

DOSSIER

Childhood(s), social movements and the city: curriculum(s) and teacher training

Colombian intercultural thought houses: pedagogical practices, indigenous cultures, and transnational reflections***As casas de pensamentos interculturais colombianas: práticas pedagógicas, culturas indígenas e reflexões transnacionais*****Flávio Santiago^a**

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ABSTRACT

Intercultural Thought Houses are institutions that seek to value the indigenous cultures of Colombia by providing an education that strengthens intercultural relations. This article reflects on the pedagogical proposals developed in these spaces for children from zero to five years old, which highlight the struggles of Colombian indigenous peoples in urban contexts to keep their ancestors' worldview alive. Moreover, this proposal can dialogue with and inspire the Brazilian scenery, especially regarding Early childhood education. Analysis highlight that this Colombian experience encourages creative and transgressive actions, questioning a single vision perspective about relations, physical spaces, shared knowledges, and educational practices experienced.

Keywords: Interculturality. Early Childhood Education. Indigenous Education. Peoples.

RESUMO

As Casas de Pensamentos Interculturais são instituições que visam valorizar as culturas dos diferentes povos indígenas da Colômbia, proporcionando uma educação que mire o fortalecimento das relações interculturais. O objetivo deste artigo é trazer reflexões a respeito das propostas pedagógicas voltadas à crianças de zero a cinco anos, realizadas nesses espaços que ressaltam as lutas dos povos indígenas colombianos em contextos urbanos, mantendo viva a cosmovisão de seus ancestrais. Além disso, ressalta-se que essa proposta pode dialogar e inspirar o cenário brasileiro, especificamente ao que se refere à primeira etapa da educação básica: a educação infantil. Com base nas análises, pode-se destacar que essa experiência colombiana fomenta ações criativas e transgressoras, tensionando a perspectiva de uma visão única acerca das relações, dos espaços físicos, dos conhecimentos partilhados e das práticas educativas vivenciadas.

Palavras-chave: Interculturalidade. Educação Infantil. Educação Indígena. Povos Indígenas.

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Introduction

This paper derived from concerns and conversations about the Colombian indigenous resistance experience of constructing the pedagogical proposal known as Intercultural Thought Houses. We reflect here on the pedagogical proposals developed in these spaces aimed at children from zero to five years old, which highlight the struggles of Colombian indigenous peoples in urban contexts to keep their ancestors' worldview alive. We also emphasize how this proposal can dialogue with and inspire the Brazilian scenario, specifically regarding Early childhood education. In this perspective, following a brief history of the Brazilian context, we reflect on how the Colombian experience can inspire us in the process of building a pedagogy of interculturality founded on intercultural education.

The intercultural perspective requires a “[...] dialogical intellectual praxis so one does not think or talk about differences, but speaks with them and from them” (Markus, 2017, p. 324). Colombia, as a social state governed by the rule of law, enshrined ethnic and cultural diversity in its 1991 Magna Carta as one of the nation's greatest assets. Such recognition highlighted the right of peoples to receive an education according to their ancestral worldviews, principles and epistemologies. Education as a fundamental right thus became a bulwark for valuing peoples' ancestry, orality and memory. The 1991 Constitution introduced important elements to strengthen the identity, socialization and affirmation processes of ethnic groups in a country with approximately 1,905,617 people self-recognized as indigenous, distributed among 115 ethnicities, according to the 2018 National Population and Housing Census conducted by the National Administrative Department of Statistics (Dane). According to Dane (2019), the Wayuu, Zenú, Nasa, Pastos, Katío, Emberásikuani, Pijaoemberá, and Emberá Chamí peoples stand out among these groups. They are located in departments such as La Guajira, Cauca, Nariño, Córdoba, Sucre, Chocó, among others.

The Intercultural Thought Houses, as Ramírez (2018) points out, make up the comprehensive early childhood care strategy designed by the Colombian State in response to the specific demands and needs of the first years of life of indigenous children. Wawitakunapawasi, the first thought house, was created in 2008. Intercultural Thought Houses offer a learning space for indigenous children in vulnerable situations or victims of conflict without disconnecting from their territory or their language, thus maintaining the relations, perceptions and meanings that inform their worldviews until they can return to their communities (Maguared, 2017).

The Intercultural Thought House projects, our spaces, began 12 years ago... when the first house was created in the city of Bogotá. It was born from an unfortunate event: an indigenous girl, in a state of malnutrition, died because her rights were denied. We started our project due to the need to keep our indigenous children alive, but also to strengthen the culture of our community, especially among the boys and girls. Why? Because while we are separated from the ancestral geographical territory by living in the city, here is our chosen territory built from having contact with the urban community. The Houses have become a place to demand adequate food, preserve customs and the mother tongue, knowledge is transmitted by having contact with the elders. So despite living in the city, the children can maintain their indigenous cultural tradition. (Coordinator of one of the Intercultural Thought Houses. Report collected in 2020).

Before the Thought Houses, 52 indigenous boys and girls already attended an indigenous kindergarten, Ingá Wawita Kunapa Wasi, which began pedagogical activities in 2007, in Bogotá. This first experience arose by initiative of the Inga peoples of Bogotá and the District Office for Social Integration (SDIS) to, among other objectives, ensure language continuity (Ramírez, 2018).

A series of proposals with ethical, political and aesthetic fundamentals for recognizing indigenous children as subjects of memory and cultural agents were elaborated based on this project. The above is based on national and international regulations, including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Political Constitution of Colombia, Law 115 of 1994 (Colômbia, 1994), the General Education Law and Law 1,098 of 2006 (Colômbia, 2006), to name but a few.

In relation to the latter, Law 1,098 of 2006, known as the *Código de la Infancia y la Adolescencia* [Childhood and Adolescence Code], in its article 13, recognizes for indigenous children and those of other ethnic groups the full enjoyment of the rights enshrined in the 1991 Political Constitution, without prejudice to the principles that rule their culture. Hence, the Intercultural Thought Houses proposal was born to make visible the plurality of childhoods, their public character and the institutional interest in integrating different (social, economic, spiritual, creative) perspectives that would promote the harmonious development of girls and boys, indigenous peoples, their role as cultural agents, the links with the elements of their multidimensional environment endowed with contexts with symbolic meanings, discourses, practices, experiences, worldviews, memories and pedagogical processes focused on addressing diversity, not just difference.

In this regard, the Intercultural Thought Houses rethink the concept of education as a subject that allows indigenous children from early childhood to develop feelings of identity, to recognize their roots, promotes self-esteem based on pedagogical mediations that break down prejudices and stereotypes through environments in which girls and boys can explore the world.

They also foster critical thinking, stimulating possibilities for participatory and interactive learning involving diverse cultural horizons that enrich the individual and collective experiences of peoples.

Addressing the intercultural debate regarding the indigenous population living in urban contexts is fundamental given the struggle to determine what is and what is not indigenous and, from there, put issues such as access to rights into individual and collective play. "Interculturality, when thought of in the everyday life of an indigenous school, is intrinsically linked to the issue of knowledge" (Paula, 1999, p. 78).

The Intercultural Thought Houses tension modern Western logic with that of indigenous peoples. As a result, small battles are won and lost, creating the permanent sprouting of different scenarios for the care of indigenous children, but above all scenarios that question both the city and public policies in their conceptions of childhood¹ and in their educational and care practices (Ramírez, 2018). These ethnic groups have full autonomy to promote educational processes according to their worldviews. The Intercultural Thought Houses seek to provide care, comprehensive and

¹ For more on the perception of childhood and its consequences in Western society, see: Santiago and Faria (2015).

differentiated education for boys and girls from 3 months to 11 years of age belonging to various ethnic communities living in an urban context.

Intercultural Thought Houses have been implemented as positive actions aimed at promoting equality for the effective enjoyment of rights, in this case for indigenous children. They are also an offshoot of public policies aimed at building spaces for the education and protection of indigenous early childhood (children between three months and five years old) and their work is enhanced and strengthened by the appropriation and redefinition movements and experiences carried out by the indigenous communities in their territory (Ramírez, 2018).

To answer our research question, we started from conversations with two coordinators and an indigenous expert² working in Intercultural Thought Houses in Bogotá. We consider the contributions of heteroscience, which takes place in dialogue, in listening, recognizing individuals as expressive and eloquent beings, thus seeing them as active participants in the investigative process (Barboza, 2022). From this perspective, conversations emerge as our primary focus, since they reveal themselves as the ideal setting for the materialization of enunciation. Participants are thus not limited to the roles of speakers or listeners, but are understood through a lens of active comprehension, each with a responsive position. This methodological choice allow us to perceive the voices of the research subjects in a plural and equitable manner.

Intercultural Thought Houses

Intercultural Thought Houses seek to value the culture of the Colombian different indigenous peoples by providing an education aimed at strengthening intracultural and intercultural relations. They put

Children at the center of attention as historical subjects capable of reading reality and participating in the presentation of possible paths for their care. As a result, educational and cultural agents maintain in their actions the awareness and intentionality to recognize children, families and communities as diverse beings and are willing to transform the traditional role of hierarchical power-based relations into equitable ones. (Colômbia, 2015, p. 4).

Bogotá currently has 11 operating Intercultural Thought Houses, which open from Monday to Friday, from seven in the morning until five in the afternoon. Some of these spaces employ professionals who are part of the children's ethnic groups.

These spaces offer comprehensive and differentiated childcare and promote dialog between ancestral knowledge and education, proposing ways to build knowledge. The habits, customs, and thoughts of indigenous peoples are taught using an approach that includes agriculture, weaving, ceramics, goldsmithing, music, dance, traditional medicine, and language, among other knowledge and arts (Maguard, 2017).

Most Intercultural Thought Houses have a pedagogical staff composed of experts, coordinators, teachers, and other professionals from the indigenous community to share other worldviews with the children and counterbalance their contact with white culture. Importantly,

² *Los sabedores* in Spanish.

[...] the “experts” are chosen by the community, because it recognizes them; the “expert’s” family is knowledgeable about medicine, spirituality, others know weaving, or are midwives—they have a comprehensive knowledge of something, because in life everything is learned, but we have something we identify with. The “expert” receives this title not because I say so, but because he is considered so by the community; they have traditional knowledge passed down from family. (Coordinator of one of the Intercultural Thought Houses. Report collected in 2020).

But to incorporate these experts into the Intercultural Thought Houses staff, they had to make recruitment profiles and bureaucratic forms of hiring more flexible (Ramírez, 2018). As an example, one of the coordinators stated that

at the beginning of the project, none of them included an indigenous “expert,” but we realized that for indigenous peoples they are the pillars, those who guide, who strengthen the community and the pedagogical team; they transmit knowledge and we know the pedagogy. Combining these two elements allows children to get to know our culture. (Coordinator of one of the Intercultural Thought Houses. Report collected in 2020).

Colombia, like Brazil, is a country with a great ethnic plurality, which is often devalued and disrespected, so building a space aimed at legitimizing a critical intercultural pedagogy is a positive step. The Intercultural Thought Houses can be understood as spaces that change as questions and tensions arise from indigenous life in Colombia’s big cities. Additionally, they offer fertile ground for understanding the urban experiences of indigenous children as residents, as well as getting a little closer to the means, strategies and dynamics from which it is possible to live, re-exist and build oneself as indigenous person in the city (Ramírez, 2018).

This mode of structuring is a pedagogical proposal developed based on the cultures of the targeted groups, designing and implementing educational programs that prioritize strengthening the identities and cultures of the subjects involved. The people who demand this form of education seek to make their culture visible (Rojas, 2011)³.

In the case of the Colombian Intercultural Thought Houses, we see a policy of strengthening children’s ancestral origins by providing toys, objects and images that refer to aspects of their grandparents or legal guardians’ cultures:

These spaces offer a comprehensive and differentiated childcare service and promote dialogue between ancestral knowledge and education, proposing ways of constructing knowledge. As such, the habits, customs, and thoughts of indigenous peoples are taught using an approach that includes agriculture, weaving, ceramics, goldsmithing, music, dance, traditional medicine, and language, among other knowledge and arts [...]. Each thought house is founded on the autonomous construction of its pedagogical project based on cosmogony, life stories and participation setting. All the houses, in their specific ways, include two pillars: the customs of sowing and spirituality. Children who grow up in these environments see diversity and difference naturally, are drawn to music, learn about their past and ancestors, and cultivate

³ We would like to take this opportunity to problematize attaching adjectives to cultures, education and subjects. When referring to the hegemonic group, no adjective is necessary; thus, we wonder if this language is also reinforcing our construction of the Other, the different, the groups, education and cultures that inhabit the margins, for there is culture, education, subjects in opposition to ethnic groups, ethnomathematics, ethnic subjects, etc.

a love for the land, plants and each other. [...] The houses have been transformed to open up to the community and to give them the opportunity to know other practices, experiences, another language and thus become another setting for integration and meeting between families. (Las Casas..., 2017).

Another characteristic of the Intercultural Thought Houses is the presence of at least one indigenous teacher, who develops pedagogical work with the children, including telling stories about their people and teaching them traditional songs. Another content worked on with indigenous children is commemorative dates, as one of the coordinators recounts:

On holidays and commemorative dates we try to work on sharing by sharing food with the children and families. We are doing more than celebrating, we are reframing our identity, thinking about how we indigenous communities have resisted what has happened throughout history. That is why we avoid terms like celebrating; no, we are resisting on that date. Like on October 12, when we hold the week of resistance and interculturality through which we give new meaning to our culture and problematize the genocide of indigenous peoples in Colombia. (Coordinator of one of the Intercultural Thought Houses. Report collected in 2016).

Some institutions also grow small herbs and food that is consumed by the residents themselves. Through the food grown and shared respect for one's own life, for the lives of others and, in general, for all living beings, represents a vision of dignity, well-being and values shared within institutions. Food is symbolic and representative of these cultures, since whether at festivals or in the everyday life of educational units, one of the priorities is promoting this action characterized by cooperation and collective well-being.

As the Public Policy for Children and Adolescents of Medellín (Colômbia, 2019) also states, the good living approach creates conditions for the collective well-being of children and their families, promoting actions for the exercise of their capacities and freedoms, enabling sustainable and inclusive living environments, harmonized with an ethics of care.

Children's pedagogical work with the land is not just an attempt to provide leisure time or a pedagogical process that teaches girls and boys to be responsible (if they do not look after the plants, they will die). These moments are linked to a philosophical conception of education that seeks to interweave all elements of nature and shares the idea that we are also beings of nature. We do not live in isolation nor have the sole privilege of exploiting natural resources: we are also the land we cultivate. This relationship with the land gets materialized in the institution's own pedagogical project, symbolizing the materialization of common elements among most indigenous peoples served by the institution. We found things that we all have in common: one, the land. Such connection with the land is very important. Thus, all the children begin to connect with the earth, to thank it through rituals, through payments, through the care they take of it, through dance, through music. (Coordinator of one of the Intercultural Thought Houses. Report collected in 2016).

In an interview conducted in 2016, an Intercultural Thought House coordinator emphasized that the pedagogical proposal including children's contact with the land is linked to a philosophical conception of education that reinforces our connection to nature, reaffirming our condition of living beings, and emphasizes how this thought is common to most of the indigenous peoples served by the Houses.

Another aspect highlighted is the representation of cosmic beings — the sun and the moon —, which govern the dynamics of life (solar and lunar cycles) and organize the activities in these spaces. They are distributed along four axes: territory and worldview, which refers to the origins of each ethnicity and other aspects; fire and life, which encompasses educational guidelines; nourishment of the earth, related to agricultural and cosmic festivities; art and symbolism, including weaving, painting and other crafts with different materials.

Among the principles, the coordinator emphasized what is called *mingana*, an indigenous language related to community work that permeates all peoples, including Afro-Colombians. This work takes place when indigenous people come together to do something for their own community or its members, generating reciprocity ties. On the relations between children and teachers, the coordinator states:

[...] we have indigenous colleagues who speak other languages and often the children do not understand what they say, but they have the chance to sometimes hear other things, other stories.... [...] so, we try to encourage respect for the words spoken by elders because in the communities all the adults are elders, right? We... let's say that since the conception of life we are not the future; children are the future. Those who lead the way—because they came and walked before us—are the grandparents, and we learn by following them, right? Hence, this respect is also generated in older people. (Coordinator of one of the Intercultural Thought Houses. Report collected in 2016).

As can be seen in the account, the developed proposal breaks with the Eurocentric conception of subject, society, educational structures and epistemology. By building a pedagogical project based on growing seasons, correlated to elements of nature, the institution breaks with the capitalist idea of mechanized time dictated by the whistles of industrial machines, as well as with the Eurocentric perspective of standardized child development. The proposal is based on the ancestral experiences of young children and newborns, putting a perception of subject, culture and language rooted in the traditional indigenous knowledge as the center of the educational work.

[...] newborns are called new moon, because they are being born into the world and then they start to get full; then we have the crescent moon children, those around two years of age who should be closely accompanied in their bodily exploration, in their relations with plants, as to exercise the body and gain strength. We then have full moon girls and boys. The full moon represents force, energy; the children are already 3 to 4 years old, they have all that energy that makes you say: Oh, that child drives me crazy! (Coordinator of one of the Intercultural Thought Houses. Report collected in 2016).

These elements are not found just in the philosophical contributions of the pedagogical project — the intercultural approach can be observed in educational practices from nursery school onwards. Such institutions strain the patterns of power relations that operate by naturalizing hierarchies of knowledge, which allows for the (re)production of relations of territorial, cultural, age, racial and class domination. As an example, we can look at the work that one of the indigenous experts did with small children and newborns:

I am an expert of indigenous medicine, and I am here to pass on my knowledge to the newborns and young children who are cared for here at the Intercultural Thought House. We work on

massages, affection, and the little ones record this contact with the indigenous teachers in their minds. We also work on spirituality and ancestral medicine. We talk about medicinal plants and highlight the value and meaning of the spirit animal — which are the condor, the anaconda, the eagle, the hummingbird — for us. (Expert of one of the Intercultural Thought Houses. Report collected in 2020).

The indigenous peoples who organize the Intercultural Thought Houses also contribute to circulating other discourses about childhoods in the city, being proposals that help to rethink and reframe the work done with early childhood, as well as the modern conceptions of childhood and school that delineate actions in the city (Ramírez, 2018). By singing or retelling stories of indigenous peoples, the Intercultural Thought Houses have tensioned the logic imposed by a single-vision perspective based on the hierarchization of knowledge, to democratize knowledge production and recognize the many ways of interpreting the world and philosophical perspectives.

The Colombian Intercultural Thought Houses develop practices based on music, arts and crafts, learning the language of their ethnic group, the relations with the territory of origin and spirituality, which is deeply linked to medicine. As Ramírez (2018) points out, these practices remind us of history, of knowledge. In other words, they weave a fabric between the different indigenous peoples and educate non-indigenous people to the depth of diversity and the importance of a non-white worldview for interpreting the world. These experiences can help us to think about childhood pedagogies based not on Eurocentric ideals, but on the culture and ancestry of our native peoples⁴.

Some milestones in public policies for indigenous peoples in Brazil: concerns about valuing the culture of indigenous peoples

Having come across these educational spaces implemented by an educational policy in Bogotá, we can build a dialog with the Brazilian reality concerning public policies, especially educational ones, for indigenous populations in Brazil, highlighting Law no. 11,645 (Brasil, 2008), which complemented Law no. 10,639 (Brasil, 2003) by including Indigenous History and Culture in article 26 of the National Education Guidelines Law (Brasil, 1996).

To do so, we will present some data that will allow our readers to draw some approximations with the Brazilian context. Firstly, over the centuries, the cultures of our native peoples have been denied, made invisible and, consequently, exterminated due to the violent process of colonization that we have historically been subjected to.

Just like in Colombia, however, many indigenous people still resist in Brazil. According to the Socio-Environmental Institute (ISA)⁵, most Brazilians ignore this enormous diversity even today. It is estimated that two to four million people lived in the territory at the time of the European invasion. Today we count more than 240 peoples who speak more than 150 languages, such as Apuriná, Baniwa, Baré, Guajajara, Guarani, Kulina, Kaingang, Kokama, Kayapó, Macuxi, Munduruku, Mura, Pankararu, Pataxó, Potiguara, Terena, Ticuna, Tupinambá, Wapichana, Xavante and Yanomami.

⁴ To learn more access the video: Maguared (2019).

⁵ To learn more access: Brasil (2023).

According to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) (2010), the indigenous population totals 896,917 people, of which 324,834 live in cities and 572,083 in rural areas, which corresponds to approximately 0.47% of the country's total population. Most of this population is found on indigenous lands, which currently total around 700 in Brazil, each of which is at different demarcation stages.

Anthropologist Azevedo (2011) points out that of Brazil's 5565 municipalities, 1085 have no self-declared indigenous population; 4382 have less than 10%; 86 have between 10 and 50%; whereas 12 municipalities have more than 50% of a self-declared indigenous population, in locations from northern and northeastern Brazil.

According to Terezinha Maher (2005), we have been subjected to an educational system structured around an ideological position aimed at negating indigenous diversity, so that it becomes imperceptible in our society. Due to this misinformation, the place occupied by indigenous people in the Brazilian imagination is filled with misconceptions.

It is therefore necessary to prioritize actions that materialize the inclusion of Indigenous History and Culture in compliance with the cited legislation. Still according to Maher (2005), it was only in the 1980s that indigenous peoples had their existence recognized by Brazilian society.

Importantly, the 1988 Constitution (Brasil, 1988) marks the achievement and guarantee of rights for Brazil's indigenous peoples, tasking the state with the responsibility of respecting and protecting their cultures. In its title VIII – The Social Order, chapter VIII – Indigenous People, article 231, we read:

Indigenous people shall have their social organization, customs, languages, creeds and traditions recognized, as well as their original rights to the lands they traditionally occupy. The Union is responsible for demarcating such lands, protecting and ensuring respect for all of their property (Brasil, 1988, p. 10).

Importantly, Brazil is experiencing a historic moment in which an indigenous woman, Minister Sônia Guajajara, who belongs to the Guajajara people who inhabit the Araribóia Indigenous Lands in Maranhão, is heading up the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples⁶, a cabinet created in January 2023 at the start of Luiz Inácio da Silva's third presidential term, in response to a demand put forward by the Indigenous Peoples Working Group, set up during the federal government's transition period at the end of 2022. With this action, the federal government is showing an initiative that creates expectations of progress regarding public policies aimed at minimizing the immense historical debt that the nation owes to our native peoples.

On the other hand, the previous government, as Rufino (2023) points out in his article *Raiva, medo e o pequeno número: o indigenismo bolsonarista a partir de Arjun Appadurai*, was characterized by conflicts regarding indigenous territorial rights, guaranteed by the 1988 Constitution and by the public policies aimed at this population that had been implemented throughout the last three decades. For example, while campaigning for the presidency, Jair Bolsonaro promised not to demarcate any indigenous land in his administration.

⁶ To learn more access: Brasil (2023).

At the beginning of 2023, the media showed examples of the lack of public policies aimed at the health of native peoples. According to a report in *Carta Capital* magazine (Lucena, 2023), Yanomami deaths from malnutrition increased by 331% under Bolsonaro's administration (2019-2022) compared to the previous four years. It was also found that 55% of the Yanomami children seen by the public health service between 2019-2022 were underweight or very underweight for their age, thus characterizing malnutrition. Another report in the same magazine states that: "the Yanomami tragedy is the consequence of a repeated set of actions and omissions that contributed to the indigenous people having their rights to life, health, food and human dignity vilified" (Terena, 2023).

Conversely, President Lula, who is in his third term as president, has pledged to legalize as many indigenous lands as possible. Importantly, it was during President Luiz Inácio da Silva's second term in office (2007-2010) that Law 11645/08 was sanctioned. As Giovana Fanelli (2020) states, this achievement resulted from the struggles of the Brazilian Indigenous Movement and indigenous teachers who demanded an intercultural school.

Such a scenario points to an urgent need for mobilizing actions aimed at construing a pedagogy based on knowledge production that encompasses cultural diversity. This initiative would promote an emancipatory education crossed by interculturality, confronting Brazil's educational system which has historically been marked by racism and the denial of differences, resulting in an aggressive historical homogenization process.

For example, the diversity of indigenous peoples existing in the Brazilian territory implies a linguistic multiplicity and consequently the need for linguistic research to recognize and value its richness. This should be of interest not only to indigenous peoples, but to Brazilian society as a whole.

According to anthropologist Franchetto (2011), linguist and specialist in South American indigenous languages, research in linguistics of indigenous languages has received great impulse in recent years, work carried out by Brazilians and foreigners, indigenous and non-indigenous. She also highlights the entry of indigenous people into higher education courses (teacher training, undergraduate and graduate), which leveraged the quality and diversity of research. Affirmative action policies adopted by universities such as Universidade de Brasília (UnB), Universidade Estadual de Campinas (Unicamp), Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ) and Universidade Federal de Pernambuco (UFPE), contributed to this process, enabling the training of indigenous linguists. This was accompanied by the promotion of many national and international scientific events and congresses, which collaborated in publicizing the progress made in this research field.

Despite these significant advances, Franchetto (2011) argues that the production is still far below the demand, which requires establishing a necessary dialogue between research and school education.

Conversely, we also identified valuable productions regarding this topic, pointing out existing studies that can be used as reference in the process of constructing knowledge that breaks with hegemonic education, that is, with monocultural reproduction. To do so, however, we must bring the concept of interculturality into the debate.

One example of this production was the book *Educação Indígena e Interculturalidade: um debate epistemológico e político* [Indigenous education and Interculturality: an epistemological and political debate] (2017) organized by Mariano Báez Landa and Alexandre Ferraz Herbeta, which gathered research from Brazil, Chile and Mexico that brings a considerable collection of experiences in the field of interculturality, interweaving the reality of indigenous and intercultural education from different Latin American regions to analyze the relations between public policy, indigenous political movement and intercultural educational practices.

In this scenario, the pedagogical proposal of the Colombian Intercultural Thought Houses associated with Law no. 11,645 (Brasil, 2008) can inspire ways of thinking about and developing intercultural pedagogical proposals that value elements from the cultures of our native peoples.

When it comes to early childhood education, which serves children from zero to five years old in daycare centers and preschools, the following reflection is necessary: How do we construct and arrange these spaces in a way that represents Brazil's ethnic-racial plurality? If, on the one hand, we recognize the progress that has been made in recent decades, we also notice pedagogical practices that continues to reinforce stereotypes. Hence the need to bring other aesthetics that represent our diversities.

As for commemorative dates, unlike in the Intercultural Thought Houses where October 12 is celebrated as a way of breaking with a colonizing thought, reframing their cultures and, consequently, reaffirming their identities, here in Brazil we tragically witness the perpetuation of pedagogical actions that highlight commemorative dates such as the 'day of the Indian,' reinforcing the idea of a single indigenous culture and, therefore, only one way of being, thinking, dressing, a single language, religion and customs, related to a social imaginary that froze these subjects in a distant historical past.

But even considering this focus on carrying out an agenda that prioritizes this theme, it cannot take place in sporadic events and be sidelined the rest of the year. Complementing the discussion, we must ask ourselves: Which indigenous people are we talking about? Do we know any of these ethnicities? What languages do they speak? What are the specificities of these peoples?

If this form of conduction remains, which paints these individuals as belonging to a single group, they will continue to be seen as the other and their cultures will be nothing more than folklore, understood pejoratively. Given this context, besides including certain themes in the school curricula, we aim to re-educate us as citizens, reviewing our attitudes and values about the ethnic-racial plurality that exists in Brazil (Coelho; Coelho, 2018).

Law no. 11,645/08 is based on interculturality. Its inherent challenge is not to be understood only as an add-on; it should establish dialogues to solve intercultural conflicts, justifying its political importance.

The earlier we get to know the cultural diversities in our society, the more chances we have of educating citizens who respect differences, whether they are ethnicity, race, gender, culture, etc. Hence, this transformation in the educational process must be considered from early childhood education. In our view, the Colombian Intercultural Thought Houses exemplify this perspective, showing their inclusion in society's everyday life, and not as an action disjointed from other spheres.

As already pointed out, Brazil is home to an enormous diversity of indigenous peoples; however, they continue to be called Indians, or at most, Indigenous, completely disregarding the different ethnicities. We thus inquire: Why not seek to recognize the differences, their specificities, the different territories they inhabit to, even if slowly, transform this historical scenario? And how would this happen from early childhood education? How can our young children and newborns construct knowledge related to these cultures that clash with what is shared by the hegemonic social imaginary?

Currently, we have several productions available that can be used as a reference to further our knowledge about indigenous peoples, such as the ISA website, which is a Brazilian non-governmental organization, created in 1944 to defend social, collective and diffuse goods and rights related to the environment, cultural heritage, the rights of the indigenous peoples; the Articulation of Indigenous Peoples (APIB) website, a body created in 2005 to strengthen the articulation between the different regions and indigenous organizations; Yandê radio, the first indigenous web radio in Brazil, whose programming containing indigenous music, informative and educational programs bring to the public a little of the indigenous reality, deconstructing old stereotypes and prejudices created by the lack of specialized information in non-indigenous media outlets.

This group also includes writers, researchers and artists who work with this topic, such as Eliane Potiguara, Davi Kopenawa, Ailton Krenak, Daniel Munduruku and Magda Pucci. Another fundamental action would be to introduce into our educational spaces people who are indigenous references, such as militants of the Brazilian Indigenous Movement. Rather than simply talking and reading about this theme, we would have stories told and shared by those who experienced them and led these processes of struggle and resistance.

The stories must be told from the perspective of those subjects who have been marginalized, and not only from the oppressor's standpoint. Hence the need to articulate actions that implement what the law foresees, ranging from knowledge production to teacher training, so there is a greater probability of effectively transforming educational spaces from a training that promotes critical awareness.

We thus propose some provocations: Can we still tell our children today the naturalized idea of a supposed discovery of Brazil? In your daycare, preschool and/or school, does the indigenous theme permeate the curriculum or is it relegated to a date or period of the year?

We should, however, recall Professor Marcos Ferreira-Santos' (2005) words: fortunately, the school institution is not the only instance of our educational path; if it were, we would no longer have the possibility of change. Without disregarding the social role played by educational institutions, the researcher raises a question: As a social pillar that reproduces this sexist, Eurocentric, racist, white-Western society, is the school able to dialogue with the Afro-Amerindian worldview linked to Brazilian ancestry?

In this context, early childhood education plays an important role in the educational process by potentially promoting educational practices based on an intercultural concept, thus contributing to the formation of critical and reflective subjects. For these transformations to take place we must invest on several fronts, including training professionals who work and will work in early childhood

education and in research that seeks to expand knowledge about native peoples, knowledge that some sought to exterminate over centuries.

We conclude by emphasizing that the effort to present the Colombian Intercultural Thought Houses shows how we still need to build and share knowledge, dialogue with our peers from the global south-south axis, since, historically, as much as we aim to build knowledge based on a non-homogeneous and colonizing thought, for this to effectively occur the European and North American references that still prevail in our productions must be confronted by an other knowledge, produced from an intercultural rather than monocultural perspective⁷. Finally, we wish for and seek other Indigenous and Black Thought Houses that can put forth and create transgressive epistemologies and methodologies.

Conclusions

The last few decades have been a fertile period for studies on childhood, and the global debates ratified the need to consider children as subjects of knowledge. As for the educational field, we highlight the importance of producing knowledge that collaborates with an education that promotes other perspectives for building relationships and valuing respect for diversity, thus collaborating with the creation of thought that recognizes the right of all to exist.

Education from an intercultural perspective allow us to transcend the aesthetic or exotic views that are sometimes normalized about certain ethnic communities to unveil the political aspects materialized in human relations. As such, promoting intercultural education from early childhood implies recognizing children as political subjects and not just as subjects of rights, thus contributing to form citizens who respect and value the racial, ethnic, gender and cultural differences that make up Brazilian society.

Politics places children's potential and emotions in a visible place, speaks with their history (past and present), their transformative capacity, their life experiences and their cognitive, spiritual, physical and social development. At this political level, we must propose an intercultural education that ensures a dignified life, based on the recognition of the pluralities and singularities of girls and boys, favoring intentional, inclusive infrastructures that are coherent with each ethnic group. To achieve this, we must challenge the pervasive colonial hegemony in environments such as schools (with their sexist games, binary language and Westernized pedagogical practices), and give way to other narratives and forms of participation mediated by ancestral knowledge and led by children as the great architects of their learning processes.

This is an essential moment for those involved in the educational process to question their contexts of action, whether reflection, discussion and the proposal of pedagogical actions aimed at promoting work from an intercultural perspective are prioritized. In this sense, once again we would like to highlight the Thought Houses, so that these spaces can bring us questions and inspiration to rethink our educational practices in the realities of Brazilian early childhood education.

⁷ For further discussions on this issue, see the following articles: Paula (2021) e Ramírez Cabanzo e Pantevissuarez (2022).

Proposing intercultural practices based on an intercultural curriculum is a transgressive action that may rescue cultures from extermination, understanding that the death of a people is both physical and cultural. These actions are characterized by resistance and existence movements, which are fundamental in the quest to assume responsibility for the immense debt owed by the Brazilian state to our native peoples.

In this context, an intercultural curriculum must be open to working with different languages, such as the arts. When Ferreira-Santos (2005) questions whether the school is in a position to engage in dialog based on the Afro-Amerindian worldview linked to Brazilian ancestry, he considers that articulating education and the arts will potentially transform the educational field, reaffirming that this curriculum should be developed from early childhood education into higher education, as to avoid interruptions and enable its necessary reach.

In an attempt to establish the beginnings of a dialog between Brazil, Colombia and affirmative public policies in education, the Intercultural Thought Houses provides inspiration when it comes to reflecting on and drawing up curricula, projects and plans for daycares and preschools in Brazil, especially in the current historical moment experienced by Brazilian society due to the losses and setbacks of the last four years.

Still on the subject of the birth of these Houses, as one coordinator reported, which occurred after an indigenous child died of malnutrition, one is reminded of the tragedy to which the Yanomami people were subjected, who, due to the lack of public policies to attend to their basic rights, witnessed the death of their adults and children. Thus, what public policies could be implemented in an attempt to mitigate this tragedy, taking inspiration from the Colombian Intercultural Thought Houses?

Finally, it is valuable to share proposals such as the Houses, which can foster creative and transgressive actions, breaking with the colonial pattern established historically, both in terms of relations and physical spaces, and in terms of knowledge shared and the educational practices experienced.

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