

## **Counter-Hegemony and Plurality of Knowledges in Education in the Light of Socio-Poetics**

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**ABSTRACT – Counter-Hegemony and Plurality of Knowledges in Education in the Light of Socio-Poetics.** This article aims to present methodological underpinnings of Socio-poetics research connected to education; more specifically, to rethink inter and transculturality envisioning knowledge decolonization, as well as, to describe the five Socio-poetics research methods basic orientation. Our studies point out that Socio-poetics, by acknowledging plurality and diversity of knowledge, can contribute to broaden horizons, when it refers to transculturality, of contemporary educational areas characterized by diversity as well as individuals' singularities, as long as it embraces counter-hegemonic perspectives and conceptions in the process of knowledge development.

**Keywords: Education. Socio-Poetics Research. Plurality of Knowledges. Counter-Hegemony. Interculturality.**

**RESUMO – Contra Hegemonia e Pluralidade de Saberes na Educação à Luz da Sociopoética.** O presente artigo se propõe a apresentar fundamentos metodológicos da pesquisa Sociopoética com interfaces na educação; e mais especificamente, refletir sobre a inter e a transculturalidade em prol da descolonização dos saberes na educação, como também, descrever as cinco orientações básicas da Sociopoética. Nossos estudos apontam que a Sociopoética, ao reconhecer a pluralidade e heterogeneidade de saberes, pode contribuir para que os espaços educativos contemporâneos caracterizados pela diversidade e por indivíduos singulares, ampliem seus horizontes no sentido da transculturalidade, na medida em que acolhe perspectivas e concepções contra hegemônicas na construção do conhecimento. **Palavras-chave: Educação. Pesquisa Sociopoética. Pluralidade de Saberes. Contra Hegemonia. Interculturalidade.**

## Introduction

When we come across the word Science, it can be quite agreeable that it automatically refers us to experiments, proofs, domain, and truth. Far from being a new connection, we believe this is due to the fact that Western scientific tradition is rooted in Eurocentric culture<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, in the preface to *The Theater and Its Double*, Antonin Artaud (2006) reflects upon the concern that a culture that is made to govern life, moves forward, however, straying from it. In Artaud's perception, "[...] We are not short of philosophical systems; their number and contradictions are a characteristic of our ancient French and European culture. But where do we see that life, our lives, have been affected by these systems? (Artaud, 2013, p. 3). This questioning by the poet, playwright, and actor, can be easily transposed to the field of contemporary education since, in general, education sciences do not lack of thought systems, but, how many of us feel affected by these systems? For something to affect us, we need to be exposed, open to the experience. In the opinion of the educator and philosopher, Jorge Larrosa (2014), experience is not the path to a goal or predicted goal, but an opening to the unknown, to what cannot be *pre-seen*, *pre-determined* or simply anticipated.

By considering knowledge a *pathei mathos* – a learning process done through and by testing, which has been replaced by *mathema* - a progressive accumulation of objective truths that are mainly external to human beings existential needs (Larrosa, 2014, translation by the authors). In view of this, educational environment relies on knowledge detached from human existential experiences, by possessing "[...] an enormous inflation of objective knowledge, an enormous abundance of technical artifacts, and an enormous poverty of forms of knowledge that acted in human life, integrating and transforming it" (Larrosa, 2014, p. 34, translation by the authors). It is worth emphasizing that the defense of knowledge that is entangled in human life, does not mean depreciating the so-called objective knowledge, or the so-called hard sciences. For the latter, since ancient times, they have allowed us *to apply* them to our daily life. Nevertheless, we question: When do we feel we are *living* within spaces of teaching and learning? In this sense, we ask ourselves, what would it be like to *live*?

Living is not to ex-ist, but to in-sist. [...] it is about [...] intention. The various intensities are the molecular differences that recognize no normality, no pattern, no average. This is life itself, [...] splendid. The expansion/contraction of differences produces singularities, that is, events that are at the same time affections in the domain of corporeality, and concepts in the domain of thought, such as the face and crown of the same coin (Gauthier, 1998, p. 104, translation by the authors).

This means that life does not happen only by ordinations and regularities, but it also includes the unexpected and the *discontour*, permeated by intensities and provoking affections. If we are retro-feeding educational paradigms closed exclusively in systems, as well

as “[...] vocabulary of effectiveness, evaluation, quality, results, objectives, [...] the language of those who know, of those in positions of power and through positions of knowledge” (Larrosa, 2014, p. 62, translation by the authors), how can we unite knowledge and life, experience and affection? In view of this, “[...] the school experience is an experience in which we do not live our life, in which what we live has nothing to do with us, is foreign to us” (Larrosa, 2014, p. 55, translation by the authors). Therefore, we believe that such a reality does not correspond to a totality, since there are different forms of knowledge<sup>2</sup>, because “[...] there is no doubt that this infinite taste for contradiction and criticism distinguishes eurodescendant<sup>3</sup> scientific knowledge from other forms of knowledge, notably those rooted in ancestry” (Gauthier, 2012, p. 24, translation by the authors). In this circumstance, we understand that it is necessary to contemplate scientific knowledge in a broader way, seeking to recognize the plurality of knowledges without this meaning invalidating any kind of knowledge.

Epistemological plurality of the world and, with it, the recognition of rival knowledge endowed with different criteria of validity, make visible and credible a much broader spectra of actions and social agents. Such plurality does not imply epistemological or cultural relativism, but certainly requires more complex analyses and evaluations of different types of interpretation and intervention in the world, produced by different types of knowledge (Santos et al., 2009, p. 12, translation by the authors).

Based on the plurality of knowledges, we understand that Artaud (2006) infers about a magical culture capable of mobilizing forces that move life, directing us to extract an idea of culture that is, above all, a protest against the conception of a “[...] separate culture, as if there were culture on the one hand and life on the other, as if true culture were not a rarefied way of understanding and *exercising* life” (Artaud, 2013, p. 5, author’s emphasis).

All that is needed is minimal knowledge and a sensitive look at traditional peoples to understand the strict relationship between culture and life, following the example of shamanistic healing<sup>4</sup>. In comparison with contemporary educational field, it is not common to come across formative processes that value the cultivation of attention to oneself and one’s body, in search of knowledge and self-knowledge. However, we understand, according to Gauthier (2012), that although there are sciences coming from traditional societies, like the pharmacy of the peoples of the Amazon River basin, what has generated - and still can generate - conflicts, the fact is that, historically, “[...] the conquered and dominated peoples have been put in a natural situation of inferiority, and consequently also their phenotypic traits, as well as their mental and cultural discoveries” (Quijano, 2005, p. 118, translation by the authors). However, starting from the statement that there are sciences other than eurocentric ones, we consider that:

In every form of knowledge that we call scientific, there are two common characteristics: coherence in relation to the constitutive hypotheses of this discipline and the search for universality, not in the sense of wanting to give an absolute and definitive interpretation of the universe [...] but in the sense that its results are valid whatever the beliefs and preferences of those who examine them (Gauthier, 2012, p. 24, translation by the authors).

This affirmation corroborates a possible recognition of the plurality and heterogeneity of knowledges, not restricted to the scientific ones, following the example of indigenous and afro-descendant knowledges, considered traditional, which we must overweigh not only in social contexts, but fundamentally in the educational scenario, given the predominance of scientific knowledges<sup>5</sup>. Quijano (2005, p. 121, translation by the authors) stresses that “[...] Europe also concentrated under its hegemony, the control of all forms of subjectivity control, of culture, and especially of knowledge production”.

In short, in favor of educational practices and more integral<sup>6</sup> ways of doing research in human sciences, Sociopoetics emerged, created precisely from experiences lived<sup>7</sup> by its creator, Jacques Gauthier, humanly formed by ancestors working in coal mines, by the Kanak people of New Caledonia, fighting against colonialism and racism. Thus, we can note that the research approach in question has as its existential principle, a non-European perspective of epistemological creation.

The Sociopoetic research approach, created in 1994-95, recognizes the plurality and heterogeneity of knowledges, and can contribute to contemporary educational spaces, characterized by diversity and unique individuals, so that they can broaden their horizons as they welcome counter-hegemonic perspectives and conceptions in the construction of knowledge. In this sense, Dore and Souza (2018) define the concept of counter-hegemony<sup>8</sup> based on the thought of the English sociologist, literary critic, and writer, Raymond Williams (1921-1988):

What, then, would be the ‘counterhegemony? It would be experiences, meanings, and values that are not part of the effective dominant culture; alternative and opposing forms that vary historically in actual circumstances; human practices that occur ‘outside’ or in ‘opposition’ to the dominant mode; residual alternative or opposing forms of culture, encompassing experiences, meanings, and values that are not expressed in terms of the dominant culture, although they are practiced as cultural and social residues of previous social formations; forms of emerging culture, encompassing new values, meanings, senses; new practices and experiences that are continuously created (Dore; Souza, 2018, p. 254, translation by the authors).

Therefore, in this article, we propose to present methodological foundations of Sociopoetic research with interfaces in education; and more specifically, to reflect on inter and transculturality in favor of de-

colonization of knowledges in education, as well as to describe the five basic orientations of Sociopoetics.

### **On Science and Spirituality in Benefit of the Decolonization of Knowledges**

Intercultural research is consistent with the view that materialism is not a substantial principle, but a propitious hypothesis in a given cultural and historical context. Other peoples<sup>9</sup>, on the contrary, need spiritualism to produce scientific knowledge (Gauthier, 2012). The words of a shaman can demonstrate his commitment to defend the intelligence of his people, although different from that of whites, but no less important:

White people call themselves intelligent. We are no less intelligent. Our thoughts expand in all directions and our words are old and many. They come from our ancestors. But we do not need, like whites, skins of images to prevent them from escaping from our mind. We don't have to draw them, as they do with their own. Nor will they disappear, because they are engraved inside us. That is why our memory is long and strong (Kopenawa; Albert, 2015, p. 75, translation by the authors).

However, despite the existence of remarkable studies from an intercultural perspective, like Boaventura de Sousa Santos et al. (2009), weaving fundamental discussions about epistemological diversity and valorization of non-Eurocentric knowledge, they still constitute a great challenge, considering that:

The instituted conception of science comes from the Renaissance, a proud, beautiful, and at the same time very repressive phase of Western history: submission of peoples from beyond the seas, submission of women, of Jews, intolerance towards everything that escapes cultural standards - prejudiced assimilated to rational standards (Gauthier, 1998, p. 147, translation by the authors).

Western education and its entire schooling process have assimilated such scientific-rationalist patterns of the European Renaissance, making it essential that contemporary educational spaces, characterized by diversity and by unique individuals, broaden horizons capable of accepting divergent perspectives and conceptions of historically hegemonic learning patterns.

In these circumstances, it is not costly to understand the unilateral vision of science with a European basis. Since historically, a certain hegemony in the West of a positivist science is understandable, we perceive this perspective when:

For the whole world, a civilized and educated man is someone who is informed about systems and who thinks about systems, forms, signs, representations. He is a mon-

ster in which we have developed to the absurd the faculty of extracting thoughts from our acts instead of identifying our acts with our thoughts (Artaud, 2013, p. 2-3).

Thus, our concern falls on the fact that we trivially think in accordance with the legacy of human history, but this history is not quite collective, since the links between ethnic groups, genders, classes, and social subgroups, in countless circumstances, have been woven on the basis of oppression rather than collaboration (Quijano, 2005; Gauthier, 2012). This leads us to reflect on the processes of colonization, generally immersed in control and subjugation, reverberant - to this day - in the different social spheres, including the formative bias and education in general. The consequences of these processes are explicit facts in *The Fall of the Sky*, a singular and exceptional work that exhales “[...] a passionate defense of the right to the existence of native people who are being swallowed up by a civilizational machine “ (Kopenawa; Albert, 2015, p. 27, translation by the authors). Therefore, against the supremacy of a certain science or any form of oppression, it becomes urgent these days:

To take *absolutely* seriously what is said by the Indians [...] and all the other ‘smaller’ peoples on the planet, the extranational minorities who still resist total dissolution by the modernizing blender of the West. For Brazilians, as for the other New World nationalities created at the expense of American genocide and African slavery, such an obligation is imposed with double force. For we spend too much time with the spirit turned to ourselves, brutalized by the same old dreams of greed and conquest and empire coming in the caravels (Kopenawa; Albert, 2015, p.15, translation by the authors, author’s emphasis).

In this direction, we can observe that such inferences from the cultural context have also reverberated in academia, since many of our research and formative processes, despite significant progress, seem to follow unilateral paths, especially when we prioritize approaches and methods that unreasonably verticalize relationships among diverse knowledges of multiple cultures, making a legitimate dialogue unviable.

If I want to research with my indigenous or Afro-descendant partners, and not about (sitting on) them, in the ethics of mutual respect and acceptance that characterizes critical interculturality, I have an obligation to suspend my judgment (Gauthier, 2012, p. 9, translation by the authors, author’s emphasis).

This means that we must fuse an opening to walk a singular path from this. Boaventura de Sousa Santos states (2011):

I have overcome this by insisting all over the world that there are practical alternatives to the current *status quo* of which, however, we rarely take care, simply because these alternatives are not visible or credible to our ways of thinking. I have been reiterating that we do not need al-

ternatives, but alternative ways of thinking (Santos, 2011, p. 18, translation by the authors, author's emphasis).

In fact, we need a true receptivity to the new, to the other, to mutual learning, just as we are capable of transforming the way we look at things - our thinking - and thus becoming more human, which is fundamental in the current pedagogical educational scenario and in the teacher training course. It becomes necessary to demand the decolonization of knowledges (Santos et al., 2009; Gauthier, 2012) with the intention of favoring a possible cultural revolution in formative spaces and academic environment, thus diverging from hegemonic practices. For this to happen, it is indispensable the understanding that:

The decolonization of the academy - therefore, of our minds - relies on the recognition that there are several types of sciences, as valid as the sciences that were developed on the European cultural floor (which I call Eurodescendant sciences so that we can leave the imperialist pretension to the universality of academic knowledge - which created the word afro-descendant or indigenous, but which one wants above all these particularisms) (Gauthier, 2015, p. 80, translation by the authors).

Nevertheless, we stress that it is not a question of rejecting Eurocentric knowledge and its contributions to the legacy of humanity, since committing oneself “[...] against the coloniality of knowledge does not mean despising the achievements of European culture, which is certainly colonizing, but which cannot be reduced to its political and economic context” (Gauthier, 2012, p. 23, translation by the authors). It also means the possibility of dialogue between academic science and the sciences of the peoples who were colonized<sup>10</sup>, representing transculturality as a place of reunion between science and spirituality, knowledges and wisdom. Far from being just an obstacle, cultural differences “[...] are also the crown of communication in a higher dimension, precisely transcultural and spiritual” (Gauthier, 2019, p. 253, translation by the authors).

We believe, therefore, that Sociopoetics, as a research approach that fosters the reencounter of knowledge in its interactive processes, contributes to the strengthening of human dignity in educational and academic contexts by uniting science, spirituality, and the body, which entitles the following topic.

### **Science, Spirituality and the Body: Learning about Sociopoetic Approach**

We are willing to defend a new science that “[...] cannot ignore the dances of the bodies entrusted to ancestry” (Gauthier, 2012, p. 62, translation by the authors). Because we consider that indigenous people and afro-descendants, based on the culture of ancestry, think with their whole bodies, like the rituals of shamanism, which use vegetables like

*Ayahuasca*<sup>11</sup> or even the dust of *Yākoana*<sup>12</sup>, to make the spirits dance (*xapiri*<sup>13</sup>) and thus take care of their own.

We discovered [...] the colonizing power, by Grandmother Ayahuasca and the vegetables in general, of the very brain of the human species. This is not only about the resistance of the Indians to the colonization of their culture, but also about the resistance of Life to destruction and capitalist colonization (Gauthier, 2012, p. 50, translation by the authors).

In one of his memorable writings, the author of *The Theater and Its Double* said that no matter “[...] we may cry out for magic, at heart we are afraid of pursuing life wholly under the sign of real magic” (Artaud, 2013, p. 4). He is probably right if we take into consideration that “[...] the Eurodescendant scientific tradition has cut off the sensitive and emotional body, as well as the intuitive head, from the rational head” (Gauthier, 2012, p. 13, translation by the authors). So evident, that the very educational practices and ways of doing research commonly, if they do not despise bodies and affections, consider them as secondary. Thus, once again, we ask ourselves: how can we speak of affection and experience in education since the latter is largely based on a Western Eurocentric tradition?

On the other hand, traditional knowledges are fully linked to the body and spirituality. In *O Oco do Vento* (The Hollow of the Wind), Gauthier (2012) shares that he needed to integrate with religious groups in order to broaden his “[...] vision of spirituality as openness and total availability to the vital energies that go through bodies and spirits, and as a demanding creation of emptiness, even in the intellect” (Gauthier, 2012, p. 161, translation by the authors). In this direction, the total openness and availability to which Gauthier shows us would be compatible with a commitment, since according to the educator Ferdinand Röhr (2012), the spiritual dimension would be the reality that exists to us only to the extent that we commit ourselves to it. We understand that this is because, although the spiritual dimension is not to be confused with religious dimension, it can in part include it from the moment we identify ourselves with something, and this something “[...] becomes an unconditional call” for whom identifying with it (Röhr, 2012, p. 15, translation by the authors).

It is in this direction that we adopt a fruitful research approach, entitled Sociopoetics, which, according to Gauthier (1998), its creator, is configured in a simple proposal: research with the whole body. “Because of the dimension given by Sociopoetics to the body, the natural tendency of Sociopoetics is to find those who know how to move the body from other cultural references” (Gauthier, 1998, p. 178, translation by the authors). This approach or method of research, based on the possibility of confluence of popular movements, and urban, and rural communities, Eurodescendant traditional knowledges (indigenous and afro-descendant), translates itself into a viable path, in the field of education, to reflect upon transculturality, which according to Gauthier



(2012), is based on the union between knowledge and wisdom, concept and ancestry, in an attempt to trail the project of a spiritualized science. “But that integrates and unites without erasing differences, without denying dominations, humiliations, and oppressions, without homogenizing or globalizing what is different and heterogeneous” (Gauthier, 2012, p. 11, translation by the authors). In defense of educational practices and processes against hegemonic ones, Sociopoetic research advocates that in partnership with others, and even more with others of strong cultural differences, it becomes possible to overcome our limits and undo the barriers we have built to sustain our disconnected self, and cut off from material and spiritual energies of nature and community (Gauthier, 2012).

Writings by Jan Masschelein and Maarten Simons (2014) argue that research in education is characterized by the researcher’s work on himself/herself. In this sense, research can be educational because it first calls into question the researcher himself/herself. Nevertheless, educational research is about making something public, attentive to the world in its truth, and available for anyone. The method of Sociopoetics adopted, at length, approaches this vision of confluence in dealing with educators as participants in research and clearly manifests the originality of “[...] always moving, at the same time, with rationality and affection, since we mobilize the whole body as a source of knowledge” (Gauthier, 2012, p. 77, translation by the authors). Thus, Sociopoetics states that the body also produces knowledge, but perhaps different: pierced by affection.

In short, we believe that the Sociopoetic research approach offers its contribution to formative processes and to

Reinventing educational research; of doing, through it, school as a *skholé*, that is, of stopping a little the vertiginous time of academic productivity to which some intend to submit it in order to experience something of free time from displacements (Kohan, 2017, p. 72, translation by the authors, author’s emphasis).

And this reinvention through *skholé* may be possible when we consider that:

The subject of the experience would be something like a territory of passage, something like a sensitive surface that what happens affects in some way, produces some affections, inscribes some marks, leaves some traces, some effects. If we listen in French, where the experience is what we drive, the subject of the experience is a point of arrival, a place to which things arrive, like a place that receives what arrives and, when receiving, gives place to it (Larrosa, 2014, p. 25, translation by the authors, author’s emphasis).

This quote by Jorge Larrosa (2014) is clear enough to expose the connection between experience and affection, since the subject of the

experience is the one who is receptive to affections, is exposed to being affected, and is like a territory of passage. Hence the pretension to think of experience and affection together as a rhizome<sup>14</sup> in the field of education.

In creating this approach or method, the French philosopher and pedagogue, who lives in Bahia, Brazil, Jacques Gauthier, exposes his intention that:

[...] scientific rigor inherited from my European roots, poetic and artistic imagination, and attention to the energies of the body and nature, particularly present in the peoples that were colonized, whether in the Pacific, the East, Africa or the Americas, conjoined in the same creative current. I accepted no rupture between popular, traditional, ancestral or acquired wisdom in daily struggles against imperialism, and science. (Gauthier, 2012, p. 73, translation by the authors).

From this perspective, it becomes relevant to understand in more detail how this confluence emerges and what guiding principles of Sociopoetics are.

### **Sociopoetic Research: five basic orientations**

Sociopoetics consists of a research method created approximately in 1994, by Jacques Gauthier, philosopher and pedagogue, whose source of inspiration was the development of his doctoral thesis in Educational Sciences, with the Kanak community of New Caledonia in 1993, at that time still a French possession. This approach is based on a combination of various methodological and theoretical orientations “[...] which marked the 60s and 70s and continue to inspire innovative research: institutional analysis, action research and participant research, pedagogy of the oppressed, operative groups, art-education, symbolic pedagogy, etc.”. (Gauthier, 2012, p. 75, translation by the authors).

Gauthier et al. (2001), warns that “[...] Sociopoetics is not a new theoretical reference, but rather a ‘method’ (in the broad sense of path, device, methodology open to the unexpected) of researching, educating, caring... that is, acting”. (Gauthier et al., 2001, p. 22, author’s emphasis). Thus, Sociopoetics is a path that is made by walking, attentive to the radical experience that poetry proposes, therefore, more open to the unexpected than a methodology would be. Instead of describing what is given, as the positivist and utilitarian use of language does, it moves away from the common judgment and intends to go to the limit of the power of creating the world.

We understand that Sociopoetics is characterized by its proximity to poetics and unpredictability, and it is unnecessary to compare it to research methods used in natural sciences, such as research in physics or chemistry. On the other hand, in the educational field and in the human sciences in general, Sociopoetics can contribute alternatively to a way of doing research, and to a formative process that contemplates the

multidimensionality of being - physical, sensory, emotional, mental, spiritual (Röhr, 2012).

In addition to a research approach, Sociopoetics enables its application in teaching and learning, following five basic orientations: *the first orientation* concerns forming the *research-group* as a device. According to Gauthier (2012), the hyphen of the word *research-group*, is necessary because it is not a group that researches, but a collective being, a subject group of its own becoming and a producer of knowledge, because its concern was to allow “[...] ‘object’ groups of academic research to become ‘subject groups’” (Gauthier, 2015, p. 79, translation by the authors).

The position of the researcher as a *facilitator*, according to Gauthier (2012), is a prominent member of the research-group, or, a professional, academic or official researcher, and can be called whatever he wants. His/her role is important because it involves discretion, needing to interfere as little as possible, and in a methodical way so that he knows how to provide the conditions to establish a responsible collective. Among its attributions, we find: implementing artistic techniques of data production, studying the data produced looking for the unconscious of the research group, organizing critical analysis, both of the study elaborated by him/her and within the group, etc. One of the demands of the creator of Sociopoetics is to elaborate cooperatively the critique not only of what was conceived, but also of what was lived, with the active and dialogical participation of all the participants of the research, mobilizing powerful affections (Gauthier et al., 2001).

For this reason, any Human Being, and specifically Blacks and Indians, no matter how much they have suffered from outrageous processes of colonization, can, through the act of emancipation promoted by Sociopoetics, affectively experience in the field of education, the equality of knowledge.

Regarding the *theme-generator*, Gauthier (2012), indicates that it refers to the theme of research, that is, a notion. It can be elaborated collectively or proposed by the researcher as a problem of academic research. Each participant in the research is active in all its stages, and may even interfere in the development of the research - this allows other sources of knowledge, not rational but emotional, intuitive, sensitive, imaginative, and driving, to come into play.

In order to meet this assertion, it is essential to listen to everything and everyone, especially those who are historically and daily silenced by oppression, as the memorable Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1987) reminds us when he states that it is necessary that those who are thus denied the basic right to say a word, regain that right. In literature, the writer Eduardo Galeano reminded us:

When it is true, when it is born of the need to say it, the human voice does not find whoever stops it. If his mouth is denied, it speaks through his hands, or through his eyes, or through his pores, or wherever he goes. Because everyone, everyone, has something to say to others, something,

some word that deserves to be celebrated or forgiven (Galeano, 2002, p. 15-16, translation by the authors).

And we could not mobilize affections without considering the body as a creative power, given that:

The body is the place [...] where intonations, cries, and whispers express what escapes from the semantic order: from rational intentionality, from political classifications imposed between what can be said and how, and what cannot be expressed. Our researches cannot lose this dimension, particularly explicit in the popular classes, of the constitution of the sense of social practices by the subjects of educational research (Gauthier, 2004, p. 131, translation by the authors).

We are based on the assumption that the body speaks, it does not cease to be the voice, the cry and the whisper of us.

From this point of view, as a *second orientation*, Sociopoetics defends the valorization of dominated and resistance cultures that were marginalized by both colonization and capitalism (Quijano, 2005), thus pointing to other ways of interpreting the world, not Eurocentric, that even have different ways of conceiving research data, producing these data in the very forms of these cultures, where the body is primordial. "This does not mean abandoning reason, but rather adding elements of the body to that reason that cannot account for everything in the whole process of knowledge production" (Silveira et al. 2008, p. 877, translation by the authors). Therefore, it is not a matter of replacing one with the other, but of considering it possible to unveil previously unknown knowledge.

Regarding the concept of scientificity, Gauthier (1998) intuited that it could no longer be produced solely by Western academic culture, but should become the subject of dialogical research involving all human cultures, including those dominated and of resistance, whether colonized or despised as the cultures of the workers in their daily practices.

The *third guideline* states that Sociopoets intend to know, think, research, learn from the whole body. In relation to the indigenous people, for example,

It is a rationality that is somewhat different from the rationality of Eurodescendant sciences, but not inferior because it is complex and efficient. [...] there, the rationale is never cut from the body - and generally from the collective body of dancers (Gauthier, 2012, p. 36, translation by the authors).

If we understand that it is possible and enriching to produce knowledge not only with the head but with the body in an integral way, combining rationality with imagination, gesture, emotion, etc. as well as the indigenous people in their rituals, the formative, teaching-learning processes and education as a whole will be contributing to the

strengthening of a global vision of the human being and its implication in educational practice.

From this perspective, we understand that the body is a creative power that Sociopoetics emphasizes as indispensable in the devices for knowledge production. This is how “[...] sociopoetics acts at the same time as a pedagogical device of collective learning through attention to the body and as a device of research” (Gauthier, 1998, p. 146, translation by the authors). *Relaxation* being an indispensable step in the production of data when it comes to developing Sociopoetic research. “At the beginning of all sessions, [...] relaxation favors not working only with the rational side and opening up to broader sources of criticism and creativity” (Gauthier, 2012, p. 81, translation by the authors). In view of releasing the body, the realization of a dynamic body relaxation at the beginning of each workshop makes it possible to flow the expression without ties or barriers.

Many knowledges for having been repressed in our nerves and muscles, by diverse oppressions or for belonging to the order of the sacred, dance or silence, are not expressed in words.

Bodies dancing, singing, twirling, celebrating in spite of being marked by physical or moral whipping, of various popular components of Brazilian society, mainly theories of African and indigenous origin. Often, skin, nerves, muscles, legs, uterus, *ginga*... know what the left brain still does not know how to symbolize (Gauthier, 2004, p. 136, translation by the authors).

In view of this, we understand that verbal language alone is not capable of expressing what has been retracted, and therefore, the exclusive use of interviews to obtain data, becomes impracticable, since “[...] improvements are very present, within and above all, in between the lines of those interviewed” (Gauthier, 2012, p. 82, translation by the authors, author’s emphasis). In view of this, it is possible to raise the question: how, then, can we cover the body and its knowledge in academic research, and why not, in the formative spaces?

The *fourth guideline* manages to answer this by declaring that *sociopoets* privilege artistic forms of production of data - and therefore, of knowledges - thus, putting into motion creative capacities that provoke the whole body and reveal unconscious sources of knowledges. These sources could not emerge in more conventional forms of research, as previously mentioned, through interviews, which are more significant after the collective study of artistic productions, in the sense of need, deepening or amplifying the problems constructed. These sources could not emerge in educational conditions based on paradigms that exclusively privilege the cognitive-rational, as well. In this direction, Gauthier (2012) highlights the importance of people letting themselves be affected; stop rationalizing everything and give themselves totally to the present moment and to research, letting the contents emerge without censorship, without having time to reflect or evaluate what is emerging.

We understand that it is of fundamental importance, for those who intend to break with oppressive and hegemonic mechanisms<sup>15</sup>, to allow the unconscious, through art, to inhabit both pedagogical practices and formative processes, as well as research in education. Therefore, art is an important dimension in Sociopoetics, for enabling the expression of what has been repressed in the body.

This epistemological and methodological concern with the mobilization of the unconscious, as a fundamental source of data, echoes directly as a demand of ours: to give voice and turn to the oppressed and marginalized, not only as producers of data whose experience of life and social practice, deserve all our care, but also as actors and actresses in the scientific adventure (Gauthier, 2012, p. 75, translation by the authors).

This portrays the care that the Sociopoetic approach takes with the integrality of the human being, regardless of his origins. Consequently, the *fifth guideline* ensures that sociopoets insist on the spiritual, ethical, noethical and political responsibility of the research group, which is not owned by professional researchers, which is not only focused on the academic world, but must be involved with the wishes and needs of the groups that host the research.

Thus, the principles of Sociopoetics, make it clear that academic research can also be formative, enabling transformation not only of the researcher, but of all involved participants. We conclude therefore, it is necessary that academic spaces and education as a whole, to welcome theoretical-methodological perspectives that encourage the production of knowledge beyond the historically established patterns of learning univocally under the cognitive-rational aspect, in order to expand educational practices that contemplate the whole body, allowing the widening of the boundaries of thought.

## **Final Considerations**

We understand that Sociopoetics, far from restricting Western thought to exclusively Eurocentric parameters, considers the multiplicity of knowledges from the perspective of epistemological plurality in defense of the decolonization of knowledges (Santos et al., 2009; Gauthier, 2012).

In a way, such a research approach is in line with the thinking of Jan Masschelein and Maarten Simons (2014), about formative pedagogical research. Considering that the Belgian authors defend a research tradition distinct from the dominant tradition, that is, hegemonic, for which the researcher is the one who generates and accumulates knowledge, being the educational or formative meaning of pedagogical research, a *constant transformation of knowledge*<sup>16</sup>. The non-dominant tradition, against hegemony, in turn, has been on the margins and in the shadows, given that its central role is not so much in the access to

truth from knowledge, but in the access to truth from the transformation of the self. In other words,

In this [non-dominant] tradition, research and study are primarily about changing a researcher's condition of existence, that is, they are an existential question. Secondly, in this other tradition, it is not only the relationship between knowledge and truth that plays a basic role, the relationship between ethics and truth does too (Masschelein; Simons, 2014, p. 61, translation by the authors).

Therefore, we consider that, researching from Sociopoetics' view, favors the deconstruction of bodies, as well as the eruption of becoming an unpredictable desire, nevertheless, it can provoke the emergence of a thought entangled in knowledge and being, generating new contours when making us leave our place, something like unprecedented displacements. For Masschelein and Simons (2014), this whole process of transformation has an intimate relationship with ethics, since:

The relationship of care is primordial, and only knowledge can play a role because of it. It can be about knowledge of oneself or knowledge of the world, but always that this knowledge is oriented to taking care of oneself. What is important is a kind of transformation of the self-directed to the domain of the self, in which the true knowledge has been assimilated or incorporated into the principle of action (Masschelein; Simons, 2014, p. 64, translation by the authors).

This means defending a creative process not only in the sense of production of knowledge as a collective exercise of thought only, but even of life, of turning to oneself, which implies looking not only at one's virtues, but at one's disharmonies. And so, transforming the act of researching into *poiesis*<sup>17</sup>.

In short, the Sociopoetics research approach expresses, in its essence, the defense of plural knowledges and non-hegemonic practices in the contemporary educational field, as well as, an integral look directed to the human being, because, like traditional peoples in their rituals, especially the indigenous people, as was highlighted in the text, consider the body as a whole. In this way, we claim that educational practices and research are capable of overcoming perspectives exclusively centered on Eurocentric conceptions of science, and contemplate aspects that foster inter and transculturality.

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## Notes

- 1 "The Eurocentric perspective of knowledge operates like a mirror that distorts what it reflects. That is to say, the image we find in that mirror is not at all chimerical, since we have so many important European historical traits in so

many aspects, material and intersubjective. But, at the same time, we are so deeply distinct. Therefore, when we look at our Eurocentric mirror, the image we see is necessarily partial and distorted. Here the tragedy is that we have all been led, knowing or not, wanting or not, to see and accept, that image as ours and as belonging only to us. In this way, we remain what we are not. And as a result, we can hardly identify our real problems, much less solve them, except in a partial and distorted way” (Quijano, 2005, p. 129-130, translation by the authors).

- 2 Discussions on the importance of the multiplicity of knowledges and possible barriers that invalidate them, are present in Michel Foucault's *Microfísica do Poder* (Microphysics of Power) (2016), in which he states that intellectuals have discovered that the masses don't need them to know, because they know perfectly and clearly, perhaps better than they do, so they say it very well.
- 3 Throughout the text, Jacques Gauthier uses the term Eurodescendant, but we adopt the understanding as Eurocentric.
- 4 On Shamanistic healing, Gauthier (2012) states that everything happens with the patient's trust in the energies of his body to enter into interactive communication with the plant's multiple healing energies. In defense of the existence of an unconscious knowledge of the body, knowledge of its healing. In the book *The Fall of the Sky* (2015), the understanding of shamanic healing is evident, through photographs and narrations, so we can understand that through *yākoana* dust (prepared from leaves and bark of a specific tree), used in the sessions, the *xapiri* (spirits) descend to “[...] drive away evil beings. They will tear away from them the image of the sick and bring them back to their bodies” (Kopenawa; Albert, 2015, p. 84, translation by the authors), bringing them healing. In this direction, the magical-religious nature of shamanism and its relationship with the corporal and spiritual dimensions becomes perceptible.
- 5 This predominance can be understood from the idea of progress, in which the Eurocentrist cognitive perspective has become dominant, “[...] so all non-Europeans could be considered, on the one hand, as pre-Europeans and at the same time arranged in a certain historical and continuous sequence from the primitive to the civilized, from the irrational to the rational, from the traditional to the modern, from the magical-mythical to the scientific. In other words, from the non-European/pre-European to something that in time will Europeanize or 'modernize'”. (Quijano, 2005, p. 129, translation by the authors). In this sense, a need to modernize or advance was incorporated, reiterating dualisms.
- 6 Studies by educator Ferdinand Röhr (2012), defend an integral human formation, considering that the human being is composed of several dimensions, being the basic ones: physical, sensorial, emotional, mental, spiritual.
- 7 Jacques Gauthier (2012), in describing his personal experiences, points out that he had to try to understand how indigenous people think, dream, and live, to share with them their struggles, to understand each other better, and above all, to begin an intercultural epistemological reflection, where each one acts as a critical gaze on the other and, in the same gesture, is transformed. “A method that would allow us to understand thought as mental geography - which I did in my doctoral thesis, which I defended interculturally, at the University of Paris 8 and the Popular University of Kanaky (New Caledonia), created by the indigenous people there who fought for socialist independence and were inspired by the work of Paulo Freire to create the Kanak People's School movement” (Gauthier, 2012, p. 8, translation by the authors).



- 8 According to Dore e Souza (2018), the concept of counter-hegemony was coined by Raymond Williams in his book *Base e Superstructural* (1973) and later revised in *Marxism and literature* (1979). “In Brazil, Gramsci’s concept of hegemony has not been understood and several authors have adopted the concept of counterhegemony, often attributing it to Gramsci and not to Raymond Williams, without even referring to the latter” (Dore; Souza, 2018, p. 255, translation by the authors).
- 9 “The ancient wisdom that carries the thinking of these original people, expressed by their traditions, rites, spells, has its anthropomorphic representations of reality, are synonyms that the dawn of civilization, does not change with the West, but renounces from the South” (Santos, 2011, p. 17, translation by the authors).
- 10 Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2006) advocates: “Subraya la búsqueda de una forma distinta de conocimiento, centrada en una dinámica enteramente nueva de conocer, de reencuentro y reapropiación de los saberes múltiples de América Latina” (Santos, 2006, p. 11, translation by the authors).
- 11 Etymologically, according to Gauthier (2012), the word *Ayahuasca* is of Quechua origin, being *Aya*: ancestral, dead person, soul, spirit; and *Waska*: rope, liana, vine, or wine.
- 12 *Yākoana* powder is prepared from the spraying of *yākoanahi* tree bark (Kopenawa; Albert, 2015).
- 13 According to Kopenawa and Albert (2015), in the indigenous tradition, *Omama* is the creator of land, forest, and rivers. He also created the *xapiri*. To cure diseases, *yākoana* powder is drunk to make *xapiri* dance.
- 14 The rhizome metaphor subverts the order of the tree metaphor. To exemplify rhizome, let us take the image of a type of radiciform stem of some vegetables, formed by a myriad of small entangled roots that intertwine forming a complex set in which the elements refer to each other and even outside the set itself (Gallo, 2016).
- 15 “La realidad no puede ser reducida a lo que existe. Se trata de una versión amplia del realismo, que incluye las realidades ausentes por la vía del silenciamiento, de la supresión y de la marginalización, esto es, las realidades que son activamente producidas como no existentes” (Santos, 2006, p. 82, translation by the authors).
- 16 According to the Belgian authors, “[...] according to this [dominant] tradition, the researcher is the one who generates and accumulates this knowledge. For him, the formative or educational meaning of pedagogical research is precisely to enrich oneself in knowledge. [...] based on infinite progress or a constant transformation of knowledge” (Masschelein; Simons, 2014, p. 59, translation by the authors).
- 17 *Poiesis* has more than just a meaning, yet here we understand that *poiesis* comes from the Greek in the sense of creation.

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