

**CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN VISUAL ARTS AND INDIGENOUS ARTS IN BRAZIL
AND IN INDIGENOUS BASIC EDUCATION**

***DIVERSIDADE CULTURAL NAS ARTES VISUAIS E ARTES INDÍGENAS NO
BRASIL E NA EDUCAÇÃO BÁSICA INDÍGENA***

***LA DIVERSIDAD CULTURAL EN LAS ARTES VISUALES EN LAS ARTES
INDÍGENAS EN BRASIL Y LA EDUCACIÓN BÁSICA INDÍGENA***



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ABSTRACT: This article encompasses visual arts, history, culture, and society in Brazil. It focuses on indigenous cultural expressions in Brazil, particularly visual productions. Given this reality, the school is considered a place where knowledge can converge to facilitate a harmonious relationship among different interethnic groups. The overall objective was to analyze the importance and appreciation of indigenous arts in indigenous schools, such as body painting, mask making, and ceramic painting activities. For this study, qualitative data was collected through a literature review, where a meticulous and comprehensive analysis of publications relevant to this research was conducted. The findings highlight the importance of promoting a school environment where integrating participants in the teaching-learning process is crucial in valuing human beings.

KEYWORDS: School education. Indigenous. Culture.

RESUMO: Este artigo compreendeu as artes visuais, história, cultura e sociedade no Brasil. Tendo como eixo temático as manifestações culturais indígenas no Brasil, e por objetos as produções visuais. Frente a essa realidade, a escola é considerada um local onde os saberes podem convergir para que haja uma relação harmoniosa entre os diferentes grupos interétnicos. O objetivo geral foi analisar a importância e a valorização das artes indígenas nas escolas indígenas, como a pintura corporal, a confecção de máscaras e as atividades de pintura em cerâmica. Para este estudo, de forma qualitativa, utilizou-se para coleta de dados a revisão bibliográfica ou da literatura, onde foi feita uma análise meticulosa e ampla das publicações coerente para esta pesquisa. Os resultados apresentados apontam a importância de promover um ambiente escolar onde a integração dos envolvidos no processo ensino-aprendizagem é fundamental na valorização do ser humano.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Educação escolar. Indígena. Cultura.

RESUMEN: Este artículo trata de las artes visuales, la historia, la cultura y la sociedad en Brasil. Su eje temático son las manifestaciones culturales indígenas en Brasil, y sus objetos, las producciones visuales. Frente a esta realidad, la escuela es considerada un lugar donde el conocimiento puede converger para que haya una relación armoniosa entre los diferentes grupos interétnicos. El objetivo general fue analizar la importancia y la valoración de las artes indígenas en las escuelas indígenas, como las actividades de pintura corporal, confección de máscaras y pintura cerámica. Para este estudio cualitativo, se utilizó una revisión bibliográfica o de literatura para la recolección de datos, en la que se realizó un análisis minucioso y amplio de las publicaciones acordes con esta investigación. Los resultados presentados apuntan a la importancia de promover un ambiente escolar en el que la integración de los involucrados en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje sea fundamental para la valoración del ser humano.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Educación escolar. Indígena. Cultura.

Introduction

The first school activities for indigenous peoples took place approximately five centuries ago. Currently, due to various mobilizations and demands made by the indigenous movement, there have been significant changes in both legislation and government policy. In this context, several studies highlight the difficulties these people face, particularly concerning the pursuit of their educational rights as guaranteed in legal and regulatory texts.

Luciano (2006) emphasizes that "the school education offered to indigenous peoples for centuries has always aimed to integrate the Indians into national society" (p. 148, our translation). It was an education without respect for cultural differences and language, focused solely on non-Indians' interests, teaching them to live and interact according to their social standards. Therefore, the school is considered a place where knowledge can unite to create a harmonious relationship between different interethnic groups.

However, we notice that the school, once an instrument of imposition on Indians in the past, is now "desired as a space of freedom, achievement, affirmation, and (re)construction of the social projects of Amerindian peoples" (Lopes, 2008, p. 02, our translation). Given this, the presented problem raises the following question as a guide: within indigenous schools, are their cultures and customs studied?

The general objective of this research is to analyze the importance and appreciation of indigenous arts within indigenous schools, including activities such as body painting, mask making, and ceramic painting. The specific objectives are to analyze the history of indigenous education in Brazil, to describe the teaching of indigenous culture in indigenous schools, and to present indigenous art and its culture within the context of primary education in indigenous schools.

The relevance of this topic lies in demonstrating that indigenous arts have expressive characteristics and serve as vehicles for transmitting knowledge and concepts in schools, through the nature and essence of humanity itself. It is emphasized that indigenous art is predominantly representative of the traditions of the community where it is practiced, rather than the individual personality of the artist.

The research defines the concepts of artistic education and indigenous cultures, analyzes their importance in the school environment, and compiles elements to reflect on indigenous art, which is considered extremely relevant in the context of valuing cultural diversity.

Methodology

This research is qualitative in nature. According to Gil (1999), qualitative research is intrinsically subjective, built upon the dynamics and approach to the problem under investigation, with the aim of describing and interpreting the elements of a complex system in an interpretative manner.

The data collection method employed in this research was a literature review, aimed at investigating scientific articles that contribute to the compilation and evaluation of studies related to the proposed theme. This analysis was conducted meticulously and comprehensively, seeking cohesion in publications within a specific area of knowledge, as stated by Silva (2016, p. 16, our translation)

Literature reviews are part of scientific research and enable a more detailed analysis of a particular theoretical field or knowledge area, allowing for insights and possible contributions to the studied area.

For the preparation of this study, the following methodological steps were adopted: identification of the research problem, definition of the study objective, selection of the sample with clear inclusion and exclusion criteria, categorization of information to be extracted from the studies, interpretation of results, and formulation of the review conclusion (Mendes; Silveira; Galvão, 2008).

The bibliographic survey was conducted using the digital platform Google Scholar, which allows access to a variety of scientific documents, including theses, dissertations, books, abstracts, and scientific articles (Silva, 2016). A relevant research conducted by Gersem Luciano resulted in the publication of the book “*O Índio Brasileiro: o que você precisa saber sobre os povos indígenas no Brasil de hoje*”, which is part of the series “*Vias dos Saberes*”. The Project Paths of Knowledge developed this project: Higher Education for Indigenous People in Brazil, linked to the Laboratory of Research on Ethnicity, Culture, and Development/National Museum of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), in collaboration with the Secretariat of Continuing Education, Literacy, and Diversity (SECAD). The project received funding from the Pathways to Higher Education Initiative of the Ford Foundation and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

This study was designed to support indigenous students' education in higher education courses. The texts aim to contribute to the experience by providing a starting point for developing the necessary tools to sharpen their awareness of the broad challenges they face, in

light of the goals set by their peoples, organizations, and communities. Among these goals are: achieving sustainability on culturally differentiated bases within the national state, recognizing the rights and duties as members of indigenous communities and Brazilian citizens, and gaining a broad understanding of the historical contexts in which they will participate in constructing various future projects. These projects are intended for indigenous individuals equipped with technical and scientific knowledge, acquired through the Brazilian higher education system, which lies outside their traditional knowledge frameworks.

For our search, we used the keywords “Indigenous education”; “Culture, indigenous education”; “indigenous school”; “indigenous teaching and learning”; “cultural diversity, indigenous art”; “indigenous art”; and “indigenous basic education”. The selection of articles was conducted through a search on the Google Scholar platform. A selective or exploratory reading followed, as described by Gil (2008), which involves identifying the sections of texts most relevant to the research. This step was crucial in filtering the most pertinent publications. Subsequently, an in-depth and interpretative analysis of the selected texts was conducted better to understand the theoretical context and findings of relevant studies. This approach allowed for the synthesis of the obtained knowledge and effective presentation of the data, contributing to the development of research on indigenous education and its cultural representation.

History of Indigenous Education in Brazil

Between 2002 and 2010, Brazilian education underwent significant transformations. During this period, the universalization of the early years of elementary education was achieved, and the Federal Network of Professional and Technological Education was established, providing secondary education to thousands of young people. Additionally, there was a remarkable expansion of municipal early childhood education networks under the guidance of the federal government.

Specific policies were implemented aimed at the care and education of young people and adults. The education of indigenous communities, quilombola communities, and riverine populations also received special attention, recognizing their unique cultural identities.

These advances were made possible due to the commitment of then-President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who prioritized investments in basic education and promoted shared responsibility among federal entities. Under his administration, the Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Basic Education and the Appreciation of Education Professionals

(FUNDEB) was created, the Basic Education Evaluation System (SAEB) was expanded, and the Basic Education Development Index (IDEB) was introduced. Additionally, various specific sectoral actions were developed to improve educational quality. Teachers, essential for the educational system's success, benefited from the implementation of the National Professional Salary Floor, although this measure faced legal challenges from some governors.

Higher education in Brazil underwent a significant transformation, with expansion in both the public sector, through the increase of seats in federal universities and the creation of Federal Institutes, and the private sector, notably through the offering of seats by the University for All Program (Prouni). The inauguration of new campuses of universities and federal institutes facilitated the dissemination of science and technology in regions previously lacking these resources, marking a new era for education in the country.

In this context, the National Education Plan (PNE 2011/2020) was formulated, reflecting the deliberations of the 1st National Education Conference (CONAE). This plan includes specific proposals for the effective universalization of basic education, extending the school day, and promoting a substantial expansion of higher education, ensuring access to knowledge, science, and art for the young population of Brazil. These initiatives are part of a broader effort to build a country with greater income distribution, democratization, strengthening of national identity, and appreciation of cultural diversity.

Teaching indigenous history and culture in Brazilian schools is governed by Federal Law No. 11,645/2008, which mandates this subject in primary and secondary schools (Bergamaschi; Gomes, 2012). The proposal by the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) for indigenous education emphasizes bilingual education, aligned with the Indian Statute (Law No. 6001/73), specifically Article 47, which highlights the importance of respecting the cultural heritage of indigenous communities. However, it has been observed that the model adopted by indigenous schools often replicates that of rural schools, without adequately tailoring the education to the specific realities of indigenous communities.

Law No. 11,645/2008 and the Incorporation of Indigenous Themes in Schools

According to Medeiros and Rosa (2012, p. 50), the consolidation of Law No. 11,645/2008, which mandates the teaching of indigenous history and culture in schools, was strongly influenced by the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, adopted in 1989.

Brazil adhered to this convention in 2004 through Federal Decree No. 5,051, committing to fully comply with its guidelines. These guidelines include ensuring equal treatment and opportunities for indigenous peoples, guaranteeing the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and respecting their identities, customs, social and cultural traditions, and institutions, essentially ensuring the right to equality without suppressing their differences (Medeiros; Rosa, 2012, p. 50).

Additionally, Article 31 of ILO Convention 169 stipulates that educational measures should be implemented to eliminate any prejudice against indigenous and tribal peoples:

Measures should be taken to ensure that education in all sectors of the national community, and especially those in direct contact with the people concerned, eliminates any prejudices that may exist against these people. To this end, efforts should be made to ensure that history books and other educational materials provide a fair, accurate, and informative depiction of the societies and cultures of the people concerned (Brasil, 2019, online, our translation).

Only in March 2008 was Law No. 11,645/2008 enacted by the Presidency of the Republic, mandating the inclusion of content on the histories and cultures of indigenous peoples (as well as Afro-Brazilians and Africans) in the education of primary and secondary school students, in both public and private schools nationwide. Since then, the law has been gradually adopted in schools as political-pedagogical projects are restructured, avoiding abrupt changes in the curricular frameworks since no new subjects were created to address these themes (Silva; Costa, 2018, p. 67).

According to Silva and Costa (2018, p. 67), it is expected that this measure, among others, will gradually reverse the bleak scenario of ignorance about the presence of societies that have long existed in the current American and Brazilian territories. These societies have survived various atrocities during colonization, overcome the adversities of extermination, and maintained their cultures and traditions over time.

With the promulgation of the law in 2008, even ten years later, "many teachers complain about not having access to this topic in their higher education courses and fear reproducing stereotypical images and prejudices due to the lack of quality teaching materials" (Silva; Costa, 2018, our translation)

Law No. 11,645/2008 requires that teachers and students of Basic Education in Brazil understand, recognize, learn, value, and disseminate indigenous history and cultures, mobilizing different content from various school components. The urgent question to answer is: how to undertake such an

endeavor when, for a long time, indigenous people were present in the school environment only in April, when "Indian Day" is celebrated on the 19th? In fact, many do not even know why this date is dedicated to indigenous peoples (Silva; Costa, 2018, p. 68, our translation).

According to the authors, the celebration of "Indian Day" is organized on April 19th in schools across Brazil, typically by teachers and students who are unaware of the reasons for its creation. In 1940, between April 14th and 24th, the First Inter-American Indigenous Congress was held in Pátzcuaro, Michoacán de Ocampo, Mexico. Representatives from most American countries (except Canada, Haiti, and Paraguay), including Brazil, were present. During the event, several important decisions were made, such as the creation of the Inter-American Indian Institute and the designation of April 19th as "American Aboriginal Day." In Brazil, it is called "Indian Day," and apart from Brazil, only Argentina (1945) and Costa Rica (1971) celebrate the date (Silva; Costa, 2018, p. 81, our translation).

"Indian Day" or "Indian Week" in Brazilian schools has acquired a tone of civic celebration over time, but it systematically repeats outdated paradigms of presenting "indigenous realities": stylized and stereotyped indigenous drawings, decontextualized presentations, generic folkloric characterizations, exotic illustrations, and portrayals stuck in the past and history of "being Indian." Even in cities with a strong indigenous presence, "it is common to see that the indigenous people represented in theatrical skits or street parades are far from the local reality and more like those in indigenous textbooks" (Silva; Costa, 2018, p. 82, our translation).

Indigenous Culture in the Visual Arts: Reflections

Educator Adriana Portella comments that "among the many functions performed in working with art, we can cite the possibility of accessing values from other cultures and the consequent analysis of their daily reality" (Paviani, 2008, p. 125, our translation). This understanding suggests that art plays a vital role in the cultural development of students.

Ana Mae Barbosa comments that through the arts, we have the symbolic representation of the spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional traits that characterize a society or social group, its way of life, its value system, its traditions, and its beliefs. Art, as a language for the presentation of meanings, conveys significances that cannot be transmitted by any other type of language, such as discursive and scientific ones (Bairon, 1998, p. 16).

According to Barbosa (2008, p. 17, our translation), "we cannot understand the culture of a country without knowing its art." Therefore, based on this assertion, students' contact with indigenous art through the teaching of visual arts is one possibility for understanding the culture of indigenous peoples.

Indigenous art is one of the most reliable ways to demonstrate indigenous culture. In these artistic expressions, we can observe, in visual production, a wide variety of lines, shapes, volumes, textures, braids, and artistic coeducations that investigate the role of art in school education. Maria Felisminda Fusari and Maria Heloísa Ferraz (2001, p. 124, our translation) point out that "[...] indigenous art can offer greater opportunities for studies and direct contact with (ceramics, weaving, music, body arts, ornaments, feather art)".

Therefore, the inclusion of indigenous culture in schools, through the teaching of visual arts, allows students to have direct contact with various indigenous artistic expressions and offers the opportunity to create visual arts using local materials such as clay, seeds, wood, and natural pigments, as well as to learn about artistic orthography, the geometry of designs, music, and musical instruments.

For Paviani, "art should be meaningful for teachers and students through experimentation, artistic reflection, and action, starting from the cultural and historical context of this group and reaching other different contexts" (Paviani, 2008, p. 124, our translation).

Thus, it is essential that educators be professionals with significant performance, seeking to update themselves with new media and information and developing research and projects within and outside the school. In this sense, the doctor in arts, Rejane Coutinho, explains that "it is necessary for the work of the art teacher not to be isolated within the school walls. The school urgently needs to open its doors and welcome the cultural production of its community and other places and times" (Paviani, 2008, p. 159, our translation).

The art teacher, in collaboration with the students, can visit cities related to indigenous culture, providing a rich information source and generating knowledge about local indigenous culture. These visits allow for cultural and artistic knowledge exchanges, creating and facilitating a space for cultural exchange between communities.

According to the National Curriculum Parameters (NCP) that address art, it is understood that the study of arts from different cultures can empower students to understand the relativity of the values that underlie ways of thinking and acting, thus creating a field of meaning to evaluate their own cultures. This contributes to the appreciation of the richness and diversity of human imagination. Additionally, by critically observing the elements present in

their own culture, students can perceive the objects and forms around them more intensely, enhancing their perception of everyday reality (Kleiman, 1997).

The artistic manifestations in indigenous culture provide elements that can be integrated into art education, given the importance of art for the cultural development of students. As mentioned by Ana Mae Barbosa, through art, it is possible to develop perception and imagination, understand the surrounding reality, foster critical thinking, allow the student to analyze the observed reality, and enhance creativity to transform the analyzed reality (Paviani, 2008, p. 18).

According to the NCP (National Curriculum Parameter) of Art: by making and knowing art, the student goes through learning paths that provide specific knowledge about their relationship with the world. In addition, they develop potentials (such as perception, observation, imagination, and sensitivity) that can support awareness of their place in the world and, undoubtedly, contribute to the important understanding of the content of other subjects in the curriculum (Brasil, 1997, p. 44).

From the perspective of Barbosa (2008) and NCP (1997), through the teaching of arts, the student develops a set of different types of knowledge and potential, including aiding in the understanding of other disciplines. Ivone Richter mentions that educators should create learning environments that promote the cultural literacy of their students in different cultural codes and lead to a generic understanding of basic cultural processes and recognition of the macrocultural context in which the school is inserted (Paviani, 2008, p. 88).

To promote cultural literacy, it is necessary for the teacher to respect the concepts that students bring from their cultural background, integrating them with the school's concepts, since in the educational process, students' habits, customs, and ways of speaking reflect their way of life, their values, experiences, and their understanding of the world.

Next, the emergence and evolution of the indigenous movement in Brazil in contemporary times will be analyzed, which resulted in articulation with various segments of Brazilian society. The advances provided by the 1988 Federal Constitution in guaranteeing the rights of indigenous peoples will also be addressed.

The indigenous movement and the achievement of differentiated school education

The 1988 Constitution was important not only for indigenous peoples but also for many other segments of the Brazilian population, as it represents the transition from a repressive political regime, the dictatorship, to a democratic regime. Known by many as the "Citizen Constitution," the 1988 Magna Carta stands out for its social character and concern for the civil rights of the population, which can be translated into the equality granted between men and women, the consolidation of labor rights, and the recognition of indigenous peoples as political actors.

Thus, by breaking with the tutelary and assimilationist ideology, the 1988 Constitution recognizes the legitimacy of indigenous cultures and becomes a significant milestone in guaranteeing indigenous rights. Unlike previous educational models, this new education aims to provide different ethnic groups with an education according to their reality, preserving their languages, customs, and beliefs.

This resulted in opening doors for differentiated school education for indigenous peoples. Unlike previous educational models, this new education aims to provide different ethnic groups with an education according to their reality, preserving their languages, customs, and beliefs.

Indigenous Education and Indigenous School Education

According to the Brazilian Institute of Social and Economic Analyses (Ibase, 2004), the indigenous peoples inhabiting Brazilian lands were unfamiliar with the school institution, but they knew their own ways of reproducing the knowledge developed and transmitted through oral tradition, in their language, without the need for alphabetic writing. In other words, each indigenous society had and has its process of knowledge through which it internalized in its members a particular way of being, to ensure its survival and reproduction. According to Opinion 14/99 of the National Council of Education, indigenous education "concerns the learning of the processes and values of each group, as well as the patterns of social relationships internalized in the daily experience of indigenous people with their communities" (Brasil, 1999, p. 191, our translation).

Indigenous peoples have a particular view of the world and life events, reflecting a distinct educational philosophy on the processes and conditions of cultural transmission, the

nature of the knowledge taught, and the social functions of education, which are intrinsic to their communities. Unlike the educational philosophy adopted by non-indigenous people, for indigenous peoples, the figure of the teacher is dispensable, as any adult in the community can act as an educational agent. Thus, indigenous education is conceived as a collective process through which community members socialize with new generations, aiming to perpetuate the values and institutions considered essential for the group's sustenance.

In this process, according to the Macuxi professor, Fausto Mandulão (2003, p. 131, our translation), “the elders have always played a very important role in transmitting knowledge to the younger generations. It is their duty to tell the old stories, behavioral restrictions, our worldviews, etc”.

In indigenous communities, elders are considered the living memory and the voice of experience. They play a fundamental role in passing on the knowledge of their people to the children, ensuring cultural continuity from generation to generation. Due to this vital mission, they are highly respected by all community members.

Indigenous Education & Indigenous School Education

Some scholars have noted that, for over 20 years, both anthropology and indigenism have distinguished between indigenous education and education for indigenous people. According to Grupioni, indigenous education is “the traditional practices of socialization and transmission of specific knowledge of each indigenous society” (Grupioni, 2000, p. 274, our translation).

This term encompasses the processes by which a society incorporates a specific way of being into its members, which is crucial for its survival and reproduction across generations. These processes allow the transmission and perpetuation of the values and attitudes deemed fundamental (Grupioni, 2000, p. 274).

Within this framework, it is evident that ancestral knowledge is passed down through indigenous education. This knowledge is essential for the preservation of indigenous culture and identity, marking its distinction from other peoples. In recent years, this education has taken on a new form, known as Indigenous School Education, according to Grupioni (2000).

For this author, this education is defined as the set of practices and interventions resulting from the insertion of indigenous peoples into national society, involving agents,

knowledge, and institutions previously unknown to indigenous life, aimed at the introduction of schooling and literacy (Grupioni, 2000, p. 274).

According to Cavalcante (2003, p. 17-18, our translation), the so-called “indigenous schools” were constructed amid numerous contradictions and faced the challenge of finding their paths, in addition to many other challenges, which are exacerbated by having an alien institution as a “model” that is not part of their tradition. “Hence the recognition by indigenous peoples of the need for a school that, without losing its specificities, incorporates the knowledge of the surrounding society”.

In this context, there is a recognized need for a school that addresses the specificities of indigenous peoples and is capable of satisfying their community and intercultural aspirations. The communal nature of this education should reflect the desires of a community that shares common goals. The intercultural dimension is crucial, as it involves individuals who experience various cultures and belong to different ethnic groups within the same territory.

Given such cultural and intercultural diversity, Brazilian legislation has sought to create spaces for integration into the educational system, whether indigenous or not, proposing that traditional schools implement in their study plans what has already been ensured by the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB), in Article 26, paragraph § 4º: “the teaching of Brazilian History will take into account the contributions of different cultures and ethnicities to the formation of the Brazilian people, especially the indigenous, African, and European matrices”.

Pedagogical Resources in Visual Arts

Teaching resources in visual arts play a fundamental role not only as supplementary support but also as a means of explanation, motivation, questioning, and enrichment of the educational process. As a teaching strategy, there should be historical backgrounds and artistic works. The aim of studying the themes of the different curricular components is to study art, taking cultural expressions into account.

By understanding the arts of other cultures, students will be able to comprehend the relativity of the values rooted in their ways of thinking and acting, thus creating a realm of self-appreciation and a sense of openness to the wealth and diversity of human imagination. Additionally, by critically observing the elements present in their own culture, they can perceive their daily reality more vividly and recognize the objects and forms around them (Brasil, 1997, p. 19, our translation).

Knowledge about indigenous art can be introduced through formal readings and elements of visual language composition, such as color and line. Connections with contemporary images that incorporate elements of indigenous culture and art form the foundation upon which practical work will be developed.

The teacher has the autonomy to conduct formal analyses, which can also involve different content areas and establish a connection with the student's experiences. The selected methodological teaching resources are based on Article 26 of Law No. 9,394/96, which stipulates that the curriculum of primary and secondary schools should include studies of the mother tongue, mathematics, and an understanding of the physical world and the reality of nature and society. The policy in Brazil must consider the contribution of various cultures and races to the formation of the Brazilian identity.

With the approval of Law No. 11,645/2008, the mandatory incorporation of indigenous culture into the curriculum was also considered. This law amended Article 26-A of Law No. 9,394/96 to advocate for the teaching of indigenous culture and history. Law No. 11,645/2008 altered the content of Article 26-A of Law No. 9,394-96 as follows:

Article 26-A: In elementary and secondary education institutions, both public and private, the study of Afro-Brazilian and indigenous history and culture is mandatory. § 1º The program content referred to in this article will include various aspects of the history and culture that characterize the formation of the Brazilian population, based on these two ethnic groups, such as the study of the history of Africa and Africans, the struggle of black and indigenous peoples in Brazil, the Afro-Brazilian and indigenous culture, and the black and indigenous people in the formation of national society, recovering their contributions in the social, economic, and political areas relevant to the history of Brazil. § 2º The content related to Afro-Brazilian history and culture and the indigenous peoples of Brazil will be taught throughout the school curriculum, especially in the areas of arts education, literature, and Brazilian history (Brasil, 2008, online, our translation).

By involving various aspects of the creation and analysis of artifacts produced by indigenous cultures, it is expected that this knowledge can be utilized in all classes of the final grades of elementary education to demonstrate their skills and competencies.

The Role of the Educator

The educator must adapt their pedagogical practice to theoretical principles, aiming to develop knowledge holistically, particular, conscious, and reflectively. In this way, the school functions as an agent of social and political reality, contributing to the process of social transformation. This role is defined by the institution's position concerning the prevailing sociopolitical conditions.

Historically, schools have been heavily influenced by traditional practices; however, contemporary reality no longer supports this type of approach. The challenge remains significant, considering that individualism has been intensely cultivated for years, and any change requires a collective and collaborative effort. For these transformations to occur, it is essential that the teaching staff is committed to a pedagogical project that fosters and sustains the possibilities for educational transformation.

By producing artistic works and understanding this production in other cultures, students can comprehend the diversity of values that guide both their ways of thinking and acting and those of society. It is about creating a meaningful context for valuing their heritage and promoting an understanding of the richness and diversity of the human imagination. Furthermore, students acquire the ability to perceive their everyday reality more vividly, recognizing and decoding the forms, sounds, gestures, and movements that surround them.

The exercise of a critical perception of the transformations occurring in nature and culture can create conditions for students to recognize their commitment to maintaining a better quality of life (Brasil, 1998, p. 19, our translation).

Art teachers must keep up with and integrate new theories and pedagogical trends, enriching the content to engage students meaningfully. For this, it is essential to have a productive exchange of ideas between teachers and students, contributing to enhancing the educational process and transforming it into a true field of discovery.

As art educators, it is crucial to recognize the importance of cultural diffusion not only for the preservation of culture but also for the cultural formation of citizens. Although the course parameters provide guiding directives, the teaching methodology, the presentation of theories and practices, as well as the motivation established in the classroom, depend on the preparation and training of the educator. These elements are vital to imparting meaning and relevance to educational practices in the arts.

Those who are committed to founding cultural identification cannot achieve a significant result without knowledge of the arts. Through poetry, gestures, and images, the arts express what history, sociology, anthropology, etc., cannot convey because they use other types of language, discursive and scientific, which alone are not capable of decoding cultural nuances (Barbosa, 1998, p. 16, our translation).

It is impossible to predetermine the outcomes related to cultural identity. In this context, if the curriculum is developed in collaboration with the teaching staff and coordinators, it can take various forms, adapting to specific needs and contexts. From the perspective of long-term student integration and training in schools, the curriculum must be consistent with the focus of education. This means that the course organization does not revolve around the subject matter but is structured according to a broad range of educational experiences combined with students' personal experiences.

By making and learning art, students embark on learning paths that provide them with specific knowledge about their relationship with the world. Additionally, they develop potentialities (such as perception, observation, imagination, and sensitivity) that can sustain their awareness of their place in the world and also undeniably contribute to their meaningful apprehension of the contents of other curriculum subjects (Brasil, 1997, p. 44, our translation).

Through art education, students acquire a set of knowledge that can enable people to understand art and its cultural formation. However, this knowledge does not exist in isolation but depends on the support of other disciplines. It is the school's role to establish the connection between the school's artistic knowledge and how it is produced and applied in society. Therefore, the art of teaching and learning creatively can contribute to making knowledge surprising, fun, playful with the unknown, assuming bold premises, working hard, and being happy in it (Brasil, 1998, p. 31).

Although the curriculum has been restructured, school subjects still remain segregated. The change is slow, but it is possible to develop skills that allow teachers to promote meaningful learning and transcend disciplinary boundaries.

For effective changes to occur in art education, it is essential "that teachers who wish to teach art have a minimum of theoretical-practical experiences interpreting, creating, and appreciating art, as well as exercising specific pedagogical reflection for teaching the art languages" (Brasil, 1998, p. 30, our translation). An art teacher with specific training can bring students closer to the artistic experience, whether personal or collective, necessary for understanding art.

[...] Art as an object of knowledge always requires a sensitive educator capable of creating situations that expand the reading and understanding of men and women about their world and culture. Such an educator must be able to open internal dialogues, enriched by the socialization of knowledge and the personal perspectives of each creator/fruit/learner (Martins; Ventura; Tatagiba, 2008, p. 56-57, our translation).

It is essential that art educators recognize the importance of students' life experiences throughout their studies. Educational institutions should incorporate these experiences into their curricula and provide opportunities for students to share their experiences. This sharing allows them to broaden their understanding of the world and the social interactions they establish.

By encouraging students to express themselves through writing and speaking about their own experiences, schools expand learning possibilities and highlight the relevance of education in students' lives. It is crucial to acknowledge that social needs include the continuous development of students' abilities to observe, feel, and behave in a reflective and critical manner.

Art is a form of knowledge that allows for the connection between individuals, even from different cultures, as it fosters the perception of similarities and differences between cultures, expressed in artistic products and aesthetic conceptions, on a plane different from discursive information (Brasil, 1998, p. 35, our translation).

In the educational context, the role of the teacher is to assist the student in exploring new perspectives, fostering the development of a more refined aesthetic and critical sense.

The Role of the School

The role of the school is to act as a mediator, through specialized competencies, to organize the process of acquiring skills, attitudes, and knowledge, ensuring quality education for all, and distributing content related to the students' lives. The teacher-student relationship is produced through the communication established by the interaction between the environment and the individual, with the teacher serving as the intermediary.

This process involves creating an environment conducive to communication, sharing, and establishing relationships based on personal and collective experiences. As students interact directly with different cultural mediums, they have the opportunity to contrast their experiences

with the knowledge transmitted by the educator, contributing to the formation of their own identities and understandings of the world. Thus, teaching transcends the mere transmission of content and becomes a collaboration in the quest for truth and critical insight.

Educators and students are protagonists in the process of knowledge construction, where experience is fundamental to learning. Education, as a field in constant evolution, faces challenges that demand continuous understanding and consideration, as its results are progressive and intermediate. It is essential to recognize that the search for educators is almost universal; therefore, decisions in schools should be based on consensus aimed at achieving the best objectives and guiding actions within the educational process. Moreover, the collective construction of knowledge must consider each academic institution's specific circumstances, considering its limitations, material and human resources, and history.

The disparity between implicit and explicit aspects prompts a deeper reflection on social reality and the effects of globalization, as well as on how to manage power relations in the daily life of schools. An autonomous and quality school must offer education that enables all individuals to exercise their citizenship with dignity, contributing to a society that matures in its social consciousness through the struggle for collective citizenship rights. "Schools can introduce practices and reflections on art linked to the possibilities of helping and fighting to maintain the health of people and cities" (Brasil, 1998, p. 40, our translation).

It is necessary to create conditions and establish effective commitments among all agents involved in the teaching process inside and outside the school. The school positions itself as a "disseminator of knowledge," while also recognizing that "teaching art in alignment with the student's learning modes means not isolating the school from social information and, at the same time, ensuring that students have the freedom to imagine and create personal or group artistic proposals" (Brasil, 1998, p. 44, our translation).

Continuous reflection on our educational actions is required to perceive and improve the quality of teaching through a comprehensive pedagogical project that values the social, cultural, historical, and political development of its students, forming conscious citizens. However, even if a project is proposed collaboratively with participants in the educational process and promoted through innovative teaching methods, it cannot be guaranteed that the school will magically transform into a superior institution. Nevertheless, such an initiative will certainly contribute to raising awareness among its members about their development.

This challenge involves multiple aspects, but the school is a privileged space to promote a more just and democratic social transformation. Just as the principles of justice and equality

are fundamental in a democracy, democratic values such as pluralism and active participation are essential. Additionally, the autonomy of schools is manifested in respect for diversity and the rich Brazilian culture.

It is crucial to value the pedagogical agents working in schools to overcome the significant local and regional inequalities in active participation. It is also necessary to demand from these professionals a robust ethical commitment focused on serving citizens in the educational realm. With autonomy, the relationship between different levels, including the school, should be marked by principles of co-responsibility, always aiming for indisputable quality education. Making the school institution an important element in initiating reflection among teachers who wish to trigger the process of constructing their identity. This led the group to realize that the organization of teaching work emphasizes broad and significant changes due to transformations that provoke structural changes, ensuring the continuity of the process.

Content mediates between knowledge and culture, in the tangible world of experiences and communications, and academic knowledge, in all dimensions of modern life. Considering future perspectives, it is imperative to reflect on the curricular proposal, ensuring that all subjects within the school community understand the importance of the theoretical framework guiding their educational practices.

The foundations of education have the potential to either restore or establish the identity of schools and subjects and can be developed through a participatory planning process. Educators, parents, and guardians can thus contribute to the formation of a democratic society. Defining the desired type of school and its alignment with societal values facilitates the recognition of current challenges, the proposition of alternative solutions, and the identification of the expected benefits from project implementation, including a collective reflection on the school and its historical background.

When constructing our school projects, we plan what we intend to do and evaluate, progressing from what we have towards what is possible. Therefore, innovation in educational practice represents a process of continuous renewal, in which flexibility, dynamism, and creativity are essential assumptions in the academic proposal. This approach considers the dialectical aspects of reality, the subject, and knowledge.

Final considerations

The ongoing changes in the contemporary world have led to alterations in the organization of work, requiring a reorganization of institutional space. The increasing complexity of organizations leads us to believe that the entire educational system, especially the reality of schools, no longer includes management models developed from the conceptual basis of traditional schools. We live in a society where knowledge becomes increasingly valuable.

Therefore, forming an idea of a critical and participatory citizen also means promoting the appropriation of these concepts and procedures. For many years, courses have been prepared for ideal students, that is, universal students. It is assumed that the logical organization of content and the simple use of attractive teaching resources are sufficient to ensure learning.

However, it is necessary to recognize that children are subjects of society, with their history and culture, and thus already possess a set of knowledge that interacts significantly with their environment. Teachers who merely organize knowledge to present to students are outdated. Current educators must create a teaching environment that is conducive to a large amount of learning knowledge and promotes the development of attitudes and skills, such as critical thinking, reflection, questioning, and investigation.

The use of resources is valuable for the appropriation of knowledge and contributes to the necessary learning of the language of images. Confronting information obtained from students' conceptions can lead to the formulation and discussion of new concepts.

From pedagogical practice, it is possible to establish strategies to guide the teacher in developing work where objectives are articulated in a coherent manner. It is crucial that these objectives allow for the investigation of customs maintained or abandoned, respecting cultural differences, and that students perceive for themselves that different peoples have distinct values and beliefs. One possible approach involves discussing with students the construction of norms of coexistence, so that they understand that such norms must ensure respect for duties and rights, recognizing that different organizations may emerge from various ethnic and cultural groups.

The teacher should employ strategies that empower students to understand that diversity is viable, as it is intrinsically linked to the values of the social groups to which they belong. Such understanding is fundamental in the school environment, as it promotes the integration of all involved in the teaching-learning process, playing an essential role in valuing the human

being. This enables the child to deal with differences, accepting people as they are, without expectations of reciprocity.

The educator must be aware of the responsibility they assume, and by acting in this way, they will promote a healthy environment, gaining freedom to produce knowledge. This attitude fosters attitudinal, procedural, and conceptual changes in individuals, contributing to the recovery of our origins and valuing the cultural roots to which we belong.

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