

Currículo da Educação Infantil: das concepções teóricas à proposta pedagógica curricular sob a perspectiva da Pedagogia Histórico-Crítica¹

Early Childhood Education Curriculum: from theoretical concepts to the curricular pedagogical proposal from the perspective of Historical-Critical Pedagogy

Currículo de Educación Infantil: de las concepciones teóricas a la propuesta pedagógica desde la perspectiva de la Pedagogía Histórico-Crítica

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Abstract: The article problematizes the curriculum for Early Childhood Education in the light of the historical-critical approach. To do so, it starts with the following guiding question: on what foundations can the curriculum for Early Childhood Education be built from a historical-critical perspective, focused on access to systematized knowledge and the full development of children's human qualities? Its aim is to understand the curricular foundations of Historical-Critical Pedagogy (HCP) and its contributions to the discussion and development of a pedagogical curriculum proposal for Early Childhood Education as a space for access to knowledge historically systematized by humanity. Research in the area of early childhood education curriculum is still insufficient when considering the complexity and disputes over how pedagogical work with young children should be carried out. This study argues in favor of building their own curricula based on a critical conception, which provides the opportunity to work with children from the perspective of an emancipatory education, so that, from an early age, they can be critical subjects and, throughout their career, transform their own realities. This is a theoretical article, with a qualitative approach, of the bibliographical research type, based on the main references in the discussion of the PHC curriculum. The results show that the early childhood education curriculum is a field in dispute and that the PHC presents curricular foundations for early childhood education, which are still under construction, based on critical conceptions of education and society and which go beyond the pedagogical spontaneity proposed by the National Common Curriculum Base (BNCC).

Keywords: Early Childhood Education Curriculum; Curricular Pedagogical Proposal; Historical-Critical Pedagogy; BNCC for Early Childhood Education.

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Resumo: O artigo problematiza o currículo para a Educação Infantil à luz da abordagem histórico-crítica. Para tanto, partiu-se da seguinte questão norteadora: sob quais fundamentos pode-se erigir o currículo para a Educação Infantil numa perspectiva histórico-crítica, voltado para o acesso ao conhecimento sistematizado e ao pleno desenvolvimento das qualidades humanas das crianças? Seu objetivo é apreender os fundamentos curriculares da Pedagogia Histórico-Crítica (PHC) e suas contribuições para a discussão e elaboração de proposta pedagógica curricular para a Educação Infantil enquanto espaço de acesso ao conhecimento historicamente sistematizado pela humanidade. Pesquisas na área do currículo da educação infantil, ainda são insuficientes quando se considera a complexidade e as disputas sobre como deve ser realizado o trabalho pedagógico com crianças pequenas. Neste estudo, defende-se a construção de currículos próprios e embasados em uma concepção crítica, que oportunize um trabalho com as crianças na perspectiva de uma educação emancipadora, para que, desde pequenas, sejam sujeitos críticos e que, ao longo da sua trajetória, sejam transformadoras das suas próprias realidades. Trata-se de um artigo teórico, de abordagem qualitativa, do tipo pesquisa bibliográfica e documental, tendo como aportes as principais referências na discussão de currículo da PHC. Os resultados apontam que o currículo da educação infantil é um campo em disputa e que a PHC apresenta fundamentos curriculares para a educação infantil, ainda em construção, pautados em concepções críticas de educação e sociedade e que superam o espontaneísmo pedagógico proposto pela Base Nacional Comum Curricular (BNCC).

Palavras-chave: Currículo da Educação Infantil; Proposta Pedagógica Curricular; Pedagogia Histórico-Crítica; BNCC da Educação Infantil.

Resumen: El artículo problematiza el currículo de la Educación Infantil a la luz del enfoque histórico-crítico. Para ello, parte de la siguiente pregunta orientadora: ¿sobre qué bases puede construirse el currículo de la Educación Infantil desde una perspectiva histórico-crítica, centrada en el acceso al conocimiento sistematizado y en el pleno desarrollo de las cualidades humanas de los niños? Su objetivo es comprender los fundamentos curriculares de la Pedagogía Histórico-Crítica (PCH) y sus aportes a la discusión y desarrollo de una propuesta pedagógica curricular para la Educación Infantil como espacio de acceso al conocimiento sistematizado históricamente por la humanidad. La investigación en el ámbito de los currículos de educación infantil es aún insuficiente si se tiene en cuenta la complejidad y las disputas sobre cómo debe llevarse a cabo el trabajo pedagógico con los niños pequeños. Este estudio argumenta a favor de la construcción de currículos propios basados en una concepción crítica, que brinde la oportunidad de trabajar con los niños desde la perspectiva de una educación emancipadora, para que, desde temprana edad, puedan ser sujetos críticos y, a lo largo de su vida, transformar sus propias realidades. Este es un artículo teórico, con abordaje cualitativo, del tipo investigación bibliográfica, utilizando como insumos las principales referencias en la discusión curricular del APS. Los resultados muestran que el currículo de la educación infantil es un campo en disputa y que el APS presenta fundamentos curriculares para la educación infantil, aún en construcción, basados en concepciones críticas de la educación y de la sociedad y que van más allá de la espontaneidad pedagógica propuesta por la Base Curricular Nacional Común (BNCC).

Palabras clave: Currículo de Educación Infantil; Propuesta Pedagógica Curricular; Pedagogía Histórico-Crítica; BNCC para la Educación Infantil.

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Introduction

Throughout its recent history early, childhood education in Brazil has lost its welfare character and has been considered a stage of basic education, especially after the 1988 Federal Constitution and the 1996 National Education Guidelines and Bases Law (LDB). Children are now recognized as subjects of rights and active in social relations. This rise was marked by struggles and disputes between different actors in society, from mothers who needed to work, to researchers in the field who began to debate the model of Early Childhood Education to be adopted, especially with regard to the guiding concepts of the curriculum, the methodology and the pedagogical approach.

In this way, thinking about a curriculum that meets the specificities of institutionalized education of children from 0 to 5 years and 11 months of age is recommended so that practices can be developed that favour the integral development of children. However, to understand the concepts of curriculum for Early Childhood Education, today it is necessary to contextualize these studies throughout history.

It is rather the awareness of human historicity itself, that is, the perception that the present is rooted in the past and projected into the future. Therefore, I cannot radically understand the present if I don't understand its roots, which imply studies of the genesis (SAVIANI, 2013, p. 4).

Curriculum concepts are a field of dispute in the academic context. This is because they are closely linked to cultural, historical and political issues. Furthermore, they have a link with three important theoretical currents: traditional, critical and post-critical.

When it comes to the curriculum, we need to understand that it is directly linked to the way how we think and act towards teaching, based on the questions: what for, to whom, what and how to teach (MALTA, 2013).

From this perspective, it is important to problematize the process of constructs these curricular concepts and the clashes surrounding a school curriculum, because a curriculum is the result of ideologies and political and economic disputes. It's not possible to just accept proposals determined by the system without questioning and investigating the interests behind the implementation of a curriculum for early childhood education institutions, particularly the BNCC (BRASIL, 2017). In this sense, the question arises: on what grounds can a curriculum for Early Childhood Education be built from a critical historical perspective, aimed at access to systematized knowledge and the full development of children's human qualities?

Considering this problem, the aim of this study is to understand the curricular foundations of Historical-Critical Pedagogy (HCP) and its contributions to the discussion and development of a pedagogical curriculum proposal for Early Childhood Education as a space for access to knowledge historically systematized by humanity.

For this exploratory research, we used the procedures and techniques of bibliographical research and as a theoretical contribution, some references from Historical-Critical Pedagogy (SAVIANI, 2011; 2013; MALACHEN, 2014; MARSIGLIA, 2011; PASQUALINI; MARTINS 2020; PASQUALINI; LAZARETTI, 2022). The choice of this theoretical perspective is justified because it advocates emancipatory education, because of the power it exerts in forming critical people capable of transforming the realities in which they live. With Marxist roots, founded on dialectical historical materialism, it also defends the guarantee of quality education, especially for the working class, which is oppressed and historically excluded from access to material and cultural goods.

In the documentary research, the aforementioned references and the official curriculum documents: National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education - DCNEI (BRASIL, 2010); National Common Curriculum Base for Early Childhood Education - BNCC (BRASIL, 2017) and the Tocantins Curriculum Document for Early Childhood Education - DCTEI (TOCANTINS, 2019), were subjected to an analysis that aimed to identify the curricular conceptions and detail the foundations of the curriculum for early childhood education. Initially, all the texts were scanned and then their contents were systematically read in order to synthesize ideas consistent with the research objective

The results are organized in textual format and the research is presented as follows: it begins with a brief presentation of the conceptions of curriculum, from the traditional, critical and post-critical perspectives; it goes on to discuss, in more detail, the critical conception of curriculum in the context of pedagogical trends, with emphasis on the curricular foundations of Historical Critical Pedagogy (HCP); and ends with an analysis of the conceptions of curriculum in the documents of curricular policies for Early Childhood Education and the contributions of HCP to thinking about curricular pedagogical proposals.

We conclude with some considerations on the curriculum approach of Historical-Critical Pedagogy, which presents solid pedagogical and psychological foundations for the discussion and proposal of pedagogical curriculum proposals for Early Childhood Education aimed at guaranteeing access to classical knowledge and scientific, artistic, philosophical, etc. knowledge, and at promoting the full development of children's human qualities from an early age.

Curriculum: from traditional to post-critical conceptions

The different conceptions of the curriculum mark a lived time and contribute to understanding the object of study in this research. That's why it's important to understand them and distinguish which concept of curriculum each of these theoretical currents defends, considering the traditional, the critical and the post-critical.

From the traditional perspective, the curriculum was understood from a purely technical perspective considering that discussions took place on how to organize it in the best and most efficient way, from the perspective of accepting both the *status quo* and knowledge that had already been developed and was therefore considered dominant, which is why theories from this perspective were neutral, despite being scientific. According to Malta (2013, p. 345), "the main issue with traditional theories can be summarized as follows: content, objectives and teaching this content effectively in order to achieve efficient results".

One of the pioneers of research into the curriculum from a traditional view and as a specialized field was Bobbitt, from the United States, who published his book *The Curriculum in 1918*. This study took place at an important time for the country, given the enormous dispute between different political, economic and cultural forces that wanted to shape the objectives and how the education of the masses would take place, according to their different and particular visions (SILVA, 2013).

According to Silva (2013), the consolidation of the curriculum model defended by Bobbitt took place through Tyler's book (1949), entitled *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Teaching*, a work that became a reference during the next four decades.

In the face of major transformations, new approaches were emerging, especially in the 1960s, when several historical movements took place:

The independence movements of the former European colonies; the student protests in France and several other countries; the continuation of the civil rights movement in the United States; the protests against the Vietnam War; the counter-culture movements; the feminist movement; sexual liberation; the struggles against the military dictatorship in Brazil; are just some of the important social and cultural movements that characterized the 1960s (SILVA, 2013, p. 29).

As these movements unfolded, another conception of the curriculum developed, based on the premise of criticizing social injustices and inequalities, denouncing the role of the school and the traditional curriculum in reproducing them. In this way, the critical conception emerged, which wanted curriculum are built to break with capitalist

bourgeois hegemony, in defense of the emancipation of less favoured, oppressed and discriminated groups, in search of social transformation.

According to Silva (2013), the main authors who laid the foundations for critical educational theory in general and critical curriculum theory were Paulo Freire, Louis Althusser, Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, Christian Baudelot and Roger Establet, Basil Bernstein, Michael Young, Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, Willian Pinar and Madeleine Grumet and Michael Apple. Thus, based on the studies of these authors, the critical theory of education has been constituted and has become a reference for thinking about the curricular model that we want to build and what kind of subjects we want to form.

In Brazil, Paulo Freire's (2019) work stands out as a cornerstone of critical curriculum studies. Although he didn't deal directly with the curriculum, he did harshly criticize the teaching model that did not favour the oppressed working class, for whom a "banking education" prevailed. There are various aspects analyzed by Freire that contribute to understanding a conception of the curriculum, with emphasis on the proposal of a problematizing and dialogical education, whose educational act implies a pedagogical relationship between the individuals who teach and those who learn: teachers and students.

Thus critical theories of the curriculum break with the idea of the curriculum being thought of only in a technicist way, with a focus on "how" to do it, and begin to study it from a sociological and political perspective, of how a curriculum can be capable of reproducing the hegemony of the ruling class, but also of resisting and transforming society through education. In this sense, Althusser's (2008) studies provided basic theories for the Marxist critiques of education that followed. He makes an important connection between education and ideology.

The third group of curriculum theories, the post-critical, emerges as a questioning of critical theories. According to Silva (2013), the theorists in this current include Hall (1997), Silva (1993; 1995; 2013), Foucault, Deleuze and Derrida, and their studies discuss the role of the school curriculum based on issues related to cultural identity and diversity, social inequality, feminism, gender, race, sexuality, ethnicity, the meaning of discourse, representation, knowledge-power, multiculturalism, among others. In other words, the so-called post-critical theories question cultural "progress" and the hegemony of certain ethnic and economic groups (SILVA, 2013).

This group of theories came to prominence in the 1970s and 1980s, following the principles of phenomenology, post-structuralism and multicultural ideals. The main criticisms

pointed out by this group refer to traditionalist curricular conceptions. These tendencies are identified by the many post's - post-structuralism, post-modernism, post-colonialism - and particularly advocate cultural studies and multiculturalism.

Post- critical theorists bring to light aspects that oppose the conceptions defended by critical theories. In other words, they clarify that the curriculum in contemporary society should not be structured solely on the basis of the categories of social class, power and ideology. It should be seen as a political and cultural practice that reflects and reproduces social hierarchies and inequalities, including those related to gender, race, class, sexuality and other forms of social difference. Therefore, the curriculum should be designed to challenge hierarchies and inequalities and promote critical, reflective and multicultural education.

These theoretical perspectives generally help us to think about the conceptual and political-ideological bases that underpin the academic debate on the subject of the curriculum. In the field of political-educational debate, clashes and curricular proposals have had fertile ground in Brazil since the 1990s, with various regulations for all levels of education, through the development of parameters, guidelines, orientations and, currently, the BNCC (BRASIL, 2017).

Historical-critical approach to the curriculum

This study is based on Historical-Critical Pedagogy. It therefore discusses how this theory has been consolidated in the midst of the different theories that have been incorporated into education, and presents the conceptions of curriculum based on this trend.

Historically, Brazilian education has been structured under the influence of different pedagogical theories. Dermeval Saviani's studies of pedagogical trends led him to develop and propose a theory that would promote quality education for all social classes. This is because the researcher realized that the different pedagogies present in the educational context did not take into account the interests of the working classes and did not provide students with the elements to fight for the social transformation that was necessary in a period when the bourgeoisie held power and access to quality schools - a reality that persists to this day, in which a small portion of the Brazilian population has access to the best schools.

Thus, Historical-Critical Pedagogy was born, beginning in the late 1970s, when political movements were engaged in the fight against the military dictatorship in Brazil. This struggle had repercussions not only in the political field, but also on the educational scene, which provided a cultural climate that favoured collective pedagogical discussions in the theoretical sphere.

Historical-Critical Pedagogy has its philosophical, political-social, historical and economic foundations in historical-dialectical materialism, a theory defended by Marx and other theorists such as Gramsci, Vigotski, Lenin and Engels. Through this pedagogy, the aim is to highlight the relevance of school education for social transformation, "Therefore, the concept presupposed in this view of Historical-Critical Pedagogy is historical materialism, that is, the understanding of history based on material development, the determination of the material conditions of human existence" (SAVIANI, 2011, p.76).

This strand has been built collectively by authors who believed in Dermeval Saviani's ideas, such as Newton Duarte, Lígia Márcia Martins, Júlia Malanchen, Ana Carolina Galvão Marsiglia, Paulino Orso, among others. In 1984, the nomenclature Historical-Critical Pedagogy was officially adopted and it still prevails today (MALANCHEN, 2014).

The pedagogical proposal of the Historical-Critical Pedagogy is developed with an articulation between theory and practice - praxis - in order for students to build a vision far beyond phenomena, given that educational practice seeks to be essentially questioning, critical and emancipatory, so that historically marginalized classes can have full access to the cultural heritage from which they have almost always been excluded, as Saviani (2011, p. 84) states:

Historical-Critical Pedagogy believes that the tendency to devalue the school reflects the contradictory nature of education, based on the contradiction of society itself. To the extent that we are still in a class society with opposing interests and that the generalized education of the population runs counter to the interests of class stratification, there is this attempt to devalue the school, the aim of which is to reduce its impact in relation to the demands of transforming society itself.

In view of this, there needs to be an understanding of the school's role in social transformation, which is achieved to the extent that it allows students critical access to systematized and historically produced knowledge, while respecting their learning pace. This access is achieved through a well-constructed curriculum based on elaborated knowledge.

The discussion of the concept of curriculum, based on Historical-Critical Pedagogy, starts from the understanding that education is an essentially human activity and takes place collectively. Thus, this process of humanization takes place through work, in which man needs to produce his own existence, unlike other living beings who adapt to reality naturally, by extracting what they need or transforming it through the creation of a humanized environment, in other words, the cultural world.

This transformation that man brings about occurs as a result of work, which is not carried out in any way, but through action that is appropriate to the purpose, which is therefore intentional. In the case of education, which is also a type of work, Saviani (2011, p.

13) states that "educational work is the act of producing, directly and intentionally, in each individual, the humanity that is produced historically and collectively by all men".

Thus, the school institution plays a fundamental role in the process of producing humanization because, as Saviani (2011, p. 14) explains,

school therefore exists to provide access to the tools that enable access to elaborate knowledge (science), as well as access to the rudiments of this knowledge. Basic school activities must be organized on this basis. If we call this the curriculum, then we can say that it is on the basis of systematized knowledge that the primary schools curriculum is structured. Systematized knowledge, erudite culture, is a literate culture. That's why the first requirement for access to this type of knowledge is to learn to read and write. You also need to know the language of numbers, the language of nature and the language of society. This is the fundamental content of primary schools: reading, writing, counting, the rudiments of the natural sciences and the social sciences (human history and geography).

In light of these statements, it is believed that it is important to think about a curriculum for early childhood education that meets its specific needs, without losing sight of the fact that children aged 0 to 5 years and 11 months should also have access to scientific, philosophical, artistic, ethical and aesthetic knowledge developed by humanity and to body culture. Those who work with this age group should reflect on the objectives they want to achieve with the children and what content should be provided.

Saviani (2011, p. 15) describes the curriculum as "the set of core activities distributed in school spaces. A curriculum is therefore a functioning school, that is, a school performing its proper function". In this sense, the school should provide children with activities that are specific to the school context, and not practices that do not contribute to the appropriation of scientific knowledge. Only school can provide formal knowledge and, outside of school, there are many other ways for children to appropriate non-formal knowledge.

With regard to early childhood education, theorists from the Historical-Critical Pedagogy argue that

the specificity of this segment of education will be guaranteed within the scope of the selection of content and ways of teaching, based on the didactic organization of scientific, artistic and philosophical knowledge and body culture as school content, with a view to the subject-addressee of the educational act, i.e. who is being taught, without necessarily implying the negation of scientific disciplines or areas of knowledge as organizers of the curriculum (PASQUALINI; LAZARETTI, 2022, p. 39).

A curriculum proposal that advocates working with historically produced knowledge needs to rethink the practices that are currently in place in schools, especially in early childhood education institutions, where a lot of work is done with commemorative dates and projects from other areas, such as health and social action, but scientific knowledge and elaborated knowledge are sidelined.

Saviani (2011) argues that schools must be clear about what is primary and what is secondary in their daily actions. He states that there is an inversion of the activities that are considered core and those that are secondary, which is why he gives an example that is very common in early childhood education institutions:

the school year starts in the second half of February and in March we have Revolution Week, then Holy Week, then Indian Week, Mother's Week, June Festivities, Soldier's Week, Folklore Week, Homeland Week, Spring Games, Children's Week, Wing Week, etc., and now it's November. The school year is coming to an end and we are faced with the following observation: everything has been done at school, time has been found for all kinds of celebrations, but very little time has been allocated to the process of transmitting and assimilating systematized knowledge. This means that the core activity of the school has been lost sight of, i.e. the transmission of the tools for accessing elaborated knowledge (SAVIANI, 2011, p. 15).

Early childhood education institutions need to prioritize the development of core activities that provide opportunities for scientific knowledge. We must not lose sight of working with systematized knowledge and classic content, such as children's identity, body hygiene, notions of space and time, and working with different textual genres.

For this reason, secondary activities based on the pedagogies of competences and learning to learn should not be prioritized. For these conceptions, the premise of educational work is to teach children about everyday life and spontaneity, as can be seen in the conceptions of the Pedagogy of Competences, which prioritizes behavioral issues to the detriment of critical thinking.

The school curriculum, from the perspective of "learning to learn", loses reference to the content to be taught, as it must focus on the student's everyday experiences and culture. The knowledge historically constructed and accumulated in human history is characterized negatively as decontextualized and fragmented knowledge, because it is not related to everyday life (MARSIGLIA, 2011, p. 16-17).

What Marsiglia (2011) says above is a concept explicitly presented in the BNCC (BRASIL, 2017), which states that teachers should act as learning mediators, since part of their job is to reflect, select, organize, plan, mediate and monitor all practices and interactions to ensure the promotion of a plurality of situations aimed at the full development of children.

In contrast to this conception, from the perspective of Critical-Historical Pedagogy, the teacher plays a central role in children's development. The teacher must be the driver of the whole process, planning activities that include systematized and scientific knowledge so that children can appropriate it, based on the development of their human capacities.

From this perspective, it is understood that pedagogical practices in early childhood education must have pedagogical intent, with explicit objectives to be achieved, so that children, from an early age, are introduced to elaborate knowledge in order to appropriate this knowledge. This appropriation happens when the teacher works on structured activities and presents historically constructed content.

Teaching permeates all the educational work carried out in Early Childhood Education; it is the moment when the teacher leads the child to form concepts, to confront knowledge. It transmits to the child all the knowledge accumulated by humanity and present in the objects that surround us. Teaching is present in the intentional planning that must be carried out by the teacher of the activities they intend to carry out with the children (ARCE, 2013, p. 10).

With the understanding that, at this stage of education, activities should be worked on that contribute to the development of children's more complex abilities, Malanchen (2014, p. 5) summarizes that:

the curriculum is understood as the expression of conceptions of the human being, nature, society, knowledge, education, teaching and learning, pretensions about the school and its social role, pedagogical practices and the relationships experienced within it. And, as a result, the intentional selection of knowledge that must be socialized for the entire population, since it is a fundamental requirement for the humanization process of each individual.

It should make explicit the theoretical conceptions of the child and the knowledge to be taught. The curriculum is not a manual to be followed, but a reference for teachers to base their pedagogical planning on with a critical sense .

The curriculum of/in early childhood education: from conceptions to the pedagogical curriculum proposal

Early childhood education is the first stage of basic education. It is organized into two phases: daycare centers, for children aged 0 to 3; and pre-schools, for children aged 4 to 5 years and 11 months.

With the approval of the LDB (BRASIL, 1996), early childhood education and all the other stages of basic education were obliged to have a curriculum with a general basis and within the municipalities, it would be built to guarantee work with the specific characteristics of each location. Article 26 states that:

The curricula of Early Childhood Education, Primary Education and Secondary Education must have a common national base, to be complemented, in each education system and in each school, by a diversified part, required by the regional and local characteristics of society, culture, economy and students (BRASIL, 1996, p. 19).

With the inclusion of early childhood education as a stage of basic education, legal provisions began to be devised to guarantee a curriculum geared to the specificities of this stage. The DCNEI (BRASIL, 2010) is a document that guides the development, implementation and evaluation of pedagogical proposals for early childhood education throughout the country and was approved by the National Education Council (CNE) in 2010. Its implementation is mandatory for all public and private early childhood education institutions.

In this sense, the concept of curriculum, according to the DCNEI (BRASIL, 2010), is that pedagogical practices should be a set that aims to articulate children's experiences and knowledge in line with the knowledge belonging to the cultural, artistic, environmental, scientific and technological heritage, so that they achieve integral development.

These guidelines indicate that the pedagogical proposals are considered as the guiding plan for the actions of educational institutions, in which the goals for the development of children and their learning should be established. This document must be drawn up with the collective participation of all those involved in early childhood education, from management to the children's families.

Thus, taking into account the LDB (BRASIL, 1996), which calls for the construction of a common curriculum for Brazil, the National Education Plan (PNE) (2014) reaffirmed this perspective, culminating in the drafting of a document that provides guidelines for the construction of curriculum in Brazil the National Common Curriculum Base. The

construction of this educational policy was produced in an arena of many clashes and controversies. The document went through three versions until approval.

According to Dourado and Siqueira (2019), the process of implementing the BNCC (BRAZIL, 2017) was not consensual, it was not agreed upon and there are several questions about its legitimacy. However, as it is a government policy, it is normative and leads public and private education networks and systems to rethink their pedagogical curriculum proposals.

Around this policy there is a strong discourse from the government and business sectors on change: of knowledge, of the school, of the curriculum, of student learning, of teachers. A discourse of individual responsibility, especially of teachers, for the success or failure of education (DOURADO; SIQUEIRA, 2019, p. 295).

For early childhood education, the BNCC (BRASIL, 2017) brings a perspective of work based on fields of experience. The document was created to standardize the content taught to all children throughout Brazil. In other words, to form a common basis so that everyone has access to the same knowledge. At this point, we must disagree, because Brazil is socially and culturally diverse and has multiple economic realities, with strong social inequalities.

In this document, the conceptions of early childhood education are geared towards building the identity and subjectivity of children, who must be the protagonists. The teacher's job is to take their interests into account, in the exact opposite of what the historical-critical perspective advocates. For this reason, pedagogical practice must be geared towards guaranteeing learning rights, which are: living together, playing, participating, exploring, expressing oneself and getting to know oneself. Thus, the entire organization of pedagogical work will be based on five fields of experience: 1) the self, the other and us; 2) the body, gestures and movements; 3) features, sounds, colors and shapes; 4) listening, speaking, thinking and imagination; 5) space, time, quantities, relationships and transformations (BRASIL, 2017).

At state level, the Tocantins Curriculum Document for Early Childhood Education - DCTEI (TOCANTINS, 2019) presents the same conceptions as the guiding document, that the work is based on the structuring axes expressed in the DCNEI (BRASIL, 2010): interactions and play, ethical, aesthetic and political principles, as well as a curricular arrangement with fields of experience and respect for the six learning rights (play, socialize, participate, explore, express and get to know each other). All the learning objectives were simply transcribed into the state document and the details of the objectives were added, that is, a thorough explanation and practical suggestions for working from each objective.

In this document, there is no explicit concept of curriculum, childhood and children. However, it is close to the conceptions of the pedagogies of childhood, of learning to learn, in which the work focuses on protagonism and children become the center of the process, which differs from the pedagogical and socio-historical ideals that the Historical-Critical Pedagogy defends, that teaching must be systematic and intentional and that it is up to the teacher to conduct and mediate the knowledge accumulated by humanity so that it is transmitted to children.

According to Marsiglia (2011, p. 104),

it's also important to emphasize that children's knowledge, based on their everyday experiences, can help structure the start of the pedagogical activity, but is not a condition for it. This is for two reasons: firstly, because the students' experiences are based on common sense, they refer to knowledge "in itself" and the form of knowledge that the school should dedicate itself to developing is knowledge "for itself". The second reason resulting from the first, is that the school dedicating itself to erudite knowledge, will not always find in the immediate interests and prior knowledge of the students the content that the school should transmit, and this does not mean that the needs should not be created and historical and elaborate knowledge should not be offered.

The DCTEI (TOCANTINS, 2019) establishes guidelines for organize pedagogical work that will be developed with children in early childhood education. It is mandatory and serves as a reference for municipalities and institutions to build their pedagogical curriculum proposals and Political-Pedagogical Projects.

A pedagogical curriculum proposal can be understood as a document that helps organize the pedagogical work of networks, education systems and school institutions. This document must establish all the guidelines, objectives and goals to be achieved, especially the conceptions of education, childhood, children and knowledge that underpin teaching practices and teaching content. This document should be the aegis from which school institutions will seek the fundamental elements to build their PPPs:

a pedagogical proposal is a path, not a place. A pedagogical proposal is built along the way. Every pedagogical proposal has a story that needs to be told. Every proposal contains a bet. It is born out of a reality that asks questions and is also in search of an answer. Every proposal is situated, it brings with it the place from which it speaks and the range of values that constitute it; it also brings with it the difficulties it faces, the problems that need to be overcome and the direction that guides it [...] it doesn't point to "the" place, "the" answer, because if it brings "the" answer it is no longer a question. Rather, it points to a path to be built (KRAMER, 1997, p.19).

Therefore, when constructing a pedagogical curriculum proposal, it must be realized that the subjects have a history that needs to be taken into account. You don't have to deny what already exists, but improve or even counter it, taking into account the desired society project, especially for the working class. Reality, needs and specificities, which are always multiple, historical and contradictory, must be taken into account in this development.

Designing and drawing up a curriculum is important because it makes us reflect on and evaluate our choices and our conceptions of education, knowledge, childhood and children, reorienting our options. And these are always historical, always reductive in the face of the unpredictability of living in the world. In other words, the curriculum concerns everyday events that cannot be objectively determined; they can only be planned with a view to opening them up to the unexpected (BARBOSA *et al.*, 2009, p. 57).

Building a pedagogical curriculum proposal is pertinent, given that the institutionalization of early childhood education is quite recent compared to the other stages of basic education. In this sense, there are still many doubts about how to develop pedagogical practices and what content should be worked with this age group of children.

The young history of Brazilian Early Childhood Education is marked by immeasurable challenges, especially: the scarcity of resources for funding institutions for young children, especially with regard to the professional training and salary requirements of their staff; the lack of definition of their pedagogical identity, which holds them hostage to unschooling ideas anchored in the artificial binomial known as "caring and educating"; the maintenance of fetishized, naturalizing and non-historicizing conceptions of childhood, etc. The result of this history is none other than the non-existence, in the 21st century, of the consolidation of nursery schools as educational spaces that mediate between the everyday and non-everyday spheres of children's lives (PASQUALINI; MARTINS, 2020, p. 444).

In addition, as it is a stage that is still being consolidated, there are disputes about the conceptions of childhood, children and pedagogical work, as there are those who defend child protagonism, in which all work must start from the child's interest and which values spontaneous activities and the argument that children's schooling should not be brought forward. In contrast to this trend, Historical-Critical Pedagogy, based on the assumptions of Historical-Cultural Psychology, argues that children need to be taught because all their higher cognitive abilities are learnt and must be stimulated in order to favour their development and, consequently, their learning.

The construction of a curriculum therefore represents the conflicting forces and interests present in society, and its delimitation and realization are strongly influenced by different educational concepts. The curriculum is therefore a space of struggle, of dispute over conceptions and purposes that the school needs to follow and fulfil, given the real demands and needs of society (PASQUALINI; LAZARETTI, 2022, p. 44-45).

From this perspective, it is argued that the pedagogical curriculum proposal should be built collectively, with studies and discussions, facing the contradictory, in a democratic process in which educational systems will be able to monitor, evaluate and support the work based on a critical conception defined collectively, to the detriment of the recurring belief that it is possible to mix different theories and put them into practice. It should therefore be emphasized that understanding what pedagogical theories are and what each one stands for is an important step towards building a curriculum that dialogues with reality and the social transformation that is desired.

In this context, a pedagogical curriculum proposal agreed collectively by all those who are part of the educational context is relevant, because those involved feel part of that process, unlike when they use a curriculum built at federal and state level that doesn't take into account the singularities and particularities of the social context of which those involved are part.

Education systems and schools have the right and duty to draw up their own curricular proposal, which establishes the relationship between the universal, which should guide education for all and which is expressed in the National Curriculum Guidelines, and the singular, i.e. the context of each system and/or school, taking into account the diversities and specificities of each group (BARBOSA *et al.*, 2009, p. 10).

This elaboration process needs to take place in a very democratic environment, so as to take into account the particularities of the education systems, as well as the reality of the educational institutions, since it is possible to cater for the heterogeneity of children if the curricula are designed and structured to reach everyone and, at the same time, each one in their singularity.

The selection of diverse cultural content that children should be guaranteed as the mainstay of their experiences is the first order task in early childhood education, which means that when it comes to designing and implementing pedagogical curriculum proposals, it's not enough to raise the banner of playfulness, because even in playful activities, content must be intrinsic for children to conceptually appropriate the social, cultural and natural world in which they are inserted (PASQUALINI; MARTINS, 2020).

In this way, conceiving of teaching and the transmission of knowledge as the premise for working in early childhood education is not to disregard childhoods, but rather to understand that children only develop and learn through work that is carried out in an intentionally organized way, "we understand that the curriculum cannot be tied to everyday life, to the knowledge built there, to the immediate, to the present. Such conceptions do not favour the emancipation of children towards systematized knowledge." (PRADO; AZEVEDO, 2012, p. 48).

Pasqualini and Martins (2020) consider that it is possible to build a curricular pedagogical proposal based on the BNCC guiding document (BRASIL, 2017), from the fields of experience, in a historical-critical approach and without giving up systematized knowledge as the fundamental articulating axis of pedagogical work⁴.

As can be seen from the discussion, building a curriculum will never be an easy or straightforward task, because throughout the process those involved will come up against conflicting issues linked to a society that is ethnically and culturally diverse, extremely unequal in socio-economic terms, and where social classes have different educational conceptions. For this reason, there will be no shortage of players trying to steer this construction in a direction that fulfils their own interests. In this sense, whenever the discussion involves the curriculum, it must be understood that it has been and will continue to be a space for struggle, but that the necessary efforts must be made to achieve the main objective, which is to meet the real needs of society, especially the working classes, who have historically been excluded from access to cultural and material goods.

Conclusions

The aim of this study was to understand the foundations of the critical approach to the curriculum, highlighting the contributions of Historical-Critical Pedagogy (HCP) as a possibility for building pedagogical curriculum proposals for Early Childhood Education.

The research highlighted the main educational theories that deal with curricular issues, from the traditional, critical and post-critical conceptions. It delved deeper into

⁴ Some Brazilian municipalities have built their curricula from this perspective, working with content historically accumulated by humanity. Two stand out as having published their curricular proposals and helping those who are in the process of building them to systematize their curricula. Cambé-PR and Cascavel-PR drew up their curricular proposals for early childhood education based on Historical-Critical Pedagogy and Historical-Cultural Psychology: Cambé Municipal Early Childhood Education Curriculum (2020) and Cascavel Municipal Public Education Network Curriculum (2020).

the historical-critical perspective, because it believes that Historical-Critical Pedagogy, a pedagogical theory under construction, brings contributions and helps the school community and the subjects that make up the management of the municipal system, the federative entity in charge of providing early childhood education, to think about a curriculum based on a conception of education that seeks the emancipation of people, the transformation of social reality and has systematized knowledge as its central focus.

The theoretical research elucidated that the curriculum is a field of dispute in the academic context and in educational practice, and that it is necessary to understand the different conceptions that underpin the debate and official curriculum documents. There are many theoretical currents that can guide a particular conception of curriculum and, as you adopt one of them, there is a path to follow. We need to move forward in understanding that a curriculum is always based on cultural, historical and political issues. In this way, its construction must be based on the education you want and the subject you want to train and for which society.

It was possible to see in the bibliography and documents analyzed that there are disputes over conceptions, between those who defend a curriculum based on spontaneous and immediate pedagogical practices, founded on everyday knowledge, which take as a premise that children should be the builders of their own knowledge, such as the BNCC and the DCTEI; and those conceptions, such as PHC, which advocate intentional and systematic pedagogical work, with the aim of providing children with the appropriation of elaborate culture and historically produced scientific, philosophical and artistic knowledge.

Historical-Critical Pedagogy clearly advocates that early childhood education institutions prioritize the development of core activities that provide access to scientific, artistic, philosophical, ethical and esthetic knowledge and classical content. PHC therefore provides curricular foundations for discussing and proposing curricula based on teaching, learning and the transmission of knowledge as a premise for working in early childhood education. However, not disregarding childhood, but understanding that children only develop and learn through pedagogical work that is intentionally organized and with content that enables mediation between children's every day and spontaneous experiences, related to the elements of systematized culture, enabling them to advance to more elaborate levels of understanding of the social, cultural and natural reality in which they are inserted.

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