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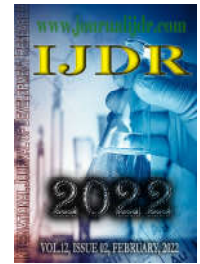
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CURRICULUM FLEXIBILITY IN THE INCLUSIVE SCHOOL: A THEORETICAL REFLECTION ON THE CURRICULUM CONSTRUCTION PROCESS

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to establish a dialogical relationship between curriculum flexibility and learning styles for teacher curricular knowledge and how these categories can serve as essential tools for building an inclusive curriculum, and specifically, how to use them as methodological strategies in the classroom context, in order to generate a better use in the learning process based on assumptions of renowned authors such as Perrenoud (1997), Tomlinson (2008), among others. For this, a brief history of the curriculum trajectory is presented, in order to identify remnants of traditional teaching that still impact the teaching of the 21st century, as well as setbacks that stagnate teaching. The relationship between curriculum and power is addressed as a game of hegemonic class interests. Curricular Flexibility is conceptualized within a classroom context in the search for social inclusion for all, without exception.

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INTRODUCTION

In this millennium, many discussions around school issues have spread, with the process of school inclusion gaining centrality in the curriculum discussion agenda. Faced with these clashes, there has been a constant movement towards the creation of conditions for the common school to organize itself in the sense of giving access to knowledge in a democratic and effective way for everyone to learn. In this sense, the theme of the curriculum assumes a central role in this discussion, making the issue of curriculum development in the field of Inclusive Education teaching disturbing. Thinking and reflecting on these issues concerning the proposed theme, linking curriculum flexibility to inclusive education, becomes relevant. It is also necessary to think about effective inclusive practices, through a broader reflection, in the methodological field on the subject, as it is through these lines that a large part of the realization of the right to education for all is provided, as it is through practices pedagogical diversified, taking into account the students' learning styles, which makes possible the realization of a dreamed curricular reality. It is in this sense that we will try to establish a dialogue between inclusive

education and the curriculum as a major challenge for collective construction, this is not always easy and does not happen in a linear fashion, based in what Maia, Scheibel and Urban say (2009, p. 176) "the practiced curriculum involves the relationships between power, culture and schooling, even if in a way, not always explicit". The article is divided into three main topics: The first presents a brief history of the evolution of the concept of curriculum, showing that curriculum is a social, cultural and historical construction. In the second topic, the curriculum is presented from a perspective of power relations in which the class that holds the hegemony determines the rules of the play, thus defining what is "important" to be considered as teachings to reproduce the *status quo*. In the third topic, consideration is given to the concept of Curriculum Flexibility as an instrument of social inclusion, a group that is becoming more heterogeneous every day, for the inclusion of ethnic minorities, the disabled, gifted/talented, in short, through diversified pedagogical interventions.

A brief history of the curriculum concept evolution: The curriculum idea is associated with the idea of organization, which implies methodological formalization, accompanied by notions of order in the

sense of internal sequence and discipline, and of structural coherence. It is within this scenario that the word curriculum is born as a polysemy term, with its main underlying ideas (GOODSON, 1995 and PACHECO 2005). Both Goodson (1995) and Pacheco (2005) discuss the etymology of the term, referring to the word *Scurrere*, as a running course, a course of studies, and present the curriculum with an educational organization. Pacheco (2005) uses Hamilton's ideas to associate the term curriculum initially with Calvino stating that only a minority, the elected, received the advantages of a better education to the detriment of the majority, that is, the rural poor, who received a low education quality. Goodson (1995) describes the evolution of the school institution, from the Middle Ages to the Modern Age. In this context, with the advance of industrialization, the system moves from classes, that is, in the more familiar and artisanal context, to the classroom, serving more the industrial and manufacturing system. The curriculum, in a dual way, is presented in a gradual, less in-depth way, aimed at the poorest, while the curriculum with greater length and duration was aimed at the more affluent, that is, for the "elected". Over the years, in the 19th century, the curriculum gained a conceptual expansion. Entering this context, it can be said that the classroom system started to present itself in the form of subjects, schedules, grades, standardization and flowchart, and when arriving in the 20th century in a more structured way, it began to have the status of "pedagogy of the curriculum" and evaluation as epistemological elements (GOODSON, 1995).

Goodson mentions that the centrality of the curriculum was reduced to academic subjects. This standardization and uniformity started to have a normative character of order and discipline, evaluation of knowledge, and in an accentuated way, being able to generate a certain ranking: the fittest would reach university studies. Schooling created distinct groups that received different *curricula*: those elected assumed a position of director or some businesses within the liberal professions, while another intermediary assumed the field of applied sciences or applied arts, and a lower category studied in technical schools, generally subsidized by the state system, being at the mercy of the State colonization system. However, the encouragement of the private sector took care to maintain the expansion to serve the more affluent. Pacheco (2005) follows his considerations on the term curriculum, stating that it has gained a range of options that range from a restricted design of instructional plans to an open design of information projects in the context of a given organization. Two different traditions conceived the term: a traditional technique, which defines curriculum at the formal level, and another which organizes learning in the organizational context.

This last approach or conception leads us to the principles of efficiency, effectiveness and effectiveness, principles evoked by the labor market in the sense of productivity. Pacheco evokes the idea that the curriculum gains prescription status with demands to be achieved such as goals and learning outcomes. He states that the curriculum in the French tradition is seen as a pedagogical action plan much broader than a teaching plan, referring to a broader plan, entering into teleological questions that advocate the purposes of education. He starts looking for a link that gains echo in Bobbitt's thinking when he says that the curriculum advocates a series of achievements and measures that children and young people would have to do and experience in order to gradually become adults in every way. In the sequence, Pacheco mentions other curriculum theorists such as Sacristan and Zabalza who point to the curriculum as a set of educational experiences lived by the student, presenting a more open vision of breadth, with a greater range of conceptual possibilities involving beliefs, values and stakeholders curriculum that bring formal and informal practices. In this sense, Pacheco (2005) states that this curriculum model was based on the principles and proposals of the new school represented by Dewey. Pacheco (2005) stated that the Latin term *Scurrere* means path journey trajectory path to follow, giving rise to the idea of an ordered sequence and another totality of studies. He declares that there is no way to build a comprehensive definition of curriculum due to the dynamic dynamics of current realities, as the curriculum is something unfinished and delimited that is outlined in the process itself or

delimited in the process. However, there are two specific points in common that thus define its field: an ordered sequence and a notion of the totality of studies. Pacheco (2005, p. 16) raises the following question: "should the curriculum propose what should be taught or what students should learn? Is it what should be taught and learned or is it also what is taught and learned in practice?". In this sense, he concludes that every curricular proposal is a historicized social construction, and dependent on numerous conditions and conflicting interests. In this wake, power conflicts occur because they have a socio-historical dimension, that is, there is a game of ideological, economic and political interests, among others.

Breaking Patterns: Curriculum vs. power: The fact that there is a group that has the power to choose or select what should be taught and what should not demonstrates a policy or a power game. This game is hegemonic, where the way of thinking and producing a world imposed by a certain culture prevails, that is, by the dominant culture, this also denotes a power game. In this way, this movement expressed in forces and the game of interests, in the disputes that are established between groups and institutions, confirming what is valid and what is not, arbitrarily and imposed on other minority cultures, demonstrate that when we study curriculum we realize that it is not just the epistemological aspect that is part of the phenomenon. We realize that it rests on political, economic, cultural and social bases, which are most often imposed by coercion, often not resisted, thus marginalizing other knowledge that is not chosen by the ruling class, thus determining what is valid and which is not valid (APPLE, 2006). For Apple (2006, p. 103):

The knowledge that reached schools in the past and that arrives today is not aleatory. It is selected and organized around a set of principles and values that come from somewhere, which represent certain views of normality and deviation, of good and bad, and of the way "good people" should act. Thus, to understand why knowledge belongs to only certain groups has been represented in the foreground in schools, we need to know the social interests that often guided the selection of the curriculum and its organization. Thus, to understand why knowledge belongs to only certain groups, we need to know the social interests that often guided curriculum selection and organization. This shows us clearly how values and interests are imbricated in the subjects who choose and select the form and contents of the curriculum, starting to be perceived as a cultural construction and an instrument of power, transmission of the ideology and hegemony of the dominants, in this sense it becomes an arena and a space for the dispute of powers, knowledge and "truths" that largely serve as social control. Therefore, we can confirm in line with Lopes and Macedo (2011, p.71) that the curriculum is "a discursive practice, a practice of power, and also a practice of meaning, of attributing meanings", as well as confirming the thinking of Foucault (2005) who asserts that it is the same loaded with discourse where language conveys representations that are imbricated with power. Pacheco (2005) emphasizes the dimensions of unity, continuity and interdependence, which result in the realization of concrete and real curricular practice that serve as training instruments and permeate impressions, tensions and realities. Finally, Pacheco (2005) makes some recommendations to question the practice, indicating some curricular deliberations to think the curriculum through the prisms: logical, political, economic, ideological, technical, aesthetic, historical and social to criticize the conceptual immobility of *curriculum*.

Conceptualizing Curriculum Flexibility: Curriculum flexibility is a phenomenon of a multidimensional character that aims to enable and make accessible to students a wide variety of multiform content on the didactic-methodological aspect. This makes us believe that flexibility is not just for the different or the disabled, but for a group that is becoming more heterogeneous every day, making education more inclusive. (DE PAULO, 2021). Within this diversity, in a changing world, Perrenoud (1997) evokes the centrality of the student in their learning, considering their learning pace, thus requiring a diversity of methods, material strategies and different resources, also used in different ways. This fact evokes changes in the pedagogical work practices in view of the diversity of rhythms that students

present. Aware of this reality, teachers need to vary their teaching methods. This constitutes an answer to the various capabilities that are contemplated by collaborative work. For this ideal to become effective, this implies different opportunities, different learning paths that aim at the whole, that is, for there to be flexibility in the classroom, teaching-learning situations must provide opportunities that encourage the development of potential and capabilities of students, without forgetting the use of media, of Gamification, as this generation of basic education students is digital native, therefore they already enter the walls of the school with knowledge of the use of digital technologies. In this process, we evoke once again the speech of Perrenoud (1997) who profess that, in different contexts, different proposals and tasks, thus providing opportunities for everyone's learning rhythms, and not the old practices, with the same lessons and the same rhythms and times standardized, as if there were no differences between individuals. Ergo, school education promotes differentiated processes, products and content and not the reproduction of serial models according to the Fordist and Taylorist paradigm. Therefore, teachers must have a broad view of the skills of students, through observation made for each of them, so that they can see their gaps and their needs and offer, during the educational process, a range of diversified opportunities for activities that permeate the tasks of integration of interactions, dialogue experiences (TOMLINSON, 2008). At the center of attention are games and games and other experiences that lead the student to mastery of diversified learning, through also diversified resources and methods. It is necessary to develop in students the ability to live with differences, and the best path and take them as a starting point, exploring their possibilities for learning. Barros (2008) highlights the importance of thinking about the diversity of ways of learning that are required of us to meet the demands based on individuality. In addition to these demands, a series of other themes are required of us, such as competences, skills, multiculturalism, knowledge construction and a series of others.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Differentiated teaching respects the skills and interests of students, and this becomes central in the differentiation paradigm and pedagogical flexibility. Achieving this challenging ideal requires a collaborative construction from the curricula of Teaching Systems passing through to students, and above all from the collective action of school managers, teachers, government officials and all other community agents to manage this situation by means of a work of reflection and cooperation, carried out through innovative and strategic work. When preparing their classes, teachers must take into account the provision of contents that take into account a continuum in which they observe the subtlety of complexity that goes from simple to complex, from general to particular, the time of each student, materials, methodologies, more flexible groupings possible

and student variables, continuous assessment of the progress of each one, observing the needs that each one presents, contemplating collaborative work, aspects which are recommended in the body of this article. This work will only become possible if the family is involved to support the continuity of the work, encouraging the commitment of the student, without counting on a very special aspect to be implemented: Teacher training for teaching classes with this profile. All this work will generate positive changes with positive results as well, the result of a pedagogical curricular differentiation aimed at equal opportunities for all. We suggest that more research is carried out on this theme that include empirical works that address successful experiences with the applicability and experience of curricular practices in the field of pedagogical differentiation and diversification. We also suggest that research be carried out linking the issues of diversification to the theme of learning styles.

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