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THE EXPANSION OF MANDATORY TEACHING IN THE DISCOURSE: THE IDEA OF CHILD AS FUTURE!

A AMPLIAÇÃO DA OBRIGATORIEDADE DO ENSINO NO DISCURSO:
A IDEIA DE CRIANÇA COMO FUTURO

LA EXPANSIÓN DE LA ENSEÑANZA OBLIGATORIA EN EL DISCURSO:
LA IDEA DEL NIÑO COMO FUTURO

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Abstract: The objective of this text is to analyze how the expansion of mandatory enrollment in preschool is part of a rationale which places the child at the center of the discourses and guides the practices with young children. It carries out documentary analysis, from a critical theoretical basis, of official documents produced and circulated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) since the 1990s, with a focus on the narrative that supports the expansion of mandatory education. By questioning the meanings and intentions of the documents, we recognize that they are committed to drive the idea of the child as a future, whose care and education are concerns supported by economic interests, and thus induce the formulation of policies that indicate preschool as mandatory. In addition, we identified that in the process of implementing Law No. 12796 (BRASIL, 2013) in Brazil, the strategies adopted bring implications for children that are opposed to the concepts defended by the area of early childhood education.

Keywords: UNESCO; mandatory registration; early childhood education.

Resumo: O objetivo do texto é analisar como a ampliação da obrigatoriedade de matrícula para a pré-escola faz parte de uma racionalidade, que coloca a criança no centro dos discursos e orienta as práticas com as crianças pequenas. Realizou-se análise documental, a partir da base teórica crítica, de documentos oficiais produzidos e veiculados pela Organização das Nações Unidas para a Educação, a Ciência e a Cultura (UNESCO), desde a década de 1990, com foco para a narrativa que sustenta a ampliação da escolaridade obrigatória. Ao problematizar sentidos e intencionalidades dos documentos reconheceu-se que estão comprometidos em acionar a ideia de criança como futuro, cujo cuidado e educação são uma preocupação sustentada pelos interesses econômicos e, assim, induzem a formulação de políticas que indicam a pré-escola como obrigatória. Além disso, identificou-se que, no processo de implementação da Lei n. 12.796 (BRASIL, 2013), no Brasil, as estratégias adotadas trazem





implicações às crianças que se contrapõem às concepções defendidas pela área da educação infantil.

Palavras-chave: UNESCO; obrigatoriedade de matrícula; educação infantil.

RESUMEN: El objetivo del texto es analizar cómo la ampliación de la matrícula obligatoria en preescolar forma parte de una lógica que coloca al niño en el centro de los discursos y orienta las prácticas con los niños pequeños. Realiza un análisis documental, desde la base teórica crítica, de los documentos oficiales producidos y difundidos por la Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura (UNESCO) desde la década de 1990, con un enfoque en la narrativa que sustenta la expansión de la educación obligatoria. Al cuestionar los significados e intenciones de los documentos, reconocemos que están comprometidos en desencadenar la idea de un niño como futuro, cuyo cuidado y educación son una preocupación sustentada en intereses económicos, y así llevar a la formulación de políticas que indicaran preescolar como obligatorio. Además, identificamos que en el proceso de implementación de la Ley N ° 12796 (BRASIL, 2013) en Brasil, las estrategias adoptadas traen implicaciones para los niños que se oponen a los conceptos defendidos por el área de educación infantil.

Palabras clave: UNESCO; registro obligatorio; educación infantil.

Introduction

The defense of children's rights, including education, is at the heart of the discourse of a set of laws, documents, reports and publications by various authors¹. Early childhood education, considered in the Brazilian context as part of basic education, has as one of its most recent changes the extension of mandatory enrollment to a part of the children at this stage, the pre-school, initially indicated by the Constitutional Amendment (EC) n. 59 (BRASIL, 2009) and then by Law n. 12,796 (BRAZIL, 2013). The Law extends and makes teaching mandatory from 4 to 17 years old, endorsing what was already provided for in the EC, and the cities had until the year 2016 to adapt the services in this regard.

Scholars have dedicated themselves to recognizing the arguments that supported the approval of these legal determinations (ROSEMBERG, 2002; DIDONET, 2009; DINIZ JUNIOR, 2020) and problematize the implications for children of the strategies adopted for their implementation (CAMPOS; BARBOSA, 2016; CAMPOS, 2013; LIRA; DREWINSKI, 2020). Focusing on the extension of mandatory enrollment, this study aims to analyze how this is part of a certain rationale, which places the child at the center of discourses and guides practices with young children. Therefore, we took for analysis the documents produced at the World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien in 1990 (UNESCO, 1990), at the World Summit on Education for All (EPT), held in Dakar in 2000 (UNESCO, 2000), and the Education for All in Brazil Report, 2000-2015 (UNESCO; BRASIL, 2014), prepared by the Brazilian Ministry of Education in partnership with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Based on the set of official documents and anchored in the Foucaultian framework, we look at educational policies based on their regulatory character and considering that they act



for the governmentality of the child subject. As Veiga-Neto (2000, p. 47) points out, paying attention to the legitimizing character of the narratives requires “[...] a permanent reflection and radical distrust of any truth said or established”. Thus, we seek to problematize the discourses, denaturalize and unveil their contingent character, examine the regimes of truth committed to the idea of the child as a future, which take the young child and their schooling as the center of discourse. Access to early childhood education, somewhat intensified by the mandatoriness^{III}, reaffirms the legitimate right already indicated by previous legislation, although not implemented and involved in paradoxes and tensions, including the inequality of access between daycare and preschool.

Initially, the text briefly resumes some historical aspects of educational policies aimed at young children, and then dedicates itself to the agency's international documents in order to identify how they guided the indication of expanding mandatory enrollment in preschool in Brazil. After this discussion, we present some consequences arising from the implementation of the law, problematizing the challenges and implications for those involved.

Initial points: educational policies for young children in history

Thinking about childhoods and the phenomena associated with them requires that we consider the conceptions that underpin policies and practices aimed at children aged 0-5 years. Marcello and Bujes (2011) reflect on the idea of the child as a project which is in tune with an ideal of society guided by economic interests and is presented in preschool education narratives, a correlation that makes sense in the analysis we undertake of the discourse of documents, which we recognize to put into circulation the principles and fundamentals of mandatory preschool. In this sense, when analyzing early childhood education policies in recent decades, we see a child who leaves marginality and assumes the centrality of the discussions, from the emergence and consolidation of the discourse of their necessary care and education.

The interest in childhood in modernity and intensified in the 20th century is problematized by Bujes (2005) and Dornelles (2005), authors who refute the idea of 'discovery' of a child's world and associate the emergence of this interest in children, their lives and ways. to think of it as a convenient move for a productive society which does not value the child for what he or she is, but for what he or she will become.

The discourse on child protection emanating from international agencies, according to Lemos (2009), declares that the objective includes reducing poverty in countries, but economic and political interests prevail in education standardization strategies aimed at children. This action upon childhood is articulated from the development of several studies, monitoring, publishing of reports that disclose the assumptions of full protection of children, actions anchored in the ideal of progress. The principle of development of the capitalist economy supports the propositions that drive practices which update the discourse that supports the



actions of international organizations. It broadens the discursive field that mobilizes actions upon children in the sense of “[...] a broad network of strategies gathered in a political device justified by a voluntarist humanism” (LEMOS, 2009, p. 3).

Educational policies and early childhood education, since the end of the 1980s, have guaranteed, in terms of discourse, education as a right for all children, and places in institutions should be offered whenever the family so desires. Until 2013, this offer was related to demand, but with the indication of mandatory enrollment in preschool, by Law n. 12,796 (BRASIL, 2013), it is the family's commitment to enroll children aged 4 and 5 and the public authorities to offer the service.

By dedicating a critical and analytical look to the legal determinations that involve mandatory enrollment for children from the age of 4, Silva and Henning (2019) do not intend to issue a value judgment on the legal determination, but rather to problematize the power relations who move to enact such an obligation, looking at them under the political-economic logic, that is, they pay attention to what is in the exteriority of the phenomenon, what surrounds it. Anchored in the Foucaultian perspective, they remember that the need to manage the population, described by Foucault, includes childhood, as it is “[...] a political body that needs to be managed” (SILVA; HENNING, 2019, p. 980).

Michel Foucault's writings on the relations between power and knowledge and the implications for the constitution of subjects make it clear that the government over men is made through discipline and control, but over the years it changes with the transformations in the modes of action of the State:

This power to govern – which is installed with liberalism and which has been perpetuated until today under the name of neoliberalism – is based on a supposed emptying of the State. Supposed because, whether in one or the other, the regulating principle of society is the market and everything that revolves around it, setting it in motion. The State regulates society based on market logics (SILVA; HENNING, 2019, p. 984).

The laws that indicate the right to education, especially the Federal Constitution of 1988 (BRASIL, 1988) and the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education - LDBEN n. 9394 (BRASIL, 1996), represent significant advances in the recognition of the importance and role of early childhood education in the education of young children and are accompanied by a new look at them, based on research and theories that consider them as subjects of rights in conditions of peculiar development. Psychology, Medicine and Pedagogy, sciences historically dedicated to the study of children, were joined by the studies of Anthropology and Sociology, emphasizing the diversity that characterizes our children and the experience of their childhoods.

Rosemberg (2002) analyzes moments of Brazilian early childhood education since 1970 based on models proposed by multilateral organizations, whose mediating influences triggered by the action of international organizations lead to models with little public investment and low cost. According to the researcher, the technical-scientific authority constructed by the agencies gives their discourse legitimacy, that is, it supports policies, with arguments consolidated in



information considered pertinent, financing and influencing power along with national actors. The researcher assesses that in the 1970s and 1980s international organizations established themselves based on the circulation and validation of ideas about early childhood education and care, with funding for projects in this sense, carried out especially from the 1990s onwards. , at first we have the ascension of ideas, their legitimation and, later, their effectiveness in policies.

Magalhães (2012) proposes that we rethink the plots of policies aimed at childhood produced from the 1990s onwards, a period with important propositions for education anchored in the slogan of the citizen child, but which covers up old goals aimed at capitalist interests and social reproduction of inequalities.

When evaluating early childhood education policies in Brazil regarding their advances and setbacks, Arelaro (2017) mentions three criteria, which, although not consensual, are variables to be considered: the democratization of access, the quality of care and the democratic management. He points out that although the democratization of the offer has grown, it still presents challenges, especially for children aged 0 to 3 years. With regard to the quality of care, he identifies advances related to financing, the teacher's salary floor, lunch and transport programs, among others, which imply the necessary democratic management of resources. As setbacks, it highlights the obligation to enroll 6-year-old children in elementary school, the privatization of early childhood education and its inclusion in the Common National Curriculum Base - BNCC (BRASIL, 2017), which in his interpretation would reduce language concepts and teaching-learning and could divide early childhood education.

In the policy production process Marcello and Bujes (2011) consider that states respond to pressures from other national contexts, from economic globalization, to global discourses that place education as responsible for numerous issues, including poverty, the high unemployment rate, among others. As they warn, the narrative of widely disseminated documents is involved in power relations and acts in a network; it is productive in the sense of building a vision of the child, of the care and education that is due to it, linked to the importance of school education for the fulfillment of the objectives of modern States. From this perspective, the authors recognize that laws and documents act to produce determined subjects connected with the political rationality of modernity.

Talking about children and their rights implies recognizing the power relations that affect their constitution, that govern them, indicate their place in society, make concessions to them and are part of an intertwined game of knowledge and power. As Abramowicz reminds us (2020, p. 8-9),

[...] the rights of children and the defense of childhood have always been areas of dispute. Children are permanent objects of biopolitics, which is the control and government of the population, as there is no territory and body more elusive than those of children, and more disputed to give them an essence and subjectivity. It is necessary to work on them incessantly; and it actually operates all the time on them, on children's bodies and their territories.





The author makes us reflect on the governed children, at the mercy of many forces, including economic ones, leading us to think “[...] how can (we) inflect, interrogate, subtract and resist the idea of childhood, when it presents itself as a manufactured device and, in a way, guarantor of the functioning of society” (ABRAMOWICZ, 2020, p. 12).

In summary, educational policies since the late 1980s have proposed the right of all children to education, but this has not yet been implemented. Next, we problematize the provisions of the analyzed documents with regard to the fundamentals, intentions and rationales underlying the mandatory enrollment in preschool.

The child as a becoming in the discourse of documents

The extension of years of compulsory schooling for part of early childhood education acquires significant importance when seen from the perspective of expanding the possibilities of making the right to education effective, but it also carries a set of meanings and rationales. It is worth mentioning that the low number of enrollments in early childhood education is historic, not because of the negligence or choice of families, but because of the lack of compliance, by the government, with the constitutional right of these children. In this scenario, it is relevant to pay attention to the principles that support the propositions present in the analyzed documents, which necessarily requires us to look at the fundamentals that come from beyond the Brazilian context.

From this object of study, our gaze fell on some documents already recognized for their founding and triggering role of educational policies, given their importance on the world stage and their impact on proposing actions in national and local governments. Thus, we chose for investigation the text resulting from the Jomtien Conference (UNESCO, 1990) which assumed the commitment of EPT, having the principles reaffirmed at the Dakar Summit (UNESCO, 2000), whose final document we also look into, and the Education Report for All in Brazil, 2000-2015 (UNESCO; BRASIL, 2014), which explains the monitoring of the implementation of the EPT principle. Historically, the hypothesis considered that the bases that support the expansion of mandatoriness were located in decades prior to its implementation, hence this time frame.

UNESCO was established in 1945, as a result of the actions of signatory countries of the United Nations (UN)^v, identified as one of the main bodies acting in favor of the development of nations in the scientific, educational and cultural areas. Since then, many documents have been produced that guide these fields of action in different countries and, from the 1990s onwards, global reports for follow-up and monitoring of the actions were carried out.

The problematization of the documents was based on the reflections of Foucault (2003), which helps us to recognize that children are part of the population and an object of the socially undertaken government, whether in the context of health, education, security or otherwise. Treated in a generalized way, with understandings undertaken by adults, children are described, categorized in their characteristics and behaviors, driving actions that act towards



the government of their bodies and minds. On the other hand, according to Abramowicz (2020), if we assumed the diversity of childhood, its ways of life and thought, we would make room for the disruptive potential that these differences have.

The concepts evidenced in Foucault's perspective are essential to interpret this discourse, understand the power relations, its functioning, the institution of truths. Foucault (2003) was concerned with explaining how the problem of population control arose, bringing in the definition of government. According to the thinker, it is from the 16th century onwards that the government of populations, including that of children, appears as a central issue in Pedagogy, associated with an interest in managing behaviors in a general manner that was presented in society. The art of governing would be, then, the way to correctly manage individuals, to lead things to an adequate objective, through the intensification of processes with different tactics.

This government, the act of managing the behavior of others, applies to the group of children in kindergarten, who appear as subjects of needs, but who are an object in the hands of those who govern. As Foucault (2003, p. 291) points out, "Managing the population means managing it in depth, meticulously, in detail". To this end, a set of institutions and procedures come into play that allow the exercise of this complex form of power, whose target is the population (children), establishing a political economy.

The concept of governmentality is presented by Foucault in his course on February 1, 1978, which understands it as a set consisting of procedures, institutions and tactics that allow the exercise of power targeting the population. The author explains the pre-eminence of government over others, through a series of specific apparatuses and knowledge, reconfiguring the State from the 18th century onwards (FOUCAULT, 2008).

The crisis of society and its modes of management, according to Laval (2019), lead Foucault to become interested in modes of government based on economic principles. Thus, the rise of neoliberalism does not only correspond to a crisis of capital, but of governmentality.

The government over children uses an apparatus organized since colonial times and intensifies and expands in order to ensure governmentality. The political dimension is explicit from the first assistance, as it extends its effects "[...] on the regulation of their collective conditions of existence" (MAGALHÃES, 2012, p. 149), in which child care is built on articulation of forces between different sectors and interests. In this sense, Magalhães resumes that from the 1930s onwards, the State assumes the role of educating through the action of professionals in place of the family, influenced by the ideas of the field of Psychology that explain the study of children from the point of view of their development and behavior. This area radically changes the fundamentals of education and, thus,

[...] we have the discourse that prioritized the education of a subject in tune with the inclinations of the social order. Upon assuming the responsibility of educating, the State became the supervisor that maintained and still maintains public order, and that policed and still polices the childhood of poor children (MAGALHÃES, 2012, p. 151).

The author recalls that, as a result of these studies, the legal field comes into play, with





laws for the defense of children, which have multiplied, which made the dimension of a citizen child gain substance in the final two decades of the 20th century, due to the incapacity of the State to assume responsibility for complying with children's rights, providing opportunities for the emergence of proposals and actions by international and local organizations. It also points out that, legally, the education of young children is organized based on their specificities, although "[...] in the concrete we see the absence of broad social policies for its effective implementation, and also discriminatory and violent against children, especially low-income ones" (MAGALHÃES, 2012, p. 152), explaining a divorce between legislation and reality.

Regarding one of the documents analyzed for this study, the World Declaration on Education for All (UNESCO, 1990), it is a text elaborated at the World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990 and widely disseminated. The EPT motto was assumed as a global commitment under the idea of offering people (especially young people and children) a minimum education, with access to basic knowledge, understood by an education that minimally teaches the working class to read, write and count, without providing elements for a human formation, although this appears in their discourse. It is noteworthy that the humanist principle is presented at some points in the document, but it is much less mentioned than the economic interests that are found to be fundamental in inducing instruction so that working individuals could minimally operate in the productive field of society. Thus, investing in the early childhood experienced by poor children is viable and necessary, as it makes people live economically, forms a way of production and, socially, acts in the formation of adjusted and governed minds not only individually, but in the population as a whole.

Foucault (2002, p. 26) highlights that "The new is not what is said, but in the happening of its return [...]", it is important to recognize how language operates, triggers other discourses and actions, creates new powers and amplifies its field of action. In this tangle of truths, the author emphasizes that education, through its knowledge and powers, is a political way of maintaining or modifying the appropriation of discourses, which reverberate truths with regularity and power of affirmation. The economic bias that permeates the discourse of documents produced by international agencies can be recognized since

[...] the pattern and stages of child development described in economic analysis defend the importance of implementing Early Childhood Education programs in poor countries that directly affect children's development, so that the desired results can be obtained. This is because, for economists, in the early stages of life, children have similar characteristics, as they are at the beginning of their training processes (CARVALHO, 2016, p. 244).

Childhood is described in the documents analyzed in a general way, without considering the different realities of each corner of the world, the needs, achievements, culture and ways of life; appears in the documents, but to legitimize a discourse of intervention in the younger layers of the population, especially from the working class. As we mentioned, in relation to the document resulting from the Jomtien conference, although it includes the mention of education as a fundamental right of all, it allies it to its contribution to social and economic progress and



in a few passages appears as a condition for a more humanized living and education. Among the goals for the 1990s is the "Expansion of basic care and child development activities [...]", without explicit mention of early childhood education as mandatory. The improvement of basic education considers that "The pre-conditions for the quality, equity and effectiveness of education are built in early childhood, with basic care and early childhood education and development activities being essential conditions for achieving the objectives of basic education" (UNESCO, 1990).

The discourse of equal opportunities present in the analyzed documents intends to cancel the socially constructed inequality and resorts to education, the school, the teachers to correct the gaps, the precarious living conditions generated outside the educational sphere and the result of the productive organization of the capitalist system. As noted by Laval (2019), the neoliberal production of inequality introduced by social policies makes it clear that world capitalism is in itself unequal.

Education in the Brazilian context and based on the guidelines of international organizations acts to ensure the governmentality of children, since the expected adult places childhood in a place of importance:

[...] the new conception of childhood was accompanied by a 'new educational proposal' that came to occupy a central place on the political agenda, mobilizing part of the Brazilian intellectuals within a broader process of governmentalization of society, for which the dimension of social control was significant and the authoritarian accent evident (MAGALHÃES, 2012, p. 149).

The concern with the attention, care and education of young children enters the radar of international organizations under the discourse of quality, equity and effectiveness of education, however it is worth remembering that since the 1990s and even today many children do not even have access to institutions, especially those from low-income and black families. It is precisely this portion on the margins of society, poor childhood, that takes center stage in the discussions:

[...] the political meaning attributed to governmentality makes it possible to think as a specific rationality of our time – the proposition of policies for investment in the human capital of poor children – organizes certain ways of conducting the behavior of subjects and populations, promoting the planning of strategies related to the management of risk factors (CARVALHO, 2016, p. 233).

It is worth considering the understanding that discourses are directly involved in the constitution of what they talk about, since language has a constitutive role and not just descriptive (FOUCAULT, 2002b; FISCHER, 2001). Anchored in this assumption, we understand that the ideas that emerge at certain times and places are committed to truths and put into operation actions and referrals. In addition, it is worth remembering that there is an association





and correlation of one discourse with another and, in the case of documents from international organizations, the focus of attention on early childhood expands and strengthens, it is recurrent from the 1990s onwards, whether in the meetings of international agencies or on the agenda of the governments of different countries.

From the above, we recognize that Foucault's ideas are a tool that encourages us to think about who we are and how we become what we are and, shifting this questioning to the educational field, we need to ask ourselves what is the role of education in the disciplinary and control and how it acts in the (con)formation of subjects. Thus, we need to consider that truths are related to intentions, linked to acting forces and the analysis of documents since their constitution, place of speech of those who proclaim them and effects that induce practices need to be studied.

[...] the meaning of printed or orally produced texts is supported by the social and institutional ties of those who produce them (economic, political, cultural and ideological), which, when examined, certainly allow the verification of relevant and potentially able to give meaning to the speech. In this sense, the assertion that we infer from the author calls our attention to the understanding of the process of production, circulation and appropriation of discourse in the management of public policies as 'practices that systematically form the objects they talk about' (MARQUES; ANDRADE; AZEVEDO, 2017, p. 64).

Thus, it is worth treating the documents as discourses-events, which consider the rights of children enrolled in a course of time for economic progress. The political propositions of the State, acting in line with international organizations, operate disciplinary and biopolitical mechanisms through power and subjectivation strategies (LEMOS, 2009). The author infers from the documents' discourse that early childhood is a time to sow for the formation of productive and submissive adults, placing the country as unfair and unequal:

Protection, in a capitalist society, became capital investment [...]. What seemed to be a mission of a salvationist nature of poor and helpless childhood is being outlined as a clear policy of social control of disadvantaged populations, marked by a preventive bias based on economics (LEMOS, 2009, p. 17).

Looking at childhood as needy reinforces exclusionary early childhood education initiatives, which treat child care as charity, far from the subject of rights. Thus, the proposals embedded in the documents of international agencies "[...] deny the possibility of citizenship and disguise the exclusion and antagonism of social relations" (MAGALHÃES, 2012, p. 149), giving a false idea of overcoming differences and little effective community participation both in policy formulation and children in pedagogical practices.

In 1996, with LDBEN n. 9394, Brazil includes early childhood education as part of basic education, and the progression and expansion of mandatory education has already started to be outlined since then, gaining strength in the first decade of the 2000s.



The EPT theme is legitimized in subsequent years and reaffirmed in the Dakar Declaration (UNESCO, 2000), in the text adopted by the World Education Summit, in which the reach of education is highlighted, with a focus on broad partnerships. The document indicates as one of the objectives related to early childhood education “[...] to expand and improve the care and education of young children, especially for the most vulnerable and most disadvantaged children [...]” (UNESCO, 2000).

In reading the Brazilian reality, Campos (2013, p. 204) identifies that from the 2000s onwards the discourse that the child, especially those aged 4 and 5 years, needs to be educated, although the indications of the organisms are based on the care logic, which makes “[...] necessary to discuss the dissemination of selective and/or focused^{IV} social policies, as well as the logic underlying the idea that early childhood education, if it cannot serve everyone, at least should. to those who need it most”.

International organizations consider successful initiatives as alternative programs for child care, encourage public-private partnerships and thus contribute to the double alienation of childhood, since assistance initiatives and/or privatization of services prevail. The private sector is presented as capable of completing the efforts of the public sector, which can shift early childhood education from the sphere of public law to the perspective of service provision. The importance of civil society and partnerships is echoed in the encouragement of local, punctual initiatives, with no effect on the constitution and strengthening of a single system that meets this right (CAMPOS; BARBOSA, 2017).

By following the unfolding of the documents by Jomtien and Dakar, certain actors participating in the movement of society are evidenced at different times, explaining a common agenda between organizations based on education that is subservient to the economy, in a discourse which at the same time responds to capital and acts in the conformation of the subjects. Carvalho (2016) suggests problematizing the ways in which children are considered, how they are meant in documents addressed to governments by international agencies, as a way to problematize the ways in which political investments on them are intensified, based on what economic experts in the field say.

Both the Jomtien declaration and the Dakar document register the need to carry out effective and regular monitoring of the achievement of the EPT's goals and objectives. Following this orientation, in 2014 the Ministry of Education (MEC), with the cooperation of UNESCO, publishes the EPT Report in Brazil, 2000-2015 (UNESCO; BRASIL, 2014), which seeks to resume and explain the progress of actions since Jomtien and Dakar until that year. Among Dakar's goals, the one related to the care and education of children is the object of analysis regarding the results achieved and the strategies to reach them. The report highlights that early childhood care in Brazil is based on health, care and education activities and records that in 2001, 55% of children aged 4 to 6 attended early childhood education institutions and, in 2012, they were 78.2%, which shows an increase in access^{VII}.

In 2018, according to data from the Report of the 3rd Monitoring Cycle of the Goals of





the National Education Plan (PNE), published by the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira-INEP (BRASIL, 2020), 93.8% of the population at the age of 4^{viii} and 5 years old attended school or daycare. The indices reveal that universalization has not yet been achieved, although the PNE target indicated the intention of this to happen by 2016.

By focusing on early childhood education, policies guided by international organizations do not represent an isolated movement, but are part of broader indications. This hypothesis of articulated and related action, especially calling for partnerships and participation of civil society (entrepreneurs), does not exclude the consideration that if agendas, on the one hand, present global linearity, on the other, they have regional and local particularities.

This aspect is problematized from the concept of Globally Structured Agenda for Education (AGEE), presented by Dale (2004). When examining the relationship between globalization and education from the AGEE approach, the author highlights the action of economic forces that go beyond the borders of countries, rebuilding the relationships between them. The author starts from the statement that globalization affects national educational policies and practices with effects that need to be analyzed, highlighting the importance of supranational forces and their consequences on the educational systems of the countries.

The globalization and restructuring of the economy have motivated new configurations to educational proposals without, however, abandoning the concept of 'moldable child': "These demands of the world of work demand a new, systematized and intentional model of education, that is, the expansion of school processes based on a certain conception of society" (MAGALHÃES, 2012, p. 153). For the author, in this way, education moves away from the conception that sees it as a right and starts to respond to the economic interests and functions. As already mentioned, educational policies began to be influenced by the guidelines of international organizations, which from the 1990s onwards assumed the slogan of EPT and the basic learning needs of children in kindergarten, and trigger legislations which are based on historically constructed conceptions of the child of the working class as a problem that needs to be formed for the future.

EC n. 59 is mentioned in the Education for All Report (UNESCO; BRASIL, 2014) as a strategy to achieve the goals of EPT a EC n. 59 (BRASIL, 2009), which deals with the expansion of mandatory basic education, is part of a set of basic legislation, which guided financing policies and services which contemplated Brazilian basic education, although they are still insufficient in the face of the great inequality of the country. The report considers the PNE to be a strategy in line with the EFA objective related to early childhood care and education, in which the planning and indication of goals coincide with the project's aspiration. It also registers that in the context of early childhood education, the legal framework is also expressed in the National Curriculum Guidelines, whose first version is from 1998 and the revision from 2009.

It is important to resume, as we have already noted, that the inherent rationality of policies guided by the strategies announced by international organizations responds to an economic demand in the first place, as it works with a conception of poor children seen as the



future of the capitalist society, in which education assumes value that is strategic for economic and social development. The ideal of a man, of a student who wants to forge him or herself, has a close connection with what is desired for society, and although poor children and their development appear in the discourse that seeks to present a more holistic^x view, this is not the principle that underlies the objectives explained in the texts, which primarily follow an economic orientation and give second place to human formation. As recorded by Laval (2019), neoliberal power uses education as a strategic value, recognizing in the modern subject the economic man, managed by the interests of the market.

In the discursive clash, defenses linked to non-governmental organizations gain substance, with a strong presence in different countries and also in Brazil. We have the example of Todos pela Educação (TPE)^x, a movement that mobilizes civil society with a program whose focus and scope are in the educational field, with defenses in line with educational organizations given the alliance between them. Thus, the business organization works to convince society about the problem to be faced, indicates that it has a solution, signaling that this had not been found before because educators, researchers and legislators were making mistakes in formulating the question, the problem and the solutions. His discourse does not attack social inequalities, the difference in income concentration, and focuses on the lack of opportunities, opening the way for entrepreneurs to incur in educational policy under the narrative of concern with the excluded and marginalized.

Diniz Junior (2020) identifies that the Jomtien Conference in the 1990s established the basis for guiding educational reforms in the signatory countries, especially aimed at expanding access, whose commitments were renewed at the Dakar Summit in 2000, with emphasis on the quality of supply and the role of education in the development of nations. From Dakar onwards, the emphasis on sharing responsibilities with society becomes evident, with the discourse of partnerships, the outsourcing of the commitment to education taking shape:

[...] we can understand that the role of the State is not necessarily related to the provision of Basic Education in the public system, but that partnerships with society can be established as a strategy to guarantee the right to schooling, in order to guaranteeing such access, including in the private system, as long as it is subsidized by the State (DINIZ JUNIOR, 2020, p. 7).

In early childhood education, we have a scenario of lack of vacancies in the public sphere and government actions in some municipalities, which allocate resources to the private sector as a way to accommodate the repressed demand. However, draining public funds to the private sector is part of a neoliberal project and comprises a political philosophy that acts on the constitution of subjects and subjectivities, as it induces the idea of greater freedom and participation in society, but acts against this.

We infer, therefore, that educational policies in the globalized world are structured on supposedly shared, articulated and negotiated values, which can be recognized as hegemonic





discourses that come from international organizations and economically powerful groups in society and act to fix meanings for education. The analysis of propositions allows us to understand the engendering of multiple voices, from those of international organizations (already widely studied) to those of business groups (CARVALHO; AXIER; FRANGELLA, 2019), which start to induce policies locally and participate in different ways of its implementation.

Principles transformed into strategies: guidelines and implications for the implementation of mandatory

Policies based on children's rights expand the possibilities of access to school, but it is worth asking, as Frangella (2009) points out, what meanings they carry, which childhood is considered. There is a need to discuss the ambiguity of a process that, if the rights of children is expanded, also unfolds in the institutionalization of childhood, its schooling, which can be recognized as a strategy of regulation, since the “[...] guarantee of rights to childhood education was transmuted into schooling of this one” (FRANGELLA, 2009, p. 13).

The expansion of mandatory education poses two challenges for governments and managers of early childhood education, according to Campos (2010): first, to ensure the pedagogical unity of this stage, making efforts to move towards overcoming the historical segmentation between nursery and pre-school including looking at practices and financing and, secondly, understanding mandatoriness as a means of democratizing Brazilian education.

When analyzing the configuration of free and compulsory education in three Latin American countries (Brazil, Chile and Uruguay), based on declarations and documents issued by international agencies, Diniz Junior (2020) recognizes similarities between the adopted strategies, some of which long term compromise rights. With regard specifically to the offer, the guarantee of gratuity applies to the population, but it is often anchored in services provided by the private sector financed with public money:

[...] the documents analyzed here do not determine that the provision of compulsory education takes place, necessarily, in public education systems, but that the State can guarantee this right - free of charge for the population -, including through articulation with the sector private, provided that the population is free of charge (DINIZ JUNIOR, 2020, p. 8).

The unfolding consequences include putting into practice, for example, vouchers for families to pay for early childhood education in private institutions, since public institutions lack available places. In Brazil, low-cost alternatives that include home care, by people without training, and public financing of vacancies in the private sector, are referrals that are already present to a greater or lesser extent in some cities. These, from the north to the south of the



country, have created, as a strategy to meet the mandatory offer of vacancies, pre-school classes in institutions originally designed and organized to serve elementary education^{x1}. Circulation in these spaces can motivate encounters and exchanges between older and younger children, inter-age learning, however care must be taken so that the right to play becomes effective.

Arrabal (2019) developed a study on mandatory enrollment in Latin American countries and concluded that the efforts concentrated in the two years prior to entering elementary school are evident for children aged 4 and 5 years old, and in some countries the expansion of mandatory education reaches 3 years. This arrangement, according to the researcher, certainly guaranteed a greater number of places and guaranteed the right to education, but it was anchored in preparatory intentions for the subsequent years of schooling:

[...] the implementation of mandatory preschool in Latin America had positive effects for the democratization of CE [Childhood Education] and learning opportunities for the age group of children immediately prior to entering elementary school in recent decades, but the universalization of preschool is not a reality in half of the countries in this region (ARRABAL, 2019, s.p.).

The mandatory preschool attendance policy provided a premature primary education, anticipating typical teaching processes for older children (ARRABAL, 2019), a condition that deserves to be discussed and is directly related to the content and guidelines of the documents.

Faced with a context that physically and pedagogically separates daycare and preschool, Campos (2013) highlights the danger of accentuating the dichotomy in the indications for the two groups of early childhood education, with the definition of different goals for the education of children from 0 to 3 years of age and for those between 4 and 5 years of age, whose risk is the repercussion of the resurgence of old practices and old forms of organization. As Frangella (2009) warns, it is necessary to privilege the child for what he or she already is, overcoming the idea of becoming.

The expansion of the offer has been made compromising the right to quality education and some of the strategies adopted by the municipal networks and their possible impacts on the lives of families, children and their education deserve to be discussed. Several aspects need to be considered so that rights are met without compromising the quality of the service offered:

There is an expectation that the expansion of access will be accompanied by guaranteeing the quality of education. It is expected, therefore, that those who were excluded by access will not be excluded again, due to the lack of teaching conditions that, similarly, would deprive them of the right to the benefits generated by education (PINTO; ALVES, 2010, p. 212-213).

The first decade of the 20th century represented a time of conceptual and methodological advances which enabled the construction of a set of knowledge that allowed the establishment of ruptures with a conception of early childhood education that was anticipatory or preparatory to compulsory schooling, or even as a compensation for cultural deficiencies (CAMPOS,





2013). However, theoretical discussions and legal propositions were not enough to guarantee the realization of rights and, in the educational sphere, to implement practices that respect children's specificities:

[...] such recognition of the specificity or social particularity of childhood and the various laws and declarations in favor of their rights did not translate into a synonym for uniformity or guarantee of good living conditions for all children. This apparent mismatch between the proclaimed and the effective is visible [...] (CAMPOS, 2013, p. 204).

In short, the guidelines of the analyzed documents are based on a conception of a child in need of education and care, as a child who becomes important as a labor force to make up the working class, inducing Brazilian policies to expand mandatory education to preschool. The focus on this segment has repercussions on the age group of children from 0 to 3 years old, who are still not a priority in public policies.

Final considerations

The new legal arrangement for the expansion of mandatory enrollment prompted us to ask how it was structured and what are the key basic ideas for this measure, which are analyzed based on documents that replicate conceptions about childhood and its education and recognized as mobilizing public educational policies aimed at young children. The document's action strategies are guided by indications of what would be best for children, the most suitable for early childhood education. Looking at this phenomenon through the lens of Foucault's theory, we observe that in the writing of documents there are recurrences of concepts and conceptions about the education and care of children that need to be captured, identified, analyzed, since historically the texts obey regularities, reaffirm truths and institute power relations.

Supported by the theory explained, we can recognize that the agenda focusing on early childhood intensifies from the Jomtien Conference (UNESCO, 1990) and is renewed at the Dakar Summit (UNESCO, 2000)^{xii}, whose principles are implied in the institution of mandatory enrollment in Brazil for preschool, which can be seen in the EPT Report. Thus, a more attentive and occupied look at young children sustains the extension of the mandatoriness brought about by the reforms of Brazilian legislation, as part of governmentality guided by economic principles and which assumes children as a focus in pedagogical practices.

Thus, when problematizing the meanings and intentions of the documents, we recognize how committed they are to triggering the idea of the child as a future. The narrative that supports the expansion of mandatory education brings a conception of a generic child, lacking



in training, seeing it as a future, looking at the child from the perspective of the future and not for what it is. In this sense, at the same time that children and early childhood education assume a central position in the discursive text, they are not attended to for what they are, but for what they represent for a productive society.

A critical and attentive reading of the documents establishing this perspective makes it clear how education is subordinated to economic interests, which disregards and/or diminishes its role in human formation. Furthermore, we identified that in the process of implementing Law n. 12,796 in Brazil, the strategies adopted bring implications for children that are opposed to the concepts defended by the area of early childhood education. Without discussing how countries can transform the conditions that generate inequalities, propositions and discourse serve the logics of the capitalist system, of economic and political management of subjects' bodies and minds.

It is worth reaffirming that early childhood education has clear objectives and purposes that do not place it as submissive to elementary education, whose greatest commitment needs to be with human formation, for a good life and better appropriation and interaction with the world, which binds it directly to the exercise of citizenship, resisting the subordination of interests.

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^{II}Rosemberg (2002), Campos (2012; 2010), Campos e Barbosa (2016), Pinto e Alves (2010), amongst others.

^{III}According to the PNE Target Monitoring Report (BRASIL, 2020), in 2018 only 36% of children aged 0 to 3 years old were enrolled in daycare centers and 94% of children aged 4 and 5 years in preschools.

^{IV}For this moment, we present an excerpt from the study developed.

^VCreated in 1945, just after World War II, with the central mission of preventing and mediating conflicts for the maintenance of international peace and security, protecting human rights, providing humanitarian aid, promoting sustainable development and defending international law. It currently comprises 193 member states. See more at: <https://www.un.org/en/sections/what-we-do/index.html>.

^{VI}Focused policies are those aimed at a specific group of the population, such as the extension of mandatory education to part of early childhood education, preschool (CAMPOS, 2013).

^{VII}In 2012, only 21.2% of the population aged 0 to 3 years old attended an institution. In 2018, this index, according to INEP (BRASIL, 2020) was 35.7%.

^{VIII}According to Ordinance 1.035/2018 of the Ministry of Education, the age group must respect the date of March 31 of the year of enrollment, so if the child turns 4 years old after this date, he/she must remain in the daycare.

^{IX}Attempt at analyzing childhood in a global manner, taking into consideration the multiple aspects that constitute and affect it.

^XMore on this subject can be found at: <https://www.todospelaeducacao.org.br>.

^{XI}On this see Lira, Drewinski and Sapelli (2016); Siqueira and Basilio (2009); Campos and Barbosa (2016).

^{XII}Also in the Declaration of Incheon (2015), which was not analyzed given the time frame of this study.

