

ARTICLE

The itinerary of the pedagogical practice for the valorization of black population in the school environment

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ABSTRACT

The article analyzes the construction and experience of pedagogical practices of valorization of black identity, memory and culture, through the pedagogical itinerary of two school institutions. We assume Latin American post-colonial studies as a theoretical-methodological approach in dialogue with Afrocentricity as an epistemological position. We approach the pedagogical practical category as a collective, intentional and institutional action and we use ethnography. The research was carried out in two municipal public schools, in the cities of Campinas, São Paulo, and Salvador, Bahia. In the organization and analysis of the data, we adopted content analysis. The findings indicate that the pedagogical itinerary of school institutions is intertwined in a context of curricular dispute; and that pedagogical practices refer to principles of the African worldview recreated in Brazil in dialogue with the thinking of Paulo Freire, that generates another way of thinking and doing education.

KEYWORDS

pedagogical practice; itinerary; identity; memory and black culture.

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ITINERÁRIO DA PRÁTICA PEDAGÓGICA DE VALORIZAÇÃO DA POPULAÇÃO NEGRA NO ESPAÇO ESCOLAR

RESUMO

O artigo analisa a construção e a vivência das práticas pedagógicas de valorização da identidade, da memória e da cultura negras, por meio do itinerário pedagógico de duas instituições escolares. Assumimos os estudos pós-coloniais latino-americanos como abordagem teórico-metodológica em diálogo com a afrocentricidade como posição epistemológica. Abordamos a categoria prática pedagógica como uma ação coletiva, intencional e institucional, utilizando a etnografia. O trabalho de campo foi realizado em duas escolas públicas municipais, nas cidades de Campinas, São Paulo, e Salvador, Bahia. Na organização e análise dos dados, adotamos a análise de conteúdo na perspectiva de Laurence Bardin. Os achados indicam que o itinerário pedagógico das instituições escolares é tecido em um contexto de disputa curricular e as práticas pedagógicas se referenciam em princípios da cosmovisão africana recriada no Brasil em diálogo com o pensamento de Paulo Freire, gerando uma forma *outra* de pensar e fazer educação.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

prática pedagógica; itinerário; identidade; memória e cultura negras.

ITINERARIO DE LA PRÁCTICA PEDAGÓGICA DE VALORIZACIÓN DE LA POBLACIÓN NEGRA EN EL ESPACIO ESCOLAR

RESUMEN

Este artículo analiza la construcción y vivencia de las prácticas pedagógicas de valorización de la identidad, memoria y cultura negra, por medio del itinerario pedagógico de dos instituciones escolares. Retomamos a los estudios pos coloniales latinoamericanos como abordaje teórico-metodológica, en diálogo con la posición epistemológica de la afrocentralidad. Abordamos la categoría de práctica pedagógica como una acción colectiva e institucional. Utilizando a la etnografía como herramienta. El trabajo en campo fue realizado en dos escuelas públicas municipales de Brasil, en las ciudades de Campinas, São Paulo, y Salvador, Bahia. Para la organización y el análisis de datos, adoptamos el Análisis de Contenido, en la perspectiva de Laurence Bardin. Los resultados apuntan que el itinerario pedagógico de las instituciones es tejido en un contexto de disputa curricular; así como que las prácticas pedagógicas se referencian en principios de cosmovisión africana, recreada en Brasil en diálogo con el pensamiento de Paulo Freire, lo cual genera una forma *otra* de pensar y hacer educación.

PALABRAS CLAVE

práctica pedagógica; itinerario; identidad memoria y cultura negras.

INTRODUCTION

The institutionalization of education for ethnic-racial relations and the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture constitute an educational policy of affirmative action aimed at the black population. With advances and limits, it is an instrument that can create the conditions for the transformation of subaltern relations in Brazilian education, once it proposes to broaden the focus of the curricula, assuming new interpretative approaches on the national identity, with some non-Eurocentric presuppositions (Oliveira, 2011).

However, the way in which the policy has been implemented points out that the construction and rooting of pedagogical practices focused on this theme is a long process, which has limits and deals with contradictions. From this understanding emerged the central question that guided the research, whose results originated the present article: what are the school pedagogical practices that have been developed for the institutionalization of the teaching of Afro-Brazilian history and culture in Brazil and how have they been built up in the daily life of the relationships in the school community?

Teacher development and teacher practice have gained relevance on studies that are concerned with the question above. However, as Oliveira and Lins (2013) well point out, the advances made from academic production focus on historical, legal and ideological elements. The actual pedagogical and theoretical issues of teacher education, as well as school experiences and practices are still in the process of being approached.

In this study we analyse the construction and the teaching and learning experiences on the pedagogical practices that value the black identity, memory and culture through investigating the pedagogical itinerary of two schools.

In the theoretical-methodological choices we are guided by two ideas, namely: the conception that anti-Black racism, as ideology and as a practice of social domination, is a structuring element of social, ethnic-racial and pedagogical relations experienced in Brazilian society (Cunha Jr., 2013) and race, as discussed by Munanga (2000), is a social construction forged in the tense relations of domination and power between whites and blacks, Europeans and non-Europeans.

From this perspective we approach Latin American post-colonial studies as a theoretical-methodological approach in dialogue with afrocentricity as an epistemological position, understanding them as possibilities of triggering awareness regarding the rupture with the hegemony of Eurocentric thinking.

The Latin American post-colonial studies, an approach deeply rooted in the locus of enunciation of the speaker, has as central question the unveiling of the articulation between modernity/coloniality and its implications in the organization of the Eurocentred domination. For this approach, race is a mental construction invented to hierarchize the world's populations according to the gradation of their color and to "naturalize" the world-standard of Eurocentric and colonial/modern capitalist power (Quijano, 2005).

Afrocentricity is "a kind of thinking, practice and perspective that perceives Africans as subjects and agents of extraordinary occurrences acting on their own cultural image and in accordance with their own human interests" (Asante, 2009, p. 93). For this thought, far from being an essentialist term, the "African" is a construct of knowledge: Being African is to be a person who participated in the 500 years of

resistance to European domination (Asante, 2009), and as it has been happening in the margin of European experience, Afrocentricity is the movement to correct this displacement and place Africans at the center of their history.

We have adopted ethnography as an adequate methodological possibility for the issues of pedagogical practices aiming at the valorization of black identity, memory and culture, for its ability to amplify the voices which had previously been silenced. We approach the pedagogical practical category based on the conceptualization of Souza (2009): a collective social action, carried out institutionally, with explicit intentions and assumed by the school community as a whole. Moreover, in order to analyse the pedagogical practices about the theme, we rely on the black thinking in education and the thoughts of the educator Paulo Freire, as guiding pillars of the pedagogical approach.

The research was carried out in two public schools,¹ located in the Southeast and Northeast of the country, both known as institutions that have pedagogical practices intensively grounded on the main theme discussed here. In the Southeast, the study was carried out at Escola Municipal de Ensino Fundamental Africanidades, which is located in the city of Campinas, state of São Paulo and was indicated by their research entitled *Práticas pedagógicas de trabalho com relações étnico-raciais na escola na perspectiva da lei n. 10.639/03* (Gomes, 2012). In the Northeast, the work was carried out at the Escola Municipal de Ensino Fundamental Baobá, located in the outskirts of the city of Salvador, state of Bahia, and it was recommended by the coordination of the Programa de Educação e Profissionalização para a Igualdade Racial e de Gênero (CEAFRO), of the Centro de Estudos Afro-Orientais da Universidade Federal da Bahia (CEAO/UFBA).

As for the treatment, production and analysis of the data we adopted the content analysis, from the perspective of Laurence Bardin (2011). Through the thematic analysis we aim to highlight the sense of the nuclei of meaning and the meaning of information.

The text is organized in two parts: in the first one we make a theoretical discussion about the senses and experiences of the categories that underlie the research; in the second one we present the results of the investigation, focusing on the pedagogical itinerary of the practices of valorization of identity, memory and black culture in the schools investigated.

SENSES AND EXPERIENCES OF PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE, IDENTITY, MEMORY AND BLACK CULTURE

Educational processes are intrinsically related to the social contexts in which they are developed. As part of a wider social practice, pedagogical practice is oriented, structured and responds to the goals and purposes of each time and social context. According to Freire (2010, p. 98), “as a specifically human experience, education is a form of intervention in the world”. Thus, the pedagogical action is materialized by its intentionality. In other words, the pedagogical character of the

1 Here the two institutions are given a fictitious name.

educational practice is understood as “action planned and intentionally performed by its subjects” (Souza, 2009, p. 34).

In the case of the school, it is mediated by the school curriculum, which we understand comprehensively, as Santiago (2006, p. 74) states: “the materialization of a project that follows a type of education and a conception of subject, meaning and traces identities through the teaching and learning processes”. However, for Gonçalves (1985, p. 315), “once incorporated by the school, an action as naive and unassuming as it may seem to be, has pedagogical force”.

In Souza’s perspective (2009), pedagogical practice is a praxis, in other words, it is a specific collective action, within the broader social phenomenon, which is education, and organized with explicit purposes and objectives to be developed jointly by the institution. The author’s definition for it is:

a collective social action, accomplished institutionally, that is conformed in the teaching practice, student practice, management practice and epistemological and/or gnosiological practice with explicit intentions, assumed collectively, permeated by affections (loves and hatreds). (Souza, 2009, p. 35)

The author affirms that each pole of this collective and institutional action is shaped by heterogeneous, diversified and singular complexities of social subjects that are the teachers, the students and the managers of the institutions, who are related through their respective practices. And the interrelation between these subjects will aim to guarantee the fourth pole of the complexity that is the knowledge or contents to be constructed or worked through programs, plans and projects institutionally determined. In order to better explain the relationships that constitute pedagogical practice, the author used the following Figure 1.

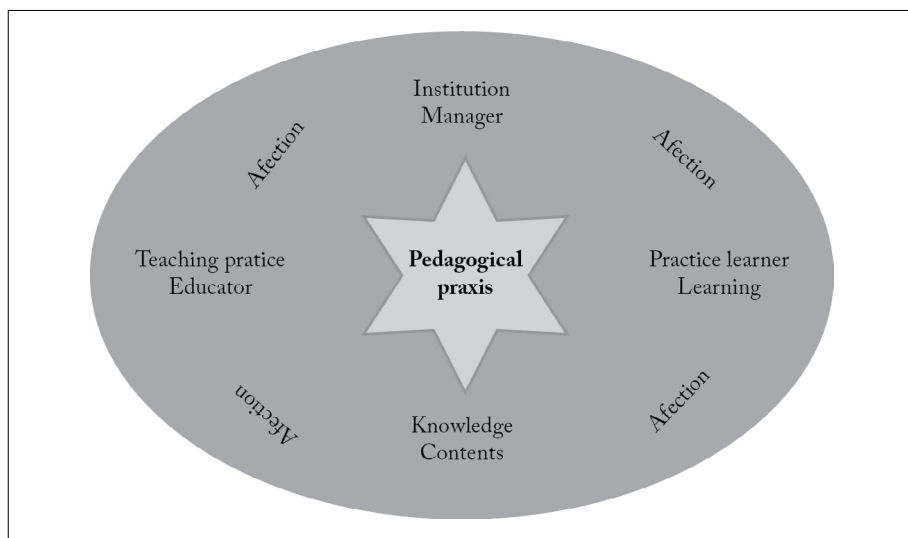


Figure 1 - Conception of pedagogical practice.

Source: Souza (2009, p. 62).

Thus, it is not any practice developed in the school space that can be understood and presented as a pedagogical practice of that institution. Therefore, the voluntary, specific or isolated work of some teachers committed to the discussion of Afro-Brazilian history and culture and education for ethnic-racial relations in their teaching practice does not constitute the institutionalization of the inclusion of these themes in the institutions to which they are linked with.

Although the school can be understood as a work organization and a place of learning, it is also a field of management of powers. For Libâneo (2004), organizations, and among them the school, are marked by social interactions between people. Understood as an organization, the school would be a “social unit that puts together people who interact with each other and who operate through their own organizational structures and processes in order to achieve the institution’s goals” (Libâneo, 2004, p. 100). The author draws attention to the fact that the term organizational culture is beyond a purely bureaucratic vision of the functioning of the institution, it entails even the informal relationships that happen in schools.

We consider that these relations influence significantly both the changes and the permanences that coexist in the school routine, when we are referring to the implementation of the teaching of Afro-Brazilian history and culture. It is necessary here to reaffirm that the pedagogical action is materialized by its intentionality. And in the case of the school, it is mediated by the curriculum. If we consider this context, we will certainly see that, in order to account for the institutionalization of educational processes that value black identity, memory and culture, it is necessary to conjugate the practices of the various subjects of the school community (teachers, students, managers), as pointed out by Souza (2009), in the school culture.

In recent² academic production, we find no reference to the concept of pedagogical practice as a whole. It often appears as one of its constituent elements: curricular policy, evaluation, teacher practice, planning etc. In most of the studies, it is approached as a context for the production of educational policy or as an empirical field of research. However, the production offers indications of what constitutes the distinctive character, the wholeness and the particularity of a pedagogical practice.

The pedagogical practice rises in the daily life of the relationships that are developed in a particular educational institution and it is structured in the development of the daily actions of the subjects. It is an intentionally organized practice to achieve specific goals; dynamic, manifested as gestures, attitudes and reflective and creative behaviours. Although the practice happens from the action of the educator, it is not a practice of the educator, but of the educational institution, configuring it as a collective practice. The processes of organization and action (time, space and routine) constitute a structural part of the design and action of pedagogical practice. It is, therefore, a formative practice composed of many other practices:

2 We carried out a study on the uses and meanings of the pedagogical practice category in six Associação Nacional de Pós-Graduação e Pesquisa em Educação (ANPEd) working groups, from 2003 to 2013: GT03 - Social Movements, Subjects and Educational Processes; GT04 - Didactics; GT06 - Popular Education; GT08 - Teacher Development; WG12 - Curriculum; and WG21 - Education and Ethnic-Racial Relations.

organizational practices, discursive practices, teaching practices, learning practices, evaluative practices, relational practices etc.

It is revealed through the various rituals, built from a conception of society, education, knowledge, teaching and learning to experience the various practices that institute it. Its predominant elements are: intentionality, institutionally; structuring from a conception of education and knowledge; articulation and cooperation among the subjects who experience it; plans of collective organization designed by the various subjects that compose the educational institution.

Thus, academic production preserves the understanding of pedagogical practice as a *network of relationships* — between people and institutions, discourse and acting, body and mind. Relationships can be characterized by the set of attitudes, behaviours and procedures of a person or institution in the initiation of a formative action. They are built socially, although in the “own and unique rhythms” of each person or institution. They require theoretical contributions (historical, social, cultural etc.) that underpin and contextualize them. They are concretized by means of daily, continuous and intentional actions (large or micro actions) that conform to rituals and communicate a discourse, sometimes silent: the curricular content of the formative action.

When we look at the pedagogical practices that value black identity, memory and culture, we assume that the rituals that *predominate* in the school are still rooted in racism and work towards the maintenance of ethnic-racial discrimination and prejudice: the curricula are structured in such a way as to ignore the existence of people who escape the standard of the universal human being: male, white, rich and heterosexual; children’s books, through their fairy tales, ignore the existence of black people or present them in a depreciatory way; the toys available, especially the dolls, offer only the representation of the population that has white characteristics; in school posters the non-white population, when not excluded, is represented stereotypically; and the history of the black population is still approached from the perspective of slavery suffered and not from the resistance to slavery undertaken by the descendants of Africans in Brazil. In the words of Gonçalves (1985), they are pedagogical rituals in favour of racial discrimination.

In summary, there is a set of words, management and procedures that were disseminated in the Brazilian school and that still work for the maintenance of the invention and inculcation of the non existence of the black population in Brazil. Although, they predominate in the school space, they are not the only practices existing in this space. At school, an environment of dispute and contradictions, there are also other ongoing practices. Constructing the repertoires of school practices that affect the structure of the established order is, therefore, the possibility of transforming these practices into new pedagogical rituals in favour of the coexistence and respect for the difference, as well as giving visibility and audibility to existing rituals.

In this sense, we focus on the pedagogical practices that based on the current legislation aim at the fight against racism and discrimination and, once institutionally experienced, have an intense rooting. According to Gomes (2012), rooting refers to the *capacity* (emphasis added) of the work developed in the school to become part of the daily school life: organization, structure, pedagogical political

project, interdisciplinary projects, professionals — teachers, managers and pedagogical coordinators.

Thus, another understanding regarding the notion of rooted pedagogical practices throughout the study is noticed. Those are practices that, not being mechanically repeated, result from a reflection of the group; they have a foundation, a purpose explained and argued by the people who carry out the pedagogical work in the school. Their characteristics are critical repetition, continuity and consistency.

Among the many rooted practices existing in the school space, we analyze the pedagogical practices of the school that value black identity, memory and culture, considering the content of the practices lived in the school space: that is, the rooted pedagogical practices that had as pedagogical content “History of Africa and Africans, the struggle of blacks in Brazil, Brazilian black culture and black in the formation of national society” (law n. 10.639/2003), as explicit in the text that amended law n. 9.394/1996 of the Guidelines and Bases of National Education.

It should be noted that, in Brazilian reality, the concepts of black memory, culture and identity cannot be taken in disarray. In this sense, black identity presents itself as the articulating pole of other concepts, since it functions as the mobilizing impulse of the black population as a collective political subject.

For Gomes (1995, p. 44).

In discussing Brazilian black people’s identity we cannot dissociate it from its historical process. The rescue of the culture, the defence of social, economic and educational equality, with respect to the differences, can only be done if accompanied by a proper historical contextualization of this ethnic/racial group and the construction of memory.

Memory is the human capacity to keep facts and experiences of the past and transmit them to the new generations. Lucilia Neves (2000) affirms that history and memory are the core of individual and collective identities, since they have a dynamic interrelationship. As the author states, memory evokes the past, to constitute a form of preservation and retention of time, saving it from forgetfulness and loss. And, in this way, both become the basis of identities through a process that has the marks of the past, but is seen and understood with the lenses of the present time.

In a word, black memory is the legacy of the permanent struggle of enslaved Africans and their descendants in Brazil to ensure the physical and symbolic survival of this population. In this perspective, when we talk about black culture we are talking about the political and ideological action of a group to build a single mobilizing identity (Munanga, 2000), capable of opposing the idea of black inferiority built by the white group, raising self-esteem and promoting dignity of the black people. Black culture is the life force that gives meaning to the existence of the black population, makes them people, human beings and, for this reason, affirms their identity. Thus, black identity is a reference through which, from their relations with one another, the individual self-recognizes and constitutes, in a dynamic, personal and socio-cultural process of building a political stance (Silva, 2013).

In this process of identity construction/reconstruction, African ancestry acts as the driving force, the organizing principle of community life of the black people: ancestry is a territory of connection, relationship and exchange. On Brazilian soil, it was especially through African-born religions that African peoples maintained their relationship with the world of origin re-created in Brazil. However, although it is related to the sacred, ancestry is thought within a worldview and not a religion. Thus, ancestry is not essential, precisely because it is the connection with a rereading of the African world in the construction of new realities by the intervention of the generations of human beings. It is a sense of belonging, of acceptance and of reference that drives life through the construction and reconstruction of identities. However, how are concepts transformed into a pedagogical school practice?

In the set of documents we work with, we identify the existence of a cycle of construction and experience of pedagogical practice, in which three categories have gained relevance: the pedagogical ritual, the curricular time and the pedagogical itinerary.

The pedagogical ritual is understood as the situations, the contents and the relationships that are lived, throughout the construction of the set of pedagogical practices of an institution. Socorro Silva (2009) called the projection of this route of construction a pedagogical itinerary. In other words, pedagogical itinerary is the choice of the route to be taken by each institution in the construction of knowledge. According to the author, it is this itinerary that characterizes the pedagogical practice of each institution and confers it specificity, because it acts as a guiding instrument of the dynamics and organization of pedagogical work.

Although, it is in and with the curricular time that the institution organizes the pedagogical work. Santiago (1990) identified curricular time as the basic instrument of school organization and functioning, through which the cycle of school knowledge construction and the production process and experience of the school's political pedagogical project take place. The "real situation, where and when the pedagogical relations are realized" (Santiago, 1990, p. 50). The curricular time is the context and the relationships, the form of organising the pedagogical ritual that is projected in the pedagogical itinerary that each institution constructs and experiences grounded on their conception of education. Together these elements make up what we can call the construction cycle and experience of pedagogical practices, which can be illustrated by the following Figure 2.

The cycle of construction and experience of pedagogical practices of valorization of black identity, memory and culture is guided by normative and political-social context and based on the conception of education that the school assumes, which is expressed in the pedagogical political project of the school institution.

The different activities and experiences of the schools that composed the empirical field of research present approximations regarding the ways of experiencing the interconnected relationships that constitute the whole of the pedagogical practice of the school, and some distances in the ways of organizing and experiencing the pedagogic practices of valorization of the identity, memory and culture, which can be perceived through the pedagogical route built.

PEDAGOGICAL ITINERARY: PROJECTION AND EXPERIENCE OF THE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES OF VALORIZATION OF THE BLACK IDENTITY, MEMORY AND CULTURE IN THE SCHOOL SPACE

The pedagogical itinerary of an educational institution is projection and experience, it indicates the direction that the pedagogical practice will take in the concretization of what was idealized. Therefore, it refers to the political-pedagogical option that the institution makes according to the conception of education that it assumes. The itinerary is an instrument that guides the dynamics and organization of pedagogical work (Silva, 2009). Thus, the pedagogical itinerary is the path, but it is also the direction. It is the destiny, the course that the institution gives to its practice.

Each school unit engenders this itinerary according to its conceptions, realities, contexts and material conditions of work. At the Baobá School, for instance, the pedagogical work with Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture permeates the whole school dynamic. It is at the heart of the thematic organization of the school throughout the year. However, in the Africanidades School the project “Africanities

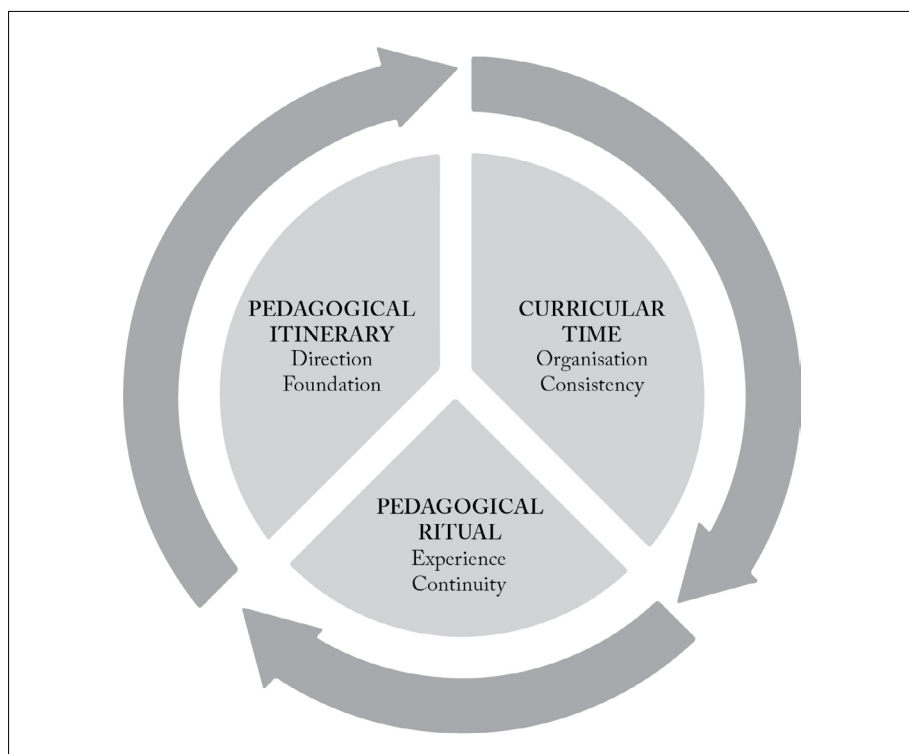


Figure 2 - Cycle of construction and experience of pedagogical practices.

Source: Elaboration of the authors.

and Diversities” is the main action of the pedagogical practice developed there. The project offers thematic workshops and culminates in a demonstration of the works produced in the workshops during the month of November.

We approach the itinerary of pedagogical practices for valuing black identity, memory and culture based on three themes:

1. the emergence and foundation of practices;
2. the importance of thematic formation in Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture; and
3. the role of collective planning in the organization of pedagogical practices.

The pedagogical practices developed in the schools field of research *originate from formative processes, inspired by the formative experiences of the Black Movement and are based on the black thinking in education*. In Campinas and Salvador, the practices precede federal legislation that institutionalizes the obligation to teach Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture in school curricula. In the context of the Africanidades School, the former director tells us how the process began:

In that period of 2002, the municipal network began this movement for racial issues, which was a government program at that time, it was the PT government — Partido dos Trabalhadores — and they proposed to work the racial issue as a government proposal. With this in mind, there was a person in charge of racial issues in the Department of Education. [...] The person was a militant of the Black Movement, she was an advisor to a councillor, who is also a militant, and she went to the city hall with this role. She started taking formation courses and I started to participate on them before law 10.639/03. (Former director of the Africanidades School, in an interview carried out on Nov. 26, 2014)

Until very recently, the Brazilian society was immersed in silencing ethnic-racial relations, and the debate on this question was almost exclusively made by Black Movements. With the rise of popular governments, international pressure for the adoption of affirmative policies and the presence of militants of social movements in these governments, besides the great number of discussions of the movements, in turn, made their claims become public policies, which were implemented in some municipal and state governments, as well as in the federal government, from 2003 on. In the sphere of education, the actions taken by the Black Movement throughout the twentieth century and their articulations with politicians allied with the anti-racist struggle gave rise to local legislation, which eventually reverberated into national elections legislation.

In the case of the Baobá school, the director of the institution states:

I was a graduate from CEAFFRO, which was called Agir. This project was a teacher development program to assure they could act in their schools.

And due to the Black Movement, Ana Célia and I had a great friendship relation. She was my literature teacher and I decided to try out at school what Ana Célia was doing with me there in Projeto Agir. And then I started to put into practice in school what I had learned there with Ana Célia, Narcimária, and Delcele... the teachers engaged on this project. When Vanda Machado presented the work of the myths I said: "I found a way". [...] [The work with the myths] worked out and became a proposal. We sat down during the teacher development meeting and wrote the proposal. [...] My group of friends of the Black Movement came several times to take part in these teacher development meetings. Therefore, this proposal born of the Black Movement, was a result of militancy. And when Lula's government implanted the law in 2003, we had already been putting it in practice since 2000. (Director of Baobá School in an interview granted on June 26, 2015)

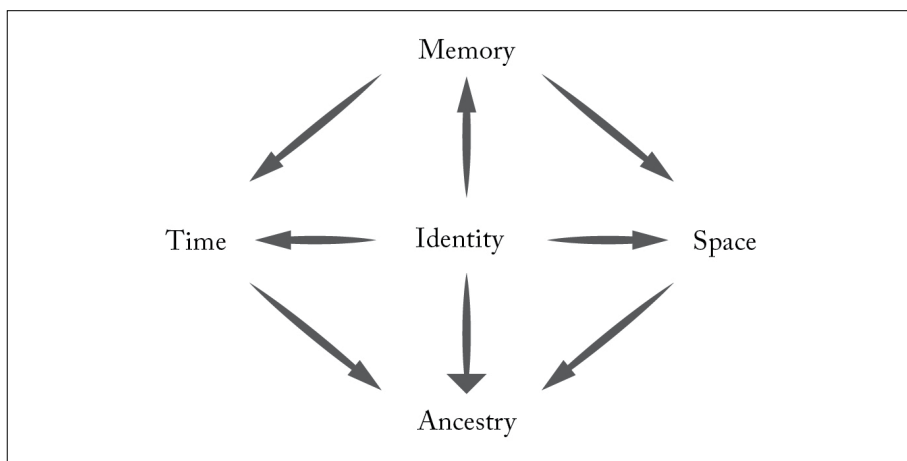
The statement articulates the influence of the Black Movement and the importance of the formative processes, which became an investment of this movement in the field of education. The teachers previously mentioned have a good reputation as researchers and activists in the field of education for ethnic-racial relations. According to Maria Nazaré Lima (2005), CEA-FRO is a program created and structured based on the agenda built by Black Movements throughout the 1980s and 1990s, which points out the need to deconstruct the Eurocentric vision of Brazilian educational culture. Thus, racial issues are considered relevant, constitutive and crucial in the formation and professionalization proposal developed and executed by the program, which focuses on racial identity and self-esteem as structuring elements of black citizenship (Lima, 2005).

The work with the myths, which was raised in the statement of the manager reported above, is named Irê Ayó Political-Pedagogical Project and was created by Professor Vanda Machado, at the Eugênia Anna dos Santos School, located in the community of Ilê Axé Opo Afonjá. Inspired by the Yoruba thoughts, the curricular intervention assumes the systematic use of myths of the Afro-Brazilian tradition as the central pedagogical strategy of educational work (Machado, 2002; Molina, 2011).

The applicability of black thought in education as a theoretical and practical support for the development of the formative work goes beyond the origins of the pedagogical experiences and can be identified in the practices developed and in the current formative processes, as observed in one of the moments of continuous formation.

The teacher developer contextualizes laws 10.639/03 and 11645/08, their importance and the resistance to their implementation; [...] It addresses the presence of the black population in the region where the school is located and talks about about the survival strategies that were necessary for the Oxossi, "Iansã is not Santa Barbara!", in order to affirm that amalgams is not syncretism. It can

be concluded by indicating that a school that wishes to work on this issue cannot fail to include it in its Political Pedagogical Project PPP), suggesting a possibility of pedagogical orientation, as follows:



Source: Baobá School continued education. Field Diary, Mar. 6, 2015.

The teacher developer not only offers a possibility of pedagogical guidance, but also uses it in the discursive itinerary developed in the formation: they start from the memory of the ancestral peoples (black and indigenous), goes through the struggles fought by these populations in order to survive physically and symbolically and points out that, at present, the black and indigenous populations live a moment of affirmation of their identities and ends up affirming that the school needs to assume this discussion as content and as institutional project.

When we turn our attention to the understanding of black thinking in education in Brazil — a set of educational ideas and practices that were constructed from the actions experienced by activists and/or organizations of the Brazilian Black Movement, with the intention of providing education for the black population — we realize that memory, identity and ancestry contextualized in time and space are main guiding principles; they are explicitly present or permeate the pedagogical proposals of the Black Movement or formative processes inspired by its trajectory, in several states of Brazil.

In Salvador, Bahia, the proposal for teacher development actions for teachers in Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture, designed by CEA-FRO in 2000 in the Municipal Education Network, adopted ancestry, identity and organization of the black population as the guiding principles for the formative work. According to Valdeci Nascimento (2005), the concepts are based on the perspective of the contemporary Black Movement and articulated

among themselves; such principles correspond to the world perspective of the descendants of Africans in Brazil.

In Recife, Pernambuco, the cultural formation experiences developed in the Núcleo da Cultura Afro-Brasileira (NCAB)³ and aimed at cultural groups, with the objective of enhancing and strengthening black culture in the city, were guided by the same principles, as indicated in *Recife nação africana: catálogo da cultura afro-brasileira*:

Conceiving cultural manifestation as an expression of the history of struggle and resistance of the black people, we identify as political-philosophical principles of the work that we are developing, the valorization of African ancestry, the affirmation of racial identity and the strengthening of the organization and resistance of the black population. (Silva, 2008, p. 9)

It is worth remembering that we do not understand ancestry, identity and resistance as static or essentialist concepts. In the Afro-Brazilian experience, such concepts result from a diasporic re-elaboration. And “diaspora is a sign of complex movements, of setbacks and advances, of affirmation and denial, of creation and mimesis, of local and global culture, of structures and singularities, of rupture and reparation” (Oliveira, 2012, p. 29).

This is an important characteristic of the pedagogical practices of valorization of black identity, memory and culture, once it reveals some paths built by the descendants of Africans in Brazil in the effort to reconstruct the references, in order to think and understand the history of the black population in the country, as well as notice and deconstruct the Eurocentrism used in educational policy and practices. It shows, therefore, the elaboration in process of *another* thought, as proposed by the Postcolonial Studies, as it is constructed from the political place of enunciation of the black people, it questions the hegemonic interests. It also appears as a border thinking, since it is built in a critical dialogue with the Western forms of knowledge.

The formation in Afro-Brazilian History and Culture as a founding element of the practice is a second characteristic of the pedagogical itinerary. The construction of pedagogical practices for the valorization of black identity, memory and culture depends on formative processes that are capable to access the knowledge denied and treated as invisible throughout history, and the identification with the theme. However, it is essential that the formation be critical, solid and convincing to educational professionals about the implications of racism and the negation of the black population regarding the failure or success of the teaching and learning processes experienced by black students. As Freire and Shor (2008, p. 46) state, “if I am not convinced of the need to change racism, I will not be an educator to convince anyone”.

3 Sector linked to the Secretaria de Cultura do Recife, created in 2001, in the first government of the PT, to meet a demand of the Black Movement of the city.

In the Figure 3 that follows, we try to understand the relational movement between the experience of the specific formation and the construction of the pedagogical practice:

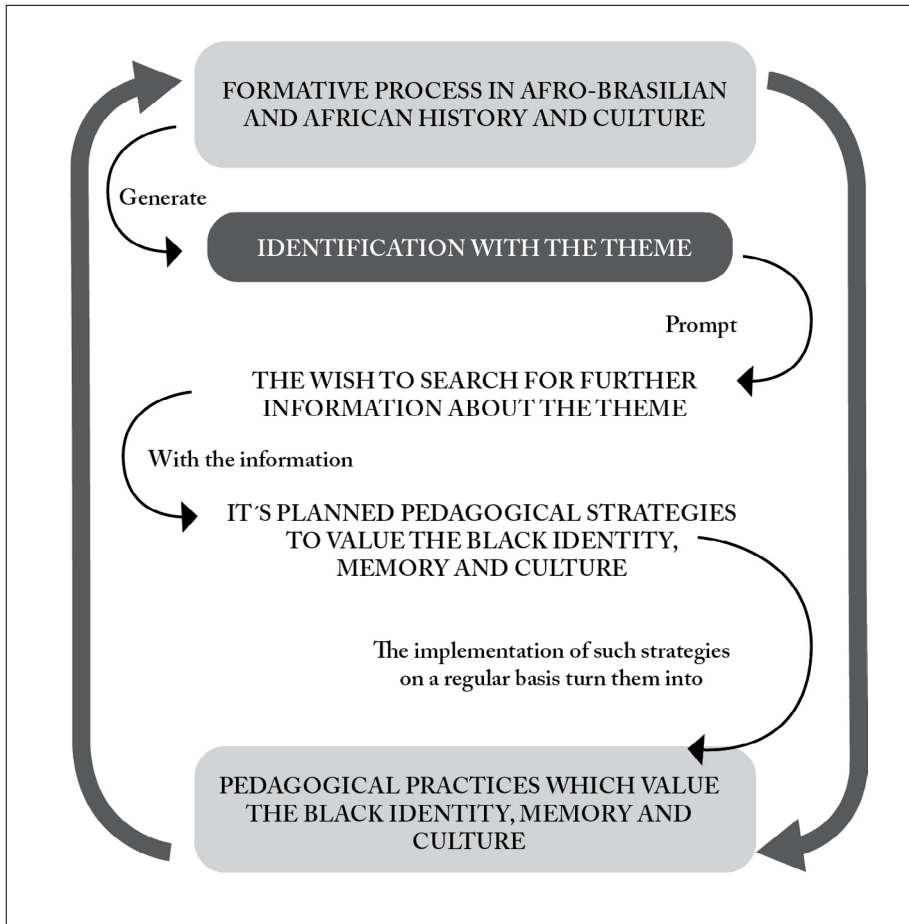


Figure 3 - Teacher development and pedagogical practice.
Source: Elaboration of the authors.

The Figure 3 shows that the dynamics of the formative processes on the theme, constitute spaces to offer positive references on the history of the black population, since those are the references that generate or make possible the identification with the ethnic-racial affiliation and/or theme, responsible for awakening or sharpening the desire of education professionals to seek more information on the subject (Silva, 2013). However, Molina (2011) warns that teacher development focused on working with the subject matter cannot be restricted to readings and debates, even though this is an important dimension. The formative processes can be constituted beyond the written theoretical dimension, because “the corporal ‘debate’

is essential” so that the subjects are not understood as an additional content in the school curriculum. The author suggests that learning and teaching Afro-Brazilian and African culture requires the knowledge of other forms of learning and teaching. With this in mind, the planning of the pedagogical action is crucial.

The *collective planning* of activities is an essential characteristic of the pedagogical itinerary of the practices of valorization of the black identity, memory and culture experienced in both schools. We identified four ways to put this planning into practice:

1. planning as a collective work of the school community;
2. planning as an organized outline of the teachers’ work;
3. planning as a teacher development tool; and
4. as a document of intent.

Planning as a collective work of the school community can be identified as a mark of the work with the theme of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture. Whether it is a demand from school management or the initiative of small groups of teachers, the fact is that planning is always collaborative and this is what makes it different.

The collective work guides the organization of the pedagogical practice of the school as a whole, not only regarding the practices related to the subject. However, we infer the fact that educational professionals did not have a specific formation on the subject during their initial formation can be understood as one of the factors that effect in this process of collaborative construction, especially with regard to teaching practice.

The collective planning as an organized outline of teachers’ work appears in the various moments of the itinerary of the construction of pedagogical practices: the decision of the activities that will be carried out, in the choice and discussion of the contents that will constitute the practices, in the appreciation and discussion of the proposed didactic situations and in the agreements necessary for the collective preparation for the practice. Therefore, the school’s planning considers the working time and the time of systematization and/or reflection on the proposed activities, according to the school community.

At the Africanidades school, this collaboration is expressed most strongly during the preparation of the thematic workshops, when professionals present their proposals in order to be appreciated by their colleagues, aiming at the success of the activity.

At Baobá School, teaching planning also results from the collaborative work among the teachers, with the support and monitoring of the management team. The organizational process of the work team can be summarized as follows: teachers meet in small groups (according to the year or teaching segment) to prepare their activities; the material produced needs to be evaluated by the pedagogical coordination and the school management staff, who in a third collective moment present and discuss their impressions on each collective planning.

In both institutions, the importance that the group attributes to planning and the way of planning allows the pedagogical practice of the institution to gain solidity and density, assuming the form of rooted practices.

The collective planning meetings that we accompanied at Baobá School also indicated the experience of planning as an instrument of formation and as a document of intent. The fact that the faculty has many newcomers to the school was the impetus for the meetings to become also moments of formation and information about the work performed in the institution. The planning was constituted as a space to explore the discussion, proposition and decision of the differentiated proposal of the school, to explain the intentions of the institution with this differentiated proposal, as well as to validate the work accomplished and to convince new professionals through the results achieved in the national assessments.

The reflection of the teachers in these meetings runs through strictly pedagogical elements, such as the function of planning in educational work, but also elements that constitute the African worldview, such as the reflection on the word *sankofa*, which refers to the relation between past and present for African societies. In the African worldview, as Oliveira (2006) recalls, it is in the past, with the wisdom of the ancestors, that guidance can be found to organize the present. Baobá School, assuming a practice based on this worldview, refers to the need to explain the intentionality of pedagogical action as a document for posterity.

As it is possible to notice, the pedagogical itinerary of an educational institution is the projection and experience, it indicates the direction that the pedagogical practice will take in the construction of the what was idealized. Therefore, it refers to the political-pedagogical position that the institution has according to the conception of education that it assumes.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The pedagogical itinerary of schools takes place in a context of political and social curricular dispute, which explains why the epistemic perspective of the work does not always show significant distances from the Eurocentric practices that produced the subalternization of the black population in Brazil.

However, the research pointed out that there are mechanisms of rooting that can be used in the construction of pedagogical practices with density, strength and epistemological consistency. In the itinerary, collective work and continuing formation on Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture are highlighted.

Then again, the articulated analysis of the construction cycle and experience of the practices (itinerary, curricular time and pedagogical ritual) shows that the basic relation that constitutes the didactic situations is the dialogic reflection. It is through dialogue and critical reflection of the reality, as Paulo Freire proposes, that knowledge is constructed individually and collectively, giving shape to rooted practices and transforming them into pedagogical rituals.

The results reveal that the rooted pedagogical practices of valorization of black identity, memory and culture take as reference the principles of the African worldview recreated in Brazil in dialogue with the thought of Paulo Freire, and generate *another* way of thinking and doing education, which can be understood as a pedagogy to combat racism.

A pedagogical thinking and acting of permanent combat against racism, which invests on processes that generate self-esteem and pride of ethnic-racial belonging. It is a pedagogy of frontier, since it is grounded on the particular knowledge of the descendants of Africans from Brazil, Africa and the black diaspora, in articulation with Western knowledge. It is a pedagogy that adds efforts to the construction of critical interculturalism, considering it exposes and questions the processes of production of the colonial difference.

It is a decolonial pedagogy because it destabilizes the hegemony of coloniality in its various dimensions: it invests on the knowledge and interests of the black population as the center of its pedagogical activity; reconstructs and visualizes the historical processes experienced by this population in Brazil, Africa and the black diaspora, focusing on the perspective of different populations; is inspired by the African worldview to build political-philosophical principles (ancestry, identity and resistance) and didactic-pedagogical principles (collectivity, orality and interdisciplinarity).

Elaborated in the middle of the curriculum dispute, it is also a pedagogy affected by the colonial difference that implements repeated processes and questions the validity of their experiences. Constructed in insurgency processes against Eurocentric hegemonic thinking, it is therefore a pedagogy of resistance, born from a culture and an identity of resistance, which has undertaken multiple efforts in the reconstitution of identities, in the reconstruction of memories, in the re-elaboration of culture and in the re-existence of the black population in Brazil.

The findings show the impossibility of building up pedagogical practices, which possess epistemological solidity and consistency for the valorization of the black population, without discussing racism as the epistemology of practices that deny this population, their knowledge and their ways of thinking and being in the world. In this context, understanding and collectively getting prepared to face the dispute seems to us an important strategy for the effective implementation of educational policy at the school environment.

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