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Cinema in childhood curricula: possibilities and pedagogical connections


Cinema nos currículos para as infâncias: possibilidades e aproximações pedagógicas

Cine en los currículos para la niñez y la infancia: posibilidades y aproximaciones pedagógicas

Monica Fantin ^[a] 

Florianópolis, SC, Brasil

Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC), Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação

José Douglas Alves dos Santos ^[b] 

Lages, SC, Brasil

Universidade do Planalto Catarinense (UNIPLAC), Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação

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Abstract

Aiming to reflect on the formative possibilities of cinema in addressing diverse themes related to children and childhoods in the curriculum, this text discusses a doctoral research project on cinema and education, involving a course titled Cinema, Childhood, and Education, offered in a Pedagogy program at a federal public university in southern Brazil. Based on a cycle of film screenings focused on childhoods themes, through short and feature films of different narrative genres - drama, fiction, suspense, humor, animation and documentary — the curated selection included well-known international productions and lesser-known ones, alongside national, regional, and local works, enabling the reflection on how certain themes are present in pedagogical and cinematographic discourses about childhoods. These questions are relevant for considering alternative narratives in childhood curricula and for expanding the cultural references of both teachers and

^[a] PhD in Education, Full Professor at PPGE/UFSC, e-mail: fantin.monica@gmail.com

^[b] PhD in Education, Assistant Professor at PPGE/UNIPLAC, e-mail: jdneyo.alves@gmail.com

children regarding cinematic production. The considerations in this article reaffirm the relevance of cinema in the curricular component of childhoods, encompassing the multiple languages of art, the plurality and specificities of children's universes, and the contextual aspects in which many children live and interact.

Keywords: Cinema and education. Children and childhoods. Curriculum as cultural practice.

Resumo

Com o intuito de refletir sobre as possibilidades formativas do cinema para abordar a diversidade temática referente às crianças e infâncias no currículo, este texto dialoga com uma pesquisa de doutorado sobre cinema e educação, que envolveu uma disciplina (Cinema, Infância e Educação), ministrada em um curso de Pedagogia de uma universidade pública federal no sul do Brasil. A partir de um ciclo de exibição de filmes com temáticas sobre as infâncias, por meio de curtas e longas-metragens de diferentes gêneros narrativos – drama, ficção, suspense, humor, animação e documentário –, a curadoria envolveu produções internacionais conhecidas e outras de menor alcance, bem como obras nacionais já consolidadas e outras de âmbito regional e local, permitindo refletir sobre o quanto certas temáticas estão presentes nos discursos pedagógico e cinematográfico sobre as infâncias. Tais questões são relevantes para pensar outras narrativas nos currículos das infâncias e para ampliar as referências de docentes e crianças a respeito da produção cultural cinematográfica. As considerações deste artigo reafirmam a relevância do cinema no componente curricular das infâncias, contemplando as múltiplas linguagens da arte, a pluralidade e as especificidades dos universos infantis, bem como os aspectos contextuais em que muitas crianças vivem e se relacionam.

Palavras-chave: Cinema e educação. Crianças e infâncias. Currículo como prática cultural.

Resumen

Con el objetivo de reflexionar sobre las posibilidades formativas del cine para abordar la diversidad temática relacionada con la niñez y la infancia en el currículo, este artículo se basa en una investigación doctoral sobre cine y educación, desarrollada a partir de la materia Cine, Infancia y Educación, ofrecida en un curso de Pedagogía de una universidad pública federal del sur de Brasil. Mediante un ciclo de proyecciones de cortos y largometrajes de distintos géneros narrativos —drama, ficción, suspenso, humor, animación y documental—, la curaduría incluyó tanto producciones internacionales reconocidas como otras de menor circulación, así como obras nacionales consolidadas y de alcance regional o local. Esta selección permitió analizar cómo ciertas temáticas están presentes en los discursos pedagógicos y cinematográficos sobre las infancias. Las reflexiones presentadas son relevantes para pensar otras narrativas en los currículos para las infancias, de manera que docentes, niños y niñas amplíen las referencias culturales respecto a la producción cinematográfica. Las consideraciones del artículo reafirman la importancia del cine en los componentes curriculares para y sobre las infancias, al integrar múltiples lenguajes artísticos, la pluralidad y especificidades de los mundos infantiles, así como los contextos en los que la niñez vive y se relaciona.

Palabras clave: Cine y educación. Niñez e infancia. Currículo como práctica cultural.

1. From the curriculum to movies: ways of thinking childhoods

When considering the curricula produced with and/or for childhoods, we move beyond the purely prescriptive aspects of this idea, recognizing that the curriculum extends beyond its bureaucratic and normative dimensions. In fact, raising this issue in a pedagogical discussion primarily involves considering teachers' perspectives and practices in the daily exercise of rethinking the role of knowledge in relation to the respect of children and childhood in our time.

Thinking childhood in its plurality, in its multiple and heterogeneous aspects, has been one of the most important aspects in the recent scientific production. The Canadian historian Colin Heywood calls attention to the fact that "this fascination for the childhood years is a relatively recent phenomenon" (2004, p. 10), and this interest encompasses aspects referring to different knowledge fields: from Sociology, to Anthropology, from Medicine to Psychology, from Arts to History, from Pedagogy to Philosophy. This helps highlight the extent to which children and childhoods are no longer marginal notions in contemporary scientific production (Santos, 2021).

Nowadays we know that, as a phase of life, childhood in its singularity is the time when individuals try experiences that will guide or configure the formation of their characters and destinies (Korczak, 1984; Heywood, 2004; Harris, 2019; Arroyo, 2019). We say configure, and not *determine*, because we believe that social and circumstantial configurations do not impose a specific end to individuals, as other factors influence this perspective.

Therefore, when referring to generational thought, we adopt the concept of childhood in the singular, considering broader historical aspects regarding the image of the child as a sociocultural category. In other words, childhood is regarded as a permanent category in society (Qvortrup, 1993; Corsaro, 2011; Sarmento, 2013). When we refer to a more specific context, which situates children in their varied "social, ethnic-cultural configurations, as well as the geographical location- urban, rural, indigenous, riverside, *quilombola*, etc. – and the multiplicities of the subject-time-space" (Fantin et al., 2023, p. 100), we adopt the concept of childhoods in plural.

In the historical scope, the child and, consequently, childhood were almost always defined in the past tense, from their future social potential. The Polish physician and pedagogue Janusz Korczak (1984) questioned whether the image we created about children and childhood in the scientific, political, and pedagogical discourses was nothing but an illusion. Not by chance, the German philosopher Walter Benjamin (2002) considered artists and poets closer to children than well-intentioned pedagogues and scientists.

This questioning is fundamental when referring to teacher education courses and even the social perception produced about children and childhoods nowadays. Freitas (2003) stresses that the scientific discourses about childhood often show a "phantasmagoric" image of the being to which the narratives are guided. While the pedagogical and scientific discourse does not consider the questions posed by children themselves regarding the images attributed and associated with them, we will, in this sense, continue to have a dimension that is more illusory than real (Arroyo, 2019).

This aspect can be related to the theories of curriculum discussed by Silva (1999a, 1999b). When making a historical balance of the theories that analyze the role of curriculum in its relationship to school-society and school-subject, the conception of curriculum as a set of knowledge, practices, and norms regarding prescribed educational objectives directly connected to a power relation does not end or is limited to the school. The selection of curriculum content and its transmission and/or pedagogical mediation reflect the political posture of certain social groups. However, they do not determine how this knowledge should be worked into school.

When questioning the production of this curriculum and to whom it politically serves, the critical and post-critical theories contribute to thinking its "phantasmagoria" when facing the discourses produced by it. About what curriculum are they talking about, and how is this discourse connected to the objective reality of daily relationships in schools? Thus, even the notion of hidden curriculum gains another connotation, because it leaves the more conservative sphere – when it receives a role of shaping and maintaining the current order – toward a more critical one: when it presents itself as a possibility of contradiction acting in the "gaps" of the system.

When considering the connections among education, culture, and their symbolic and discursive processes, the curriculum can be defined as “a field in which multiple elements implied in power relations are at stake, the school and the curriculum are territories of production, circulation, and consolidation of meanings” (Costa, 1999, p. 37). Faced with the displacements of contents and values in the curriculum practices, Oliveira and Destro (2007) suggest a conceptual reconstruction situating the curriculum as a cultural practice, that is, as the production of senses and meanings. The meanings are “subjectively valid and, at the same time, are objectively present in the contemporary world – in our actions, institutions, rituals, and practices” (Hall, 1997, p. 24).

“Understanding the curriculum as a cultural practice means considering the collection of experiences in the school context that involve a system of values, behaviors, and knowledges, and not only relationships between forms and contents to be assimilated” (Fantin, 2012, p. 441). Thus, the curriculum encompasses all types of knowledge, learnings, experiences, and absences that students might have as they are schooled and participate in a broader culture.

An alternative curriculum design involves inherent possibilities for subjects that connect with the world and with others also in school, but not, as Arroyo (2011) suggests, when emphasizing the curriculum as a frontier territory that allows redirecting the gaze and the knowledge learned in school. In this frontier territory, arts serve as bridges that help establish other pathways within the pedagogical proposals with multiple knowledges that enter the school. Bridges between the knowledge from the curriculum guidance and the knowledge that comprises individual and collective experiences that intercross the school context.

In this articulation of different types of knowledge, formal and informal learning, and cultural and artistic practices, movies stand out when presenting themes and questions that establish themselves as references closer to the everyday reality of children’s lives and the representation of their childhoods, as we can see with the experience we share in this text, opening ways for the polysemy, plurality, multiplicity, and multimodality of knowledge and human experiences.

In this perspective, it is fundamental to understand that the role of the curriculum for schools and childhoods is to present several cultural, local, and global expressions, through proposals that promote understanding, respect, and the valuing of differences. A perspective that considers the various conditions of living childhoods from the specificities and singularities involving social class, ethnicity, gender, geographical location, and their intersectionalities (Fantin et al., 2023).

Thinking such questions in school involves exploring cultural roots, understanding other cultures, potentializing knowledges, and transversal competencies that can contribute to the development of key aspects of a curriculum for childhoods involving multiple languages, communication, collaboration, imagination, and critical thinking.

2. From the curriculum to the classroom

If the curriculum supposedly sediments a world knowledge that aims to maintain the political-economic order of a given society (Apple, 1982), the arts raise different viewpoints about the aspects that compose this society. In the sense proposed here, one of these aspects is to rethink childhoods. If it is not possible to analyze the curriculum disregarding the power relations that seek to determine a gaze and perception, it is not possible to analyze childhoods while disregarding the historical, cultural, and social aspects that produce several gazes/images about them.

Understanding the curriculum as a built culture from the processes and social interactions reminds us to analyze other questions, such as teachers’ language, devices and artifacts used, not only because they are mediators of culture in school, but because they create what is considered as the culture of teachers and students, which, in turn, provide several types of relationships and interactions between them and with the broader culture, as Sacristán (1995) highlights. Still, according to Sacristán (1998), the system of constant review, which should be part of curriculum production and school, refers to how knowledge guides our gaze and directs our perception.

More than a system closed in itself, we understand that the curriculum should continue to be open to debate, to production, and to the inclusion of different knowledges, with interpretations and translations as plural as possible. This is something that art, in general, in its multiple expressions and manifestations, enables better than the academic discourse because, differently from the latter, the former does not intend to be an imperative of behaviors from the produced knowledge (Santos, 2021; Macedo; Sierra, 2024).

We highlight, in particular, the seventh art because the potential of cinema and audiovisual media in education has been widely studied and included in several curriculum proposals from diverse sociocultural contexts (Bazalgette, 1991; Rivoltella, 1998; Reia-Baptista, 2002; Fantin, 2006; Bergala, 2008; Barbosa & Santos, 2014; Santos, 2021; Fresquet et al., 2024; Fantin et al., 2025).

After all, a substantial part of contemporary culture is immaterial because several representations mediate the knowledge produced through the means and artifacts of digital culture. A significant part of what we know today involves mediated cultural experiences that come from the audiovisual repertoire present in traditional (radio, newspaper, cinema, and television) and digital media, which is increasingly more present and available in platforms of audiovisual sharing. These experiences are part of an understanding of curriculum as cultural practice.

Aiming to problematize such questions, the subject *Cinema, Infância e Educação* [Cinema, Childhood, and Education] was developed in a Pedagogy course of a federal university, as well as the dialogue of this experience with a part of a doctoral research conducted between 2017 and 2021. This approximation between cinema and childhood in teachers' education facilitated reflection on the discourses, representations, and images of contemporary children and childhoods within the academic curriculum, guided by curated themes and movies, and a methodology that could also be considered in childhood curricula.

The subject has been offered in the course since 2010, proposing to screen films with themes of childhood and teacher education, involving the appreciation/fruition, analysis/reflection of films in different cultural spaces; and sometimes with audiovisual production, such as cinema workshops and other proposals incorporated into the process. In this reflection, we discuss the proposal developed in 2020, which was one of the research objects of the aforementioned PhD.

2.1 A contextual note

In 2020, due to COVID-19 in Brazil, students' and teachers' routines underwent a change and structural and organizational reconfiguration with the interruption of in-person classes. As the physical spaces of the school and academic institutions were closed, an alternative to minimize the sanitary, political, and pedagogical implications in education was to resume classes in an online format, with synchronous and asynchronous meetings¹. This reorganization process greatly affected the pedagogical relationship between the subjects and the institutions in their different segments: teachers-students, students-school, teachers-teachers, students-school, students-students, school/university-community (Barros, 2022).

The pandemic led to serious consequences, many of them still present in different scopes and dimensions: isolation, anxiety, concerns, and others that were part of the scenario of physical distancing. At that moment, movies and series became essential to "ease" a bit the tension and to reflect about several theme: the frailty of life and its daily miracle, death and its traumas, the spaces of being in society, the value of family affection, the existential crisis, each person's priorities, the formative processes that surpass the walls of schools and universities, and many others.

Several studies show the importance of art in our lives and particularly during the pandemic (Cascino, 2020; Rodrigues et al., 2021; Gasperi, 2021). If not for access to cultural and artistic productions during the lockdown, the

¹ About the complexity of this process and its sanitary, economic, social, and educational consequences, see Sousa Santos, 2020; Morin & Abouessalam, 2020; Harari, 2020; Krenak, 2020; Couto, 2020; Pretto & Bonilla, 2020; Fantin, 2013.

pandemic's problems could have been even more severe, as contact with art and the aesthetic experience reinforces what Austrian philosopher Ernst Fischer terms the "virtue of the magic" (2015, p. 20).

With a similar argument, the Brazilian writer and art critic Ferreira Gullar talks about the complex alchemy in art, which can transform pain in aesthetic joy, highlighting that "life, with all it offers, is not enough" (2015, n/p.), referring us to the Portuguese poet and philosophers Fernando Pessoa, when stating that every art "is a confession that life is not enough" (1966, p. 285).

On his turn, the Czech poet Rainer Maria Rilke described art as "the love of God" (2011, p. 124), associating it with the conception of life, a way of being that approximates us from a sensation of the sacred, the sublime, in the sense of becoming an experience that wisely guides our gaze and behavior when faced with certain situations, specially the darkest and/or most tragic. We observed the extent to which the artistic production helped students when the classes resumed in the subject *Cinema, Infância e Educação*, which served as one of the empirical bases for the doctoral research.

The subject's Teaching Plan was adapted for online teaching, offering synchronous and asynchronous meetings, in alternate weeks, in which we would discuss the movies indicated during the week (in the in-person modality the movies were screened in class). During the meetings, we opted for a welcoming approach, considering the context and the students' testimonies, which portrayed anxiety and a "mix of feelings", some of them stating that series and movies "saved them" or were "a comfort" and a "balm" when faced with so much tragedy².

2.2 A curriculum proposal with films

In the excerpt of the empirical research developed in dialogue with the subject, we focus here on the aesthetic experience with film texts about childhoods. We believe that movies can widen the understanding about a series of meaningful questions in the formation of subjects, as evidenced in our studies (Fantin, 2006; Santos, 2016, 2021), because they establish themselves as references to understand and question the most diverse themes.

Seeking to perceive how cinema, as a curriculum component, can help open epistemological horizons regarding different themes of teachers' work and pedagogical actions, we raise some reflections based on an activity proposed in the subject, the collective writing of texts produced by the students, published in an educational blog about the movies watched. This activity helped to perceive the multiplicity of readings concerning childhood(s).

The methodology used, considering the circumstances, was to weekly send links to the class with the movies through the platform *Moodle*. We divided the class into groups and each group was responsible for writing a text produced by its members about the movie, which would be published on the subject's blog. Furthermore, the group would be responsible for the initial mediation of classes, raising their classmates' reflections.

We share below some excerpts of the texts published in the blog and highlight some students' comments regarding the works and what the film reading triggered them to think about children, childhoods, and teacher practice³. Such experience shows the importance of working on these themes in the curriculum without limiting ourselves to more conventional models. "Beyond books as main material references in formation, cinematographic narratives establish themselves as a relevant and necessary theoretical and reflexive base, with a conceptual pedagogical guidance" (Santos & Fantin, 2023, p. 18).

Thus, some works we briefly present here could compose a curriculum about childhoods. We are aware of several studies and pedagogical proposals involving film curatorship; however, in this reflection excerpt, we provide just a few examples.

² This sensation can also be present in schools, as evidenced by similar testimonies from children and teachers, as shown in the research conducted with Early Childhood Education teachers about cultural productions offered to children (Santos, 2020). Furthermore, several studies show the importance of films in the education of children's imaginary (Fantin, 2006, 2009) and in the construction of subjectivities (Santos & Fantin, 2023).

³ The excerpts in italics refer to the posts, while students' comments at the blog and/or during the classes are highlighted between quotation marks.

2.2.1 *Butterfly (La lengua de las mariposas, 1999, by José Luis Cuerda)*

The relationship between a seven-year-old child called Moncho and his teacher, Don Gregorio. The teacher's role stands out due to how he paid attention to the children and sought to find opportunities for integral learning, emphasizing mainly the emotional questions and the classes outside the restricted school environment.

The main themes observed by the class were: "the loss of childhood innocence" or the "maturing" of the child's character; the relationship teacher-student, and how the teacher stimulated and considered the child's autonomy and critical thinking; the differentiated education, the "several classrooms" explored by the teacher through his didactics; Moncho's fear to go to school and his adaptation process; the social effects of war through the child's perspective; a more understanding and less repressive pedagogical practice; the dialogue as a mediation proposal; among other questions that make the work "very necessary for us as future teachers".

"Enchantment is a defining word in the relationship between Don Gregorio and his students", affirms Lopes (2006, p. 175), mainly the relationship he established with Moncho. Lopes also states that this enchantment takes place through the teachers' love for his pedagogical actions, the children, and knowledge, opening in the end of his narrative "several interpretation possibilities" (2006, p. 176). The way the teacher received and welcomed his students, as well as the open-air classes, were central points and almost unanimous in the students' discussions.

Regarding children's autonomy, according to Korczak (1984), in the adult-child relationship, the child often assumes a supporting role, one with no autonomy, and that cannot even be considered a subject of rights. Their knowledge, feelings, and experiences are disregarded (if not belittled), as if they were inferior or irrelevant, something that the movie exemplifies well.

About the classes outside the school, the scenes presented a representation of the class-tour according to the French pedagogue Célestin Freinet (1973), which provided children with an experience that could relate to everyday life and the subjective elements of the school and scientific knowledge proposed. Demonstrating in the practice the theories studied, Freinet, and Don Gregorio, instigated curiosity and fomented the will to know the students, starting from a sensitive listening and the respect to the most elementary doubts.

2.2.2 *The boy who harnessed the wind (2019, by Chiwetel Ejiofor)*

The story of a child and several contextual processes through which he goes through regarding his relationship with the family, the school, the community, and himself. The extent to which the power of curiosity through thought, associated with imagination, will help him in his life path.

"The film makes us reflect on the little and simple things in life and see how persistence is inspiring and important", commented the group. "It is sad to think that there are many Williams around, with so much potential and minimal opportunities". The group also stated that the film "is an important resource to be used in the classes, because, besides presenting elements of a different culture, teachers can work interdisciplinarily because it approaches historical and geographical themes, as well as scientific and biological ones.

Other aspects highlighted were: "the hunger for studying"; the difficulty regarding the "access and permanence" in school; "it shows that different childhoods exist"; and "brings the reality of many children"; the access to technology", the relevance of having the right to a quality education guaranteed; and how the film instigates the feeling and thinking "in that reality" presented.

The diversity of questions that emerged in the text produced by the group and the class's comments mainly emphasizes the hardships faced by the child studying and continuing in school, as well as the cultural and economic aspects inherent to his political and social context. The dimension of access to technological resources is present (or, in this case, the lack of access), which corroborates studies that show the need to consider such aspects when approaching childhood in the formative processes (Fantin, 2009; Buckingham, 2010).

Interdisciplinarity was also mentioned in the text and in the comments, when suggesting that the movies could be worked in/with other subjects due to the different topics they may approach. This shows how a movie can mobilize projects and actions in different subjects, promoting greater participation among teachers, subjects, contents, and students (Rizzo Junior, 2011; Santos, 2016).

Still about the movie, Santos & Mualaca (2021) called attention to the fact that the protagonist, besides being a child, is black, and, different than other secondary or low-relevant roles (by being black or by being a child), he is the one who stands out in the narrative. For the authors, the work allows us to "learn about different issues regarding life and its different contexts and circumstances" (2021, p. 478).

2.2.3 The Jar (Khomreh, 1992, by Ebrahim Forouzesh)

Students empathized and got together to face an issue involving their physical security (as, without the jar, children could only access the stream water near the school). Although the teacher was considered authoritarian in certain cases, he was concerned with sharing his knowledge and help children –even if he was going through difficulties himself.

"Despite the movie's simplicity, it provokes many reflections that are not only restricted to the pedagogical sphere", students highlighted, quoting as examples: the teacher's role in the community; school precariousness; the concept of childhood; the social, cultural, and other differences that highlight the plurality of themes and questions that can be raised through this film.

They also mentioned the teacher as the single school representative; a different historical and cultural context that helps thinking our own reality; the relevance of collective work; children's relationships with their peers and with adults; the jar as a character, not only as an object. We can say that "The Jar" is part of a series of other Iranian movies belonging to what Lopes calls the flourishing of local cinematographic realism and that "place children in vogue" (2012, p. 165).

The movie raises questions concerning teachers' work and the material conditions to play such a role in society, without appealing to these professionals' kindness and love, as Arroyo (2007) considers and Marques also stresses, when reminding that in the movie the teacher "goes without eating, donates the little food and money he has, and [...] works all time for the school" (2016, p. 45).

2.2.4 Coraline (2009, by Henry Selick) and Alike (2015, by Henry Selick)

Coraline presents a child faced with the fears and challenges that a new change brings to her life, as well as some dilemmas in her relationship with her parents. It highlights children's loneliness and the dangers of the illusion of a "perfect" world, as nothing is what it seems under the protagonist's view. Alike raises a parallel between childhood and adult life, weaving a powerful pedagogical criticism of the model of society and school/education presented. It stresses the role of art in the formation and the importance of listening to children.

When portraying different forms of "abandonment", both movies raise reflections associated with this contemporary social configuration that removes from many children their right to play, to fun, to dream, to culture, to the contact with diverse artistic expressions, as well as respect, love, human adventure without turning them into inhuman misfortunes (Korczak, 1984; Tonucci, 2008; Arroyo, 2019).

Aspects that imply in a project of society and school, which values or not its educational processes, imagination, dream, relationships, play and games, getting closer to practices and values that make us smile, Alves (2018) and Hortélio (2020) suggest. According to the authors, these should be the sense and the end of education, leaving behind their more conventional practices and reconfiguring itself to help build other formative models, aesthetics, and sensibilities.

2.2.5 Limbo, or from those suffering bullying (*Limbo, ou de quem sofre bullying*) and *Os Melhores Amigos de Um Robô* (The best friends of a robot)⁴

The works contribute to thinking about the cinematographic production made by children, and the relationship between media-education from the students' perspectives. With important themes widely present in the school context, the films bring children as protagonists and focus on their perspective, including an authorial dimension.

The short films "talk, in a general way, about friendship in different contexts" and help "reflect on the importance of media-education in educational environments and children's active participation". In this sense, we perceive the critical and creative dimensions of an educational work with media, which both short films made perceptible, showing experiences that demonstrate that it is "possible not only to teach *with, about, and through* the means, but to form spectators/authors/critical producers that negotiate meanings, who construct knowledge, and interact in several ways as objects of culture" (Fantin, 2011, p. 30).

Another aspect to be highlighted is the importance of working on the productive dimension of cinema in formation. This formative demand can approximate cinema to the epistemological and methodological field (in permanent construction) of media-education, which "establishes it as a space of theoretical reflection about the cultural practices and also as an educational action in a transformative perspective to reapproximate culture, education, and citizenship" (Fantin, 2011, p. 30).

2.2.6 Drops of Joy (*Tarja Branca*, 2014, by Cacau Rhoden) and *Target Market: Kids* (*Criança, a Alma do Negócio*, 2008, by Estela Renner)

Two works that portray play as a fundamental element for children, highlighting its plurality in different contexts.

Play is a key formation element. "Children's culture is play", states Lydia Hortélio (2020, s/p). This perspective brings to the educational processes (formal/informal) the centrality of a formation in contact with the arts, playing, and games, in contact and in exchange with other people (in the relationship between peers and teacher-student). From the group text and the comments, we can resume what Galeano (2009) stressed: lucky are the children that can be children, who have their childhood time respected.

By highlighting the diverse games and representations of play within the national territory, *Tarja Branca* helped students perceive the numerous and varied childhoods in our country. As we have also seen at *Criança, a Alma do Negócio*, from the perception of consumption regarding toys and certain technologies (such as the cellphone). As the movie is from 2008, the group also questioned the changes in the consumptions and media and cultural practices occurred in the scope of digital culture in the last years, updating certain discussions and problematizing the phenomenon of children youtubers and influencers.

Plural childhoods were identified in the movies from the socioeconomic configurations portrayed, mainly focused on the dimension of play and consumption- how the consumption power creates a disparity in access to given resources and material goods and how this reverberates in individual and social thought and behavior. Digital culture reveals how children participate in this dynamic (Buckingham, 2000, 2010). In this case, more than accessing the devices and their resources, it works as a space of experiences that carry within it the established practices and that constantly reconfigure itself (Costa, 2008; Pretto & Assis, 2008).

The knowledges and behaviors signaled by media-education become fundamental for the citizen formation that teachers and schools should strive to achieve, considering the different childhoods through these sociocultural and

⁴ *Limbo* was produced by children in Grades 4 and 5 at the Núcleo de Educação da Infância from Colégio de Aplicação da Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte, NEI/CAP/UFRN, during workshops conducted by Sihan Felix, offered in the outreach project Práticas Cineclubistas na Escola da Infância – Cineclubes –, coordinated by Professor Milene Figueiredo in 2017. *Os melhores amigos de um robô* was produced, scripted, acted, and directed by Grade 1 children, coordinated by the teachers Karina Sena and Sandro Cordeiro in the context of the project Os robôs e as tecnologias developed in 2018.

political differences, without defining *a priori* children as "natives" of a given culture that, despite affecting everyone, has quite an unequal criteria of access, knowledge, and opportunities. Thus, inequalities and differences cannot be ignored but tensioned so that they can be better understood in educational action and everyday practices (Fantin, 2009; Buckingham, 2010; Fantin & Rivoltella, 2012).

3. Final remarks

Articulating a proposal to reflect on children and childhoods through cinema leads us to think of cinema itself as a "cultural curriculum". In this case, movies bring and/or foment questions that affect the subjectivation process of spectators, in the development of their way of seeing the world and what happens in it (Santos, 2021).

We know that, beyond school, other social spheres teach knowledges, information, behaviors, and practices that also build curriculum in articulation with formal and non-formal learnings. When considering the communicative and reflexive power that films and other arts offer, we emphasize their curricular power.

As a language, information vehicle, communication, and reflection, films raise different viewpoints about the aspects that compose society. As a work of art, it does so less in the sense of stating a single viewpoint and more in the sense of stimulating questions about the aspects of fiction and reality, social organization, power relations, and the several meanings of the sociocultural dynamics, while keeping the ability to imagine other possible realities.

"When considering that film texts allow other pedagogical readings in the institutional space regarding the themes approached, it is possible to presume their relevance as a source and as a reference in such process" (Santos & Fantin, 2023). Beyond fruition, cinema in the curriculum and in the school-academic formative process also becomes a political and educational act, and even an act of resistance and transgression against certain conceptions and practices that seek to eliminate art and the aesthetic experience of education.

Foreseen in the Federal Constitution (Brasil, 1988) and still not guaranteed to all people, the right to culture and art is a way to transform the curriculum for childhoods into a teaching-learning process closer to everyday life, as many movies can raise social readings and the construction of subjective meanings that are related to their lives.

When arguing about cinema in the curriculum of childhoods and teacher education, we believe it can be contemplated in the pedagogical practice with children in several ways: as transversal themes, interdisciplinary projects, workshops, cine clubs, and many other possibilities, seeking to minimize the "mismatch between the strong presence of media [and technologies] in everyday life and in the culture of children and young people and the near absence of teacher training and school curriculum" (Fantin, 2012, p. 437). From this perspective, a school aligned with the challenges of its time should contribute to children's formation through a school curriculum that promotes citizenship and children's rights, alongside playful, educational, and cultural practices. We understand that art may be a horizon in this sense, when proposing other school and educational configurations.

In this reflection, we explored the idea of a cinema-based curriculum for childhoods, so that Pedagogy students and future teachers could learn to consider it as a language, text, art, media, educational and social practice, with its own statute and epistemology, having the same importance as other formative practices. It is essential to highlight such a perspective because the presence of cinema in education is still closely related to the instrumental use of films, as a resource to be used in "spare time", as a substitute, or only as entertainment, limiting their artistic and cultural potential.

In this exercise of the gaze towards film reading, various challenges range from institutional infrastructure to teacher education. However, such conditions do not prevent movies from being present and being part of students' formative processes. Furthermore, Law 13.006/2014 foresees the obligation of screening two hours of national films a month as a complementary activity to the curriculum.

"There are many ways of relating cinema and education", Rogério de Almeida comments, "from more conservative approaches that consider cinema as a didactic tool to be used to teach in the classroom, up to wider

approaches that understand cinema as a producer of senses" (2017, p. 23). There are many ways to relate cinema to childhood and to teachers' actions, as evident in the comments from students participating in the subject and, consequently, in the research presented throughout this text.

When considering the historical singularity of such a proposal, in the context of the pandemic period, we should bring here other comments from the class that emerged during the evaluation of the experience and the learning triggered by the subject. These fragments of testimonies contribute to understanding the aesthetic value of films in the formative process and how this action can go beyond the objectives foreseen in the curriculum.

According to the students, the subject changed their perspective, because they previously perceived "movies as just a hobby" and that it was "very special", mainly in the scenario they were experiencing, in which they could "integrate the experiences and learnings with the family" when watching and discussing the films with them. A student commented that some friends and relatives asked if she had learned anything or if she had just "watched" films during the subject. According to her, "it was much learning".

Others highlighted that the mediations and a non-standard assessment process was quite pertinent, mainly due to the novelty of online education, and thanked for what they had learned. "This exchange was very interesting and enriching for our gaze. A practical lesson on what to do" regarding thinking about childhoods and their specificities through films.

One of the students emphasized that "each film was a great learning experience as a person and sharing with the classmates was very special". Another observed that "it was amazing to perceive how different the classes became, in a light way, bringing much knowledge and opening several ways of thinking and reflecting about everything around us". Students noted that they "learned to see" movies as more than just a recreational activity, developing a certain competency to analyze and better understand the numerous layers of interpretation in film images.

When affirming the potential of a curriculum targeting childhoods from cinema as a means or as an end, we emphasize the value of films as a curriculum proposal in which films have a referential and methodological centrality. This understanding is clear when considering the power of themes that emerged during the movie discussions in the experience presented here.

Among some examples, we can cite: the specificities and singularities of children and childhood(s); the problem of access and permanence of school in the subjects' lives; the role of school and educators in the formation and development of children's gaze over the world and themselves; the different childhoods that exist and their many contradictions; the relationship children-adults and childhoods-society; among others that could certainly be explored in a curriculum about/for childhoods with a sufficient theoretical quality to the formative process.

Surely many other themes could be contemplated from the movies presented, as well as other theoretical-methodological approaches about the relationship between cinema and curriculum for childhoods. We also highlighted the imaginary, the smile, the dream, the play, the arts, the emotions, the feeling, and the thinking promoted by films and their educational mediations, as a set of elements that interact and dialogue among themselves within each of us.

Finally, the experience with films in teacher education can inspire other curriculum practices with children in school, as well as with young people and adults in the university. After all, the practices involving cinema in the curriculum of childhoods enable subjectivation processes that might build other ways of educating and building curricula.

Curricula in movement that can be created with, about, and/or for children, which encompass playfulness, art, beauty, imagination, and the possible inventiveness to live the childhoods within and outside school, carefully listening to all enigmas, curiosities, challenges, and poetry that make up education with art.

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