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PROJETO GÊNERO E DIVERSIDADE NA ESCOLA: A GENDERED APPROACH ON THE PROJECT

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Abstract

This paper is based on feminist studies from a post-structuralist perspective and it aims to discuss how categories such as gender and diversity are conceptually and methodologically added in the agenda of basic education teacher training policy based on education for diversity, titled Projeto Gênero e Diversidade na Escola [Gender and Diversity in School Project] (GDE). Four GDE guiding documents between 2007 and 2011 were analyzed. A cultural analysis was carried out to argue about the unintelligibility of gender and diversity education proposed by organized politics based on how sexual and cultural diversity are treated, as well as sex and gender binarism. Its limits and potentialities were tested as a State-based agenda for a certain purpose and governance at the expense of the production of (un)viable bodies.

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UMA ANÁLISE GENERIFICADA SOBRE O PROJETO GÊNERO E DIVERSIDADE NA ESCOLA

Resumo

A partir dos estudos feministas e em uma perspectiva pós-estruturalista, discutimos como gênero e diversidade são acionados conceitual e metodologicamente na agenda de uma política de formação de professores/as da educação básica pautada pela educação para a diversidade, intitulada Projeto Gênero e Diversidade na Escola (GDE). Analisamos quatro documentos norteadores do GDE entre os anos 2007 e 2011. Realizamos uma análise cultural para argumentar sobre as ininteligibilidades de uma educação em gênero e em diversidade proposta pela política organizada com base no trato com a diversidade sexual e a diversidade cultural, bem como o sexo e o binarismo de gênero. Tensionamos seus limites e potencialidades como agenda de Estado para o governo a expensas da produção de corpos (in)viáveis.

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PROJETO GÊNERO E DIVERSIDADE NA ESCOLA

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UNE APPROCHE GENRÉE DU PROJETO GÊNERO E DIVERSIDADE NA ESCOLA

Résumé

À partir des études féministes et dans une perspective poststructuraliste, cet article se penche sur la manière dont le genre et la diversité sont conceptuellement et méthodologiquement mis à l'agenda d'une politique pour la formation des professeurs. Il s'agit d'une politique prenant en compte l'éducation à la diversité, intitulée Projeto Gênero e Diversidade na Escola [Genre et Diversité à l'École] (GDE). Nous avons retenu quatre documents directeurs du GDE de la période 2007 à 2011 et effectué une analyse culturelle visant à discuter les manques d'intelligibilité d'une éducation au genre et à la diversité proposée par cette politique centrée sur les rapports entre diversité sexuelle et diversité culturelle, bien que sur sexe et binarisme de genre. Nous montrons à la fois les limites et les potentialités que représente cet agenda pour la maîtrise des corps au détriment de la production des corps (non) viables.

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UN ANÁLISIS GENERIFICADO DEL PROJETO GÊNERO E DIVERSIDADE NA ESCOLA

Resumen

A partir de los estudios feministas y en una perspectiva posestructuralista, discutimos cómo el género y la diversidad son impulsados conceptualmente y metodológicamente en la agenda de una política de formación de profesores/as de la educación básica regida por la educación para la diversidad, titulada Projeto Gênero e Diversidade na Escola [Proyecto Género y Diversidad en Escuela] (GDE). Analizamos cuatro documentos orientadores del GDE entre los años 2007 y 2011. Realizamos un análisis cultural para argumentar sobre las ininteligibilidades de una educación en género y en diversidad propuesta por la política basada en el trato con la diversidad sexual y la diversidad cultural, el sexo y el binarismo de género. Tensamos sus límites y potencialidades como agenda de Estado para el gobierno a expensas de la producción de cuerpos (in) viables.

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THIS TEXT IS BASED ON AN 'UMBRELLA' STUDY ENTITLED *POLÍTICAS PÚBLICAS DE INCLUSÃO social e transversalidade de gênero: ênfases, tensões e desafios atuais* [Public policies for social inclusion and gender transversality: emphasis, conflicts and current challenges].² This greater, multifocal and interinstitutional study ranks in the framework of problematizations about the relation between gender and public policies for social inclusion in Brazil.³ Overall, the analysis was on gender transversality in government policies and programs for promoting social inclusion and taking gender as a theoretical category, and as an important policy to contemplate this purpose.

Considering this overview, this article derives from analyses carried out in one of the sub-projects linked to the matrix research aforementioned. The study aims to problematize how the categories gender and diversity are activated on a conceptual, methodological and political level, composing the public

1 Single quotation marks are used to highlight words intentionally used with a different meaning from the traditional. Quotation marks are used for citations shown in the text.

2 The research was supported by Universal/CNPq, n. 443423/2014-8 from 2014 to 2017.

3 The team consists of a collective of researchers from universities in different regions of Brazil, coordinated by Prof. Dr. Dagmar Estermann Meyer, from Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS). The researchers are from five Brazilian universities: in the south, UFRGS and the Regional University of Northwestern Rio Grande do Sul (Unijui); in the Southeast, the Federal University of Espírito Santo (Ufes); and in the northeast, the Federal University of Paraíba (UFPB) and the Federal University of Recôncavo da Bahia (UFRB).

propositions of the *Projeto Gênero e Diversidade na Escola* [Gender and Diversity in School Project] (GDE). As an analytical strategy, the paper emphasizes the limits and potentialities of the scheme gender-diversity as an agenda proposed by the State in modernity. Hence, four documents that regulated this policy produced between 2007 and 2011 were analyzed.

Thus, this text provides a brief description of the GDE, the analyzed documents and the selection criteria of this material. Then, it defines how gender and diversity are activated in the GDE and how they form epistemic-political paths of proposition for (un)viable bodies and lives in the education field nowadays. Finally, the text proposed is crossed by problematization schemes and a rupture with a harmonious, multicultural and tolerant diversity and a binary gender, considering the GDE as a public policy directed to the area of education.

GDE AND SELECTED DOCUMENTS

GDE was formed as a government policy directed to the training of teachers working in basic education, to strengthen an education to work with gender, sexuality and race-ethnicity.⁴ GDE presented its first offer in the training of 7teachers in extension course format between 2006 and 2007, during President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva administration. The constitution of the GDE is an unfold of an intersectoral coordination, including partnerships between different Brazilian and foreign institutions, such as the Special Secretariat of Women's Policies of Paraná (SPM/PR – *Secretaria Especial de Políticas para as Mulheres do Paraná*), the Special Secretariat for Policies to Promote Racial Equality (Seppir/PR – *Secretaria Especial de Políticas de Promoção da Igualdade Racial*), the Secretariat of Continuing Education, Literacy and Diversity (Secad – *Secretaria de Educação Continuada, Alfabetização e Diversidade*) of the Brazilian Ministry of Education (MEC),⁵ the Secretariat of Distance Education (Seed/MEC – *Secretaria de Educação à Distância*),⁶ the British Council (funding)⁷ and The Latin American Center on Sexuality and Human Rights of the State University of Rio de Janeiro's Institute of Social Medicine (Clam/IMS/UERJ – *Centro Latino-Americano em Sexualidade e Direitos Humanos do Instituto de Medicina Social da Universidade do*

4 GDE was established in 2006 during President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva first mandate via pilot project (see CARRARA et al., 2011) and then from annual offerings. This policy was maintained during President Dilma Rousseff mandate.

5 It was an aid in the educational process by providing resources such as *TV Escola*, learning objects and a collaborative learning environment that was used for digital inclusion and distance education activities. In 2011, it was renamed to Secretariat of Continuing Education, Literacy, Diversity and Inclusion (Secadi – *Secretaria de Educação Continuada, Alfabetização, Diversidade e Inclusão*).

6 In 2005, a Letter of Intent was signed by the British Council, SPM/PR, Seppir/PR and MEC, through Secadi and Seed, in order to implement education policies for gender equality, race/ethnicity and sexual orientation through training activities for teachers.

7 British Council is an international organization of the United Kingdom for matters of Education and Culture, promotion of human rights, that strengthens and share educational policy experiences among countries. British Council was responsible for financial subsidy and by encouraging the exchange of experiences on educational policies of the operating area of the GDE project.

Estado do Rio de Janeiro).⁸ The continuing training of public school teachers was indicated as a priority, through the offer of specialization and/or extension level courses

[...] in gender, sexual orientation issues and ethnic-racial relations in order to provide them the tools to critically reflect on the individual and collective pedagogical practice and to combat all forms of discrimination in the school environment. (CARRARA *et al.*, 2011, p. 54, *free translation*)

The pilot project conducted in 2006 was offered in six Brazilian municipalities and, according to SPM,⁹ carried out the continued training of 865 teachers. After this initial experience, Secadi/MEC modified and expanded the GDE modes of execution, building its offering for Open University System of Brazil (UAB – *Sistema da Universidade Aberta do Brasil*) of Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (Capes – *Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior*)/MEC in partnership with higher education public institutions in the country, also including courses in specialization level. In general, the Gender and diversity in school: evaluation processes, results, impacts and projections (*Gênero e diversidade na escola: avaliação de processos, resultados, impactos e projeções* – 2017) report points out that “GDE was offered by 38 state and federal public universities, reaching more than 40,000 education professionals”¹⁰ (CARRARA *et al.*, 2017, p. 15, *free translation*). The offers were conducted annually, expanded throughout the country and guaranteed in the extension of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva government and President Dilma Rousseff government.¹¹

As for the current government policy, the Secretariat of Continuing Education, Literacy and Diversity (Secad/MEC) that helped to promote GDE and in 2011 was renamed to Secretariat of Continuing Education, Literacy, Diversity and Inclusion (Secadi – *Secretaria de Educação Continuada, Alfabetização, Diversidade e Inclusão*), emphasizing the transfer for incorporation of the Special Education Department. In 2016, in the government of President Michel Temer, a Secadi was abolished, as can be seen on the website of the department Secretariat (BRASIL, 2017). The current government of President Jair Bolsonaro kept extinction agreed by the Temer government, which shows the absence of priority, in the

8 Clam has as institutional proposal the production, organization and dissemination of knowledge about sexuality from the perspective of human rights, aiming at a reduction of gender and sexual inequalities. Specifically in the GDE project, Clam was selected to perform some actions, such as the coordination of the teaching material preparation, the selection of the course participants, the selection and training of teachers, the coordination of the course to its final step and the production of evaluation reports and the development of policy impacts (see CARRARA *et al.*, 2017), among other actions.

9 Available at: <http://www.spm.gov.br/sobre/a-secretaria/subsecretaria-de-articulacao-institucional-e-aco-es-tematicas/coordenacao-geral-de-programas-e-aco-es-de-educacao/gender-and-diversity-in-school/course-gender-and-diversity-in-school-gde>. Access on: May 17, 2017

10 In the original: “o GDE foi ofertado por 38 universidades públicas estaduais e federais, atingindo mais de 40 mil profissionais da educação”.

11 The government of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva was formed between 2003-2011 and the government of President Dilma Rousseff between 2011-2016.

field of Brazilian educational policies for the issues of human rights, ethnic-racial relations, gender and sexuality relations, and the debate on diversity.

Among the different materials available on the GDE project, from documents that guide the proposal to those that invest in their assessment, this research project prioritized a methodological route. Initially, the documents were recognized and selected to build the main analytical work. In this scheme, a documental methodological approach (FLICK, 2009) was produced and the contributions of Costa and Porto Carvalho (2012) on the various stages of a policy were considered, from the drafting (perception and elaboration of the problem) and formulation (how the problem will be solved) processes to the stages of implementation and evaluation, in order to categorize them in this stage policy scheme and to understand their contributions to meet the objectives of this research.

After this movement, four GDE documents were selected for analysis, which were defined based on the following criteria: a) initial guiding policy documents; b) documents that showed a registration table and project experience evaluation. These criteria allowed the selection of documents related to different stages of the policy, writing a scope that deals with the implementation process, as well as on the first movements of the policy evaluation built by the actors/subjects of the proposal.

The first analyzed document, entitled Notebook SECAD 4 – Gender and sexual diversity in school: recognizing differences and overcoming prejudices (*Gênero e diversidade sexual na escola: reconhecer diferenças e superar preconceitos*) (HENRIQUES *et al.*, 2007), is part of a series of notebooks that document Secadi/MEC public policies put into action from the year 2004, and GDE project is one of them. The second analyzed document was the publication Gender and diversity in school: teacher training teachers in gender, sexuality, sexual orientation and ethnic-racial relations (*Gênero e diversidade na escola: formação de professoras/es em gênero, sexualidade, orientação sexual e relações étnico-raciais*) (PEREIRA *et al.*, 2007),¹² that was selected because it was a first attempt to systematize the experience, explaining the implementation and presenting the first evaluations based on considerations of teachers, students and tutors. The third document was Gender and diversity in school: teacher training in gender, sexuality, sexual orientation and ethnic-racial relations – Content book (*Gênero e diversidade na escola: formação de professoras/es em gênero, sexualidade, orientação sexual e relações étnico-raciais – livro de conteúdos*) (BRASIL, 2009). And finally, the fourth analyzed document was Gender and diversity in school: trajectories and impacts of an innovative public policy (*Gênero e diversidade na escola: trajetórias e repercussões de uma política pública inovadora*) (CARRARA *et al.*, 2011).

Cultural analysis was operated as the analysis procedure of the documents selected as empirical material. In this conceptual-operative field, the culture

12 The notebook is the teaching material and guidance for the teachers (book content).

concept is activated as a field of constant struggles, challenges and resistance, in which the subjects are organized in different groups (MEYER, 2003). In this scheme, culture is productive in the context of power-knowledge relations. Hall (1997, p. 33) highlights that culture not only means “to share meanings”, but also a field of continuous disputes, in which the language constitutes a privileged way by which the meanings are produced, negotiated and exchanged. Through language, forms of meaning and social classification are produced, generating positions on race, ethnicity, nationality, generation and gender, for example.

Based on this understanding, it is worth questioning how some statements on gender and diversity can be activated to explain the epistemological scheme and the political effects of assuming these concepts, producing and making up the cultural framework. In addition, when considering public policies and, in this text, especially the GDE project as part of the educational cultural mechanisms in contemporary times, in dialogue with a wide notion of education (MEYER, 2003), an analytical and educational movement of this policy was conducted, which allowed us to “describe constituent elements of rationality that produces and sustains such policies” in which “contemporary social problems are, explicit and intensely, articulated”¹³ (MEYER, 2012, p.49, *free translation*). Thus, the cultural analysis invests in placing and discussing how and with what effects the GDE project exposes gender and diversity in a conceptual and practical form

MODES OF OPERATION WITH DIVERSITY IN GDE

The “twist and turn” of the GDE analysis process from the selected policy documents challenged us on the strategic role of the diversity category in its conceptual and political (dis)associations. This main analytical movement allows us to discuss and problematize how this concept and its uses (in their power schemes) make commitments, tensions and boundaries for a proposal on “education for diversity,” as well as its narrowing/enlargement policy movements for a government agenda committed to gender transversality.

In these analytical organization/visibility movements, the first statement was that the word *diversity* is mentioned very often in the analyzed documents. This observation is directly related to certain condition assumption and/or transverse position attributed to diversity in the projects and programs produced by Secadi/MEC between 2004 and 2007, including the GDE project. On this, the *Gender and sexual diversity in school: recognizing differences and overcoming prejudices* (HENRIQUES *et al.*, 2007, p. 5, *free translation*) notebook directs that “the themes [in Secadi/MEC policy] include issues of ethnic, racial, gender, sexual, regional and cultural diversity, as well as human rights and environmental education”.¹⁴

¹³ In the original: “descrever elementos constitutivos da racionalidade que produz e sustenta tais políticas [...] se articulam, explícita e intensamente, problemas sociais contemporâneos”.

¹⁴ In the original: “os temas abordados [na política da Secadi/MEC] compreendem questões da diversidade – étnico-raciais, de gênero e diversidade sexual, regionais e culturais, bem como os direitos humanos e a educação ambiental”.

According to the proposal of Secadi/MEC, the GDE project has enunciation regularity of the term *diversity*, which operate primarily in the following positions: a) by its position on the goals agenda of the GDE project – as a social product of the policy effectiveness; and b) by the conceptual and operational investment in diversity in different documents and modules of the GDE project – as the policy operative and strategic tool. Related to the first point, excerpts found define the GDE project and indicate its goals, such as “training of education professionals policies for human rights, gender and ethnic-racial equality and respect for sexual orientation diversity”¹⁵ (HENRIQUES *et al.*, 2007, p. 16, *free translation*) or “promoting the public policies articulation of many sectors [...] aimed at promoting education for gender equality and the recognition of the diversity of sexual orientation and gender identity”¹⁶ (PEREIRA *et al.*, 2007, p. 39, *free translation*).

Regarding the activation of diversity as a conceptual operation, as mentioned in item b), the GDE project activates two main modes of operation with diversity: the concepts of cultural and sexual diversity. Both appear substantially in the documents examined and are positioned as epistemic concepts and important policy tactics for promoting education for diversity. In the GDE project scheme, theoretical operations with (cultural and sexual) diversities act as fundamental gear for the promotion of diversity – product of the policy effectiveness – and a condition for the education proposal. *Cultural diversity* is explained in the content module as “arbitrary and collectives character of behaviors and social identities”¹⁷ (CARRARA *et al.*, 2011, p. 41, *free translation*), as well as “the diversity of values, behaviors and identities according to different cultures”¹⁸ (p. 42-43, *free translation*). This diversity blended with the concept of culture is placed as a great association and/or collective of subjects and meanings, behaviors and identities, set expressions of different cultural spaces.

It seems, then, that the GDE project more comfortably activates a *diverse cultural scheme*, a meeting, a celebration of differences when it comes to cultural diversity. This theoretical and political proposition constitutes a distinct way of understanding how the difference is operationalized within the culture. On this, the concept of culture assumed here allows us to show how the relations of knowledge and power are interspersed with the classification methods, significance and social hierarchy of subjects, identities, customs, values and behavior activated by public policies such as the GDE project. An epistemic-political-analytical field of culture is neglected when diversity is taken as different, the difference as a product, the culture as stratification. Thus, dialoguing with Tomaz Tadeu da Silva (2000, p. 76, *free translation*), “it would

¹⁵ In the original: “políticas de formação de profissionais da educação para os direitos humanos, para a equidade de gênero e étnico-racial e para o respeito à diversidade de orientação sexual”.

¹⁶ In the original: “promover a articulação das políticas públicas de diversos setores [...] voltadas à promoção da educação para a igualdade de gênero e para o reconhecimento da diversidade de orientação sexual e identidade de gênero”.

¹⁷ In the original: “caráter arbitrário e coletivos de comportamentos e identidades sociais”.

¹⁸ In the original: “a diversidade de valores, comportamentos e identidades segundo diferentes culturas”.

be necessary to consider the difference not simply as a result of a process, but as the process itself”¹⁹ of production in/for the identity of culture and the difference references.

In addition, the question is: when using the concept of culture as set by the GDE project, which are the (im)possibilities of social analysis when, theoretically and methodologically, gender and sexuality are activated as distant markers or unclassified in direct/priority mode of what public policies appoint as cultural diversity? Also, the analyzed documents highlight the conceptual and political operation needed about sexual diversity and/or sexual orientation in school and in education as an important mode of operation with diversity.

A specific investment points to the visibility of gender-sexual minorities to “consider the youth experience and perceptions on issues such as sexual diversity, sexual and reproductive rights, pregnancy, desire, pleasure, affection, AIDS and drugs”²⁰ (PEREIRA *et al.*, 2007, p. 44, *free translation*). Thus, the school would need to activate sexuality and/or sexual orientation as “school is silent on the subject or deals with sexual diversity from the perspective of a ‘problem to be faced’”²¹ (PEREIRA *et al.*, 2007, p. x, *free translation*).

Analyzing the documents, the suggestion is that the GDE project assumes sexuality and/or sexual orientation as important categories that explore, along with the gender and race/ethnicity categories, its main action, which is the training of teachers with focus on education for diversity. These movements with diversity make up the analyzed policy and are constituted as operative tools that guarantee answers to the demand for “educational actions and policies that aim at the respect and value of diversity and that combat discrimination”²² (CARRARA *et al.*, 2011, p. 25, *free translation*).

In these paths announced here, diversity appears as an important strategy and as the effect of the analyzed public policy actions, teacher training specifically. Thus, as a strategy to understand the limits and the theoretical and political possibilities of the GDE project, the interest was in understanding how diversity is stated and which developments are possible. The assumption was that the language constitutes meanings within the culture (HALL, 1997). This understanding shows that diversity can work with different effects, as Cosentino and Abramowicz (2011) instigate when analyzing the different connotations of the diversity enunciation in Brazilian public policies in the education field. According to these authors, a “diversity rise” in which different meanings are assigned is possible to distinguish, but in which “the inaccuracy or unrestricted use thereof goes beyond simple compliment to differences, plurality and

¹⁹ In the original: “seria preciso considerar a diferença não simplesmente como resultado de um processo, mas como o processo mesmo”.

²⁰ In the original: “levar em conta experiências e percepções juvenis sobre temas como diversidade sexual, direitos sexuais e reprodutivos, gravidez, desejo, prazer, afeto, Aids e drogas”.

²¹ In the original: “a escola silencia sobre o tema ou lida com a diversidade sexual pela ótica de ‘problema a ser enfrentado’”.

²² In the original: “ações e políticas educacionais que visem ao respeito e à valorização da diversidade e combatam a discriminação”.

diversity, becoming a conceptual trap and an emptying and/or appeasement political strategy of the differences”²³ (COSENTINO; ABRAMOWICZ, 2011, p. 245, *free translation*).

This rise of diversity was constituted of different modes and periods. First, from the 1990s, as a result of the demands of many international organizations, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which now includes the diversity term in their documents and action plans, causing this assumption in countries such as Brazil. Beyond this point, a process of institutionalization of diversity policies within the MEC is identified,²⁴ even if the movements of appropriation and operationalization by departments have happened in different ways.

Under the theoretical-political analysis of dealing with the concept of diversity in education policies, it seems that the use as a synonym for multiplicity constituted as a concept linked to the multiculturalism and interculturalism framework. Silva (2000, p. 73) argues that the problem with this approach lies on the effect of the treatment given to diversity, making it impossible that “a perspective limited to proclaim the existence of diversity can be the basis for a pedagogy that places a political critique of identity and difference at its center”.²⁵ Corroborating Silva and Michele Vasconcelos and Jeane Felix (2016), the tactical importance considering the effects of relations knowledge-power, of public policies operating with the right to education as a right to equality and difference was indicated. This conceptual and political path would put the field of education and its institutions, such as the school, further from a “identity confinement scenario” and more as an investment in life as a political space.

Still on (im)possibilities and social effects when dealing with diversity, Larrosa and Skliar (2001) make us think about the challenges of the politics of difference, pointing to the dangerous effects of propositions that enunciate diversity, democracy, tolerance and plurality as slogans and goals of their practices, however, activating the differences,

[...] representing them, disabling them, ordering them, making them productive, converting them into well-defined problems or well-profitable goods; we would have to produce and channel flows and exchanges [...] we would have to summon all

²³ In the original: “a imprecisão ou o uso irrestrito da mesma não se restrinja ao simples elogio às diferenças, às pluralidades e às diversidades, tornando-se uma armadilha conceitual e uma estratégia política de esvaziamento e/ou apaziguamento das diferenças”.

²⁴ In this context, several programs in which diversity is mentioned were identified, for example: a) the *National Curriculum Parameters* (PCN), which stand out among its themes to “cultural diversity” and “sexual orientation”; b) *Diversity in the University and Education for citizenship and inclusive education: right to diversity* of the Department of Special Education, although the program that actually had greater resources was *Diversity in University* (COSENTINO; ABRAMOWICZ, 2011). Besides these, the creation of the *Department of Education and Literacy and Diversity* (Secadi/MEC) can also be mentioned.

²⁵ In the original: “uma perspectiva que se limita a proclamar a existência da diversidade possa servir de base para uma pedagogia que coloque no seu centro a crítica política da identidade e da diferença”.

possible otherness, to allow all communications.²⁶ (LARROSA; SKLIAR, 2001, p. 10, *free translation*)

Assuming theoretical-political and ethical commitments to the erasure of identity stratification (or its meetings at the diversity level), of cultural essentialism as a product of this governance mode and, hence, of the bodies definition/fixation movements in modernity, GDE project is problematized to affirm it as a way to produce identification policies and government of difference.

In this sense, the reference is to a diversity that functions in/for the movement of difference, assuming it as a productive process, as an operation-action-movement that is not done by the diverse. A questioning investment “not only to the identity [and to the difference], but also to the power to which it is strictly associated”²⁷ (SILVA, 2000, p. 101, *free translation*). In this line of argument, the GDE project proposes to deal with cultural and sexual diversity as the meeting of representative products, captured by a certain fixity – such as identity, difference and diversity. Moreover, contrary to a politics of difference, these categories are activated as referents for contemporary subjectivities, even though this is a policy produced as a consequence of inclusive and minority fights.

Diversity is considered here less as a celebration, meeting, gathering or assembly of stratified identity fictions, even if these possibilities have important political functions within the culture. Difference and desire are thought as possibilities to subvert the idea of functionalities of the body (and the subjects) and their fixed positions in the contemporaneity. The relation with the other for the production of the subject is considered. However, the difference and identity in binaries – that thirst for power that is woven only by the distinction and stratification of oppositions – is discouraged. The interest here is in thinking about differentiation as a cultural process

GENDER STEREOTYPES IN THE GDE: (IN)VIABILITIES OF THE BODIES?

How could gender operate under the GDE project working to produce “open records available to speaking bodies”²⁸ (PRECIADO, 2014, p. 35, *free translation*)? In this section, inspired by Vasconcelos and Felix (2016), gender was analyzed as the GDE project conceptual tool, thinking about its limits and tensions for education for diversity. Therefore, in the policy documents, gender may have many uses, such as gender identity and marks; differences, discrimination, gender-based violence; female participation in the labor market and gender equality (HENRIQUES *et al.*, 2007). Its identification occurs as an analytical and

²⁶ In the original: “representando-as, desativando-as, ordenando-as, fazendo-as produtivas, convertendo-as em problemas bem definidos ou em mercadorias bem rentáveis; teríamos de produzir e canalizar os fluxos e os intercâmbios [...] teríamos de convocar toda alteridade possível, de permitir-se todas as comunicações”.

²⁷ In the original: “não apenas à identidade [e à diferença], mas também ao poder ao qual ela está estritamente associada”.

²⁸ In the original: “registros abertos à disposição dos corpos falantes”.

political category to contrast the historical mechanisms of male dominance in the health, education and work fields (PEREIRA *et al.*, 2007). A marked contrast to a biological determination of gender also exists, highlighting the history of its conception to explain the differences and social/cultural inequalities between men and women (masculinity and femininity), pointing out that it was a

[...] concept formulated in the 1970s with profound influence of the feminist thought. The concept was created to distinguish biological and social dimensions [...] [and] it means that men and women are products of social reality and not an outcome of the anatomy of their bodies.²⁹ (BRASIL, 2009, p. 40, *free translation*)

In the produced analysis investment, note that the policy shows a distinction between gender and sex and a debate on how natural is the linearity sex-gender-sexuality (BRASIL, 2009, p. 16). Arguments located in order to oppose heteronormativity, that is, a “contrast to the conventional, male, heteronormative, white, middle-class model”³⁰ (HENRIQUES *et al.*, 2007, p. 35, *free translation*). A consistent discussion of institutional homophobia in school and on a diagnosis concerning women (data on access in different age groups) was also identified. However, contributing to the previous analyses of the GDE, two contradictory movements regarding the concept of gender were simultaneously identified: a) a smaller amount of assertive problematizations on the production of masculinities³¹ b) only a few mentions and discussions of heteronormativity allied to the invisibility of discussions on cisgender bodies and transgender bodies.

Also, in this GDE project analytical movement and recognizing the (im)possibilities of this policy, the concept of gender was used seeking to break any gender biological origin. The gender policy is agreed here to be a normative field that stabilizes the binary gender as body intelligibility mode and, therefore, naturalizes sex (BUTLER, 2003). In this scheme, gender is constituted as a synthetic, flexible, variable and capable of being transformed or imitated operation, according to Preciado (2008). This means a distinct gender analysis of those operating with the sex category, without denouncing it as a normative product/producer that works to generate/manage gender.

²⁹ In the original: “conceito formulado nos anos 1970 com profunda influência do pensamento feminista. Ele foi criado para distinguir a dimensão biológica da dimensão social [...] [e] significa que homens e mulheres são produtos da realidade social e não decorrência da anatomia de seus corpos”.

³⁰ In the original: “contraposição ao modelo convencional, masculino, heteronormativo, branco e de classe média”.

³¹ Students and teachers’ evaluations highlighted “as a gap in the texts view on men, we added the word ‘as’ introducing the quote and on the masculinity, from the relational approach enhanced by the gender category” (PEREIRA *et al.*, 2007, p. 95, *free translation*). In the original: “como lacuna nos textos o olhar sobre os homens e sobre a masculinidade, a partir da abordagem relacional potencializada pela categoria de gênero”.

In this sense, gender is “the effect of the intersection of discursive and visual representations that emanate from different institutional arrangements”³² (PRECIADO, 2008, p. 83, *free translation*), among which family, religion and the State, and its institutional and social policies apparatus, can be highlighted. This understanding allows us to discuss not only the gender technologies as a set of techniques that activate performative modes to produce the bodies bound to, and originating from, a sex materiality (PRECIADO, 2008), but also the binary notion of men and women, due to the operation of that normative category/technology (BUTLER, 2003; PRECIADO, 2014). This assumption allows us to question and problematize binary intelligibility modes that form gender and sexuality pedagogies, public policies included. Thus, the assumption enables us to question what is in the place of the unintelligible and, impossible and “non-objectifiable” in the field of public policies allegedly destined to the field of diversity and education.

Vasconcelos and Felix (2016) lead us to think how the notion of humanity and human rights policies is disputed. According to the authors, the common statements are of “a gendered and sexualized humanity or if there as a man or as a woman; as a heterosexual or as homosexual, the first terms always keeping a superior hierarchy relationship”³³ (VASCONCELOS; FÉLIX, 2016, p. 256, *free translation*). It means assuming a body like a given materiality named as biological and made eligible, intelligible and viable from a constrictive normative basis, which explains the body in a particular culture. These normative processes of body (and sex) meaning/constitution are disputed – on the one hand, the processes try to fix senses, naming and signing certain marks on their bodies; on the other, the inherent possibilities to the normative repetition, that in its ritual, can subvert those meanings constituted as “the” reference – power possibilities and paths and resistance.

Thus, the GDE project analyses performed activate this policy as a producer of meanings and consolidated on an epistemological field of gender and sexuality understanding. The analyses point to important generalized assumptions triggered by the policy and at the same time, its fissures and contradictions. First, certain conceptual/political oscillation of the GDE project relating to the bases of gender disputes was highlighted, considering that, while the document announces as the objective “to build an education policy for diversity that challenges stereotypes, prejudices, gender and ethnic-racial inequalities, sexual orientation and gender identity based discrimination”³⁴ (CARRARA *et al.*, 2011, p. 35, *free translation*), a focus reiteration in a non-sexist, non-racist and non-homophobic education is

³² In the original: “o efeito do cruzamento de representações discursivas e visuais que emanam dos diferentes dispositivos institucionais”.

³³ In the original: “uma humanidade generificada e sexualizada ou se existe como homem ou como mulher; como hétero ou como homossexual, os primeiros termos guardando sempre uma relação ‘superior’ de hierarquia”.

³⁴ In the original: “a construção de uma política de educação para a diversidade que questione estereótipos, preconceitos, desigualdades de gênero, étnico-raciais, a discriminação por orientação sexual e por identidade de gênero”.

noticed. What threads and tensions in the epistemological and political field of gender do these expressions place?

It seems that the emphasis on the sexist/non-sexist idea along with the activation of gender identities works by planning how to deal with gender based on sex as an epistemological and political referent of body definition. In addition, the scheme with gender identities reflects an education for diversity that comes from the operation with the identity concept, or rather with these “rough sketches of identity formation”³⁵ (HALBERSTAM, 2012b, p. 2).

Whether the analyzed policy would act from “gender myopia” (VASCONCELOS; SEFFNER, 2015) was speculated, i.e., if the GDE project proposals would work composing epistemic-political infeasibility for ambiguous directions, displacement across borders and abjection/resistance fields setting the target bodies/subjects of social policies. “Gender myopia” would work constituting public policies and conceiving the target subjects of the government proposals such as those ontologically intelligible from the sex-gender-desire-sexual identity linearity. A viability and readability plan that constitute a body and which bodies are possible to be conceived as object of Brazilian public policies.

Considering that “identifications are never fully and finally made” (BUTLER, 1993, p. 105), the GDE project, even disputing essentialist conceptions of gender, activates what is human, viable and worthy of being considered a body that socially matters when operating with this gender identity scheme, more consistently in the analyzed texts of this policy:

The link between gender binary (man-woman) and binary present in the sexuality matter (heterosexuality-homosexuality) is also addressed in a transversal perspective, as well as the relationships between social discrimination of gender and sexual orientation based in Brazilian society.³⁶ (CARRARA *et al.*, 2011, p. 42, *free translation*)

Thus, society invests in an agenda for the promotion and guarantee of the rights of those bodies recognized as women or men and of bodies recognized as cisgender. The GDE project activates a potent intersectional repertoire for teacher training, articulating gender, sexuality and race/ethnicity; however, the heteronormativity of the plan is considered as a possibility that should be expanded in the scheme proposed by the GDE project, breaking paths that activate possible bodies of public policies based on sex and

³⁵ In the original: “esboços grosseiros de formações identitárias”.

³⁶ In the original: “A articulação entre o binarismo de gênero (homem-mulher) e o binarismo presente no plano da sexualidade (heterossexualidade-homossexualidade) também é abordada em uma perspectiva transversal, bem como as relações entre a discriminação social por gênero e por orientação sexual na sociedade brasileira.”

[...] naturalizing gender [...], it will not develop from such category, a work of analysis, intervention and (trans)formation in policies and health services, along with managers, workers users, with all and each of us.³⁷ (VASCONCELOS; SEFFNER, 2015, p. 264-265, *free translation*)

Tensions and limits of the policies and, in the GDE project case, of an education for diversity that can work producing what is conceived as a human, worthy of intent and State action in modernity. “The questioning of reifying State agendas of a heterosexual lifestyle as a defining standard of what ‘counts’ in certain notions of humanity”³⁸ (DORNELLES, 2013, p. 38-39, *free translation*) is selected as a priority here.

Despite its investments in the rupture with one of the main expressions resulting from heteronormativity – heterosexuality –, GDE activates an epistemological field that still produces non-human and/or impossible subjects/bodies as the political focus when activating the concept of sexual orientation and sexuality in the proposals for the rupture with a homophobic society. Dialoguing with Jack Halberstam (2012a), that happens when the relationship of desire and the desiring bodies possibilities in the experience field, is disregarded to be broader than the expression of an identity through an acronym (LGBTTI,³⁹ for example) and/or broader than the orientation/gender identity resulting indications can express. Thus, identity expressions that the policy proposes when addressing the sexuality field fail to classify some bodies and consequently, the bodies are neglected as focus.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Some problematizations were pointed out on how diversity and gender can be activated on public policies, indicating its tensions and challenges for disputes by means of bodies knowledge and recognition by the State in modernity. The GDE project expanded teacher training policy in Brazil focused on education for diversity. A policy that is based on the scheme between gender, sexuality and ethnic-racial relations. Relevant theoretical and social paths to visualize the sexualized gender-race power-knowledge relations that produce social inequalities in Brazil, as well as to complicate social analysis in the education and school education fields. In addition, the performance of GDE on the national scenario has to be considered, since in the past decade investment and conservative attacks increased in the fields of culture, education, arts, in the policy to define

³⁷ In the original: “naturalizando o gênero [...] não se desenvolverá, a partir de tal categoria, um trabalho de análise, intervenção e (trans)formação nas políticas e nos serviços de saúde, junto a gestor*s, trabalhador*s e usuári*s, junto a tod*s e cada um* de nós.”

³⁸ In the original: “o questionamento das agendas de Estado reificadoras de um modelo de vida heterossexual como padrão definidor do que ‘entra na conta’ em certas noções de humanidade”.

³⁹ Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, *travesti*, and intersex.

the bodies that are worthy of educational and social policies, respect for public spaces – including the school – and effective exercise of constitutional rights.

However, from a cultural analysis, the problematization is on the epistemological scheme and the political effects of the assumption of the diversity and gender concepts by the GDE project, to question who counts as (im)possible body to promote this public policy. Initially, the fundamental was to break with the fixed and friendly logics of diversity, such as the meeting of the multiple and different, to think of the power of working with the difference as a process. Analytical and cultural propositions allow us to invest in this scheme between difference and culture to highlight the continuous production of the subjects marked as different, and to resist the marking-fixing modes woven in knowledge-power relations. In the same vein, the binary logic and identity logic structure the design and analytical discussions proposed by the GDE project, taking, more strongly and consistently, the documents analyzed as a reference.

Documents analysis was emphasized because the expansion and functionality strategy of the project over the years was sustained in conjunction with some higher education institutions, constituting as a project that was certainly carried out crossed by the specificities of each institution and region. Thus, this GDE project path allowed appropriations, negotiations and several reconfigurations by the institutions, even if a conceptual and analytical framework for the policy is presented by its documents, registering here the limits of a documental analysis.

The project stands out as very powerful and fundamental for the teacher training of those working in basic education now, in 2019, even after 13 years of its inception in the pilot format in 2006. The disputes around gender and sexuality in education and especially in school intensify the actions of organized conservative groups, building the fallacy that dealing with these issues would be the exercise of a gender ideology in schools. These conservative positions overlook the importance of a non-racist, non-sexist and non-homophobic education, guided by promotion of equality and respect for difference.

Conservative political groups and (usually Catholic and/or Protestant) religious groups invest in education to also modify documents and/or to censor teachers and pedagogical activities that deal with gender and sexuality also activating criminalization of effective teaching practice. For this purpose, they use the term “gender ideology” to argue that problematizing those themes involves subverting family values, promoting the Law Project n. 867/2015, that establishes the “*Programa de Escola Sem Partido*” (Nonpartisan School Program), in which “the practice of political and ideological indoctrination [...] that may conflict with parents or guardians of students religious or moral convictions will be forbidden”⁴⁰ (BRASIL, 2015, art. 3, p. 2). *free translation*). These schemed and affirmative strategies of “gender ideology” in schools impacted on the removal of the term *gender* of

⁴⁰ In the original: “vedadas, [...] a prática de doutrinação política e ideológica [...] que possam estar em conflito com as convicções religiosas ou morais dos pais ou responsáveis pelos estudantes”.

education plans of some states and municipalities in recent years. In addition, the agreement announcement of a school without “gender ideology” was activated as a government project in the Brazilian 2018 presidential elections.

Thus, in a contemporary analysis of the Brazilian scenario, GDE constituted/constitutes a still powerful and necessary project to the education field and for the country, because of how it deals with conceptual and fundamental political principles for a society that effectively acts to expand the possibilities of bodies in democracy. Therefore it is necessary to continue investing in the implementation of public policies that use gender and diversity as epistemic-political propositions, considering the disputes with the heteronormative schemes and considering the suspicion to fixation strategies of the subjects of difference as tactical ways to produce an effective exercise social arena of citizenship by the bodies/subjects in a democratic context.

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