

**THINKING ABOUT INTERCULTURALITY IN EDUCATION AND  
INTERCULTURAL CRITICAL DIDACTICS IN CONTEMPORARY TIMES**

***PENSAR A INTERCULTURALIDADE NA EDUCAÇÃO E A DIDÁTICA CRÍTICA  
INTERCULTURAL NA CONTEMPORANEIDADE***

***PENSAR LA INTERCULTURALIDAD EN LA EDUCACIÓN Y LA DIDÁCTICA  
CRÍTICA INTERCULTURAL EN EL TIEMPO CONTEMPORÁNEO***



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**ABSTRACT:** From the perspective of critical interculturality, this article proposes a reflection on the uses, purposes, and meanings of intercultural education, understood as an educational praxis of inclusion, validation, and recognition of the cognitive plurality inherent to cultural plurality. As a result of bibliographic research, the aim is to reflect on inclusive pluralism among diverse peoples to achieve the complementarity of local knowledge, having transversality and curricular flexibility as epistemological bases for pedagogical intervention. Organized in three parts, the text presents the theoretical foundations of interculturality and the presuppositions of critical interculturality; it sets forth the premises of multiculturalism and proposes an intercultural education in which the right to diversity is re-signified. It concludes that critical intercultural education is essential in school reconfiguring, articulating equality and difference to build knowledge, know-how, and practices committed to dialogue, decoloniality, and curricular and social justice.

**KEYWORDS:** Multiculturalism. Interculturality. Didactics. Social justice. Curricular justice.

**RESUMO:** *Sob o viés da interculturalidade crítica, este artigo propõe uma reflexão acerca dos usos, finalidades e significados da educação intercultural, entendida como práxis educativa de inclusão, validação e reconhecimento da pluralidade cognitiva inerente à pluralidade cultural. Busca-se, como resultado de um levantamento bibliográfico, refletir sobre o pluralismo inclusivo junto a povos diversos para alcançar a complementaridade dos saberes locais, tendo na transversalidade e na flexibilidade curricular as bases epistemológicas para a intervenção pedagógica. Organizado em três partes, o texto apresenta os fundamentos teóricos da interculturalidade e os pressupostos de uma interculturalidade crítica; expõe as premissas do multiculturalismo e propõe uma educação intercultural onde o direito à diversidade seja ressignificado. Conclui-se que considerar a didática intercultural crítica é essencial num processo de reconfiguração escolar, articulando igualdade e diferença para construir saberes, conhecimentos e práticas comprometidos com o diálogo, com a decolonialidade e com a justiça curricular e social.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Multiculturalismo. Interculturalidade. Didática. Justiça social. Justiça curricular.*

**RESUMEN:** *Desde la perspectiva de la interculturalidad crítica, este artículo propone una reflexión sobre los usos, propósitos y significados de la educación intercultural, entendida como una praxis educativa de inclusión, validación y reconocimiento de la pluralidad cognitiva inherente a la pluralidad cultural. Como resultado de un levantamiento bibliográfico, se pretende reflexionar sobre el pluralismo inclusivo entre pueblos diversos para lograr la complementariedad de los saberes locales, teniendo la transversalidad y la flexibilidad curricular como bases epistemológicas para la intervención pedagógica. Organizado en tres partes, el texto presenta los fundamentos teóricos de la interculturalidad y los presupuestos de la interculturalidad crítica; expone las premisas del multiculturalismo y propone una educación intercultural en la que se resignifica el derecho a la diversidad. Se concluye que considerar la enseñanza intercultural crítica es fundamental en un proceso de reconfiguración escolar, articulando la igualdad y la diferencia para construir conocimientos, saberes y prácticas comprometidos con el diálogo, la descolonialidad y la justicia curricular y social.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *Multiculturalismo. Interculturalidad. Didácticas. Justicia social. Justicia curricular.*

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## Introduction

Multiculturalism, or cultural pluralism, as a theoretical contribution and political field in defense of cultural diversity, is revisited in this study due to the need to understand society as constituted by plural identities based on the diversity of race, gender, social class, cultural and linguistic patterns, among other identity markers. By constituting an epistemological rupture with the modernity project, which believed in the homogeneity and natural evolution of humanity towards an accumulation of knowledge that would lead to the universal construction of progress, multiculturalism advocates for the recognition and appreciation of the culture of so-called minorities (Canen; Oliveira, 2002).

Brazil is one of the most multicultural nations, encompassing various types of cultures that, since the period of colonization, have been shaped by the habits and customs originating from Europeans, Africans, and indigenous peoples from each region of this diverse country. Thus, multiculturalism is present in the constitution of its people and various social manifestations, as it combats the idea of cultural homogeneity, grounded in a perspective where diversity, discontinuity, and difference are perceived as central categories. In opposition to the modern perception of identity as an essence, stable, and fixed, multiculturalism brings forth the understanding of identity as a continuous process of construction and reconstruction.

Conversely, multiculturalism is understood as an approach that questions the construction of differences and, consequently, the stereotypes and prejudices against those perceived as different in unequal and exclusionary societies. Therefore, it goes beyond the “appreciation of cultural diversity, understood in an essentialized and folkloric manner” (Canen; Oliveira, 2002, p. 63, our translation), since in this logic, multiculturalism is reduced to an appendage of the regular curriculum.

The critique of the concept of multiculturalism developed here refers to the fact that a crucial purpose in school practices is the recognition of the relational nature of individuals and the social groups with which human beings identify. Although there is a recognition of cultural and social diversity in the discourse of respect for it, insurmountable ethical, political, and humanitarian barriers still persist in the coexistence of people who share different life repertoires.

In education, interculturality and multiculturalism play a vital role in shaping conscious and critical citizens. In this regard, it is important to highlight that the school, as proposed by Pérez Gómez (2001, p. 17, our translation), is configured as a “living, fluid, and complex space where cultures intersect.” Thus, there is a pressing need in the educational context to experience a collaborative, innovative, and respectful workspace, where new ideas frequently arise, fostering a creative environment, a locus of fundamental importance for individual and collective growth.

In this way, by presenting students with a wide range of cultural perspectives, the aim is to encourage them to understand and question their own beliefs and values, developing empathy and knowledge of diversity, while preparing them to act more respectfully and collaboratively in an increasingly globalized world, thus enhancing the assertiveness of their decision-making.

The qualitative focus of this investigation is based on research in the Social Sciences and Education, which allowed the aggregation of knowledge and meanings to the studied phenomena, demanding an interpretive and explanatory corpus through the findings of a bibliographic survey (with the period of scientific production delimited between 2010 and 2024<sup>5</sup>), focused on reflective analysis of the challenges and perspectives of intercultural education today.

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<sup>5</sup> The period from 2010 to 2024 was delimited to allow coverage of a range of phenomena based on reflection on critical interculturality that advocates the construction of other possibilities and societal and pedagogical strategies that challenge the status quo and encourage the deconstruction of a condition of subordination of a large part of contemporary society through a decolonizing education that provides a critical reflection of reality.

Based on the definition of the objective of the bibliographic review and prior research, search descriptors were defined for the scientific journal databases: multiculturalism, pluriculturalism, intercultural education, social justice, curricular justice, critical didactics, and intercultural didactics. Boolean operators and the Mendeley reference manager were utilized.

This is, therefore, a theoretical investigation of a qualitative nature that employs text analysis from various authors, some of whom predate the defined temporal scope: Baptista and Nascimento (2017), Candau (2008, 2011, 2012), Canen and Moreira (1999), Canen and Oliveira (2002), Carvalho (2016), Lemes (2024), Nóvoa (2022), Pérez Gómez (2001), Santos (2018), Silva and Rebolo (2017), Soares (2020), Tubino (2005), Valadares and Júnior (2016), Young and Muller (2016), although all those cited above are considered relevant contributions referenced as the themes are addressed throughout this article. The theoretical framework and the temporal scope presented are also justified by the establishment of the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) during the defined period, a document that, according to some critiques, seems to contradict notions of difference and diversity.

After a thorough study of the mapped literature, the theoretical framework supports the advocacy for multicultural education, embedded within a postmodern vision of society in which plurality and heterogeneity oppose any form of standardization. The conclusions highlight the need to broaden discussions within public educational institutions regarding understanding multicultural and intercultural concepts and practices vis-à-vis curricular justice permeated by critical multi/intercultural didactics in favor of social justice.

In light of the above, this article aims to provoke reflection on the uses, purposes, and meanings of intercultural education, understood as an educational practice aimed at inclusion, validation, and recognition of the social and cognitive pluralities inherent in cultural diversity. The goal is to analyze how to promote inclusive pluralism among different peoples, with the aim of achieving complementarity of local knowledge, using curricular transversality and flexibility as epistemological foundations for pedagogical intervention.

Interculturality in education is presented as a pedagogical approach that seeks to foster cooperation, respect, and acceptance among diverse cultures and individuals. The aim is to preserve cultural identities while promoting the exchange of experiences and mutual enrichment in participants' learning (Soares, 2020). In this context, the notion of interculturality, as proposed by the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC), can serve as a pathway to the establishment of liberating education, based on carefully established parameters for curricular and pedagogical organization within Brazilian Basic Education.

The text is structured into three parts. Initially, it addresses the theoretical foundations of interculturality and the necessary assumptions for the development of critical intercultural didactics. Next, it offers a reflection on multiculturalism and interculturality, analyzing their premises and the resistance to an intercultural education agenda. Finally, it proposes an intercultural education approach that implies a practice in which the right to diversity is re-signified and respected.

### **Theoretical Foundations of Interculturality and the Assumptions for Considering Critical Intercultural Didactics**

The theoretical foundations of interculturality represent a way of understanding cultural diversity that recognizes the coexistence of ethnically and culturally distinct groups while revealing the different forms of historical interactions, conflicts, and dialogues between these groups.

Interculturality presupposes the inevitable interaction between different cultures, allowing for, from a political perspective, the establishment of a respectful dialogue between them. This dialogue fosters the construction of an integrative, equitable, just, egalitarian, responsible, and supportive society, preserving the inherent differences of the respective cultures, but without permitting subordination, dominance, or intolerance.

In the context of contemporary schooling, it is understood that the concepts of learning and development are guided by ethical, political, and aesthetic principles aimed at integral human formation and the building of a just, democratic, and inclusive society. Such premises require a critical approach, considering the operational complexity and insufficiency of the current institutional model in overcoming inequalities to fully realize the principles of citizenship (Baptista *et al.*, 2024).

Interculturality promotes dialogue among various cultural groups, so that different cultures can coexist, interact, and learn from one another. This must occur through the state's role in ensuring equality among those who continuously pursue overcoming social heretics, which frequently result in fictitious opposition and the attempt at the supremacy of some cultures over others.

As a concept, interculturality encompasses the construction of democratic and inclusive societies, promoting practices that encourage interaction, understanding, and respect among different cultures and ethnic groups. This is achieved by articulating equality policies with identity policies (Candau, 2008, 2011).

Thus, the concept of interculturality aligns with education by incorporating identity, homogeneity, and diversity as fundamental axes, in addition to values such as peace, citizenship, human rights, equality, tolerance, and multicultural education. Interculturality, requiring interrelation between cultures to ensure peaceful coexistence, differs from multiculturalism, which focuses on mere tolerance among coexisting cultures.

Interculturality, therefore, takes on the challenge of confronting individualism, consumerism, and immediate culture fostered by globalization, as well as the ethnic and cultural implications resulting from this process of global political, economic, and cultural integration<sup>6</sup>. It positions itself as a vector for forming and integrating socially constituted groups.

Pérez Gómez (2001) highlights that the circulation of different cultures in the school environment promotes a reflective mediation of the plural influences exerted by various social cultures on new generations. For the author, the school is configured as a meeting point between cultures, distinguishing itself from other institutions and spaces of socialization by its "own identity and its relative autonomy," factors that foster its educational development (Pérez Gómez, 2001, p. 17, our translation). It is within this school environment, through its rites and practices, that "critical interculturality strengthens the construction of dynamic, open, and plural identities, as well as challenges an essentialized view of its constitution" (Candau, 2012, p. 129, our translation).

From this perspective, based on authors such as Candau (2012) and Pérez Gómez (2001), who advocate for more critical multicultural practices referred to as a critical intercultural perspective, effective pedagogical actions promote the construction and sharing of knowledge about cultural pluralism and inequalities. These practices include the development of democratic activities in the classroom involving active student participation and the implementation of didactic strategies imbued with cultural values and relations that transcend marginalization and favor critical engagement.

Intercultural Critical Didactics, as proposed by Candau (2012, p. 131, our translation), encourages "dialogue, mutual respect, and the construction of bridges and shared knowledge<sup>7</sup> in the daily life of schools and the teaching-learning processes developed in classrooms."

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<sup>6</sup> Unison refers to the practice of singing the same note or melody at the same time by all group members. In other words, it is a way of uniting the singers' voices, creating a sense of unity and strength in the interpretation of the music in such a way that the voices harmonize together perfectly, creating a balanced and pleasing sound to the ears. Therefore, by singing in unison, the group members can synchronize their voices and create a sound that conveys the song's message more clearly and emotionally, engaging the audience in a powerful and impactful way.

<sup>7</sup> The teaching-learning process binomial is used to refer to the interaction and inseparability between teaching and learning.

Candau (2012) highlights two central aspects of this didactic reflection: pedagogical differentiation and the use of multiple languages and media in the school environment. This is a perspective under development, recognizing society as a space of constant interaction, based on the assumption that the articulation between cultures can be regulated. This perspective does not limit itself to respecting cultural diversity but promotes coexistence and the exchange of experiences, recreating existing cultures and proposing a new cultural synthesis, which implies reworking preconceived cultural models.

Intercultural Critical Didactics, which permeates scientific, artistic, and philosophical disciplines in line with the guidelines of academic culture reflected in curricular definitions, and intertwined with the characteristics of experiential culture, is committed to democratic education and transnational integration, aiming at human development and global citizenship. Responsible citizenship must ensure the duty to protect and promote the culture of all groups that make up a nation, guaranteeing that their voices are heard and their contributions recognized.

Education and multiculturalism, values that are transversal to interculturality in the contemporary world, mobilize tools for building a modern society. In this context of globalization of principles, culture, training, identities, and full citizenship, these values present themselves as an alternative that transcends political-economic materialism, resisting attempts at hegemony and the impositions of dominant minorities (Tubino, 2005).

Thus, interculturality proposes the replacement of values inherited from the dominant culture, assuming dimensions of education that integrate predominantly sociological aspects over philosophical ones. The complexity of educational praxis demands the understanding of critical interculturality as a political, social, epistemic, and ethical project, embedded in a decolonial pedagogical perspective.

### **Reflection on Multiculturalism and Interculturality: Criticism of an Illusory Rhetoric**

The social movement in defense of the struggles of ethnic, social, national, and gender minority groups, called multiculturalism, began in the early decades of the 20th century in the United States, together with a curricular approach that opposed all forms of prejudice and discrimination prevailing in the school space. However, it was only in the 1980s that universities began to embrace this multiculturalist agenda.



In Brazil, also in the 1980s, with the process of political redemocratization and the influence of critical and post-critical theories, interest in the multiculturalist approach to education and the school curriculum intensified. The goal was to promote education aimed at citizenship, defending human rights and committing to respect for cultural diversity, overcoming discrimination and prejudice.

The criticism of the concept of multiculturalism addressed in this study arises from the observation that contemporary society experiences a superficial relationship between distinct groups, without effective hybridization between them. Although it is recognized that knowledge about cultural facts—such as beliefs (religious, social, political, artistic, and ideological), attitudes, values, rites, traditions, and ways of thinking of different groups—can contribute to valuing cultural plurality and confronting prejudices, the multicultural approach tends to ignore the historical, political, and social mechanisms that construct discourses reinforcing the silencing of identities and the marginalization of groups. For this reason, identifying these mechanisms and working toward their overcoming constitutes the central axis of a more critical multicultural stance, also called a critical intercultural perspective, with which there is agreement (Canen; Moreira, 1999).

The configuration of the principles of interculturality stems from the idea of recognizing diverse communities or social groups as full political actors, seeking to establish a bridge of interaction and dialogue that allows understanding the other from their own culture (Baptista; Nascimento, 2017).

Multiculturalism, understood as a descriptive term, advocates for the coexistence of different cultures within the same social space, based on the principles of tolerance and respect for difference. It acknowledges diversity and refers to mutual respect and the fight against cultural homogeneity imposed by the notion of superiority held by European colonizing peoples, as well as the combat against racism, prejudice, and discrimination, traits widely associated with multiculturalism. However, it is essential to consider and value the relational nature of human beings and social groups, the educational policies aimed at vulnerable groups and indigenous peoples, and to question the imposition of an educational model that privileges historicity and other cultural aspects essential to cultural diversity.

The term multiculturalism has a polysemic and broad nature, encompassing epistemologically diverse and, at times, conflicting stances (Canen & Moreira, 1999). Authors Canen and Moreira (1999) and Canen and Oliveira (2002) emphasize that, in addition to valuing cultural diversity, it is fundamental to combat stereotypes and prejudices directed at those

considered “different” in unequal and exclusionary societies. In this regard, they argue that education and teacher training in multicultural and unequal contexts, such as in Brazil, should adopt multiculturalism as a guiding horizon for the curriculum, incorporating inclusive norms, discourses, and practices.

These insights, however, are not limited to the descriptive nature attributed to multiculturalism. They stem from a heuristic approach to knowledge construction, an interpretative capacity of the world. Evidently, the contextual reality surrounding the educational institution should be the primary source for knowledge creation. Nonetheless, science is presented in a fragmented manner, without an integrative viewpoint or perspective, which leads students to a limited understanding of society.

The compartmentalization of content in the educational system reinforces only certain aspects of human, social, technological, and scientific plurality, resulting in a partial understanding of reality at the expense of a broader, global approach. A critical approach to multiculturalism must go beyond mere tolerance and the recognition of different social groups. It is the responsibility of all to recognize the entirety of each human being, preserving ethics and respect. However, the current educational landscape still constrains the perspective on the coexistence of various cultures.

Cultural diversity is a fundamental pillar for the constitution of a plural and inclusive society, and multiculturalism is intrinsically linked to the conception of citizenship and respect for differences, elements essential to promoting social cohesion and peaceful coexistence among different social groups, regardless of their cultural origins.

By acknowledging and respecting the historical and social differences between individuals and groups, equality of opportunity is promoted, along with harmony in the interaction between these diverse groups and respect for human dignity. As a historical and psychological construct, individuality shapes an integrated system of self-formation, which, once internalized in human beings, complicates a more comprehensive interpretation of external reality.

In this context, the perspective to mitigate segregation, which still predominates in contemporary schooling, is represented by the manifestation of interculturality. This scenario presupposes the abandonment of past anachronisms and civilizational processes, allowing individuals and, consequently, contemporary society, through new knowledge and relational dynamics, to gain greater flexibility for change (Young; Muller, 2016).

The relationship between schooling and students' cognitive development, according to Lemes (2024), structures both the schooling process and the role of the school in shaping and developing students' intellectual abilities. The current logic of schooling and learning, as noted by Nóvoa (2022), "has deep roots in a structural pattern that carries within it persistent historical flaws of a system that proves incapable of addressing its vital issues, thus tending to degrade until it disintegrates" (Lemes, 2024, p. 13, our translation). Therefore, "changes in society" are "fostered by the dynamics of communications, the virtualization of social relations and work, and the new parameters of cognitive development in this context" (Lemes, 2024, p. 13, our translation), which incorporate, at the core of educational transformation, the principles of a diverse society.

In summary, it is necessary to reflect on how to promote inclusive pluralism among different peoples, seeking the complementarity of local knowledge, with curricular transversality and flexibility as epistemological foundations for pedagogical intervention. In this sense, the critique of multicultural rhetoric aims to transform the asymmetries and cultural hierarchies that label and stereotype diversity, as well as deepen the understanding of inequalities accumulated across generations. In contrast, there is a need to discuss more engaged notions of social transformation, grounded in theoretical-critical approaches.

The aim of this article is to reflect on the uses, purposes, and meanings of intercultural education as an educational praxis guided by inclusion, validation, and recognition of cognitive plurality, which is closely linked to cultural plurality. Valuing cultural diversity strengthens each individual's identity and their connection to the community, in a continuous effort to revise values related to the maintenance of ethical, rational, and scientific attitudes. These attitudes, in turn, recognize the uniqueness of human knowledge and transcend the violence arising from prejudice and discrimination.

### **For an Intercultural Education Committed to a Praxis Infused with the Right to Diversity**

Intercultural education is indispensable in a society with multicultural characteristics, as is the case in Brazil and other countries, where "different sociocultural groups gain a greater presence in public spheres" (Candau, 2011, p. 241, our translation). Discussions on ethnic, racial, and gender issues are on the agenda in schools, even impacting teaching practices, although they remain insufficient to prevent tensions, conflicts, and the invisibility or lack of appreciation for traditional and indigenous peoples.

Contreras (2002) theorizes that teacher autonomy consists of awareness of pedagogical practice, of teaching itself, and of the role of the teacher, as well as the meaning of teaching and education in society. The author emphasizes that the production of teaching knowledge cannot separate the creation from its application, nor theory from practice, imposing the need to reveal them within the human and social context of the educational phenomenon.

The psychopedagogical, didactic, and curricular principles of schooling place diverse peoples at the center of the debate and pedagogical practice by recognizing the indissoluble relationship between culture and human nature. However, the invisibility of these groups is perpetuated when their knowledge and ways of being are not integrated into the schooling process.

In this sense, educational action with an intercultural perspective consists of the articulation between local knowledge, based on reflective and interpretative methodologies grounded in collaborative research processes within the school context. Reflection on the concept of social justice makes interculturality particularly relevant, given the urgent need for awareness of the effects of inequalities and the structural and symbolic violence that have historically affected various groups, whether due to ethnicity, skin color, origin, social class, education, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.

The starting point of this debate lies in the recognition of conditions of vulnerability, stemming from social, economic, and racial stratification, which demands the construction of a more free and egalitarian nation. This construction involves the right to preserve these groups' cultures, languages, and ancestral knowledge. The contemporary school, bearing the legacy of previous centuries, continues to "treat everyone in a homogeneous manner" (Silva; Rebolo, 2017, p. 182, our translation), making it a homogenizing institution. This contributes to the perpetuation of stereotypes and asymmetries that intensify social and cultural inequalities. However, the school must take on the role of promoting respect for diversity and preserving cultures and mother languages.

Social justice, which permeates intercultural education, essentially depends on the creation of educational proposals that value and re-signify cultural identity from a polyphonic and multifaceted perspective. These proposals should focus on the intersection between tradition and modernity, equity and equality, integration and inclusion, always defending the autonomy, territories, and cultures of communities, with the aim of achieving inclusive plurality.

Recognizing and appreciating diversity involves understanding the multiple ways of seeing, thinking, and being in the world as complementary perspectives. This arises from the relational nature of different peoples, ethnicities, cultures, and populations, fostered by social interactions, dialogues, power relations, political structures, cultural norms, and knowledge exchanges. All of this must be grounded in the principle of respecting the right to cultural diversity.

#### The Intercultural Dimension Recommended by the BNCC

[...] arises from the understanding that cultures, especially in contemporary society, are continuously interacting and (re)construction. Thus, different groups of people, with diverse interests, agendas, and linguistic and cultural repertoires, experience in their interactions and flows processes of constitution of open and plural identities (Brasil, 2018, p. 245, our translation).

In line with this conception, an intercultural curriculum must respect the needs of different social and ethnic groups coexisting in each society to ensure curricular justice in schools. Interculturality and multiculturalism are based on an ontological dimension whose principle is social justice, as they promote the recognition of rights and freedoms. In this sense, they constitute the key to the legitimate recognition of socially and culturally diverse groups, without discrimination or exclusion. The aim is to solve, through praxis, the problems arising from the historically imposed asymmetries, hierarchies, and devaluations, which disqualify individuals and marginalized community cultures.

From the perspective of interculturality, the multiple realities of different cultures are multifaceted, complex, and contradictory. From this point of view, the ontological foundations of intercultural education are established by promoting social inclusion and considering the equality of individuals as human beings.

New educational environments, in turn, redefine boundaries and enrich relationships with knowledge, which is legitimized by research, creation, and acquisition of new understandings. From the comprehension of these assumptions, a praxis emerges that challenges the homogenizing sense of the school and values diversity as a mechanism for transforming inequality into real equality. This is achieved through inclusive dialogues claiming diversity as a personal and collective right, thereby promoting social justice.

Acting in favor of curricular and social justice involves, on one hand, teacher autonomy and, on the other, the guarantee of effective learning for all students, considering their learning processes, as well as both systematized and experiential knowledge. There is no room for teachers to be mere transmitters of already-established truths. On the contrary, they must seek

new questions that do not close in on themselves and which, in a free inquiry, propose the description of what they see, speak, and feel about being in the world.

Thus, it is necessary to grasp the experience of seeing and speaking, attempting to overcome the dichotomy between subject and object in pursuit of the experience of feeling. This experience goes beyond reflective thought; it is not singular knowledge but a continuous search for truth. The experience of feeling does not reduce human knowledge to mere sensation but reflects the desire to attain a sensitive understanding and to reconnect rationality with an understanding of the world.

From the standpoint of interculturality, it is understood that learning means leveling, through questioning, the difficulties and contradictions between the acts of seeing, speaking, and feeling the world. Ontological questioning, as a moment of interrelation, is the perception of something tangible that awakens a connection with knowledge and the explanation of consciousness. In the context of predicative truth, when revealing answers and questioning the world we live in, it is necessary to cast a critical eye on the principles, methods, and conclusions of a particular science.

Intercultural education implies (de)normalizing homogeneity and the priority that has been given to equality to the detriment of equity. This reflection addresses ways to soften the hierarchies with which we measure diversity, build and recognize diversity, and ensure that diversity is normalized as a foundation for constructing active and supportive citizenship.

Intercultural education re-signifies the value of diversity and interculturality in society, in education, and in schools. It materializes through a critical and reflective analysis of historical, cultural, social, economic, and political contexts, allowing diverse individuals and groups to act based on knowledge of their rights and the rights of others. This is done through the experience of feeling, which reveals and puts us in touch with the moment when truths are established.

For teaching to translate into learning, it is necessary to till the soil, delve into the knowledge, talents, motivations, emotions, doubts, and fears of those who are learning. One who sows without tilling the soil can, at most, scatter seeds on the surface with no expectation that they will ever take root, grow, and bear fruit (Torres, 2001, p. 306, our translation).

## **Final considerations**

This article, by proposing to reflect, based on theoretical foundations, on the uses, purposes, and meanings of intercultural education as an educational praxis aimed at inclusion, validation, and recognition of the cognitive plurality inherent in cultural plurality, reveals an understanding of curricular construction in which the school and its members—teachers and students—transcend the tenuous line between what they know, who they are, and the role they occupy in teaching and learning processes. This aims to endow educational action with social and curricular justice. From this perspective, the curriculum will be transformative when, by identifying needs and modifying processes, a critical intercultural education is realized, where the right to diversity is redefined and respected.

Didactics, by incorporating multi/intercultural critique, starts from the principle that the intrinsic relationship between curricular justice and the sense of social justice promotes the continuous reconstruction of educational practices and teacher autonomy, with the aim of addressing the right to diversity, promoting both equality of opportunities and respect for human dignity, in a coordination between equality and difference.

To continue the reflection, in line with António Nóvoa and Yara Alvim, who call upon **Schools and Teachers**: protect, transform, value. Various voices, in unison, advocate: **protect them**, because schools are unique places of learning and socialization, meeting and work, and also of safeguarded human relationships; **transform them**, because schools need profound changes in their educational environments so that students and teachers can build together processes of learning and education; and **value them** because schools are essential spaces for the formation of new generations, who, thanks to the qualified work of teachers, unite knowledge and feeling, knowledge and emotions, culture and personal histories.

Finally, recognizing and appreciating diverse cultures enable mutual learning and the construction of a social identity that promotes equality of opportunities and respect for human dignity and contributes to overcoming prejudiced attitudes.

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