

INTERVIEW WITH HERCULANO RICARDO CAMPOS, PHD

Fauston Negreiros ¹; Herculano Ricardo Campos ²

ABSTRACT

With a consolidated performance in the area of School and Educational Psychology, Herculano Ricardo Campos, PhD built a significant itinerary as a researcher and professor, with emphasis on studies on violence and social and educational practices with children and adolescents. Our interviewee from the History Section of the Educational and Educational Psychology Journal is Current Coordinator of the Psychology and Educational Policies Working Group of ANPEPP - National Association of Research and Graduate Studies in Psychology, in the biennium 2018-2020 and was provided by the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte to the state government, to preside over the State Foundation for Social and Educational Assistance - FUNDASE. He is the author of several academic and technical productions, and has guided theses and dissertations that analyze public policies on education, childhood and adolescence in Brazil, from a historical-cultural perspective. His relevant contribution to the knowledge of the area can be expressed in this interview by Fauston Negreiros.

Keywords: School Psychology; school violence; children and adolescents.

Entrevista con Prof. Dr. Herculano Ricardo Campos

RESUMEN

Con un desempeño consolidado en el área de Psicología Escolar y Educativa, el profesor Doctor Herculano Ricardo Campos construyó un itinerario significativo como investigador y profesor, con énfasis en estudios sobre violencia y prácticas sociales y educativas con niños y adolescentes. Nuestro entrevistado de la Sección de Historia de la Revista de Psicología Educativa y Educativa es el Coordinador Actual del Grupo de Trabajo de Psicología y Políticas Educativas de ANPEPP - Asociación Nacional de Investigación y Estudios de Posgrado en Psicología, en el bienio 2018-2020 y fue proporcionado por la Universidad Federal de Río Grande do Norte al gobierno del estado, para presidir la Fundación Estatal de Asistencia Social y Educativa - FUNDASE. Es autor de varias producciones académicas y técnicas, y ha dirigido tesis y disertaciones que analizan las políticas públicas sobre educación, infancia y adolescencia en Brasil, desde la perspectiva histórico-cultural. Su contribución relevante al conocimiento del área se puede expresar en esta entrevista de Fauston Negreiros.

Palabras clave: Psicología escolar; violencia escolar; niños y adolescentes.

Entrevista com Prof. Dr. Herculano Ricardo Campos

RESUMO

Com atuação consolidada na área da Psicologia Escolar e Educacional, o Professor Doutor Herculano Ricardo Campos construiu significativo itinerário como pesquisador e docente, com destaque aos estudos sobre violência e práticas sociais e educacionais com crianças e adolescentes. Nosso entrevistado da Seção História da Revista Psicologia Escolar e Educacional é Coordenador Atual do Grupo de Trabalho Psicologia e Políticas Educacionais da ANPEPP - Associação Nacional de Pesquisa e Pós-graduação em Psicologia, no biênio 2018-2020 e foi cedido pela Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte para o governo do estado do Rio Grande do Norte, para presidir a Fundação Estadual do Atendimento Socioeducativo – FUNDASE. É autor de diversas produções acadêmicas e técnicas, e orientou teses e dissertações que analisam as políticas públicas de educação, infância e adolescência no Brasil, sob a perspectiva histórico-cultural. Sua relevante contribuição para o conhecimento da área pode ser expressa nesta entrevista realizada por Fauston Negreiros.

Palavras-chave: Psicologia Escolar; violência escolar; crianças e adolescentes.

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Fauston Negreiros: Herculano, I am honored to conduct this interview with you. Could you tell us a little about your itinerary for training and acting in School Psychology?

Herculano: Fauston, it is a source of great satisfaction for me to be interviewed by you, for this publication of the ABRAPPEE Journal, and be able to tell a little of my path in Psychology, particularly in School Psychology. The interest in the area was further consolidated during the graduation in Psychology, taken in Natal, at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte (UFRN), in the period between 1979 and 1983. At that time Brazil was living a very special moment in its history, marked the retreat of the military dictatorship that began in 1964 and the demands for democratic reorganization of the country, with broad social sectors taking the lead in the construction of what wanted a new national reality was, based on freedom, participation and growth. In that context, students and professors, or rather, the academy

- with SBPC carrying out a decisive role in the national context - exerted a different role, so that engagement in the political struggle was an essential complement to what was seen in the classrooms; the student directories and academic centers were open to learning and exercising politics, to articulating theory and practice, as was commonly to say.

Together with my dear friends I lived intensely all that upheaval moment, including assuming the direction of some student bodies, etc. Despite all my elementary education being taken in a private, religious and bourgeois school, it was within it that I obtained my political 'baptism of fire', made possible by the referral made by one of the priests / teachers to participate in 'youth groups' of 'youth ministry'. Luckily for me, Pastoral developed its actions, at the time, in tune with the guidelines of liberation theology, with the basic ecclesial communities: we prayed, but we also critically analyzed social reality. So, when I reached at the university and faced with local and national debates, proposals for student and political party organization, student demands, cultural upheaval, questioning and the transformation of values, I felt very attracted to participate in all that.

The political climate invaded the classrooms of the university, so that we separated professors who adopted a critical and transforming thought from those who were blind, deaf and dumb before the social reality of oppression and repression, seen as conservative. From the theoretical point of view, it is from that time the revitalization of Marxist and Marxian thought, which served as a guideline, as a filter, both for the reading of social dynamics and for guiding criticism of certain theories in the field of Psychology, which were presented as unquestionable truth, without a critical

counterpoint, without reflection, leading us to attend

classes with a certain air of boredom and resignation. On the contrary, echoing the importance that many of us gave to political engagement and social commitment, an unforgettable group of teachers in our Course provided critical reflection on Psychology, Education, knowledge, making us to think about the difference between the police professor and professor committed to the quality of life of students and their families, about the meaning of a school for the people, based on the Paulo Freire's principles of education. We were fascinated by the discovery of the writings of Saviani, Maria Helena Patto, Sílvia Lane etc.; the critique of the theory of human capital, of the dualistic school, of school failure, of Psychology at school.

As a result of this synergy among social reality, political engagement and critical training, notably in the area of Education, even before completing my degree I was already a state teacher in teacher training schools, teaching the subjects of Psychology and Philosophy of Education. A little over two years after completing my course, I arrived in São Paulo and at PUC to do a Master's in School Psychology - which was not completed. During my time in São Paulo, I worked as an internship supervisor in the school area at the University of Guarulhos.

The option was given and, despite the accidents of the route and the turns of the river of life, it has consolidated itself over the years and is revealed up to the present moment. Subsequently, back to Natal after eight years, I completed the Master and Doctorate in Education at UFRN, the latter of which was taken concurrently with teaching in the UFRN Psychology Course, where I started to work after being approved in public competition for School Psychology. There, I taught different disciplines and was also an internship supervisor in the area; for many years I coordinated the Specialization in Psychopedagogy, completed in the face of the contradictions with the performance in School. In partnership with Rosângela Francischini, PhD we created, in the early 2000s, the Núcleo de Estudos Sócio-Culturais em Infância e Adolescência¹, which more recently, in the context of my postdoctoral studies with **Marilda Facci**, PhD was updated and restructured, changing its name to the Núcleo de Estudos em Psicologia Histórico-Cultural².

Fauston Negreiros: How did your insertion into the studies about violence and social and educational practices with children and adolescents occur?

Herculano: Well, there are two aspects to consider in

¹ Center for Socio-Cultural Studies in Childhood and Adolescence.

² Center for Studies in Historical-Cultural Psychology.

this regard. First, it is important to clarify that my work in the poor children and adolescents field started before

I dealt with the topic in the context of academia. During my stay of almost eight years in São Paulo, initially to do the Master at PUC / SP, I had the opportunity to compose the management of two daycare centers, the first of which is the Creche Itaquera II³, administered by the Secretaria do Menor⁴- managed by Alda Marco Antônio-, in which I was deputy director. After being fired in the context of a strike led by SITRAEMFA, in which I participated even though I held a management position, I went to work in the city of Santo André / SP, directing Creche Cata Preta⁵, which at the time it was agreed with the city hall although it was managed by the Rotary Club – at that time it was the first Celso Daniel's management.

From Santo André, I only left to take over - after a selection process - the direction of the Centro de Convivência da Praça⁶, in São Paulo, in the Santo Amaro neighborhood, during the administration of Luíza Erundina at the city hall and Rosalina Santa Cruz at the Secretaria do Bem Estar Social⁷. The Center was a municipal facility open to the public, but focused on the poor childhood and adolescence that lived and circulated in the neighborhood. The failure of the campaign to elect Eduardo Suplicy as successor to Erundina and a job proposal in Natal resulted in my return to this city in early 1993. It was then that I engaged in different initiatives aimed at this audience of children and adolescents: in Movimento Nacional de Meninos e Meninas de Rua⁸, developing work as a street educator; at Casa Renascer⁹, as a guiding partner for work with female adolescents who are victims of sexual abuse or exploitation; in the Forum de Erradicação do Trabalho Infantil¹⁰, under the guidance of the then Regional Labor Office; in SOS-Criança¹¹, a government program run by the Priest Sabino Gentili - who had been my teacher at Salesiano School and who had taken me to Youth Ministry - to pay attention to the violation of the rights of children and adolescents; and in civil society entities, in the field of defending the rights of children and adolescents.

The second aspect is about my work context at UFRN. I researched and discussed the phenomenon

of child labor in the PhD in Education, at UFRN, under the guidance of Oswaldo Yamamoto, PhD. In that opportunity, I accessed the production of Irene and Irma

Rizzini about childhood in Brazil, after talking to the first one at the Santa Úrsula University - USU -, in Rio, in Botafogo neighborhood. I also read a lot of historical analysis about work in Brazil, including social organization; in addition to the analyzes about the constitution of Brazil, its people and the domination structure constitution. At OIT headquarters in Brasília, I acquired ample material on the reality of the exploitation of child labor in different regions of the globe. Professor Oswaldo provided me with literature released in Europe, in countries like France and England. After the course, I opted for the expansion of research in the area of childhood and adolescence, one of the reasons that made me engage in the Nescia creation, with Rosângela.

It was a time of great bets on social policies around the Statute of Children and Adolescents, so that some meetings / classes at the Nucleus are memorable, with students in the corridors, wanting to participate. Many researches have emerged and there had been a diversity of themes. One that was consolidated, notably in the face of the great controversy that was taking over society at the time, it was the theme of violence in schools, even being much explored by the media. A research and an extension project were structured with undergraduate students and other volunteers, who at the same time obtained information about the topic from the community of different schools, made listening groups, conversations with parents, teachers and students from schools far from the center of the city of Natal / RN. The meetings were held on Saturdays in the morning, to allow the presence of working parents. Our group was divided, so that some students developed activities with the children that were taken by the relatives, others collected the answers to the questionnaires and I with some more listened in the conversation circles. We obtained impressive reports, which revealed a very wide dimension of violence, well beyond what was observed in the media focus. Theoretical orientation had its *partis pris* in Sociology, in Debarbieux's reflection about the constitution of the concept of 'violence at school' in the face of a series of depredated events, in French schools. Here in Natal, where different sectors of society talked about violence in schools, we wanted to know, first, if it existed, and then, what it looked like. In this context, bullying was also discussed, a relationship mediated by opposing feelings, of submission and oppression, generally marked by violence and which has a privileged locus of occurrence in school. Authors such as Dan Olweus, Cléo Fante and many others guided the reflection, which as a rule characterized the characters of the relationship

³ Daycare Itaquera II.

⁴ Secretariat of Minors.

⁵ Daycare Cata Preta.

⁶ Square Community Center.

⁷ Social Welfare Secretariat.

⁸ National Movement of Street Boys and Girls

⁹ Rise House.

¹⁰ Child Labor Eradication Forum

¹¹ SOS – Child.

and pointed to the need to inform educational actors so that they were attentive, prepared to deal with the characters and the effects of such practices: it was the school psychologists who addressed the training demand and the construction of care strategies.

Such diversification of focus around the initially configured theme, about poor children and adolescents, was largely due to the demands of master students, on the one hand, and students of specialization in psychopedagogy, on the other, who needed to write their monograph as a condition for getting the title of specialist. In my opinion, the approach to the theme initially proposed was significantly expanded, and much about this process was registered in the production developed with the School and Educational Psychology WG, by ANPEPP. In that context, the partnerships among the university, the social movement and governmental and non-governmental organizations were very significant, which we were fortunate to provide. As an example I mention one, developed together with the Public Ministry of RN, which was the creation of a specialization in the area of childhood and adolescence, aimed at operators in this area, such as judges, prosecutors, delegates, counselors, etc. Finally, as it shouldn't be, the insertion in this area and the focus given to the themes related to it have been the result of the relationship with different actors; it constitutes a process whose vitality is revealed in the fact that today I am assigned by UFRN to the state government, to preside over the Fundação Estadual do Atendimento Socioeducativo - FUNDASE¹².

Fauston Negreiros: How do you currently evaluate the socio-educational care policies in Brazil?

Herculano: The policy that provides the guidelines for this service is SINASE, referenced in ECA. The legal proposition is excellent, reaching even architectural minutiae with a view to serving adolescents in conflict with the law. However, there is still a very large gap between the text of the law and the reality of its application, between what is foreseen and what is actually made available by the state structure. In my view, a better and broader understanding of this reality requires the adoption of two theoretical *parti pax*: first, the understanding that the reality of the adolescent in conflict with the law constitutes an expression of the social issue, demanding from the state the assistance via assistance policy - despite the guideline for this assistance to take an intersectional aspect, crossed transversally by education. And second, to look at public policies under capitalism as being an instrument in facing the social issue, in order to emphasize that the legal prognosis is always subject to the effects of the correlation of the forces of different actors and interests

¹² State Foundation for Social and Educational Assistance.

that dispute the public fund, leading to the expansion of politics in certain situations, and in others to retraction. When it comes to socio-education as a policy, while its expansion beckons with the consolidation of intersectional and the educational perspective in

different modalities and levels, its retraction only allows containment, the emphasis on the element 'security', discipline etc. As the adolescent in conflict with the law is an effect of the way production is organized and wealth is distributed in our society, if on the one hand he will become a phenomenon as long as these models persist, on the other hand the attention paid to him essentially depends on factors extrinsic to his person and condition, but intrinsic to the economic and political characteristics with which the social structure is presented in specific circumstances.

Despite the explicitly pedagogical and educational claim, the current social reality contributes to socio-education dealing with an audience that moves between the need for care and the need for containment, assistance and security. Increasingly, a portion of the children of poverty is driven to transgress the legal regime, including the role played by organized crime in the territories, where at the same time it entices, provides opportunities for work and income. Generally invisible to society and suffering from the lack of coverage of basic policies, such as health and education, the law states that when entering the socio-educational system, adolescents should be the target of an intersectional set of actions aimed at their dignified development, including training for work, as if the reality to be built from there in a certain way had a compensatory character in the face of its historical lack of assistance. Therefore, these boys and girls in a contradictory way acquire citizenship status precisely when their freedom is restricted or suppressed, and it is under such a condition that the great bet of the actors of socio-education is effective, that education, the character of which all work must cover context, make it possible for adolescents under socio-educational measure to assess and criticize the transgression actions for which they are being punished, and to orient themselves towards the reformulation of their life project, in the perspective of reordering values, learning productive strategies, valuing schooling as a way of social insertion.

If on the one hand socio-education is work for educators, for trainers imbued with noble principles of respect for the individual and the valorization of the human that develops in adolescents, the fact that they are under socio-educational measure because they have transgressed the bourgeois legal regime requires workers, likewise, a profile and practice consistent with the security structure in which they operate - educators and adolescents. Thus, the educational dimension

of socio-education finds a significant obstacle to its exercise, let alone in a socio-political context such as the current one, in which there is a significant regression of investments in assistance, education, culture and even work, etc., and on the other hand, a growing emphasis on security, censorship, restraint, conservative values, etc. Increasingly, there is a gap between the essence of what is provided for in the legal text and the daily reality of the socio-educational system in each state. They emphasize isolated experiences, of punctual success in one or the other aspect.

Finally, also in view of the contradiction that is embedded in state policies, which on the one hand are an important instrument in order to soften the demands of workers against capital, hiding its characteristics and disguising its effects, and on the other hand they represent effective achievements of these same workers in the perspective of a more dignified life, the policy of socio-education requires negotiation and permanent work for its effectiveness and for its qualification. In our view, it is fundamental to understand and insert this struggle in the broader context of actions for a society fairer, more equalitarian, without deluding yourself with mere legal improvement, such as new clothes in a degraded body.

Fauston Negreiros: In your career as a researcher, a psychology professor who investigates the topic, what contributions can the area bring to the theme of school violence?

Herculano: I believe that discussing this topic with a view to the school and educational area requires explaining, first of all, what I understand to be the contribution that should be given to the educational context, notably the formal one, by the psychologist who works in this interface. Based on Vigotski's reflection about the relationship between development processes and formal schooling, I understand that it is up to the area to contribute to the qualification of the mediations built in the teaching-learning process, aiming at the development, the improvement of thought processes. Thus, given the context in which it operates, I believe it is necessary for the psychologist to consider the meanings that violence takes within this context, so that prevention and coping with them constitute yet another pedagogical and educational strategy, in view of which the different actors school community need to get involved, participate.

The violence that manifests at school, called school violence, which can be institutional, originating from actors outside the educational context, or even it comes from the members of the school community, needs to be understood as an epiphenomenon of violence that permeates social relations more wide. From this point of view, the primary focus of attention needs to be this

generating dynamic, without which care within the school will be extremely partial. However, bearing in mind that the school context differs by the function of teaching and learning and by the large concentration of children and adolescents within it, it is from the social

function of school education and the way in which the school institution is organized that strategies for coping with violence at school need to be considered. In other words, violence is one, entering into symbiosis and assuming the character of the context in which it manifests itself, therefore making it believe that it is diverse, as well as that its localized combat can lead to its end.

In the extension project mentioned above, listening to different actors in the school community revealed, for example, that much of what was provoked by teachers and understood as a manifestation of violence translated into traumatic personal experiences, consolidated behavior patterns over years of living together with family members. The family members, in turn, pointed out the manifestations of violence that involved their children as a result, for example, of the free time they had, including due to the cancellation of classes, the lack of teachers etc., which led them to live with unwanted street characters. Despite testimonies of this kind referring to situations that do not necessarily relate to the school context, I understand that it is their relationship with this context that demands from educators, such as the school psychologist, the need for intervention

Thus, despite the fact that the school psychologist's work is very limited to face the social conditions that generate violence, even though his performance is in fact partial, there is no doubt that a necessary strategy, for example, is to be immersed in social reality and familiar with the students, the knowledge of the challenges they are subjected to daily, of what constitutes violence for them. Listening to the different actors in the school community and collective reflection on possible strategies to face the violence that afflicts them is an important demand for the psychologist. The opportunity to reflect on patterns of interpersonal relationships is another important demand, since many of these patterns, even when permeated by violence, are experienced by people in a naturalized way, as if they were the best and the only form of relationship; and many other actions of this nature. All of them, I emphasize, need to be discussed with teachers, managers, pedagogical advisors and parents, in view of their necessary articulation with the teaching-learning process and the development of students.

Fauston Negreiros: For you, what do challenges be necessary to face in the theme?

Herculano: I hope I made it clear that the psychologist

who works at the interface of education has an objective to fulfill, which is to contribute to the qualification of students' thought processes, notably via the qualification of pedagogical mediations. Thus, issues or challenges such as violence only make sense

to be faced in view of this educational function of the psychologist, directly articulated with a function of the same order that is assumed by the other actors in the school context. This aspect hints at the challenge of the construction of an effective educational practice by the psychologist, significantly different from the clinical practice that seems to summarize the psychological doing and that still finds great acceptance within the schools. The discussions that point to the importance of formal education for development constitute the theoretical basis to be worked on in academic training, in order to enable a safe and consequent professional exercise for psychologists who work at the interface of education.

Fauston Negreiros: As one of the pioneers in School Psychology in the Northeast and a reference in the area, how do you understand the expansion of this field in the region?

Herculano: In fact, I lack consistent data to make it possible to say about this expansion. I believe that a survey about this subject would bring a significant contribution to the area: who works as a school psychologist, in what type of institution, developing which activities, where did the training etc. Nevertheless, two achievements regarding the professional practice of the school psychologist deserve reflection, either by the indication of how much we still have to advance, or by the strong positive signal in the sense of how much we have advanced and gained recognition with our work differential.

First, I refer to the strong insertion of professionals in this area in the Federal Institutes - FIs -, as revealed in the series of publications in which you, Fauston, are one of the organizers. On the one hand, it is worth mentioning the large number of professionals who are hired to work with the educational spectrum - and not just in the Northeast -, which is evidence of the importance attributed to psychology by these training centers, and even a bet in the sense that the expertise of psychologists can contribute to the improvement of the processes experienced within those institutions. The expansion of training levels, with the corresponding opening to population contingents that traditionally did not characterize themselves as clients of these Institutes, led to an investment in the perspective of obtaining support for the new challenges that presented themselves. On the other hand, it deserves attention the fact that many of the professionals who went to work in these educational institutions still continue to develop a practice marked by the characteristics of

the clinic, both revealing an inadequate selection of candidates in the competitions, as well as a lack of clarity about the real contribution that

Psychology can offer to the teaching-learning process in its diversity, as well as an incipient professional training in what concerns the peculiar reality of educational contexts - notably formal contexts.

Secondly, I would like to say that we were delighted to accompany the first competition at UFRN for a school psychologist - not a teacher -, whose expertise pointed out from the contents of the written test clearly signaled to a professional who knows the students' development processes, through educational actions; and then, when practicing this professional, observe his work involving teachers, coordinators, families, in the challenge of contributing to the dynamics of the classroom, teaching and learning. I understand that the guideline adopted in this contest reveals, on the one hand, the frustration of the sector - the application school - with the work of another professional of Psychology who worked there, of a markedly clinical nature. On the other hand, the insertion that the concept of educating school psychologist has been achieving, as a result of undergraduate training and the internship developed in different contexts of the university, through which the potential of the area is revealed and it helps to configure the profile of a professional to development, learning and teaching issues.

Anyway, these are two experiences from which it is possible to talk about expanding the school field. Despite its apparent contradiction, its essence is complementary, constituting what I understand to be the characteristic of the area progress. Some scattered and unsystematic indicators seem to corroborate my opinion, even though I select these indicators. First, the concentration on a small number of graduate programs in the region, the theses and dissertations dealing with educational policies, as revealed in the research carried out by our WG / ANPEPP, Psychology and Educational Policies. Second, the scarce number of professionals from the region in the ANPEPP/WGs who research in the school and educational field - even though I do not have data to confirm this information. Third, taking as reference the main Brazilian congress in the school and educational area, that of the Brazilian Association of School and Educational Psychology - ABRAPEE -, once again the concentration in a reduced number of states of researchers and even students who present works etc. And yet, the very limited number of states in the region that have an ABRAPEE Representation. As I pointed out before, the lack of regional research about insertion of the school psychologist may be compromising my impression, which is that the expansion of the area in the Northeast still needs a lot of effort. Who knows, we might be excited to do an inter-institutional research to

address the topic!?

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