

Teachers' perceptions of interculturality: reflections from teacher training¹

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to analyze the perceptions of teachers working in the early years of elementary school in a Quilombola school in the countryside of Bahia, regarding the manifestations of the concept of interculturality in daily school life. This is a study based on the Critical Collaborative Action Research methodology, constructed from a training process with 9 teachers. Semi-structured interviews were conducted at the beginning and end of the process to identify teachers' knowledge before and after the training. The result highlighted the importance of action research as a tool for teacher training. The conclusion emphasizes the relevance of the debate on the concept of interculturality in daily school life as a way to promote transformative education and critical training.

KEYWORDS: Teacher training. Educational practices. Interculturality. Action research.

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Percepções de professoras acerca da interculturalidade: reflexões a partir de uma formação docente

RESUMO

Este estudo teve por objetivo analisar as percepções de professoras que atuam nos anos iniciais do Ensino Fundamental em uma Escola Quilombola no interior da Bahia acerca das manifestações do conceito de interculturalidade no cotidiano escolar. Trata-se de um estudo que tem como base metodológica a Pesquisa-Ação Crítico Colaborativa construída a partir de um processo formativo com 09 professoras. Foram realizadas entrevistas semiestruturadas no início e no final do respectivo processo como forma de identificar os saberes docentes pré e pós formação. Como resultado foi possível identificar a importância da Pesquisa-ação como instrumento de formação docente. A conclusão destaca a relevância do debate sobre o conceito de interculturalidade no cotidiano da escola como forma de promover uma educação transformadora e de formação crítica.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Formação docente. Práticas educativas. Interculturalidade. Pesquisa-ação.

Percepciones del profesorado sobre la interculturalidad: reflexiones desde la formación docente

RESUMEN

Este estudio tuvo como objetivo analizar las percepciones del profesorado de los primeros años de primaria en una escuela quilombola del interior de Bahía, respecto a las manifestaciones del concepto de interculturalidad en la vida escolar cotidiana. Se trata de un estudio basado en la metodología de Investigación-Acción Colaborativa Crítica, construido a partir de un proceso de formación con nueve docentes. Se realizaron entrevistas semiestructuradas al inicio y al final del proceso para identificar los conocimientos del profesorado antes y después de la formación. Los resultados destacaron la importancia de la investigación-acción como herramienta para la formación docente. La conclusión enfatiza la relevancia del debate sobre el concepto de interculturalidad en la vida escolar cotidiana como forma de promover la educación transformadora y la formación crítica.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Formación del profesorado. Prácticas educativas. Interculturalidad. Investigación-acción.

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Introduction

This study is an excerpt from the doctoral thesis entitled "Action Research, Teacher Training and Construction of Decolonial Educational Practices: a study in a quilombola school in the interior of Bahia," defended in 2024 in the Postgraduate Program in Education linked to the Federal University of Ouro Preto. In it, we undertake some reflections on the teachers' conceptions of the concept of interculturality in education, based on the construction and development of a Critical Collaborative Action Research project, with the aim of understanding the teachers' perceptions of the concept of interculturality and its manifestations in education.

We anchor ourselves in the intercultural approach to build a dialogical interface with education. In weaving this discussion, we converse with Latin American authors who consider interculturality as a key concept for understanding the reality of colonized countries in the historical process.

In this sense, we also emphasize that it is through the official curriculum that the sociocultural and historical knowledge and repertoires of 'others' are relegated to a lesser place or even manufactured as nonexistent. The debate undertaken here puts the spotlight on these issues of domination and violence that permeate both education/school and the curriculum produced by them.

We challenge the monocultural, monoracial, and monochromatic approach in which the curriculum is presented in school institutions and how the sociocultural experiences of the subjects are absent. We also argue that a fruitful path to building another school/education and consequently a curriculum full of life inevitably involves teacher training, since these discussions were not present in the initial training of most teachers.

We present the methodological aspects employed, situating the nature of the research, the method used, and characterizing the collaborating teachers. In addition, we briefly detail the formative meetings held with the

teachers in order to situate the readers on the approaches and themes that were present in the reflections carried out.

Next, we opened the data analysis section through the teachers' statements. Initially, we presented a comparative table with the teachers' initial and final conceptions of the concept of interculturality, in order to outline a profile of the signs of changes in teachers' perceptions after the training process carried out with them.

And, finally, based on their statements, we analyzed the new perceptions from the discussions fostered by the training process developed. We sought to build reflections that allow us to construct other alternatives for promoting an education that considers the socio-historical and cultural paths of the different groups present in the school from the new perspectives presented by the collaborators.

Interculturaity and the dialogue with education

School education in the Americas has historically played an important role in producing cultural and epistemological homogenization. This process fulfilled the primary function of crystallizing cultural values based on Eurocentrism, while silencing many other voices, knowledge, and cultures of groups that were relegated to a place of invalidity (Candau; Russo, 2010).

The coloniality of knowledge, as pointed out by Quijano (2005), fulfilled the task of suppressing the knowledge and wisdom of so many other groups, which, from a Eurocentric perspective, were considered primitive, barbaric, and situated in a past space/time or non-existent. In this context of denial, the attempt to disqualify the 'other', their culture and their knowledge, the concept of interculturality (Walsh, 2001; 2007; 2009, 2012) emerges as a possibility for fostering dialogue between the knowledge, ways of life and sociocultural knowledge of the peoples that make up the diversity of the American continent, especially Brazil.

Catherine Walsh has dedicated part of her work to discussing interculturality as a mobilizing attitude for cultural dialogue among Latin American peoples. In her theory, she elaborates on three types of interculturality: relational, functional, and critical (Walsh, 2009). For the author, the perspective of relational interculturality is linked to the most elementary and general form of contact and exchanges between different cultures, people, groups, values, knowledge, and cultural traditions. This entire range of possibilities for dialogue could be achieved in situations of equality or inequality. Understood in this way, interculturality would be an element that has always existed, since people and/or groups have always been in contact with one another (Walsh, 2009).

The second type of interculturality conceived by Walsh is functional interculturality. In this model, the intercultural perspective serves the function of recognizing existing cultural diversity and differences, in order to include the excluded cultures within the hegemonic frame of reference. The mobilizing intention of dialogue is built towards tolerance and peaceful coexistence between different groups and their respective cultures (Walsh, 2009).

Finally, from the perspective of critical interculturality, diversity is not seen as a problem. The central issues involve tensioning of the colonial and racial power structure, as well as understanding that differences are produced within a power matrix that is colonial, racial, and hierarchical. This structure has historically constructed and perpetuated the idea of whites as superior, while relegating indigenous and black peoples to positions of inferiority (Walsh, 2009).

In this context, critical interculturality is understood by the author as:

A proposal and a political project that could also expand and encompass an alliance with people who also seek to build alternatives to neoliberal globalization and Western rationality, and who fight for both social transformation and the creation of very different conditions of power,

knowledge, and being. Conceived in this way, critical interculturality is not an ethnic process or project, nor a project of difference in itself. (...), it is a project of existence, of life (Walsh, 2007, p. 8).

In this sense, critical interculturality prioritizes the recognition and consideration of the distinct social movements that have been articulating, (re)affirming, and claiming their identities. It enables the articulation between policies of recognition and redistribution, as well as affirmative actions that are based on the construction and strengthening of democratic ties (Candau, 2012).

Therefore, how can we build intercultural proposals if the existing schools in our country have colonial structures? How can we promote intercultural educational practices if our curricula still deny differences? How can we prioritize an intercultural project if Eurocentrism and the coloniality of power/knowledge/being continue to contaminate our thoughts and practices? How can we build intercultural dialogues with students if their knowledge and that of the groups to which they belong continue to be silenced by the school?

In light of such questions, it is necessary to agree with Tavares (2014). According to the author, for an intercultural education to be possible and viable, the decolonization of education is unavoidable. Candau (2012) has argued that schools continue to turn a blind eye to diversity, conceiving equality and homogeneity as synonyms, seeking to erase any trace of difference, becoming a machine for homogenizing people, disregarding their different origins and cultures.

According to Walsh (2014), intercultural education is based on symmetrical dialogue between different cultures, promoting relationships of reciprocity and interdependence. In this context, different ways of perceiving the world and experiencing life interact, always guided by respect for differences. Education is a project that requires teachers to adopt new

positions regarding knowledge, cultures, and the diversity of individuals, which will certainly demand new ethical-political positions on the power relations built in the school (Marín, 2015).

Santiago, Akkari, and Marques (2013) argue that, even with all the advances in public policies, discussions about ethnic-racial relations remain absent from classroom debates and are rarely present in teaching and learning actions or even in teacher training. An example is Law 10.639/2003, amended by Law 11.645/2008, which is configured as intercultural legislation.

Therefore, it is imperative to train professionals committed to an intercultural school/teaching/society project. In these terms, intercultural education calls for a refounding of the school, supported by the construction of new practices. To this end, commitment is necessary on the part of the actors involved with/in education, understanding that this undertaking necessarily involves the reformulation of the country's education systems, the curriculum, but, above all, teacher training.

Methodological Aspects

This study is qualitative in nature. According to Triviños (1987), in the qualitative approach, the researcher is not concerned with quantifying or creating generalizing laws, but rather with studying what subjects think about their experiences, their lives, and their projects.

We adopted Critical Collaborative Action Research as a method to foster our reflections. Dionne (2007) advocates that Action Research, in its broad sense, associates researchers and actors in the same action strategy to modify a given situation and a research strategy to acquire systematic knowledge about the identified situation. Among the Action Research modalities developed by Franco (2005), in this study we adhere to the critical type, understanding that critical action research does not only intend to understand or describe the world of practice, but to transform it.

Here, we present and discuss the data produced from a teacher training program that took place in a quilombola school located in the Quilombola Community of Nova Esperança, in the municipality of Wenceslau Guimarães, Bahia. The training process took place between March and October of 2023 with monthly meetings via the Google Meet platform with nine teachers (understood by us as collaborators) from the early years of Elementary School at the Quilombola School Caminho da Boa Esperança – EQCBE, with a total of seven training sessions held, one of which was in person.

Two rounds of interviews were conducted (an initial one to identify and understand their perceptions and conceptions about the concept of interculturality in education and another after the training process). Then, based on the premises advocated by Critical Collaborative Action Research, a training process was developed together with the collaborators, in order to discuss the themes that they considered important, both for the school and for the community in which the school is located.

Below we present the collaborating teachers in this study, their background, the classes they teach, their ethnic identification as quilombola or not, and their employment/functional status. In observance of ethical research principles, the collaborators will be named after birds of the Atlantic Forest known to the community in which the school is located, even though authorization was granted under the Informed Consent Form and the Substantiated Opinion of the Research Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Ouro Preto under number 5.327.966.

TABLE 1 – Research collaborators (training developed with teachers of the Early Years of Elementary School)

Teacher	Background	Classes taught	Identifies as Quilobola	Employment status
Parrot	Mathematics	3rd/4th grades	No	Temporary contract
Thrush	Pedagogy	3rd, 4th and 5th grades	Yes	Temporary contract
Bellbird	Pedagogy	Pre-K, Kindergarten, 1st/2nd grades	Yes	Temporary contract
Macaw	History	Kindergarten and 1st/2nd grades	Yes	Temporary contract
Hummingbird	Geography	Pre-K	Yes	Temporary contract
Toucan	Pedagogy	1st/2nd grades	No	Permanent
Guria	Language Studies	5th grade	No	Permanent
Canary	Teaching	1st/2nd and 5th grades	No	Temporary contract
Nightjar	Pedagogy	1st/2nd, 3rd/4th and 5th grades	No	Temporary contract

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2025).

We also highlight that, in developing the themes for the training sessions, the demands of the Quilombola community were taken into consideration, given that, at an earlier stage, we had listened to what they considered important and what should be part of the educational practices developed by the school and teachers, although this text does not address other aspects developed throughout the doctoral research.

Below, we present a table detailing the training sessions containing the following elements: themes, date, time and format, text used, and the authors of said texts.

TABLE 2 – Organization and development of the training process

Themes	Date	Time and format	Text used	Author(s)
To discuss, collectively, the historical and socio-anthropological concepts of quilombo; To understand the historicity and diversity that make up quilombola communities in the present.	March 31st	From 7 to 9 PM; virtually	Updating the concept of quilombo: identity and territory in theoretical definitions.	Alessandra Schmitt; Maria Cecília Manzoli Turatti; Maria Celina Pereira de Carvalho
Racism as a structural and structuring element of social and educational inequalities in Brazil, especially affecting the Black population and quilombola communities.	April 28th	From 7 to 9 PM; virtually	Quilombola communities: conceptual elements for their understanding.	Wesley Santos de Matos; Benedito Gonçalves Eugenio
Colonialism, coloniality, Eurocentrism, and interculturality and their implications for education.	May 26th	From 7 to 9 PM; virtually	Intersecting Knowledges: (De)coloniality, Epistemic Racism, and the Teaching of Philosophy.	Diego dos Santos Reis
Critical and Decolonial Intercultural Education as a possible alternative for the emancipation of individuals.	July 25th	From 6 to 8P PM; in person	Differences, Intercultural Education, and Decoloniality: Insurgent Themes	Vera Maria Candau
Reflections on the Guidelines for Quilombola School Education as a public policy.	Aug. 29th	From 5 to 7 PM; virtually	National Guidelines for Quilombola School Education	-
The Political-Pedagogical Project of the Quilombola School Caminho da Boa Esperança: dialogues, reflections and constructions.	Sep. 29th	From 7 to 9 PM; virtually	Quilombola Education and School Curriculum: Perspectives on Educational Practice in the School Context	Jean Mac Cole Tavares Santos; Élide Joyce de Oliveira; Guilherme Paiva de Carvalho Martins
Building possibilities for alternative and insurgent pedagogical practices based on the sociocultural and historical reality of the Nova Esperança community.	Oct. 27th	From 7 to 9 PM; virtually	Federal Law 10.639/2003 and the National Curriculum Guidelines for Education on Ethnic-Racial Relations	-

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2025).

The texts selected for each training session were chosen based on the teachers' needs and were theoretically aligned with the themes they had chosen during the planning of the training proposal. It is worth noting that supporting materials for the discussions were sent a week in advance to allow for their reading.

During these meetings, the teachers shared their perceptions of the texts and/or works read and sought to understand how the authors' ideas were articulated or not with their educational practices. Based on these initial perceptions, the aim was to build possibilities for fostering activities and actions that would mobilize the intercultural perspective by associating the knowledge produced by the community.

Following the training process, the data produced through interviews with the teachers were analyzed and interpreted through the lens of Textual Discourse Analysis (TDA). According to Moraes and Galiazzi (2011, p. 7), TDA corresponds to “[...] a methodology for analyzing qualitative data and information with the purpose of producing new understandings about phenomena and discourses”.

The teachers' conceptions of the concept of interculturality

We begin by presenting a comparative table between the observations obtained from the initial and final interviews we conducted, in which we organize a summary of the statements of the nine collaborating teachers (Table 3).

TABLE 3 – Comparative Table Between Initial and Final Interviews

Teacher	Conceptions of Interculturality	
	<i>Initial</i>	<i>Final</i>
Parrot	Works with the community's culture; Considers the students' knowledge; Strengthens the Quilombola identity.	Worked on in an overlapping way by the school; Learning from the culture of others; Dialogue between cultures; Respect for difference; Difficulties in developing intercultural work.
Thrush	Does not know the concept.	Understands the history of the Quilombola community; Considers the community's culture; Recovers local history; Actions to strengthen identity with the effective participation of students.
Bellbird	Promoting local culture; Bringing community culture into the school.	Considers the Quilombola identity; Pedagogical practice committed to the community.
Macaw	Does not know the concept.	Awareness of the importance of community culture; Promotes conflicts between teachers' personal beliefs.
Hummingbird	Relating different cultures; Dialogues between Afro-Brazilian cultures.	Concept and necessary practice; Dialogue between cultures; Articulated and contextualized work with the community; Interculturality as a power for emancipation; Understanding relationships from the perspective of differences.
Toucan	Does not know the concept.	Different work.
Guria	Dialogues between the culture of the community and that of other groups; Knowing, respecting, and valuing the culture of other groups.	Thinks about the issue of Black people in society; Reflects on ethnic-racial relations; Reveals the prejudices and beliefs of many teachers.
Canary	Going back to the community's past.	Bringing the community's history into the discussions.
Nightjar	Does not know the concept.	Remains not knowing the concept.

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2025).

Based on the summary table above, we analyzed the changes and continuities in the teachers' conceptions of the key concepts that guide this study. We also included those collaborators who did not participate in any training sessions. Even so, these teachers participated in the interviews and,

in their statements, showed evidence of changes in conceptions and perceptions about the categories analyzed.

From this data, it is possible to infer that the training developed through action research, in some way, reverberated in the school context, although it did not have the same reach in relation to those who engaged in it. Regarding participation, it is possible to say about the teachers' investment in training and that it is not just a one-way street from those who train to those who are trained, but rather a collaborative process involving and participating in everyone.

We identified that the training process contributed to possible changes in the teachers' perceptions of the concept of interculturality and the possibilities that this concept has in building an education that promotes an ecology of knowledge (Santos, 2018a). In Table 3, we demonstrate, in general terms, the possible changes in the teachers' conceptions about the concept of interculturality and how they associated it with the education produced in the EQCBE and their educational practices with the students.

Teachers' perceptions of the concept of interculturality in education after the training process

Below, we present the perceptions that the teachers (re)elaborated based on the discussions mobilized during the training process, considering the collaborators' statements, in order to understand what intercultural education would be in a quilombola context. When asked about their perceptions of the concept of interculturality and its relationships with education, educational practices, and how the training process contributed to this journey, they revealed to us, based on their experiences, that:

[...] after the process of studying, the process of reading, the process of disseminating what was studied, what we heard, what was also discussed, I realized that this process of interculturality has been kind of working. It has been done more as an overlap

than as a joining, so to speak, because, let's talk about the issue. If I talk about religion, for example, Catholicism is very strong in Nova Esperança, but when we talk about Quilombola culture, Quilombola culture, we're not exactly talking about Black culture... That's it, when we talk about the intercultural issue, we understand that I will learn from your culture, speaking of religion. I will learn from your religion and you will learn from mine, and we don't need to change religion, we need to learn from each other (Parrot, 2023).

It is possible to perceive that teaching based on hegemonic religious pillars still prevails, as Parrot argues. It is noteworthy that Nova Esperança is a community whose residents are, to a large extent, Catholic, although Protestantism is already present. Even if it is not explicit in the teacher's discourse, we can infer that the educational practices developed by some of his colleagues are anchored in religious precepts, whether of the community and/or the teacher.

The work developed from a hegemonic religious perspective carries the imminent danger of excluding minorities who dissent from hegemonic thought. The school, as a public and secular institution (Brazil, 1996), needs to ensure respect for differences, including those of a religious nature, so that we do not run the risk of devaluing and discriminating against individuals and/or groups for representing the "other," the "different," those historically considered by coloniality as "inferior" (Moreira, 2002).

The teacher, based on their critique, approaches critical interculturality (Walsh, 2001; 2007), in the sense of seeking to build a practice that mobilizes difference in its historical, political, social, and cultural aspects. According to Santiago, Akkari, and Marques (2013), educational practices guided by interculturality need to start from situations in which students are led to multiple situations that can foster an understanding of the world mediated by differences and that can allow them to produce reflections on their context and their realities.

Professor Guria presents us with the consequences that these practices based on religious discourse produce within the school and how they affect students. For her, there is resistance from students to participate in activities that mobilize elements of Black culture: “Teacher, I’m not going to dance that. God forbid. That thing over there. That thing over there is crazy. Then they criticize a classmate, and the classmate says, ‘No, I can’t participate in that.’ So, we still see that the issue of coloniality prevails a lot.”

Tavares (2014) argues that the decolonization of education needs to be an urgent and unavoidable project in order to build a truly intercultural school and curriculum. Parrot and Guria are aware that this model of education reproduces symbolic violence against the Black and Quilombola population.

The collaborators Thrush and Bellbird offered reflections on the formative process and their understandings of the concept of interculturality in education. For them:

[...] we’ve been doing everything we can to bring the history of our community to the students in our region. As I said, for the locals themselves, so they can then pass it on, so the culture isn’t lost, because we see that a lot has been lost. Quite a lot has already been lost, if we analyze it. Because, you see, the people who know the history today are getting older, others are passing away, so if we don’t achieve our goal, our culture ends up being lost, our history ends up being lost, let’s say. So much so that we did a project that I thought was really cool, it was a book, I don’t know if you’ve seen it. This book tells a bit of the history that we only hear about, but we hadn’t yet done the actual writing part. So when you have it written down, it’s something that won’t be lost. Even when we’re not here anymore, there will be someone who will be and who will know this history. [...] we had this idea and made this book, which has images that the students themselves produced,

because we brought it to the students to produce within the school itself, so the students produced images of the community, the theme of our work was even cultural heritage, it talked about heritage and that's where we wanted to go (Thrush, 2023).

After this training, I realized that things have changed, so we perceive this interculturality in a more open way, in a more contributory, more practical way. So, it was just a maturation of our practices, and in fact, this training contributed; we noticed more progress in our practice. Identity was worked on in a way that allows the teacher to think and implement what needs to be worked on in the classroom. My pedagogical practice came with more commitment, so we can perceive, we can implement (Bellbird, 2023).

The teachers demonstrate, through the activities developed with the students, that they promote intercultural dialogue in their educational practices. Firstly, by fostering student protagonism and, secondly, by providing opportunities for the knowledge produced by the community through its history, culture, memory, and social experiences to enter the school and engage in dialogue with established, Eurocentric knowledge. The teachers showed that their perceptions of the concept had changed, considering that the first teacher (the thrush) did not elaborate on the concept in the initial interview, but in the final interview presented the arguments described above.

Attitudes and actions such as those reported demonstrate a concern for recognizing and valuing the sociocultural differences and diverse knowledge produced by the students who enter the classrooms every day, but above all, they affirm a position of recognizing differences as something inherent to human collectives. This recognition makes it possible to break with the monocultural and monoracial character of

school culture (Candau, 2008). By promoting practices based on interculturality, the teachers enable knowledge of the students' cultural world, realizing that they, as subjects of/of history, produce knowledge and bring significant experiences and life stories to the curriculum.

In our view, the teachers' perceptions are complementary, as they are, to some extent, influenced by the discussions built during the training process and the actions developed during the school year. The arguments stated above resonate with teacher Macaw's perception of interculturality in the educational context of Nova Esperança. For her, themes related to quilombola issues need to be present in the school and in the curriculum, prioritizing knowledge constructed in social relations, but she also recognizes that the knowledge addressed in school "cannot remain restricted; the student should not be limited only to the quilombola school of Nova Esperança, to the Nova Esperança community. But rather, a context about quilombolas in general" (Macaw, 2023).

The teacher understands how important it is for a school to consider the educational process from the sociocultural and historical repertoires of the community, understanding that students are not restricted to Nova Esperança and that in larger contexts they will need to establish relationships between their community and other quilombola communities, since they are collectives that organize themselves in different ways and construct distinct experiences. By bringing the diversity of sociocultural experiences into educational practices, the teaching and learning process goes against the Eurocentric rationality that considers experience dissociated from knowledge (Arroyo, 2013).

Hummingbird understood the power of the concept of interculturality and the driving force it possesses when associated with education. She also understood the collaborative training process as important for her new elaborations on the proposed theme. Her initial perceptions suggest that interculturality is the "relationship between different cultures." For the professor, interculturality imposes itself as a necessary concept and practice from the formative process because:

[...] by learning about different cultures and how they relate to each other, we can also perceive and awaken in the students themselves an interest in themselves and in local issues. Because when we only work with a particular culture, a particular place, in an individualized way, as it appears in books, a particular knowledge as it appears in books. Then, when we work in a contextualized way, we can bring it to reality, we can awaken in the student an interest in the different cultures that exist, in how these different cultures contributed to the formation of our community, of our place, because we know that the culture we have today is the result of all the other cultures that came before us and that in a certain way it remained and was modified according to certain communities, according to what each one understands to be necessary for themselves. But, when we start to bring this in a contextualized way, the quilombola issues begin to awaken interest. It's not just about having the word quilombola in the name of the school or in the name of the community. It's about understanding what it means to be quilombola, how I, as a quilombola, can stand before the world fighting for things that my ancestors already fought for, but they didn't have the same knowledge or the same voice that we have today [...] we know that it's very much a product of the system we have and that this isn't easy to change, but if we aren't actively in schools awakening in students this interest, this critical thinking in the face of what is imposed by our system and bringing up the themes of multiculturalism, of interculturalism, as you yourself brought up a lot in the training. And I didn't know the concept, I had some understanding, but I didn't have a real understanding of the word decolonial, which I came to know from the training (Hummingbird, 2023).

It seems to us that Hummingbird's perception of the concept of interculturality, as reworked, is theoretically very close to the dialogues constructed in the formative process. She understands the relevance of creating space for the knowledge and culture produced by the community in the curriculum and, consequently, in educational practices, understanding that intercultural debate does not materialize from the silencing of counter-hegemonic knowledge.

She also emphasizes the need to mobilize the community's culture and foster intercultural dialogue, highlighting the differences that exist between them, in order to build a global understanding from the local reality of the students. The teacher's argument finds support in the thinking of Arroyo (2013), who argues that it is necessary to evoke the reality experienced by the students and their communities in order to enhance the involvement of the actors who live it.

It is noticeable in her discourse the importance of the formative process for this new way of conceiving interculturality and the contribution of the concept to her understanding of how the school, the curriculum, and education are guided by the colonial matrix of power. Macedo (2006, p. 292) denounces that the school and the curriculum have historically been "at the mercy of the imperatives of the knowledge of groups, both culturally and economically hegemonic," and Hummingbird's position opposes this thinking, because, in the way she has constructed her actions, the curriculum can become a space/place/territory of resistance and construction of counter-hegemonic knowledge.

In this sense, we can infer that the teacher's discourse seeks to insert the school in a place where power relations must and need to be questioned in order to foster in students a sense of belonging to a Quilombola identity. Based on this understanding, she seeks to modify the hierarchical structure of knowledge that has been an indelible mark of school culture, demanding changes and mobilizing interculturality (Nascimento, 2020).

However, despite understanding the importance of interculturality in school, curriculum, and education, she still conceives of it as something external, as seen when she uses the demonstrative pronoun "this" or "that." In this sense, we emphasize that interculturality is not outside of us; it is forged in the human relationships we build, through differences and horizontally constructed dialogues. Nascimento (2020, p. 02) emphasizes that intercultural educational practices should not only "give voice" to the oppressed, but also promote systems of affirmation of place, speech, and equally, listening. It is about advocating for stories told by places, voices, and subjects that the hegemonic has tried to erase".

Final Considerations

The research found that several collaborators had never heard of the concept of interculturality and, therefore, did not elaborate an answer when asked about the topic. There were also those who elaborated an answer associating interculturality with cultural issues, but without articulating it with education and the educational practices developed at the school.

The silence and uncertainties that permeated the teachers' statements regarding the concept analyzed here are not unprecedented. Studies such as those by Santiago, Akkari and Marques (2013), Munsberg, Fuchs and Silva (2019) and Matos (2024) have shown that these are recent discussions and that, little by little and with much resistance, they have been gaining ground within universities and teacher training courses. It should be noted that education, the school, the curriculum and, consequently, the educational practices of teachers are still sustained and structured from the Eurocentric bases of knowledge.

The development of the action research, as shown in Table 2, sought to understand how Eurocentrism and the coloniality of power, knowledge, and being contributed to producing America, especially Latin America and the peoples that constitute it, as inferior and, thus, justify the process of violence,

exploitation, and decimation that was undertaken against the original peoples of the so-called "New World." These concepts were discussed in order to highlight how coloniality and its facets operate in education, in schools, in the curriculum, and in the educational practices developed by the teachers.

This dialogue allowed us to think about alternative solutions, in order to enable the emergence of another education/school committed to life and the mobilization of knowledge and skills silenced by Eurocentrism. Based on a theoretical framework, it was possible to reclaim other epistemologies, other ways of seeing, feeling, and being in this world. Furthermore, the constitution of quilombola communities as an ethnic group, holders of rights guaranteed by Brazilian legislation, was discussed, as well as how the knowledge produced by these communities has not been part of school curricula.

The discussion focused on how Quilombola School Education was established as a public educational policy, built with the Quilombola movement, the legal frameworks that support it, and how this policy has been targeted by neoliberal advances aimed primarily at its deconstruction and dismantling, mainly due to the absence of the State, whether in continuing teacher training or in investments that could guarantee the effectiveness of the legislation in force.

The research allowed us to infer that, although some teachers developed activities that engage with interculturality, the final interviews revealed an incipient theoretical and methodological understanding of the concepts addressed during the training process. Furthermore, it was possible to perceive, through the teachers' statements, that interculturality is conceived as something external to individuals, when in reality it is produced from the relationships and dialogues of knowledge, symmetrically produced by different collectives.

These subtle nuances perceived in the subtext of the collaborators' statements revealed that the teachers began reflecting on the role of the school in relation to the knowledge and skills produced by the community and

how these repertoires contribute to collective strengthening. It also contributed to the teachers, to some extent, exposing their internal conflicts regarding work with the knowledge and skills produced by the Nova Esperança community. In addition, it considered the specificities of the teachers and the understanding that subjectivities are constructed throughout life and shape us.

Moreover, it was evident that the training, through critical collaborative action research, enabled the teachers to build possible paths for an approach to the sociocultural repertoires produced by the community, based on practices mobilized by intentionality. These teachers – unlike the ready-made “training packages” that are sent to the schools – were active subjects and protagonists of the entire training process, proposing readings and planning activities and actions with the Nova Esperança community as the leading role.

We reaffirm the need to promote and strengthen public policies aimed at teacher training, a training proposal where the teacher feels a sense of belonging and recognizes themselves in the training process. In developing this study with teachers, we realized that the famous training programs, designed and planned by educational bodies at the municipal, state, and federal levels, no longer meet the needs and aspirations of teachers.

In this sense, we argue that it is essential to recognize the value of teachers, not only in discourse, but to consider their distinct places and paths. It is necessary to think about and promote training programs guided by their own demands and to consider them as subjects of the process. In this sense, the journey with the teachers showed us that it is essential to consider subjectivities and that the training path involves, at many times, giving up truths that were previously considered absolute and non-negotiable, and building forms of collective intervention.

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