



School inclusion discourses: moralizing ways, humanizing ways

*Discursos da inclusão escolar: modos de moralizar,
modos de humanizar*

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Abstract

In the present article we intend to put under suspicion some discourses about school inclusion, which we have seen circulating nowadays. To do this we selected some editions of the magazine *Nova Escola* presenting school inclusion as central theme of their articles. Discourses marked by terms like “love”, “donation”, “affection”,

and “humanization” are examined in this paper from the theoretical basis found in Friedrich Nietzsche, which allows us denaturalize the benevolent air announced in those narratives. *We must* be open to Others in order to be touched, if those who are touching us conspire in favor of goodness and order. We also problematize the emphasis those discourses show in socializing and conviviality processes. They mark a kind of learning trivialization since they reiterate that conviviality with others; respecting rules and knowing how to behave are fundamental apprenticeships in inclusion processes. By putting those discourses under exam, the text aims to provoke thinking and to dismiss approved truths about school inclusion pronounced by modernity.

Keywords: School inclusion. Modernity. Moral. Government.

Resumo

O presente artigo pretende colocar sob suspeita alguns discursos sobre a inclusão escolar, que vemos circular na atualidade. Para isso, selecionamos algumas edições da revista Nova Escola, que apresentavam a inclusão escolar como tema central de suas matérias. Discursos marcados pelos termos “amor”, “doação”, “carinho”, “humanização” são examinados a partir de uma matriz moderna que investe na moralização dos afetos. Devemos estar abertos ao Outro para sermos tocados, desde que o que nos toca conspire a favor do bem e da ordem. Além disso, problematizamos a ênfase que tais discursos apresentam nos processos de socialização e de convivência. Eles marcam uma espécie de banalização da aprendizagem, uma vez que reiteram o convívio com o outro, o respeito às regras e o saber comportar-se como aprendizes fundamentais nos processos de inclusão. Colocando esses discursos sob exame, o texto pretende provocar o pensamento e suspender as verdades consagradas acerca da inclusão escolar proferida pela modernidade..

Palavras-chave: Inclusão escolar. Modernidade. Moral. Governo.

Introduction and methodology

The discourses that are spread about inclusion in school today celebrate values such as respect, tolerance and compassion, referring either to an act essential to make us more human, or to a glorious act of welcoming others, in our supposedly *best* places of existence and coexistence. This article aims to put into suspicion some of the discourses about School Inclusion that we see circulating nowadays. Discourses about “love”, “giving” and “caring”, before sounding like the construction of better and more dignified individuals, sound more like “a religious dogma, a political ideal or [and] a moral demand” (MARTON, 2001, p. 186).

Provoked by the writings of Friedrich Nietzsche and authors connected with his opinions, we undertook writing this article. We selected as our research methodology the analysis of some editions of the magazine *Nova Escola*, which presented school inclusion as the central theme of its articles. Since *Nova Escola* is a magazine of large circulation within Brazilian schools and also in the broader field of education, we think it would be important to denature some truths produced by these benevolent discourses that summon experts, researchers and teachers to talk about this extremely controversial issue, which has been receiving a coating to appear touching, humanizing and welcoming.

School inclusion in the current agenda

To start the discussion proposed for this paper, we conducted a problematization regarding this call to everyone being responsible for the inclusion process. The idea that we must create strategies for Everybody's Education demarcates the operation of Modernity, since values and ideals are created to be followed by the collectivity. Those who do not adapt to these ideas end up being called wicked, evil, sick, and all other forms of appointment serving to the production of stereotypes in a *social shadow* area. They are those who are so *terrible* that they do not open themselves

to others' needs because they lack sensitivity or succumb to a supposedly privileged status that alienates them.

In order to not going against your own moral *you must abdicate yourself and sacrifice*. This should be ordered only by those who thus abdicated their own advantage, which would maybe result in their own ruin, in the sacrifice imposed to individuals (NIETZSCHE, 2001, p. 72, our emphasis).

Thus, this proposal of *becoming available to others* is not everybody's proposal or a proposal originating from someone who thinks about the social wellbeing, but a moral action generated by Modernity itself.

It is important to emphasize moral is not, in the conception we are adopting here, a natural datum or just a contractual answer to a social need, but it is also the product of a complex game of forces that produces values, judgments, interests and behaviors. Moral is founded beyond reason, for a game of *seduction* that challenges us by many ways.

There's no use: one must question mercilessly and take to court all feelings of self-denial, and sacrifice on behalf of others, all morality of renouncing oneself [...]. There is too much charm and sugar in those feelings *for others*, and *not for me*, so one does not have the need to be double suspicious and ask, *Would it not be perhaps - seductions* (NIETZSCHE, 2005, p. 37, our emphasis).

It is quite evident how some Discourses adhere to this game of seduction that keeps forming a teaching moral. A teaching moral which calls for a fraternal opening to others, which would be the condition to, on one hand, *humanize* the teacher and, on the other hand, to provide *care* to the individual who needs teaching.

Schools are responsible for implementing this teaching policy, which first of all is also moral. That makes this institution "the main institution in charge of building this kind of world we call the modern world" (VEIGA-NETO, 2003, p. 104). A world that, through

education — whether formal or not — throws us into a more evolved, more civilized life.

The continuous speech of being a better person goes through this way of being welcoming, accepting and tolerating towards other people. Humanization will only be possible when, by detaching us from ourselves, we are able to reach this stage of a more evolved life.

Education — not only in school, we must say — comes to make us human, conscious and free. It basically shapes the modern individuals by making them able to live in a civilized society. Therefore, social organization itself must carry out school strategies that allow structuring life in society. So we realize how this educational proposal follows the course of teaching citizens that would perform those beloved values of Modernity, making them moral, aware, supportive subjects, and benefactors. The discourses present in some of the analyzed magazines show Education teaching individuals to be more human, solidary and fair. We understand then how education can decisively contribute to create new forms of life, new ways of being in the world. Before existing to teach contents, education emanates to manufacture us as participative individuals engaged in the meshes of the modern episteme.

This all helps us to understand that most of the practices that take place in schools were not simply created with the objective that children learn best. Nor were either the result of the intelligence of teachers, pedagogues and those who thought modern schools. Of course this does not mean that many of these practices do not work positively for learning [...]. One of the lessons learned from all this is the fact that, well before working as an apparatus for teaching content and promoting social reproduction, modern schools worked — and still work — like a big factory that manufactured — and continues manufacturing — new forms of life (VEIGA-NETO, 2003, p. 107-108).

Therefore, the discourse regarding the *teaching of human beings* through Education announced by magazine *Nova Escola*, reveals the

marks of the same ideas that we have presented. Inclusion becomes an essential process in the constitution of better human beings, who are more evolved and full of virtues essential for a good social life. Here are some of the analyzed clippings:

For the educator, inclusive school, teachers and students learn a lesson that hardly life will teach you: to respect differences. This is the first step to build a more just society (CAVALCANTE, 2005, p. 24).

In an inclusive school, children and young people learn to be supportive (CAVALCANTE, 2005, p. 44).

School is for all children: by living with differences, students and teachers become solidary citizens (NOVA ESCOLA [capa], 2005).

So who lives inclusion, knows he is participating in something revolutionary — like what is happening with Junior. He belongs to a group, he is esteemed, he has his basic rights respected, and — even not knowing — collaborates in educating adults that are more tolerant, supportive and responsible for others (CAVALCANTE, 2005, p. 40).

The discourse of the magazine is clear: inclusion is responsible for making people more human. And if we look at the modern project of Education, this is exactly what is expected of it: decisively help to build a society in which individuals are able to live harmoniously, respecting each other and reflecting about their actions in advance, in order to guide their conducts in the path of righteousness.

It is worth remembering that this *applied moral* is the result of an inscription of the modern thought of human sciences in the great background of Kant's transcendental philosophy, who considered moral actions should be determined by the application of the categorical imperative. According to him, this would be the way of applying human reason in a practical way and linking individual actions to collective interests. And yet, the challenge in integrating and including everybody in school spaces, supports the view that only from Education a person can become truly human. This thought refers to the modern value of humanization. There is a responsibility of making individuals educated,

respectful, solidary, fraternal, a whole set of *virtues* that would make individuals *become* human. Curiously and perhaps paradoxically, the discourses that support this humanization of individuals are based on the assumption of human universality and naturalness and human rights. Why turn human what is human *a priori*? It seems that we are rather dealing with a particular form of *humanization*, which is conventionally described and desired by Modernity.

So schools, modern equipment par excellence, are great engines able to transform primitive or barbarian men into civilized men. The concept of civilization pervades modern ideologies, crossing different fields and assuming also various expressions. The science of Modernity justifies colonization and exclusion of others by the discourse of civilization, humanization and salvation. In an attempt of extracting the most savage instincts of individuals, society, through different institutions – schools, for example – and different strategies – Inclusion, for example – compose proposals that seek to make people compliant, governable and civilized. According to Dussel, this is a “process of rationalization characteristic of modernity: it draws a myth of its goodness (civilizing myth) with which it justifies violence and declares itself not guilty for the murder of others” (DUSSEL, 1993, p. 58).

Schools, working to meet the needs of a certain type of individuals, have been organizing their curriculums and their practices in order to fabricate modern individuals. In operation, the school institution seeks order and civilized life and, for this, the transformation of the individuals who enter this machinery becomes necessary: tearing off their wildness and turning them into *human* subjects, in civilized subjects.

Who has no culture of any kind is crude, and who has no discipline or education is a savage. Lack of discipline is an evil worse than the lack of culture, since this can be remedied later, while one cannot abolish wildness and correct a discipline effect. [...] It's exciting to think that human nature will always be better developed and enhanced through education, and that it is possible to get to that form, which in fact suits

humanity. This opens the prospect for future happiness of the human species (KANT, 2002, p. 16).

The schools, institutions that provide access to formal education, have become essential for the production of this modern world, providing students with an evolution from their primitive and barbarian states. The teaching of citizens depends on schools. And for the happiness of mankind, schools teach individuals behavior and conduct rules to live in a collective way without savagery, and making them fraternal. We can see that in the following passages:

Simple attitudes such as gathering in groups, remain sitting, eating by themselves, taking care of their personal hygiene and use educational material by themselves can be considered major breakthroughs for students with intellectual disabilities (MARTIN, 2009, p. 25).

Inclusion enables those who are discriminated because of their disabilities, social class or by color, to find their place in society. If not, they will always be dependent and will have only half citizenship (CAVALCANTE, 2005, p. 25).

To be carried out, this modern project employs different institutions, which should pass on the necessary and valid values that form our current time. Schools, as one of those institutions, building, strengthening and confirming that project, organize educational activities, directing them to achieve their goals. Carrying out the order became central to the development of modern civilization. The choices of curriculum, teaching strategies, and methodologies are rationally designed aiming the necessary order for learning to occur. Remembering that this learning does not bind only to specific contents of each school subject, it also binds to different school teachings, for example, *to tolerate* each other. For this, everyone must be accepted in school:

Inclusive education **welcomes everyone** without exception (CAVALCANTE, 2005, p. 24, our emphases).

To include means providing **qualified education for all** (CAVALCANTE, 2005, p. 42, our emphases).

Schools must receive any student who does not fit the ideal model (CAVALCANTE, 2005, p. 42, our emphases).

Schools print the necessary culture to everyone, order, civility, discipline to all bodies. So, for Modern Pedagogy, everyone must go through school. The ability to study and to be educated are natural features of mankind and schools must work with everybody.

One teacher for many students who are in the same level of learning, transmitting to all and at the same time the same knowledge, always with the same method, and necessarily accompanied by the same text. This scene is repeated in the other classrooms of the school and, in turn, in each and every one of the schools of the same territory. Everybody at the same time; everybody approaching the same issues, in the same manner and using the same resources. This is the landscape painted by Comenius' pedagogy. This is the landscape painted by modern pedagogy (NARODOWSKI, 2004, p. 74).

If the order operates in the schooling process, no one will escape Education; all men will be available to the disciplining produced by school. With educated people, humanity would change, achieving equality, fraternity and freedom from knowledge, the raw material of progress and the inculcation of conduct rules, moral rules. However, if until now we realize that inclusion is taken as a simple socializing process, as a fraternal coexistence among individuals, i.e., as the humanization of men, we also find discourses that link inclusion to learning. Editions of the magazine *Nova Escola* from 2003 to 2005 reinforce the idea of inclusion as socialization; however editions from 2007 to 2009 highlight the need to link inclusion and learning (see Table 1).

Table 1 - Magazine *Nova Escola* headlines about school inclusion

Headline	Section	Issue – page
Inclusion: everyone learns when children with disabilities attend school with other children.	Cover	i. 207, November/2007
Inclusion that teaches.	Special Edition	i. 24, July/2009 – p. 9
Inclusion is time for learning.		i. 206, October/2007
Inclusion only with learning.	Cover	i.206, October/2007, p. 39
Knowledge and behavior: small disabled children know a lot of things. Sometimes even more than their classmates.	Special Edition	i. 24, July/2009, p. 24

Source: Research data.

But still with this shift in the analyzed discourses it is relevant to ask ourselves: what do they mean when they talk about learning? What do they mean by learning in this context? If we analyze the articles published, we soon realize that in the concept of learning, everything related to habits, attitudes, behavioral postures, and so on, is included. We may say that there is in this sense an oversimplification of the term learning, regarding not only cognitive learning — and it practically disappears from these speeches — but also what we call social learning. Let's consider other excerpts that explain this:

Simple attitudes such as gathering in groups, remain sitting, eating by themselves, taking care of their personal hygiene and use educational material by themselves can be considered major breakthroughs for students with intellectual disabilities (CASAGRANDE, 2009, p. 25).

The participation of classmates in activities usually brings good results. I think this is the greatest gain of all. Coexistence teaches a lot. (RODRIGUES, 2009, p. 44).

The way to behave in the school environment, as well as being taught, must be assessed. A particularly important aspect is how to behave during a test. (GURGEL, 2007, p. 20).

Learning is understood here as knowing how to behave in the school environment, complying with its routine, establishing good relationship habits with classmates and teachers, among others. So we can observe the prominence socialization still gets when it is declared that our greatest gain is coexistence, because it teaches you a lot. In a recent study conducted by Traversini, Balem and Costa (2007), we can find similar discussions when, in the development of the research, the authors are faced with speeches from teachers who say “everything generates learning” or even “students will always learn something”. About this, the authors declare:

[...] There is a *trivialization* of the word learning, which means, any activity proposed by the teacher reaches the expected goal: to learn something, even if it is learning not to *mess up* using class time with anything. Or consider learning any student action regarding the proposed activity, aiming one of the widespread beliefs of the constructivist discourse that learning occurs from the students’ initiative and action (TRAVERSINI, BALEM, COSTA, 2007, p. 8, our emphasis).

With the exercise of problematization developed here we do not intend to go against socialization or despise what we call here “social learning”. We consider such learning important for the development of students and their relationship not only within school but also outside. However, one must be careful when giving great importance to social learning, because we cannot forget the commitment that the school should have with the construction of formal education. According to Lopes (2005, p. 2):

Inclusion that reduces the integration process to simply being together in the same physical space; or that reduces being together to socialization, is much more perverse than exclusion; this is an excluding inclusion. I do not mean by this that schools should not provide opportunities for socialization, I mean it cannot be reduced to the role of socializing, forgetting the requirement of knowledge and other functions.

In this sense, the problematizations presented in this text about the emphasis of the pedagogical discourses in socialization processes, coexistence and respect — in other words, the humanization of men — intend to show how such discourses wickedly exclude other individuals, putting them in a position of disability and social shadow. Precisely these speeches glorifying the inclusive approach as more humane and fraternal are caught in a perverse process of exclusion. While seeking to exalt inclusion processes as those that enable the construction of more human individuals, they also mark separated places for people in school, determining who is able to learn and who is only able to socialize and coexist. The analysis developed in this text intended precisely to denaturalize the benevolent air that accompanies such discourses in school inclusion, observing the effects they produce beyond good and evil.

With the analysis presented here, we have shown the tension always present in any practice, with different effects. We do not intend to define these practices as good or bad, true or false, right or wrong, but to point out the variety of effects they can produce, in addition to their well-intentioned goals. We think: is it possible to question, inquire and disbelieve a moral that plagues us, affects us, and captures in its meshes of natural, logical and unquestionable evidences? At the same time that we question moral as a permanent state of *accepting* others through, for example, compassion, love, care, brotherhood with our *brothers*, we think that in our world, given the cultural, social, economic and political differences we must think of strategies that make possible the coexistence between different communities, constantly questioning the processes of differentiation produced by relations of inequality and constant attempt to capture others.

By understanding that this is a political discussion, we think it is necessary and urgent to compose possible fields of social action, necessarily built for us to live in this hybrid, mestizo and Babel world. A Babel, because we live in a time of bewilderment, “a chaotic tone in which the incomprehensible of what we are is presented to us scattered and confused, disordered, out of tune, in a confused and confusing whisper

made of dissonances, fragments, discontinuities, causalities, and noises” (LARROSA; SKLIAR, 2001, p. 8).

In this sense, we think we need a certain ethic for the world of multiple cultures, but an ethic that ruptures with the naturalized moral we know. An ethics that makes it possible to think the world without stakes sticking in our thinking. An experience with the differences. A requirement placed by the differences. Openness to the other. Openness to that unpredictable, unidentified, unexpected one. Openness to the differences, to what escapes the norm, to what escapes the sameness. Openness to living the power of this difference announced in others and in me.

We think that being open to the experience of / with others is a process that strongly relates to the concept of experience in Larrosa (2002, 2004). What happens to us and through us, touches us, transforms us. An experience is an event that gives us what to think, what to feel. It destabilizes us, it requires us time for thought and feelings flowing through the events that take us, forming potentiating experiences of life.

The experience, the possibility that something might happen to us, pass by us, or touch us, requires an act of interruption, a gesture that is almost impossible these days: it requires stopping to think, to look, to listen, to think more slowly, look more slowly and listen more slowly; stopping to feel, to feel slower, take in the details, to suspend opinions, to suspend judgment, to suspend desire, to suspend the automatic action, to cultivate attention and politeness, open your eyes and ears, talking about what happens to us, learning slowness, to listen to others, cultivating the art of encounter, to be very silent, be patient and give yourself time and space (LARROSA, 2004, p. 160).

Conclusion

We eventually approach Nietzsche to set the tone of our attempt. This is not a new project or a proposition of a new pedagogy, or *the experience pedagogy* necessary for us to think school inclusion. It's more

like the exercise of our own thinking caused by the need of imagining, inventing possible ways to justify and operate our relationships when we no longer have the universality of moral and truth.

We intended to present a few provocations about inclusion though. Provocations that affected us because we have started to reflect about our world today. Being open to others carries the power of exposing us to everything that comes from them; regardless our judgment about the quality of this *everything*. Incidentally, it is not just *opening* to others intentionally that will give us the possibility of being affected by them. The simple fact of being alive and living together is, by itself, a condition of affection. Perhaps the so called *opening* would make us more willing to be sociable, fabricating positive judgments about these “affections”¹. However, what we perceive is a specific way to manage these affections. We *must* be open to others to be touched, since what is touching us conspires in favor of goodness and order. This is a particular form of moralizing affection that does not give us another chance but *accepting* the positive effects of the other on our own existence.

Let’s provoke ourselves to think: which other possibilities we have to think about inclusion other than moralization of affections? Which possibilities we have of looking at these discourses - so important for inclusive education –poking our thoughts to find new ways of looking at the national policy spaces that form schools nowadays? Let’s continue looking and reflecting, as Foucault (2006) would invite us.

References

¹ While we recognize that “affection” has become a specific concept in the thoughts of the French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, we have restricted ourselves here in use the term “affection” as the tension that occurs in the game of touching and being touched, reaching and being reached, affecting and being affected, concerning all elements that form the world, people, things, ideas, feelings etc. This sense gets close to the concept in Deleuze and Guattari (1992), but by being a punctual approach which would implicate a detailed and extensive discussion, we chose not doing it.

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