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## Interactions and play: childhood curriculum as experiences of the 'unseen'

Interações e brincadeiras: O currículo das infâncias como  
experiências do “não ver”

Interacciones y juegos: el currículo de las infancias como  
experiencias del “no ver”

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### Abstract

The article proposes a reflection on the Early Childhood Education curriculum based on the notions of event, deconstruction, and experience, in dialogue with the works of Jacques Derrida and Clarice Lispector. The epigraph from *Memoirs of the Blind*, by Derrida, and fragments from *Água Viva*, by Lispector — which reveal a writing marked by “not seeing” — are taken as a metaphor for the unpredictability that constitutes the curricula lived with childhoods. We return to the most recent curriculum policies for Early Childhood Education — the *National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (DCNEI, 2009)* and the *National Common Curricular Base (BNCC, 2018)* — where the centrality of interactions and play as structuring axes of pedagogical practice in Early Childhood Education is emphasized, as a possibility to question the way these elements may be captured by a prescriptive logic. In another direction, we argue in favor of a curriculum as an unpredictable event, movements

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of otherness, and subjectivation processes that escape normativity, associating it with the metaphor of "blind writing," from Derrida, as a potential way to think of a curriculum built in the encounter with the other and the unexpected — not as error, but as a creative gesture. Likewise, the discontinuous and non-linear flow of Clarice Lispector's writing is called upon as an image of an inventive curriculum, open to difference and to the multiplicity of childhoods, as an ethical and aesthetic invitation to think of the school as a space of shared experiences, where interactions and play, as well as the curriculum itself, function as acts of invention, resistance, and expression of differences.

**Keywords:** Curriculum. Childhoods. Interactions. Play. Experience.

## Resumo

O artigo propõe uma reflexão sobre o currículo da Educação Infantil a partir das noções de acontecimento, desconstrução e experiência, dialogadas com as obras de Jacques Derrida e Clarice Lispector. A epígrafe de Memórias de Cego, de Derrida, e os fragmentos de Água Viva, de Lispector, evidenciam uma escrita marcada pelo "não ver" e são tomados como metáfora para a imprevisibilidade que constitui os currículos vividos com as infâncias. Voltamo-nos para as políticas curriculares da educação infantil mais recentes - Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais da Educação Infantil (DCNEI, 2009) e a Base Nacional Comum Curricular (BNCC, 2018) - nelas se evidencia a centralidade das interações e brincadeiras como eixos estruturantes da prática pedagógica na Educação Infantil, como possibilidade de problematizar a forma como tais elementos podem ser capturados por uma lógica prescritiva. Noutra direção, argumentamos em favor de currículo como acontecimento imprevisível, movimentos de alteridade, e processos de subjetivação que escapam à normatividade, associando-o à metáfora da "escrita cega", de Derrida, como potência para pensar um currículo que se faz no encontro com o outro e no inesperado – não como erro, mas como gesto criador. Da mesma forma, o fluxo descontínuo e não linear da escrita de Clarice Lispector é convocado como imagem de um currículo inventivo, aberto à diferença, e à multiplicidade de infâncias, como convite ético e estético para pensar a escola como espaço de experiências partilhadas, onde as interações e brincadeiras, assim como o currículo, funcionam como atos de invenção, resistência e expressão das diferenças.

**Palavras-chave:** Currículos. Infâncias. Interações. Brincadeiras. Experiência.

## Resumen

El artículo propone una reflexión sobre el currículo de la Educación Infantil a partir de las nociones de acontecimiento, desconstrucción y experiencia, en diálogo con las obras de Jacques Derrida y Clarice Lispector. La epígrafe de Memorias de ciego, de Derrida, y fragmentos de Agua Viva, de Lispector —donde se evidencia una escritura marcada por el "no ver"— son tomados como metáfora de la imprevisibilidad que constituye los currículos vividos con las infancias. Retomamos las políticas curriculares más recientes para la educación infantil —las Directrices Curriculares Nacionales para la Educación Infantil (DCNEI, 2009) y la Base Nacional Común Curricular (BNCC, 2018)— donde se evidencia la centralidad de las interacciones y los juegos como ejes estructurantes de la práctica pedagógica en la Educación Infantil, como posibilidad de problematizar la forma en que tales elementos pueden ser capturados por una lógica prescriptiva. En otra dirección, argumentamos a favor de un currículo como acontecimiento imprevisible, movimientos de alteridad y procesos de subjetivación que escapan a la normatividad, asociándolo a la metáfora de la "escritura ciega" de Derrida, como potencia para pensar un currículo que se construye en el encuentro con el otro y con lo inesperado —no como error, sino como gesto creador. Del mismo modo, el flujo descontínuo y no lineal de la escritura de Clarice Lispector es convocado como imagen de un currículo inventivo, abierto a la diferencia y a la multiplicidad de las infancias, como una invitación ética y estética para pensar la escuela como un espacio de experiencias compartidas, donde las interacciones y los juegos, así como el currículo, funcionan como actos de invención, resistencia y expresión de las diferencias.

**Palabras clave:** Currículos. Infancias. Interacciones. Juegos. Experiencia.

## 1. Introduction

By accident, and sometimes on the brink of an accident, I find myself writing without seeing. Not with my eyes closed, to be sure, but open and disoriented in the night; or else during the day, my eyes fixed on something else, while looking elsewhere (...) (Derrida, 2010, p. 11).

The epigraph we use to start this text is part of the work "Memoirs of the Blind: The Self-Portrait and Other Ruins" by Jacques Derrida (2010) and will help us compose, together with Clarice Lispector's writings in *Agua Viva*, the pathway of this text that intends to problematize how curricula have been produced with childhood, starting from the Derridian ideal of experience and happening. In this sense, writing blindly, at night, or dodging the gaze from the rigidity of the paper and the pre-determined path, presents itself as a possibility of not knowing exactly what will come, because faced with this experience of "unseen" there is a gap between the intention and the gesture, between idea and shape, as what escapes control. However, it is not blindless as a mistake, but as a condition of creation, which in each trace makes something new emerge. In this way, we dare to think of the curriculum for childhood as an event, an unpredictability, a scape.

In *Água Viva*, a book by Clarice, first published in 1973, the author commits herself with the words as a fourth dimension, free from the limits of an orthodox narrative struct, Clarice flirts, plays, interacts with the reader from a continuous flow of words.

You don't understand music: you hear it. So hear me with your whole body. When you come to read me you will ask why I don't keep to painting and my exhibitions, since I write so rough and disorderly. It's because now I feel the need for words—and what I'm writing is new to me because until now my true word has never been touched. The word is my fourth dimension (Linspector, 2019, p. 11).

And the child, which is her fourth dimension? Play? The child, as Lispector, is not restricted to playing with the body, with the word, with the possibilities of being in a world that seeks to dialogue with her, that interacts with her not taking it as a given, but as created, a deconstructive gesture that, challenging the world's order, open possibilities for other meanings. The child plays a game that unstable her, in a constant deferral that shows that the meaning might be different. Playing and interacting, opening to be affected by what the other provokes, in the meeting with the "power or the vulnerability of/with the other" (Almeida, 2018, p.120).

As Clarice, in this text, we dare, through words, to seek possibilities of thinking and defending curriculum as experience. In the path chosen is one that sees poetry in the everyday life of school, which is not concerned with the order of the facts, but that seeks in them and from them a dialogue with the many possibilities that emerge from the interactions and plays with/of children. About this, we also turn our gaze on how Brazilian curriculum policies have been using the power of plays and interaction, proposing that these are taken as structuring axes of Childhood Education curriculum.

The *Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais para a Educação Infantil/DCNEI* [National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education] already established that:

The pedagogical practices that compose the curriculum proposal of Early Childhood Education should have as guiding axes the interactions and plays, articulating knowledge and experiences that promote children's full development (Brasil, 2009, p. 15).

A perspective reinforced in the *Base Nacional Comum Curricular* [Common National Curriculum Framework] (2018) which recognizes play as a privileged form of children's expression, knowledge, and relationship with the world, when stressing that:

The interactions and the plays, structuring axes of the curriculum proposal, are fundamental to guarantee experiences that promote children's right to learn in significant contexts (p. 39).

However, we have been observing how the idea of learning and teaching has been the tonic of these proposals, since childhood, seeking the development of abilities and competencies within a perspective of measured quality.

Not disregarding the power of plays and interaction, we intend to shake the notions of plays and interactions that have been used by policies, disturbing the statements that, when establishing play as structuring, eclipse play when focusing on the final meaning of play, valuing the "teaching while playing", "not noticing learning", and as something possible to be measured. We argued in favor of play as experience and event, as opening and unpredictability, which blurs and questions fixed senses, pre-established products. In this text, we advocate a broader perspective for interactions and plays, understanding that adults and children produce culture, knowledge, interact, and, mainly in an institutional space that welcomes children, produce curriculum to the same extent.

From this perspective, we question how childhoods have been taken as dispute instances through the curricula, when projecting, on the one hand, fixed meanings for children and the curriculum and, on the other, potentializing curricula made with childhoods that make difference emerge. What can be thought about the curriculum to/for childhoods? Which curricula has been produced with and/or for childhoods? How does school answer these calls for otherness?

In another passage from *Água Viva*, Clarice tells us:

(...) I can still reason- I studied mathematics, which is the madness of reason- but now I want the plasma- I want to eat straight from the placenta. I am a little scared: scared of surrendering completely because the next instant is unknown. The next instant, do I make it? or does it make itself? We make it together with our breath. And with the flair of the bullfighter in the ring (Lispector, 2019, p. 2).

This writing, crossed by the act of deciding to think about school from the poetic, the inventive, the deconstruction, and the event that is built as giving oneself to the next unknown instance, which is built together. Derrida (2012) when stating that "the measure of the event's possibility is given by its impossibility" (p.239) invites us to this this unknown in the context of human relationships from the singularity of the event, with the easiness of a bullfighter in the ring always expecting the unusual, the unpredictable.

From the dialogue with Clarice Lispector and Derrida, we propose a debate on the interactions and plays as constitutive elements of Early Childhood Education curriculum, as an impossible possibility, as an event, unknown, as unpredictability. As something that arrives, the event is also what cannot be understood, so that Derrida (2012) presents it as a movement of some type of appropriation that intends to understand, recognize, interpret...while pointing out that its understanding presupposes that such an appropriation is always flawed, not sufficient. (Amancio, 2019)

In *Memoirs of the Blind*, Derrida (2010), provokes us to think about the possibility of blind writing:

What happens when one writes without seeing? A hand of the blind ventures forth alone or disconnected, in a poorly delimited space; it feels its way, it gropes, it caresses as much as it inscribes, trusting in the memory of signs and supplementing sight. It is as if the lidless eye had opened at the tip of the fingers, as if one eye too many had just grown right next to the nail, a single eye, the eye of a cyclops or one-eyed man. This eye guides the tracing or outline [*tracé*]; it is a miner's lamp at the point of writing, a curious and vigilant substitute, the prothesis of a seer who is himself invisible. The image of the movement of these letters, of what this finger eye inscribes, is thus sketched out within me. From the absolute withdrawal of an invisible center or command post, a secret power ensures from a distance a kind of synergy. It coordinates the possibilities of seeing, touching, and moving. And of hearing and understanding, for these are already words of the blind that I draw in this way (p. 11/12).

*What happens when one writes without seeing?* Also in the curriculum that is written unseen, which is not open to be seen before it takes place and that makes itself up in the meeting of the subjects, similar to the ventures of a blind person's hand, willing to create amidst uncertainty, despite the political, curricular, and pedagogical projects,

despite the regulations, despite the desires. Thus, "...it inscribes, trusting in the memory of signs and supplementing sight. It is as if the lidless eye had opened at the tip of the fingers..." – as a supplement, we allude to the curriculum not as a seeing prescription, but as something built through touch, voice, sensitive listening, meeting, interactions, plays, and the whole body...as Lispector warns us.

The meeting between Derrida and Lispector enables us to question the curriculum thought as literature and philosophy, blurring borders, a question proposed by Derrida, who rejects the dualism grounded in a system of oppositions. Thus, by his indication, we should by attention that "[...] there is an infinite task of deconstruction: it is necessary to draw on the heritage and its memory for the conceptual tools that allow one to challenge the limits that this heritage has imposed up to now" (Derrida, 2004, p.31). Hence, in the dialogue we propose between Derrida and Lispector, we grope the possibilities to fecundate the curriculum space around experience, a recurrent concept in the production of curriculum policies and that has its meaning under dispute, in which we place ourselves by defending a notion of experience as event.

In this text, we take the risk of writing as opening, as an event and not a closed plan. Therefore, the analysis undertook here does not follow a linear path or compartmentalized between theory and practice. We oscillate, on purpose, between the two facets of investigation: on the one hand, the critical examination of curriculum documents for Early Childhood Education, specially the DCNEI (Brasil, 2009) and the BNCC (Brasil, 2018); on the other, the experience of children's play that emerge from daily interactions as a power of invention and questioning of norms. Far from considering them as isolated objects or opposite poles, we assume a movement of blurring the frontiers between the empirical and the documental, between the experienced and the prescribed, as an epistemological and political gesture.

In this sense, we took the path, from the theoretical-methodological entanglement aligned to the post-foundational, discursive and deconstructive-inspired perspectives we mobilize, of an investigative posture that removes us from the safety of already-established methodological procedures and calls us to a composition in which, as Ranniery (2018, p.982), we consider the "resources and artifacts of qualitative investigation less as something methodological and more as a yarn ball of ethical-political questions[...]".

Hunted by the questions of St. Pierre (2018, p.1053) – "After all, what can one do with post-structuralist theory in an empirical study?", we search for pathways to not perpetuate a disconnection between theory and methodology. Hence, we did not opt for one or another center of analysis, but by ambivalence as a possibility of reverberating meanings, opening gaps for policies and practices. Such as the writing without seeing evoked by Derrida (2010), our proposal relies on the uncertainty and the power of what escapes and in a curriculum built in the vibration between what is established and what is to come. By doing so, we open space to think other curriculum possibilities, which do not eliminate the unpredictability of the encounter, but that welcome it as a constitutive dimension of teaching.

## 1.1 "For these are already words of the blind that I draw in this way" ...

Words drawn in blindness, in the dark, present themselves to us as a curriculum, as a field of disputes, as a continuous movement of escape and negotiation, impossible to be foreseen, but, at the same time, which mobilizes projects, a wish to see the drawing ready, marked by the "last" outline, however always open to the new – as an unfinished composition.

Our professional trajectories, though different and singular, bring us to this encounter, in which we move faced with the possibility of drawing the words of the blind because recognizing their incompleteness. In this pathway, we dare to share records, experiences we call here flawed appropriations, which we retake to think about how interactions and plays compose the curriculum as a process of "not seeing".

When analyzing of Derrida's works regarding art, Jardim (2024) uses one of the author's conferences, called "Thinking out of sight" and, based on it, associates the concept of experience to "not seeing". Regarding the notion of

experience, she highlights that Derrida runs away from a connection with the metaphysics of presence and relates it with traveling:

(...) what does it mean to *experience* towards something, through or since the arrival of the other in its more predictable heterogeneity; it is a non-programmable travel, a travel whose cartograph is not drawable, a trip without design, without a goal, and without horizon (Derrida, 1974 *apud* Jardim, 2014, p. 139).

For the author letting oneself be moved by the unknown does not place it in the categories of subjectivity of subjectivity, but associates the notion of experience to invisibility, which, for the author, is a characteristic of art and drawing, as Derrida questions the primacy of the sense of sight as objectivity and "to this experience that scrambles and shakes the oppositional pair visible/invisible, Derrida calls "*aveuglement*" [making or becoming blind]". (Jardim, 2014, p. 139)

Therefore, it is in this blinding experience, in which we dare to dialogue with school as a non-planned travel, without a chronology and horizon, but with the possibility of, when seeking between the possible and the impossible, investigating a new political possibility that opens itself up to the future. (Duque Estrada, 2020).

Hence, when we defend a curriculum as experience, we dialogue with Derrida's deconstructive gesture that criticizes the notion of experience as an "experience of", as the access to a reality that presents itself and can be captured, understanding it as a crossing; it is a trace and is beyond itself. Haddock-Lobo (2013), in a text in which he follows Derrida's tracing in the uses of the term experience in the different writings from the author, helps us to understand that Derrida's effort is to think the "radical impossibility of accessing things as themselves, as a possibility condition of any experience", taking as the motto of his reflection the author's idea that "the thing itself always escapes". (p.260)

This meaning contorts the notion of experience that unfolds itself in the curriculum policies that we questions and that are grounded in the idea of "experience of...", an experience that foresees/presentifies what it should allow, not open to unpredictability, on the contrary, fears it because this can misalign what is expected from this "experience" as the experienced as such, what can be measured and have a metric that allows one to say that the experience was implemented and produced results, in this case, the achievement of previously outlined objectives. The experience we see in contemporary curriculum policies are considered as a path that produces good results. In another direction, Haddock-Lobo (2013) derridianly explains experience as what folds itself beyond itself and then raises the radicality of experience itself.

## 2. Interactions and plays: the secret harmony of the disharmony in curriculum documents

The secret harmony of disharmony: I don't want something already made but something still being tortuously made. My unbalanced words are the wealth of my silence (Lispector, 2019, p. 5).

As Clarice, we dive into this writing because we deeply want to talk about the crossings and experiences proposed by teachers-researchers in childhoods. In a political, reflexive, formative insertion that makes us question: How and why do children play? To what measure do we surrender ourselves to the "*aveuglement*" of plays beyond the experience that blurs the opposition pair visible/invisible? What do we (not) see when children interact and invite us to play? As a non-predictable experience, interactions and plays are not made, they happen in the secret harmony of disharmony; in the dispute for toys, the negotiations in structured and symbolic games, in the interactions with adults and children and in the ceaseless possibility of signification, as Benjamin (2002) states:

A child wants to pull something, and so he becomes a horse; he wants to play with sand, and so he turns into a baker; he wants to hide, and so he turns into a robber or a policeman. We are also familiar with a number of ancient

playthings that were presumably once cult objects but that scorn the function of masks: balls, hoops, tops, kites-authentic playthings; "the more authentic, the less they meant to adults". (p.76-77).

Interactions and plays, immersed in the "secret harmony of disharmony", approximate us to children's universe and reconfigure our perceptions on play and its possibilities. The moments of play uninstall adults' certainties and open possibilities for the tension between the visible and the invisible, what is here and the not-here, always building new senses.

Resuming the (DCNEI, 2009), article 9 defines the interactions and plays as structuring axes of Education and defines children as:

Historical subjects with rights that, in the interactions, relationships, and everyday practices they experience, build their personal and collective identity, play, imagine, fantasies, wishes, learns, observes, experiences, narrates, questions, and builds meaning about nature and society, producing culture. (Brasil, 2009).

BNCC (2018), as previously discussed, ratifies the importance of maintaining such structuring axes added by six learning rights, which are: socialize, play, participate, explore, express, and know oneself- which guarantee the conditions for children to learn through an active role in the environments that invite them to experience challenges and can build meanings about themselves, others, and the social and natural world.

The guidelines and documents that conduct Early Childhood Education reaffirm the importance of some aspects in these dynamics of constructing identity and culture, and invite us to reflect about the relevance of educational environments that promote freedom and creativity in the learning process. The plays and interactions, more than elements of children's everyday life, are, thus, forms of expression, of questioning, and reinvention of the world- for children and for us, adults who are willing to listen to what emerges from them in every gesture, word, and game.

Having plays and interactions as axes, BNCC (2018), defends that:

This conception of child as the one who observes, questions, raises hypothesis, concludes, judges, assimilates values, builds knowledge and appropriates the systematized knowledge through action and in the interactions with the physical and social world should not result in the confinement of these types of learning to a process of natural and spontaneous development. On the contrary, there is a need to imprint an **educational intentionality** to the pedagogical practices in Early Childhood education, in kindergarten and preschool.

This intentionality consists in the organization and proposition by the educator of experiences that enable children to know themselves and the other, and to know and understand the relationships with nature, with culture, and with the scientific production, which are translated in the practice of personal care (eat, dress, and clean oneself), in the plays and experimentations with varied materials, and in the approximation with literature, and the meeting with people. (BRASIL, 2018, p.36-37).

What aligns with the notion of experience inferred from BNCC

Considering that, in Early Childhood Education, the different types of learning and children's development have interactions and playing as structuring axes, guaranteeing them the rights of *sociability, playing, participating, exploring, expressing and knowing themselves*, the curriculum organization of Early Childhood Education at BNCC is structured into five **experience fields** in the scope of which are defined the learning and development objectives (Brasil, 2018, p. 38).

The previous definition of experience is established in its direct association with action that aims the development of specific abilities and knowledge, which emphasizes what is criticized by Derrida as the "experience of".

In Early Childhood Education, the essential learnings encompass behaviors, abilities, and knowledge, as well as experiences that promote learning and development in several fields of experience, always considering interactions and playing as structuring axes. Therefore, these learnings are **objectives of learning and development** (Brasil, 2018, p.41 original highlights).

Plays and interactions seem captured by a prescriptive logic that place them as possibilities to access a reality closed on itself. The prevalence of a logic that signifies experience as predictable, aligned to objectives and abilities that guarantee learning, eclipses unpredictability, and the experience with the other that arrives with no warning. It also establishes, tacitly, binaries in the duality intentionality/unpredictability, objective/contingence, certainty/uncertainty, repetition/difference (...)

This understanding of experience ends up inferring senses about the idea of play and interaction that, in a discursive articulation with the defense of educational intentionality in the actions developed with children, become means to reach learning objectives, undermining the inventiveness of plays as singular experiences that are powers going beyond...

We should point out that our argument does not intent to invalidate the idea of educational intentionality, under the risk of excessive spontaneity or emptying the pedagogical action – it is not a question of one or another or an unproductive polarization that does not allow facing the tensions. What we highlight is how the idea of intentionality, associated with other significations observed in these policies, produce a discursive arrangement that overpowers the senses of what is established as a structuring axis-plays and interactions – submitting it to the force of this idea. Resuming the dialogue with Derrida's (2010) work, which follows us in this reflection, if plays and interactions invite us to write without seeing, their signification in the curriculum policies demand visibility and clarity that seek the precision in this writing.

About the work "*Memoirs of the Blind*", Ponzio (2019) points out that any type of writing, verbal or non-verbal, is used to delineate the limits in the shadow. In this sense, the author highlights that philosophy, as a writing in the shadow, counterposes one of the most important myths, through which Western philosophy represents itself: Plato's myth of the cavern. On it, the philosopher frees himself from the bonds to directly access things, rehabituating his eyes to the light. In another direction, she explains that Derrida will subvert this logic subjacent to the search for truth when stating that our access to the "real" will always be indirect, as writing does not emerge in the direct relationship with things: "Writing, the philosophical or artistic writing, emerges from the absence, from what is no longer, and what does not exist yet." (p.125).

In this movement that believes to be impossible to directly access things, recognizing the power of interactions and plays as writing in the shadow, we argue about the senses mobilized by policies that seek to fixate meaning to play, as a starting point for an end, as a calculated and predictable movement that wants to untie the bonds and access the light as a guide and direct play beyond what we believe to be its actually power: that of creation, a committed opening to otherness as a perspective.

When going over the curriculum documents as writings of meanings that seek to delimitate, organize, and guide the practices with childhoods, we recognize the tensions that emerge when these texts aim to shape what we see as movement, thus, what we present in this text is not a second movement, different and isolated, but the continuous unfolding of what already reverberates in the policies and is (re)inscribed in the gestures, bodies, and encounters with children. Therefore, when moving from the documental analysis to the experiences with childhoods, we do not establish stagnated territories but assume the blurring of frontiers as an ethical and political posture.

In this midway between what is prescribed and what escapes it, we follow the line of experience as an event. A curriculum that is not over in the regulations but is composed in the vibration between what is established and the unpredictable, between the visibility of the letter and the invisibility of the gesture. Next, we let the experiences speak, not as examples of what was said, but as ways to enlarge the meanings and tension the limits of what does not intend to be fixed.

## 2.1 What I say to you is never what I say to you but something else instead

Listen to me, listen to the silence. What I say to you is never what I say to you but something else instead. It captures the thing that escapes me and yet I live from it and am above a shining darkness. One instant a thematic theme unfurls without a plan but geometric like the successive shapes in a kaleidoscope (Lispector, 2019 p. 7).

An instant that leads to another, with no plan...a portrait of a time perpetrated by endless processes of "not seeing", however, "this does not mean that it does not reach, that it does not exist; this means that one cannot name it in a theoretical way, that one cannot even pre-say it." (Derrida, 2012 *apud* Amancio, 2019, p. 8). In this way, Amancio complements that saying continues impotent when faced with the unpredictability of the event, however, he argues that this impotence is never total.

An instant that leads me to another and moves through the incompleteness of language towards a non-absolute communication but, at the same time, possible. After all, this dialogue is undertaken with the school surrounded by a negotiation movement of several significations and interpretations, never complete, but contingently given meanings.

Language is, therefore, a fold over itself, through which unexpected unfoldings move. Hence, what is said is never only what is said, but a game of meanings that move, escape, and are remade in the act, at each event. In the interactions and in play the meanings are also created and recreated in experience. In this sense, there will always be a game in every word said or written, each experience, entangles themselves to the not-here, what resonates beyond the statement; often as an act of listening to silence, as a ceaseless and continuous attempt to capture what always escapes us.

Thus, we launch ourselves in the possibility of narrating what we call play experiences and how they gave meaning to the ways of looking interactions and plays as ceaseless spaces of learning, interacting, distinguishing, signify, and produce curriculum.

The experiences we narrate and how we narrate them, in a way, make them emerge to us, to the reader, to future interlocutors, and for the children we portray from our records and our memories. Once more, we highlight that when resuming these experiences, we do not do it as a movement that tries to plan reality, reduce the experience and its power to a narrated fact, but as a possibility to open us up to rethink school, children, and the several ways through which interactions and plays build, create, and recreate the curriculum away from the bonds of a didacticism, far from the proposal of how to do, and close to the experience of *becoming*, as a pathway with no arrival point, as an event that occurs in the flow of human relationships.

It is a ceaseless discursive game, a plethora of references, interpretations, and meanings that emerge from the school context, which negotiate gestures, statements, narratives, and spaces, seeking a signification that is always contingent, always postponed.

It's so odd to have exchanged my paints for this strange thing that is the word. Words-I move cautiously among them as they can turn threatening; I can have the freedom to write this: "pilgrims, merchants and shepherds led their caravans toward Tibet and the roads were difficult and primitive!" With that phrase I made a scene be born, as in a photographic flash (Lispector, 2019, p. 14).

## 2.1.1 Experience 1<sup>1</sup>:

Luís<sup>2</sup> is a five-year-old neurodivergent child in Early Childhood Education with a hyperfocus on music. Luís loves classical, children's, and Brazilian popular music. These three musical genres compose a meaningful part of his repertoire, daily shared with teachers and classmates. He sometimes arrives at school singing and always asking about the composers. Luís calls himself "Luís, the musician" and makes a point of being known and called as such.

Due to his passion for music, we witnessed him abdicate from moments of free or adult-mediated games, among other proposals, by arguing that "musicians don't play" or in other different situations in which he learned to deny his participation, mainly in collective moments, under the argument that musicians would not do such things.

What would be the path to make Luís feel invited to be together? To create, to interact, and to play? There was no script, no prescription, and not even the desire for his participation to be imposed upon him. We relied, with no guarantees, on the "not seeing", not as something that does not reach, but as what is impossible to pre-say. In education, as an experience of otherness, which occurs in the relationship with the other, fully other. (Macedo, 2018)

How about starting from music itself? Our approximation with Luís and of Luís with the other children took place through musical stories, singing games, the shared access to different instruments, "(in)visible" pathway that approximated him from the everyday life of school, permeated by interactions and plays.

Once Luís emphatically said "musicians don't draw". Then he was invited to draw while listening to the teacher singing the song "Aquarela" [Water Color] (written by Toquinho) and started to draw sailing boats, gloves, castles, and the many other elements he listened and sang in the song. Another interesting episode took place when he heard the ballad: "Sopa de Pedras" [Stone soup] by Bia Bedran and, based on it, he started to look for, almost daily, spoons, pens, pots, and stones from the backyard to make his soup. At first, the initiative was exclusive to him, but that invited other children to sit beside him and "cook" with him. Cooking with the classmates became a practice, even with no invitation, a shared play that enabled exchanges, hugs, conflicts, smiles, and the experience of meeting in the interactions, his own world of things as Benjamin states.

What does Luís's experience approximate us to? Which invitation does it make? In Benjamin (2002) play is evidenced as a space of invention, from which the child reorganizes the world based on her experiences:

Children are particularly fond of haunting any site where things are being visibly worked on. They are irresistibly drawn by the detritus generated by building, gardening, housework, tailoring, or carpentry. In waste products they recognize the fact that the world of things turns directly and solely to them. In using these things, they do not so much imitate works of adults as bring together in the artifact produced in play, materials of widely differing kinds in a new intuitive relationship. Children thus produce their own small world of things within the greater one. The norms of this small world must be kept in mind if one wishes to create things specially for children, rather than let one's adult activity, through its requisites and instruments, find its own way to them (p. 103-104).

Luís shows us, as Benjamin points out, the impossibility of this premeditated creation and its measure, found and shared in the pathways to reach him and for him to reach us. Music emerges as a path that approximates, that connects Luís with the others, the world, with plays...Resuming Derrida, we can think about the opening of becoming that established itself in a field of possibilities. We shall think about the play that emerges in the in-between, the gaps of the routing, in what cannot be predicted. When recognizing Luís in his singularity, it was possible to create spaces not only for him to be together with others, but also to re-signify his relationship with school and play.

As Luís shows us, the curriculum as an event does not occur from linear prescriptions but takes place in the encounter among subjects, gestures, affections and times, such as the trace of a drawing drawn in the dark, as the "A

<sup>1</sup> All experiences described are from a record/reflection notebook of the routine with children in classes we worked as teachers; we used fictional names and omit the place identification, as they are the writers' personal records. The choice of the episodes dialogue with the perspective undertaken in this text: to potentialize play as experiences of not seeing, non predictable, and portray plays as event.

<sup>2</sup> Experience report – teacher's personal notes, 2024 – Preschool class in a public school in the West region of Rio de Janeiro.

hand of the blind ventures forth alone or disconnected, in a poorly delimited space; it feels its way, it gropes, it caresses as much as it inscribes..” (Derrida, 2010, p. 11).

This hand that ventures and gropes is a metaphor for the educational gesture that renounces the totality, the control, and opens itself up to the becoming, entering the field of play, previously denied by Luís when affirming that “musicians don’t play”, was not done through an imposition, but opened gaps of meaning that manifested themselves in the stories told, the sounds shared, and the pans and stones manipulated, as an inventive power that reorganizes experience. Playing as gesture, detour, amazement, in a time that characterizes the Derridian becoming.

Luís’s experience invites us to think about school as a space of listening, of waiting, plays and interactions as language that articulate being in the world, which interpenetrate the curriculum as a pathway, even if we cannot say *a priori* where we go.

### Experience 2<sup>3</sup>:

The children played in the school yard with building blocks. Some stacked them, others transformed them into different objects, and Maria received each of her classmates for a “beauty day” in her saloon. The blocks were used as a brush, a hair dryer, make-up, nail-polishes, and other possibilities. At the end of each “treatment” done by Maria, she charged others who had to pay with tree leaves collected in the backyard. Ana, however, ended her treatment and realized that she had not collected her leaves to pay, to which Maria answered: “a client who doesn’t pay, doesn’t get it” – my mom says this in the salon. Nonetheless, Ana tried to argue that she had already undertaken the treatment, and she did not know how to solve the situation. They stayed for a while trying to solve the situation when João, who followed up close, said: “I think we better end up this play and become real children again”. Ana and Maria looked at each other, opened large smiles and another play started.

Nothing is more suitable for the child than to bring together in its constructions the most heterogeneous materials – stones, plasticine, a pinecone, or a pebble bring together in the solidity, in the monolithism of their matter, an exuberance of the most different figures. And when imagining children dolls made of birchwood or straw, a glass crib or tin ships, adults are in fact interpreting, in their own way, children’s sensibilities. Wood, bones, fabrics, and clay represent the most important materials in this microcosm, and all of them were already used in patriarchal times when toys were still part of the process that linked parents and children (Benjamin, 2002, p. 92).

While playing children recreate experiences that, according to Benjamin (2002), would happen through the “law of repetition”, however, such law would not be anchored in the “do as if”, but in the possibility of “always doing something anew”, in an iterability movement. As Derrida enables us to argue, children’s gestures bring at each repetition, at each inscription, new possibilities of signification; a repetition that exposes the instability of meaning, always singular and contingent, which is made as a trace...

Ana, Maria, and João are this invitation to play as a resignification of culture, as BNCC (2018) presents:

Playing in different ways, in different spaces and times, with different partners (children and adults), opening and diversifying the access to cultural productions, knowledge, imagination, creative, emotional, corporal, sensorial, expressive, cognitive, social and relational experiences (p. 38).

Nonetheless, when accepting the invitation, children twist the experience foreseen, going beyond the aporia experience that unveils the radicality of the experience – they erase the learning objectives that could be established and are aligned to the experience fields imagined, they blur the frontiers and subvert the very notion of truth/reality when moving themselves sometimes as real children or not. What moves in this interspace? What meanings take place in this movement that is not a simple imitation, but is related to difference and, thus, the possibility of signification? In

<sup>3</sup> Experience report – teacher’s personal notes, 2015- Preschool class in a public school in the West region of Rio de Janeiro.

this between, the relationship established is not the binary opposition between the original and the copy, but the deferral, signification, blurring that disorganizes the prescription of oppositional logic that delineates what being and the not being.

Playing as a power of inventiveness is closer to what we have been arguing on the idea of a curriculum as experience, beyond reproducing the "adult world experiences"; Children, re-signify, experience different knowledge, affections, relationships, languages... Playing as an act shows a curriculum that takes place involved by the possibility of, at each experience, re-signify the curriculum as a movement, as an unfinished and founding process, as a time of collective invention and shared formation.

### Experience 34:

In a class of four-year-old children, four girls played at the school. One was the teacher and the others were the students. Jacqueline, who was the teacher, said:

- *Hey, silence, you're talking too much, let's do this homework quickly.*

I came closer to where they were playing and Isabela asked if I would like to be a student as well. When I accepted, she quickly said: - *So, sit down, be silent and take your notebook.*

- What do you want me to do? I asked.

She replied: - *You'll write: two, two, two, two, until the end of the paper.*

I wrote it and told her I had finished: - *No, you didn't, now you have to cover all the dots!*

Curious, I asked her what school was that in the play. She told me it was a 'notebook school' and that her sister studied in a 'notebook school'. I asked if her school was also a 'notebook school' and she said that it was not, it was a 'child and play school'. So I questioned

- And do you prefer the 'notebook school' or your school?

She answered: - *I like this school that let's me play 'notebook school'.*

We continued involved in the play for a while and, at the end, I was congratulated for being a good student.

Which senses overflow children's plays: What do they show us, communicate, and interpret through play? How do they reveal in their discourses and plays the understanding that they have of themselves, others, and the social world? As Scramignon (2017) points out, children build their identities in the alterity with adults, which allows us to think childhood apart from the context it takes place: "children raise questions that express society and its contradictions: social inequality; prejudice; cultural industry consumption; ways of being boys and girls; the relationship with their own body; with their self-image." (p. 151). She adds:

However, children do not directly reproduce the world of adults but can establish new relationships with the world presented to them. Regarding school, they invite teachers to think new work perspectives considering the unpredictable and the spontaneity presented by them, showing how the school routine, as something thought and planned directly by adults, can be different, from the contributions and the recognition of childhood competence in this participation (p. 153).

<sup>4</sup> Experience report – teacher's personal notes, 2018 – Preschool class in a public school in the West region of Rio de Janeiro. This experience was also described in the thesis of one of the authors (Camões, 2019).

The possibility of experiencing a 'notebookless school' highlights the circulation of meanings as a whole other alterity, the perspective is to open up for different contexts as a construction in the world and not as a given, to open up to the extent that playing reverberates other meanings, perceived from the relationships between children, children with adults, and their constant re-significations, always new, as Benjamin (2002) warns us; playing as a space of invention and experimentation, from which children reorganizes the world based on their experiences.

### 3. Some remarks to continue the debate...

I write in signs that are more a gesture than voice. All this is what I got used to painting, delving into the intimate nature of things. But now the time to stop painting has come in order to remake myself, I remake myself in these lines. I have a voice. As I throw myself into the line of my drawing, this is an exercise in life without planning. The world has no visible order and all I have is the order of my breath. I let myself happen. (Lispector, 2019, p. 15)

There are many senses that overflow as discourse about the experiences. Children talk about their experiences, be them socially and culturally "authorized" or not. Children live different childhoods and how is it possible to get closer to them when we subtract these differences? It is impossible to be with them and not allow ourselves to listen what they have to say, without being able to listen to the silences, to enter and observe plays and different forms of interaction. Thus, the experiences shared here are not intended to fixate meanings, they were an attempt to remember contexts, prospecting new presents, singular events that write, without seeing, other curricula with childhoods.

In this pathway of reflection and writing, intertwined with Clarice Lispector's poetics and Derrida's deconstructive gesture, we revised children's interactions and plays as unpredictable events, as experiences that escape the attempt to run away, which makes us advocate for the curriculum as an experience that happens, among other things, in the plays and interactions. School, thus, becomes a space of encounters, negotiations, and experiences that are always new.

One should mistrust types of knowledge that are defined *a priori* and recognize the power of looking children and childhoods, as well as the experiences of play and, therefore, the curriculum as event. And what do we do with what reaches us? About this challenging process, Abramowicz and Tebet (2017) defend that we need to think education, children, and childhood from other bases; from differences, as this childhood we constantly try to gasp resists and escapes us, in an endless movement of reinvention.

The experiences narrated, far from being simple descriptions, organize themselves as possibilities to evoke the power of play as a founding act, as a field open to invention and alterity. When recognizing the different childhoods that inhabit school, we open ourselves to unlock pathways to perceive that the subjects build themselves in the intertwining of differences. How can we make the school a place to exchange experiences and share meanings? Hence, play reveals itself as an act that escapes, that remakes itself, and that invites us to a constant exercise of listening, attention, and openness to the unknown.

Thinking about childhood as an event implies recognizing the multiple experiences that cross children in their different contexts. It is not about fixating meanings, but being available to listen, observe, and understand the ways through which children express and build themselves in the world. Thus, school can be a living place for exchanges and sharing, where sensitive listening and the recognition of differences enable new possibilities of existing and learning. After all, as Clarice Lispector reminds us, the world has no visible order – in breathing, in movement, in events, in happenings, the experience is continually made and remade.

In this sense, throughout this text, we moved between two dimensions: the analysis of curriculum documents and the attentive listening of children's experiences in their interactions and plays. We methodologically chose to separate them, though not intending to delineate rigid frontiers between theory and practice, policy and experience, norm and gesture. On the contrary, we sought to reveal how these dimensions are interconnected and mutually reinforced.

DCNEI and BNCC are shown as regulation instruments that, simultaneously, recognize the importance of play and interactions and tend to capture them through prescriptive logics, aligned with the rationality of predictability and measurement. The experiences lived in the body, the listening, and the encounter leak through the gaps, revealing that play and interaction do not fit the frame of what was foreseen. They point towards a curriculum that is made in the in-between, in the instant, in the difference that emerges. In this displacement, between the established and what insists on escaping, we advocate a curriculum as event, as one that is not closed within the rules, but is constantly reconfigured in the singular experiences of children and their educators. A curriculum that does not intend to be complete, closed or guaranteed, but that pulsates as a Derrida's gesture of blind writing or Clarice Lispector's uninterrupted flow of words; both teach us that there is something that escapes us, something that resists, something that (re)starts.

We end this text aware that this is not the end of the reflections emerged here. On the contrary, they continue in movement, unfolding themselves in new questions, concerns, and discoveries. As Clarice reminds us, "what I say to you is never what I say to you but something else instead.". Maybe it is exactly in this in-between, this space between what is said and not-said, between what is seen and not-seen, where the power of interactions and children's plays lie: as gestures that reinvent existence and draw new ways of being and learning in the world.

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