is that the Call for Proposals (Brasil, 2021) aimed to direct practices related to all Brazilian Education, that is, from Basic to Higher Education, in its various modalities. With the publication of the Opinion, this direction was changed, since the document aimed to regulate Hybrid Education within the scope of Higher Education. Subsequently, in 2022, the movement to standardize Hybrid Education for Basic Education was resumed, with the publication of the Call for Proposals on January 5, 2023 (Brasil, 2023)

Next, an analysis of each of these instruments will be made, based on the categories of Higher Education and Basic Education, observing in the documents the context of the levels of education and

their implications for each of these segments. The objective is to elucidate the possibilities of implementing the educational organization proposed by the conceptual understanding of Hybrid Education indicated in each of the documents, as well as to point out the text's inconsistencies from the perspective of a critical educational purpose, of comprehensive and emancipatory education.

The analysis begins with a reflection on the terms and concepts established in the document "General Guidelines on Hybrid Learning," given the understanding that the content of this document has not been substantially altered in subsequent ones and, therefore, serves as material basis for understanding the conditionalities, contradictions, and advances presented in all of them.

General guidelines for hybrid learning

In the document entitled "General Guidelines for Hybrid Learning," issued by the CNE in 2021, Hybrid Education is aligned with an understanding of learning, and therefore, it is referred to as a hybrid methodology (Brasil, 2021). It is worth noting that in the Call for Public Consultation Notice⁵ issued by the CNE (Brasil, 2021), the stipulated deadline for document analysis and possible contributions was only ten calendar days. Despite the short deadline, many institutions and associations related to the field of Education sent and publicized their contributions to the document on virtual networks. The criticisms and reflections focused on the limiting nature of the methodological perspective of Hybrid Learning, disregarding various dimensions that make up the organization of the educational process.

As it is already possible to recognize in the BNCC, in these General Guidelines on Hybrid Learning, it was decided to talk about learning and not teaching. The pedagogical process is thus centered on the student and, above all, on what they should be able to do in their school journey. From this perspective, the teacher, if properly 'trained' to act as a technician in the implementation of the BNCC, is understood as a less important element, although the text of the document makes some effort to say otherwise. Furthermore, by emphasizing the centrality of the student, the Guidelines identify remote teaching as the solution to problems recognized in face-to-face teaching, although these problems cannot be explained by the modality of the pedagogical encounter, implying the confrontation of the absence or precarious presence of the State in financing and promoting quality public education (Galian *et al.*, 2021, authors' emphasis).

This understanding of technological functionality, aligned with the potential quality enhancers, has already been analyzed by distance learning researchers (Alonso, 2010), who indicated that the centrality of technology in pedagogical processes, by instrumentalizing them, limits the potential of Education. Regarding the concept of Hybrid Education and its potential in the educational process, expanding times and spaces with the integration of these processes, the text of the CNE Call for Proposals that was appended to the General Guidelines for Hybrid Learning represented a conceptual advance on

what was understood as hybrid in education; however, it disregarded *the primary nature of the integration between activities* for them to be considered hybrid. This occurred due to the mistake of considering any different or complementary activity as part of Hybrid Learning, that is, as a methodology.

Although it presents Hybrid Learning as a new pedagogical approach with a methodological perspective (which is the subject of this critique), the document includes in the concept its possibility of being mediated or not by information and communication technologies (ICTs). These could be applied and developed in the common offering of any and all courses in pursuit of more flexible pedagogical practices and organizations through synchronous and asynchronous moments of teaching and learning and through prepared and organized, combined, and/or modified pedagogical strategies.

The Call for Public Consultation by the CNE on the Guidelines for Hybrid Education (Brasil, 2021), despite reinforcing the possibility or not of using ICTs in Hybrid Learning, indicates that the flexibility of times and spaces was already a practice incorporated into Brazilian education through the lessons/tasks of students carried out outside the school environment, and that, paradoxically, the novelty of Hybrid Learning lay precisely in the insertion of digital technologies.

This Hybrid Learning, resulting from the presentation of a 'hybrid or mixed teaching', from a historical perspective, according to a technical note sent to the National Education Council by Professor Guiomar Namo de Mello, is a pedagogical innovation as old as the new active pedagogies. All students are already sufficiently familiar with the traditional 'homework', required in terms of studies, text elaboration, diverse readings, research development, and the most diverse activities developed outside of school, such as projects, supervised internships, and technical visits to companies, museums, various parks, etc., as well as the utilization of numerous knowledge developed through informal and non-formal means. [...]. The new fact, which must be considered of the utmost relevance, was the emergence of ICTs, which came to enhance and allow student-centered teaching and learning to be not only viable for many students and teachers, but, above all, to be dynamic and engaging (Brasil, 2021, p. 9, emphasis in the document).

The delicate issue raised here is the confusion of concepts instituted by a text in which everything fits as Hybrid Learning, disregarding the role of integration. It is even possible to account for individualized activities to reinforce mediated and collective learning in school spaces as learning moments that ensure "autonomy, protagonism, and forms of personalization of student productions" (Brasil, 2021, p. 3).

The document states that Hybrid Learning can occur with or without the support of ICTs, although it repeatedly emphasizes that the innovative nature of Hybrid Education lies in this integration. Despite the conceptual advancement of the term for understanding integration as a characteristic of Hybrid Education, normative instru-

ments are moving towards the consolidation of the already much-criticized instrumentalization and mechanization attributed to education mediated by digital technologies, since their insertion in the educational process is not a guarantee of quality. By indicating that everything can be considered hybrid, the distinction between projects and programs that make use of technological information and communication devices will be restricted to those that already have the best educational system that class differentiation can provide.

The document itself is contradictory in its understanding of the possibility of having a Hybrid Education with or without the incorporation of ICTs, as it brings an intimate relationship between it and the technological devices. According to the excerpt from the Guidelines highlighted below, it is the ICTs that justify the implementation of Hybrid Learning, since, without their use, the experiences that expand the temporal and spatial relationship in the school are reduced to the incorporation of homework as a Hybrid Education proposal.

The hybrid and flexible vision of education has been redefined by the growing connectivity, generating greater access to technological devices. With this, differentiated curricular paths and greater dynamics in the mobility of relationships and mediations between teachers and students, among themselves, between classrooms and other school environments and the world, were made possible, allowing for more effective, expanded, and multidirectional articulations and interactions (Brasil, 2021, p. 2).

Therefore, the text that makes up the Guidelines aims to regulate the methodological understanding of Hybrid Learning at different levels and modalities, centralizing the pedagogical process on the path built by the student. But as can be inferred from the indication of hybridism given by the homework activities, the intended context of autonomy precedes the educational organization mediated by the teacher, with the didactic-pedagogical intentionality and the possibility of communicational expansion among the various agents involved in the educational act, whether they are teachers or students. The document thus proposes a methodology that reverses the role of educational actors but does not establish the roles of the teacher, highlighting the innovative and fundamental role of ICTs as a guarantee of the quality of the educational process in education.

The basic concept of this hybridism proposes it as a real enrichment of face-to-face teaching, considering that technology enhances agility and helps organize learning, in addition to offering an opportunity for an active role of the student in the use of digital resources. In the contemporary school, technology is an important component in pedagogical practice, instrumentalizing the act and interaction with the world, which is increasingly connected, expanded, and demanding new learning practices. An important reflection is the change of roles of the actors. The student starts to produce knowledge and develop skills, and the teacher, responsible for the construction of learning experiences according to the needs of the students, acts as a guide and mentor of this productive process, assuming the partnership in the collective construction of authorial action (Brasil, 2021, p. 3).

The possibility of flexibility proposed in the CNE Guidelines directly establishes the role of the State in the field of public education policies by endorsing aspects of merit and individualization of proposals organized by Hybrid Learning, indicating that, to face the educational changes then underway, "effective decisions by leaders that ensure public *support policies*" would be necessary (Brasil, 2021, p. 12, our emphasis).

This measure of flexibility finds great support in the concept of *methodologization* that is evident in this text, since, by instituting a movement of distancing and negation of the regulations already applied to education mediated by digital technologies, this standardization moves towards the consolidation of distance education as a methodology for all Brazilian education, thus dispensing with the State as an agent of monitoring and evaluation, since it is not responsible for the supervision and proposition of paths and didactic organization of the pedagogical process. The proposition is so cunning that even its criticism can occur in a contradiction since no researcher who relies on concepts of a critical and emancipatory education would defend the intervention of the State in the protagonism and autonomy of teachers.

Understanding the teaching work and its relevance, it becomes evident that it is not the State's responsibility and policy proposals' responsibility to direct the instrumentalization of this work. Thus, the authors of this article express their disagreement with the incorporation of merely methodological discourses into technology-mediated education. The distance education modality, even though it is configured as an educational process, has specificities in both the formative and structural areas that need to be the object of policy proposals and, even more, of evaluation and monitoring of their implementations, under penalty of resorting to the insertion of ICTs as an individualized process of quality in education.

The text indicates the functions of the State: to provide budgetary resources for the acquisition of informatics equipment; to develop national programs of methodological strategies and those aimed at the training of teachers and educational managers in planning dynamics; to evaluate learning and the use of technological resources; and to suggest new teaching and learning methodologies. It is evident that, according to the opinion, Hybrid Learning should offer in-person and distance courses without percentage limits established for applying the methodology in the remote learning process of the students. In the draft Resolution attached to the opinion that established the General Guidelines on Hybrid Learning, the rules for Hybrid Learning would apply to the levels of Basic and Higher Education and the different teaching modalities.

Hybrid education in higher education

As seen earlier, eight months after the publication of the draft General Guidelines for Hybrid Learning, the CNE issued Opinion

CNE/CEP No. 14, of July 5, 2022, General National Guidelines for the Development of the Hybrid Teaching and Learning Process in Higher Education (Brasil, 2022a), with a proposed Resolution attached to the document. In this new instrument, it was decided not to treat Hybrid Education as a methodology but as a process, even though, when defining the hybrid teaching and learning process, the document only suppressed the term methodology as linked to Hybrid Education. The understanding of this process, however, remained in the methodological scope.

Art. 2nd - The hybrid teaching and learning process is characterized as a flexible methodological approach, organized based on ICTs, active and innovative, guiding teaching activities and various forms of teaching and learning, aimed at competency-based training, stimulating students' autonomy and protagonism and collaborative learning, allowing the integration of virtual interaction in learning spaces with face-to-face activities (Brasil, 2022a, p. 12).

The text of CNE/CEP Opinion No. 14/2022 does not bring any changes regarding the concepts addressed in the previous item of regulatory flexibility, nor about the methodological understanding of Hybrid Education as a strategy of this flexibility and the erasure of the State's functions as an inducer of public policies, being only responsible for supporting institutional policies. However, when presenting the Resolution Project that established the General National Guidelines for the Development of the Hybrid Teaching and Learning Process in Higher Education (Brasil, 2022a), some procedures and understandings that were more nebulous in the document sent for public consultation were announced.

Initially, it is highlighted here the link that the hybrid process document makes with the initial training of Basic Education teachers:

Art. 7th - The HEIs that offer Initial Teacher Training for Basic Education can appropriate information and communication mediation technologies in order to value aspects related to the experience and use of digital language in real and remote didactic-pedagogical situations, in line with the provisions of CNE/CP Resolution No. 2, of December 20, 2019.

Sole paragraph. HEIs may associate the provisions of the caput with compliance with the provisions of CNE/CP Resolution No. 1, of October 27, 2020, which deals with the Continuing Education of Teachers, in partnership with the Education Systems, their Education Departments, and educational institutions (Brasil, 2022a, p. 13).

Such a link between the hybrid process and the initial training of Basic Education teachers advances in new alignments that the regulation of Hybrid Education has brought, especially by highlighting the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the configuration of teaching and remote practices as a new form of education organization. This link between Hybrid Learning and remote education was not clear in the document sent for public consultation, but it is directly presented in the Opinion (Brasil, 2022a), demonstrating one of the

true intentions of the hybrid process by proposing that remote practice replaces curricular in-person practices.

Art. 14 - Within the scope of this Resolution, remote practices are considered activities integrated into the mandatory curricular components of higher education courses, not to be confused with curricular internship activities, in order to *expand learning by competencies through the provision of content and skills to students, in environments linked to the professional and cultural activities of the course, external to the institution.*

§ 1 The practices referred to in the caput must be planned and detailed in the curricular projects of the course, both in pedagogical aspects and in technological aspects that should mediate the learning development process, in order to objectively clarify the set of competencies, contents, and skills to be achieved.

§ 2 *Remote practices referred to in the main section may replace in-person curricular practices*, except for internships, synchronously, at the discretion of the institutions offering higher education courses (Brasil, 2022a, p. 25, our emphasis).

The Resolution Project also presents the conditions for introducing the hybrid process into teaching and learning, indicating that altering institutional documents, namely the institutional development plan and the course project, is a procedure for this. Still, it points to the need to establish Hybrid Education as a deepening of knowledge and learning based on competency-based teaching.

Art. 12 - Hybrid activities in the context of teaching and learning, as set out in this Resolution, are not considered those promoted by HEIs as provided for in MEC Ordinance No. 2,117 of 2019, that is, the application of percentages to face-to-face courses offering the course and subjects in the distance learning modality, or that, in any case, generate complementation in the pre-existing curricular structure of the face-to-face course, by modules in the distance learning modality. Sole paragraph. To comply with the provisions in the main section, the hybrid teaching and learning process must be fully integrated into the course activities, *in order to facilitate and stimulate the organization of competency-based learning* (Brasil, 2022a, p. 14, our emphasis).

This conception of technicist education, which conditions the educational process to the training of workers based on competencies, meets a demand of neoliberal society and comes to be seen as a means to meet the demands that the market imposes on the production process. This logic, as pointed out by Catani, Oliveira, and Dourado (2001), significantly restricts the role of education in worker training, greatly impacts the definition of curricular reforms adopted in the 1990s, and still affects regulatory processes for Brazilian education today.

The hegemonic ideology advocates a redefinition of Human Capital Theory as it links education and employability. In the business perspective, the understanding that has prevailed is that the new professional profiles and the training models currently required by the capitalist production paradigm can be expressed, in summary, in two aspects: professional versatility and flexibility. This would be the case, with greater or lesser intensi-

ty, for workers in all fields and for all educational and training institutions, especially schools and universities. Furthermore, the development of this versatility and professional flexibility (multi-skilled professional) would include the identification of cognitive skills and social competencies required in the exercise of different professions, as well as in different branches of activity. It also includes rethinking professional profiles and training, qualification, and retraining programs from different training institutions, such as schools, universities, unions, companies, and NGOs. The dissemination of this idea of re-signification of Human Capital Theory directly interferes in the scope of educational policies in Brazil, especially regarding the ongoing curricular reforms (Catani; Oliveira; Dourado, 2001, p. 71).

The Opinion that contains the Resolution Project now analyzed follows the line of countering the perspective of Hybrid Education of offering distance learning hours in face-to-face courses to the distance education (EaD) modality, indicating that the organization of the hybrid teaching and learning process is configured as a change in the curricular proposal, in which physical presence becomes a less important component for the construction of knowledge. In a recent interview with the newspaper *Folha de S. Paulo*⁶, the president of the CNE, Prof. Luiz Cury, describes Hybrid Education as a procedure for integrating students, school, and community, and questions educational proposals that aim to remove students from the school institution.

The Opinion, however, leaves room for this distancing of students from educational institutions not only to remain, but also to deepen by indicating that the curricularization of extension and practice as a curricular component of initial teacher training courses can be carried out remotely.

Art. 5th - Within the scope of the flexible process of hybrid education, learning can occur interactively and dynamically between in-person or virtual academic activities, synchronous or asynchronous, with the use of ICTs.

Sole paragraph. The virtual activities referred to in the caput should preferably be carried out at the Higher Education Institution (HEI), constituting activities related to learning through remote practices that reach environments outside the HEI, as well as classes, lectures, debates, seminars, exchanges, and other forms of interaction available in the curricular pedagogical projects.

[...]

Art. 10 - The hybrid teaching and learning process, once adopted and provided for in the institutional curricular documents, should guide the didactic-pedagogical activities, from the physical space of the HEI, so that they can be developed online, in a synchronous and asynchronous manner, without being confused with percentages of activities in the distance learning modality in face-to-face higher education courses (Brasil, 2022a, p. 13-14).

As can be seen, the draft Resolution does not materialize the design of activities to be developed within educational institutions. If

the document, which is already approved, is approved in its entirety, there will be the possibility for Hybrid Education to follow the trend of reducing in-person hours, whether in the classroom or in other educational spaces, being expanded by practices that already constitute the offer of distance hours in face-to-face courses. Despite the insistence of the CNE Opinion and the Resolution Project to ratify this offer, it is understood that this differentiation lies much more in a regulatory issue than a conceptual and didactic one, since the text itself indicates that the intentionality of the use of the hybrid lies in the possibility of expanding “the current regulatory benchmarks, without the percentage limits established for practices and possible remote learning for students, whether in face-to-face courses or those developed within the scope of distance education” (Brasil, 2022a, p. 7).

At the last minute of the Bolsonaro government, the Ministry of Education (MEC) published Ordinance No. 325, dated December 30, 2022, on regulating the hybrid teaching and learning process for *stricto sensu* graduate programs in Brazil. In the course of the text, the reorganization of the educational scenario, the changes that are happening according to cultural contexts, the insertion of technologies, and the exceptional restructuring that had to be carried out due to the Covid-19 pandemic (Brasil, 2022d) are evident.

The document considers advances that should improve the flexibility of teaching and learning dynamics, the redefinition of pedagogical approaches and practices, with the association of face-to-face and non-face-to-face activities in flexible institutional times and spaces, and the insertion of technology. Despite being extremely succinct, it also refers to the unanimous approval of Opinion CNE/ CP No. 14/2022, but does not provide information on what could be done for the benefit of postgraduate studies, despite announcing that the Directorate of Evaluation of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (DAV/Capes) has the competence to define the operational norms for the fulfillment of the Ordinance.

Hybrid Education in Basic Education

Decree No. 11,079⁷, of May 23, 2022, explicitly states the intention to link Basic Education learning recovery strategies to the implementation of the “pedagogical use of digital content”, based on principles of “improving the initial and continuing training of basic education professionals, to guide the use of technologies to improve teaching and learning processes” (Brasil, 2022b, [online]).

The Innovation Network for Hybrid Education appears in the proposal presented by MEC Ordinance No. 865, of November 8, 2022 (Brasil, 2022c), as the implementation of a larger governmental action, called the National Policy for Learning Recovery. The implementation of these purposes and principles outlined in the Decree currently under analysis materialized in public policy with the implementation of the Innovation Network, which implements the education-technology relationship from instrumental and mechanistic

prisms, advancing the relationship between the teaching-learning process towards an automated action, as highlighted in the excerpt below.

Art. 2nd - The implementation of the Innovation Network for Hybrid Education will be organized considering the following stages:

I – acquisition, creation, and provision of the Network's technological resources;

II – technical training for the use of the Network's technological environments;

III – *selection, adaptation, and reuse of educational resources that facilitate and automate educational activities*; and

IV – creation of the National Observatory of Hybrid Education to monitor the activities developed within the Network (Brasil, 2022b, [online], our emphasis).

To understand the impact of remote teaching on Basic Education, data presented by the Senate in the document “Pandemic accentuates educational deficit and requires actions from the public authorities” is used, which aims to provide support for the gradual return of in-person classes during the pandemic, using “the hybrid format” (*apud* Araújo, 2021). The document indicates the educational losses caused to students in the state education network and confirms that this gap was greater for students in public schools.

Although the data presented and the public policy of the Innovation Network for Hybrid Education reflect different moments, the data related to teaching and learning during the pandemic allow the interpretation that the Brazilian educational system and all the links of the educational process within the scope of social public policies did not manage to provide quality education to public school students.

In January 2023, the CNE launched a new Public Consultation in the field of Hybrid Education, this time on the proposal of the National Guiding Directives for the development of Hybrid Education and flexible practices of the hybrid teaching and learning process in Basic Education (Brasil, 2023). Such consultation is part of the legal movement to which Basic Education has been subjected in the linking process – mainly – of Hybrid Education and the feasibility of the new High School. The Guidelines bring some clearer questions about the understanding of Hybrid Education, based on the assumptions of remote education, as can be seen when its text states that it is “relevant to consider the use of remote teaching strategies, not yet characterized as hybrid teaching and learning processes” (Brasil, 2023, p. 5).

From the methodological perspective of the expression Hybrid Education, the National Guidelines for Basic Education follow the same path already outlined by Decree No. 11,079/2022 and MEC Ordinance No. 865/2022, which link the implementation of the new High School to hybrid formats. It is also a continuity, among the documents, of the perspective of symbiosis between Hybrid Education and an educational project centered on the development of skills, as al-

ready advocated by the current National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) for High School.

The National Guiding Guidelines for the development of Hybrid Education and flexible practices of the hybrid teaching and learning process in Basic Education mention the acquisition of tools and formative processes to integrate the National Education Plan in the period from 2024-2034, but, as presented in the text under public consultation, the immediate start of hybrid learning within the scope of Basic Education would be linked to the conditions and structures already existing in school institutions. In the case of public education, these structures have already proven to be incipient, both for the use of work organization within educational institutions and even more markedly in the intentionality of breaking down time and space barriers, which opens up possibilities for the development of educational processes mediated in places other than the school.

Differently from the instruments that regulate Higher Education and emphasize the distancing of Hybrid Education from the rules that make up the distance modality and the use of distance hours in face-to-face courses, the Guidelines for Basic Education have recovered the terms established in Resolution No. 3, of November 21, 2018, which updated the National Curriculum Guidelines for High School (Brasil, 2018). For the interpretation of how hybrid moments would be implemented in the curriculum, in line with the forecast of the percentage of distance learning hours in face-to-face courses, the Guidelines for Basic Education extended the possibility of instituting this percentage also for Elementary Education.

As for the workload to be used for virtual approaches, society's discussions are repeated in the demand for set times. On this theme, we have to consider that Brazilian legislation already establishes that schools have the freedom and autonomy to adopt percentages of school time in non-face-to-face activities, including the use of technologies, according to the learning objectives of each course, year, in line with the age and maturity of the students (Brasil, 2023, p. 18).

There is a concern here regarding the intentionality of including virtual activities in face-to-face teaching, as it appears to be different from the understanding of the State's role in proposing norms for monitoring the process. If in Higher Education these norms unfold in processes that aim to monitor and evaluate the propositions of educational projects that involve the flexibility of times and spaces, in Basic Education this evaluation is done by ranking the institutions, with financial and structural damages to the schools and teams that make up the evaluated community. This interpretation sheds light on the Final Considerations of this text, which move towards the understanding that this flexibility intended by the instruments that regulate the hybrid aims to consolidate the business reform in Brazilian Education, as Freitas (2018) advocates. In this way, education and educational institutions play a leading role in disseminating neoliberal meritocratic discourses, legitimizing social inequalities and masking them

as merit inequalities, with the school being organized by the *no excuses* (zero tolerance) system.

Final Considerations

Rodrigues' (2021, p. 203) analysis of the concept of hybrid – thought based on the instruments that regulate the provision of distance education in face-to-face undergraduate courses – also perfectly fits to understand the intentions imposed on the regulations now analyzed on Hybrid Education:

What we see in these documents [ordinances offering distance learning hours in undergraduate courses] is not the conceptualization of hybrid education, but rather a hybridization of concepts that deal with distinct conceptions, in an attempt to elaborate a discourse that brings touches of innovative propositions for quality education, but which actually move towards consolidating individual processes of quality assurance very close to the meritocratic discourse already defended by neoliberal ideology (Rodrigues, 2021, p. 203).

The tensions presented in this study about the conduction of these normative instruments are configured, therefore, as a denunciation both in defense of education mediated by technologies, Hybrid Education, and distance learning, as well as the structuring of a public policy that is configured based on progressive, critical, and emancipatory educational purposes for the student and the worker. Regarding this necessary confrontation of ultraliberal policies and the path to subvert this reality, Freitas (2020, [online]) states: We must build paths that, based on local realities, can maximize our action in this process. This action in this process is not to completely block, but rather for you, as much as possible, to subvert what is proposed.

Regarding the instruments now analyzed on Hybrid Education, there is a covert trajectory of deregulation of those that support the development of the distance modality and the role of the State in establishing these policies, both for Basic Education and Higher Education. The trajectory proposed so far by the instruments that regulate Hybrid Education has shown a departure from the regulation of Distance Education, allowing an interpretation that the distance modality assumes not only regulatory flexibility for the use of technologies in education and its implications in the configuration of face-to-face education, but also its deregulation, linking Hybrid Education to an almost everything of curricular and management possibilities, and delivering it to the logic of the market, as if it could validate good educational proposals, despite being destined to be consumed as a mere educational product.

The data indicated in the reading of the texts demonstrated that the construction of the conceptualization and applicability of Hybrid Education was a strategy designed for the flexibilization of the conditions imposed on the distance education modality, opening spaces for individualization of proposals that begin to align with the intentionality of each educational institution. However, based on the theoretical

references on which this article is based, it is advocated that the appropriation of technology by education be seen as a cultural and social process, which, within the scope of teacher training and the physical, technological, and curricular structure of educational institutions, can constitute one of the paths for human development to be the result of an emancipatory project.

The logic of individualizing and organizing the educational process based on a methodology, on the acquisition of informational equipment, and on formative processes provided by stagnant programs should not guide an innovative education proposal. However, the practice that has been adopted for technology-mediated education instrumentalizes and precarizes the educational process and mischaracterizes teaching work.

To overcome the instrumentalizing and precarious model, it is necessary to recognize the contributions of Hybrid Education, as the experience with teaching and learning practices that combine/integrate face-to-face and online as a whole causes the roles of students and teachers to change in relation to traditional teaching. Such modification enables the customization of this process and the obtaining of evidence (in identifying the different needs of students), in which monitoring, mediation, and evaluation can be better developed (Cieba, 2021). That is, studies show that Hybrid Education can promote pedagogical richness (with greater access to knowledge and interaction), flexibility in study time, greater student protagonism, and collaborative work with colleagues (Graham, 2013; Lencastre, 2013).

Thus, Hybrid Education can greatly contribute to the construction of an educational project that includes the expansion of the social function of the school and scientific training if innovative educational proposals are presented, guided by public policies that support teacher and student training, digital inclusion and literacy, infrastructure, and the technological structuring of society and educational institutions.

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² Although the analyzed documents use the expressions *Hybrid Methodology* or *Hybrid Learning*, this study uses *Hybrid Education*, given the understanding that the teaching process also involves learning (but not only that), in an approach that surpasses the banking education model rejected by Paulo Freire, who advocates for a

perspective of emancipatory human formation based on *Education*. Therefore, it relates and considers the process of teaching and learning.

³ Rodrigues (2021) criticizes the use of distance learning hours in face-to-face courses for understanding the distance learning modality as a methodology and, consequently, as a disengagement of the State in monitoring and evaluating the distance learning modality. From this understanding, the term methodologization of distance education has been gaining ground in studies and discussions carried out in the research network mentioned in this article. In this way, this neologism is being used to designate the process of configuring the distance modality in a teaching methodology, thus being able to be offered without specific regulation or monitoring and even being confused/merged with Hybrid Education, which the authors of this text reject.

⁴ Different research groups and associations published on their social networks/websites texts prepared to meet the 2021 Call for Proposals with criticisms of the mistaken concepts used in this Guideline and the impact caused on the teaching and learning process (Anfope, 2021; Anped, 2021; Galian *et al.*, 2021).

⁵ Available at:
http://portal.mec.gov.br/index.php?option=com_docman&view=download&alias=227281-edital-de-chamamento-educacao-hibrida&category_slug=novembro-2021-pdf&Itemid=30192/.

⁶ Available at: https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/educacao/2023/02/liberar-ensino-a-distancia-para-faculdade-presencial-e-ruim-diz-presidente-do-conselho-de-educacao.shtml?pwgt=kuf6l9kgvwqpn4e76urkpazbjy1tmcbx4t1ohbngplsema&utm_source=whatsapp&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=compwagift/ Accessed on: Mar 4, 2023.

⁷ The text of the Decree that formalizes the learning recovery policy delimits this action to Basic Education. This delimitation is also present in the content of MEC Ordinance No. 865/2022 and in the succession of instruments that regulate Hybrid Education in Brazilian educational policy, with the publication of the National Guidelines for the Development of Hybrid Education and flexible practices of the hybrid teaching and learning process at the Basic Education level, which will be addressed in the next section.

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