

Mediation practices toward public schools violences

Práticas de mediação frente às violências em escolas públicas

Prácticas de mediación frente a la violencia en las escuelas públicas

Pratiques de médiation face aux violences dans les écoles publiques

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Abstract

This article aims to analyze the mediation practices implemented by public schools forward to situations of violence. It was written based on intervention-research conducted in six public schools of Chapecó/SC, through interviews with directors, deputy directors and pedagogic coordinators, documentary research and observations registered on a field journal. The analysis of the information was substantiated in the Foucault's genealogy conception. The results indicate a variety of actions that seek to minimize situations of violence still based on an individualistic and essentialist perspective. However, there is the emergence of some inventive and collaborative practices that make school a place of meetings and construction of other possibilities founded in dialogue and respect for the differences.

Keywords: violence, school violence, mediation.

Resumo

Este artigo teve como objetivo analisar as práticas de mediação implementadas por escolas públicas frente às situações de violência. Foi escrito com base em uma pesquisa-intervenção realizada em seis escolas públicas estaduais de Chapecó/SC, por meio de entrevistas com diretores, vice-diretores e coordenadores pedagógicos, pesquisa documental e observações registradas em diário de campo. As análises das informações fundamentaram-se na concepção genealógica foucaultiana. Os resultados indicam uma diversidade de ações que buscam minimizar as situações de violência, ainda fundamentadas em uma ótica individualista e essencialista. No entanto, há a emergência de algumas práticas inventivas e colaborativas que tornam a escola lugar de encontros e de construção de outras possibilidades fundadas em relações de diálogo e respeito às diferenças.

Palavras-chave: violência, violência escolar, mediação.

Resumen

Este artículo tiene como objetivo analizar las prácticas de mediación llevadas a cabo por las escuelas públicas para hacer frente a situaciones de violencia. Fue escrito sobre la base de la investigación-intervención realizada en seis escuelas públicas de Chapecó/SC, mediante entrevistas con los profesionales de la gestión y coordinación pedagógica, la recuperación de información y observaciones registradas en un diario de campo. El análisis de la información fundamentada en la concepción genealógica de Foucault. Los resultados indican una variedad de acciones que buscan minimizar la violencia basada en una perspectiva individualista y esencialista. Sin embargo, hay la aparición de algunas prácticas innovadoras y colaborativas que hacen de la escuela un lugar para las reuniones y que construyen otras posibilidades basadas en el diálogo y el respeto a las diferencias.

Palabras clave: *violencia, violencia escolar, mediación.*

Résumé

Cet article avait pour objectif d'analyser les pratiques de médiation mises en œuvre par les écoles publiques face à des situations de violence. Il a été rédigé à partir d'une recherche interventionnelle menée dans six écoles publiques d'État à Chapecó (SC), s'appuyant sur des entretiens avec des directeurs, des directeurs adjoints et des coordinateurs pédagogiques, ainsi que sur des recherches documentaires et des observations consignées dans un journal de terrain. L'analyse des informations s'est appuyée sur la conception généalogique foucauldienne. Les résultats révèlent une diversité d'actions visant à réduire les situations de violence, toutes fondées sur une perspective individualiste et essentialiste. Cependant, certaines pratiques inventives et collaboratives sont nécessaires, transformant l'école en un lieu de rencontres et de construction d'alternatives fondées sur des relations de dialogue et de respect des différences.

Mots-clés : *violence, violence scolaire, médiation.*

The various forms of violence in schools have worried parents, students and professionals, prompting action in educational policies and research. We set out to investigate this phenomenon from the perspective that “the creation of contextually specific knowledge, in which what are traditionally called micro and macro-structural aspects can be analyzed in unison” (Gastaldo, 2014, p. 13).

We carried out an exploratory-quantitative study , which mapped violent practices in 13 state schools in Chapecó/SC, using questionnaires answered by 963 participants (teachers, students and family members) (Bonamigo et al., 2017). Another study followed up the process of returning the previous study to 12 of those schools, involving 408 participants: 221 students, 105 teachers, 63 parents, 11 principals and eight pedagogical coordinators, in which new information was produced (Bonamigo et al., 2014). These surveys identified three distinct types of violent practices (Charlot, 2002): a) at school: verbal aggression between students, mild physical aggression and threats between them; b) at school: vandalism and theft of school materials and equipment; c) at school: verbal aggression between students and teachers and threats between them. We conclude that violence refers to the need to overcome the school ways of educating, which have been emptied of meaning in a technologically-based post-industrial society, requiring education as a process carried out in a network, with a focus on the territoriality of communities (Bonamigo et al., 2014).

Studies - such as Sposito (2001), Abramovay et al. (2006), Sastre (2010) and the Federal Council of Psychology [CFP] (2018) - show that violence is recurrent in the school context and is produced socially, encompassing intra- and extramural factors. In this way, it must be considered that minority groups are subjected to prejudice and discrimination, which is made visible in violence against black people, indigenous people, women, people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ etc. Finally, it is “necessary to consider social relations “(...) and seek, in a contextual and in-depth approach, the nuances and singularities that reveal the complexity of the experience of violence and prejudice, as well as the ways in which these two concepts are articulated” (CFP, 2018, pp. 34-35).

This article focuses on the mediation practices carried out by public schools in the face of violence. By mediation we mean the discursive and non-discursive practices of education professionals who, in fulfilling their pedagogical role, “share/dispute/negotiate points of view or tendencies, in a continuous process of producing meanings” (Silva, 2003, p. 135), with a view to dealing with situations of violence in everyday school life. It should be clarified that we are not referring to conflict mediation (Chripino, 2007) and the related notion of a culture of peace (Noletto, 2008), which have been assimilated by various school systems.

We consider situations of interaction in which one or more actors act directly or indirectly, massively or sparsely, causing harm to one or more people to varying degrees, whether in their physical integrity, their moral integrity, their possessions, or their symbolic and cultural participation. (Michaud, 1989, pp. 10-11)

Violence and its forms of representation are mutable and show what a particular group understands as such (Wieviorka, 2007). The various cultural and historical references result in different definitions of violence, but “certain aspects of violence are perceived in the same way in different cultures and societies, forming the common ground against which ethical values are built” (Chauí, 2000, p. 432). Thus, from an ethical perspective, the philosopher defines violence as “a violation of someone’s physical and psychological integrity, of their human dignity” (Chauí, 2000, p. 432). Thus, Santos (2009) considers it

a power-knowledge device, a disciplinary and regulatory practice that produces social harm and is established as a specific rationality, from the prescription of stigmas to actual or symbolic exclusion. Violence would be the social relationship, characterized by the real or virtual use of force or coercion that prevents the recognition of the other - person, class, gender or race - causing some kind of damage, configuring the opposite of the possibilities of democratic society (Santos, 2009, p. 16).

The topic encompasses heterogeneous meanings, and its singularities require an approach that favors understanding the practices involved in mediating violent situations in schools. For this reason, this research is based on the Foucauldian genealogical conception, which “questions when and how the conditions arose for a situation to arise as we find it” (Ignácio & Nardi, 2007, p. 94), to understand the process of emergence of the object studied. In this sense, the practices are taken as a device, as a strategy of power, therefore, of subjection and configuration of knowledge that are produced by it, and likewise condition it, that is, as a producer of technologies of the self that operate as control strategies that are socially and politically legitimized by reaffirming the subjectivation processes in force (Foucault, 1977).

This debate allows us to understand the singularities of each school community, contributing to the invention of emancipatory strategies, in other words, building cooperative and collaborative relationships between people. We realize that violence that is not mediated in inventive ways undermines and even prevents the right to school education and deepens social inequalities, which highlights the relevance of studies on the practices that deal with this phenomenon.

With this in mind, the aim of this article was to analyze the mediation practices carried out by public schools in Chapecó/SC in the face of violence, identifying the strategies, the people involved and the resources used in these practices.

Method

Ferreira (2008) points out that Foucault operates with the idea that “the neutrality of correct methodology should be replaced by an ethic of self-invention, in which subject and object are constituted in the research process itself. Therefore, in his critical ontology, Foucault associates research and processes of subjectivation” (Ferreira, 2008, p. 536). With this in mind, our analysis mapped narratives that describe how ways of life at school are articulated with the statements that guide mediation practices in the face of violence as a technology of the self.

In this sense, we see truth as an invention, in other words, “regimes of truth” (Foucault, 2000), which are constituted as discourses that function as truth in a given society, showing that all discourses, such as those produced in schools and research, are forces in a field of disputes that seek to establish explanations that claim to be truths. Thus, Meyer and Paraíso (2014) postulate that we fight against single and universal causes, historical linearity and a realistic view of knowledge.

This perspective brings the genealogical approach closer to intervention research, which, through the micro-political analysis of everyday life, enables the denaturalization of discourses and practices about violence and includes the researcher and the researched as participants in the production of knowledge (Rocha, 2006). This approach is also part of the tradition of participatory research, which sees the act of research as a social intervention, in which subject and knowledge are mutually constituted, thus requiring the researcher to analyze its implications, as these will mark the knowledge produced. Also, “as a flexible theoretical-methodological approach, inserted in specific contexts that speak of the micropolitics of everyday life that constitute and are constituted by the dominant discourses of our society” (Gastaldo, 2014, pp. 12-13).

As such, we understand methodology in the terms of Meyer and Paraíso (2014, p. 18),

as a certain way of asking, interrogating, formulating questions and constructing research problems that is articulated to a set of procedures for collecting information - which, in congruence with the theorization itself, we prefer to call “production” of information - and strategies for description and analysis.

The research took place in six state schools in Chapecó/SC, which were chosen at a meeting between the researchers and the Gerência de Educação (Gered), a management body located in the West region of the state of Santa Catarina. The manager suggested that we cover all the regions that make up the Rede de Atendimento à Infância e Juventude (RAIA - Childhood and Youth Care Network), which is a network of organizations, programs and/or services for children and

adolescents. This network includes professionals working in education, health and social assistance, as well as professionals from the Public Prosecutor's Office and professors and students from the Community University of the Chapecó Region (UNOCHAPECÓ), who meet periodically in six regions of the city, according to the distribution of the Social Assistance Reference Centers (CRAS).

Considering the 13 schools that took part in the two surveys mentioned in the introduction to this article, the manager indicated one per RAIÁ region. One of the regions had not been included in the other surveys, so a new school was added. The research was presented at a meeting of school managers who accepted the invitation. The project was approved by the Ethics Committee for Research Involving Human Beings of the Universidade Comunitária da Região de Chapecó (CEP/UNOCHAPECÓ), under registration no. 065/14. To maintain their anonymity, the schools are numbered from 1 to 6.

The techniques used to gather information were: a) documentary research into the schools' mediation practices in situations of violence. Documents consulted: Political Pedagogical Project (PPP), school regulations and projects developed at the school. Not all schools made all these documents available: b) semi-structured interviews with managers and/or pedagogical coordinators, who are responsible for the school. As they are responsible for dealing with violence situations, the following people took part: in Schools 1, 3 and 5, the principal; in School 2, the technical-pedagogical assistant; in School 4, the principal, the vice-principal and the pedagogical coordinator; and in School 6, the principal and the pedagogical coordination assistant. The guiding topics of the interviews revolved around situations of violence that occur in the school and the actions taken to deal with them: how and when they are carried out; who coordinates them; and the internal and external resources used. The participants signed an informed consent form, and the interviews were recorded and transcribed. The information produced during visits to the schools was recorded in a field diary.

The information was analyzed in a qualitative way, using discourse analysis, in the genealogical perspective (Foucault, 2002; 2005), which seeks to map out under what conditions, by which actors and along what paths, the practices of mediation against violence implemented by the schools were possible. We seek to interrogate the practices and truths produced and reproduced by the violence mediation device, to grasp the meanings and identify the subjectivation processes involved.

The information on each school is presented below, followed by a discussion involving all of them.

Results

School 1

Regarding the actions the school takes to mediate situations of violence, the interviewee said that the institution "doesn't work with specific projects", but with "isolated actions" throughout the school year, organized by the pedagogical coordination team. These include lectures by a soldier from the Military Police (PM) on the topics of "violence prevention, procedures in the event of violence, guidance on crime prevention, conflict mediation and family responsibility in the training and education of children"; and "small projects that are developed based on everyday situations at the school". The school works "preventively" at the start of the school year, determining what is acceptable and unacceptable in terms of student conduct. These determinations are sent in a document to the parents, which must be signed by them and returned to the school. He considers that this practice, in addition to the pedagogical work carried out in the classroom by teachers through discussions, deals with *bullying* and the "not so serious fights" that result from it. These fights are more frequent in the afternoon; the morning shift, on the other hand, is "quieter".

The school also hosts the Institutional Program for Teaching Initiation Scholarships (PIBID), where one of the themes is to anticipate the link between future teachers and public-school classrooms. With this in mind, *bullying* is one of the themes being addressed in the 8th and 9th grades. PIBID is run by Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (CAPES), a foundation of the Ministry of Education, and at this school it is run by a university, which offers grants to undergraduate students to do internships. The course aimed at teachers was another practice mentioned, which worked on the issue of homophobia at school, with teachers as the main audience, since homophobia was practiced by them against students or between teacher and teacher.

These mediations seek to address the following types of violence reported by the interviewee: "*bullying*", expressed in various forms; "geographical prejudice", because the school caters for students from different social backgrounds; and fights that take place outside the school, mainly at night, involving issues related to drugs and theft. When such fights occur, the institution acts as a mediator, based on reports from parents or students. When the aggression exceeds a "manageable level" in the management's view, the police are called and a police report (BO) is made.

Violent practices perceived in the school are mediated by two technical-pedagogical advisors. This mediation can be calling the parents, so that "the student only enters the school when they are present"; or recording the fact in the "occurrence book" and collecting the signatures of those involved, as well as in an operational system, so that the pedagogical coordination can access the information at any time.

The school has surveillance cameras and a security guard. The interviewee said that the equipment “is aimed at protecting the property and not the students”, but that it helps them in this regard. Regarding the external resources used, the “major partnership” is with two universities: UNOCHAPECÓ and the Federal University of the Southern Border (UFFS). When it comes to CRAS, he says that “there is no space for the school”.

School 2

Regarding the violence that occurs at school, the interviewee reported: “verbal violence”, considered the most common, and “physical violence”. She understands that verbal aggression is used by students as a “form of defense” and that if it is not resolved, it becomes physical aggression. To deal with situations of verbal aggression, the school talks to those involved so that “the students apologize”. If appropriate, to expose the situation to the families, they send notes to the parents or request their presence at the school. Physical aggression control practices vary according to severity, which is graded according to the pedagogical coordination’s view. Examples of this scale of severity: “The kids are always running around, one pushes, another hits”, in which case “we just call them to talk”; and “when the aggression is a stronger push, then we close the door and have a more serious conversation”. Students are not suspended, as they believe they “have the right to be in the classroom”. However, the student only enters the school the day after the incident, with their parents present. In addition, depending on the severity, the police are called, those involved are called, the student is “taken to the police station with the parents” and a police report (BO) is made.

The school doesn’t have a specific project on violence, but they do develop actions throughout the school year to “minimize” it, involving pedagogical coordination and teachers. At the beginning of the year, talks are held with the Guardianship Council (CT), with the military police officer mentioned in School 1 and through the Educational Program for Resistance to Drugs and Violence (PROERD) - developed by police in public and private schools in various countries. In Santa Catarina, the cycle of lectures is coordinated by the Military Police and aims to train children, teenagers and adults to “resist” drugs and violence, in a movement to “value life”.

The school considers that one form of mediation is the act of gathering the afternoon shift students who are arriving at school inside the school, to avoid contact with the morning shift students who are leaving school, as this is when the “settling of accounts” takes place. The fact that there is no leisure area in the community leads to violence, because “there is a dispute over space”, says the interviewee.

When it comes to violence that happens outside the school, the interviewee says that “the school doesn’t do anything, because we can’t embrace everything”. She says that the situation is “resolved”, in other words, the school only interferes when “outsiders” get involved.

In terms of internal resources, there are 14 surveillance cameras and a watchman, which are “essential for the school”. Regarding the interaction between the school and external bodies, the interviewee believes that there is a “close relationship”, but that it is an “exchange of cards”. The main players are CRAS, the CT and the Military Police. She mentions seeking out the police and the CT as a “socio-educational strategy” for the school, as it helps to “reduce violence”. As for CRAS, it helps to resolve problems of non-attendance, providing assistance about what is happening, such as: “this student has such a problem” or “this happens in his family”.

School 3

For the interviewee, the biggest problem is the violence that happens outside the school, but which ends up “affiliating” with it, because “people from outside have access to the bars (...), people we know who use drugs, who are involved in violence and who have a police record”. He thinks that this access is aimed at “passing on” drugs to students. Faced with this, the school reports the “suspect” to the Public Prosecutor’s Office, the police, the CT and the health unit “so that possible measures can be taken, but none are taken”. From this context, the school asks the “guard” (a non-military employee who works on the premises) to talk to the “outsiders” in the following terms: “tell them that this is no place for them, that they are causing problems for you and for us in the management”.

The interviewee also reports a higher incidence of verbal violence at school, such as *bullying*, racial and gender discrimination, compared to the low incidence of physical violence. Faced with this situation, the school promotes talks with students, as a kind of “second chance”, because “the student won’t come back to the office for the same problem, since they know the consequences if it happens. “(...) I’ll give you a chance, otherwise I’ll call the mother”. This form of mediation is carried out by the principal, without variation in the face of different forms of violence. Regarding violence that occurs outside the school, but which affects the school, it is impossible to deal with the problem, because they call the police, “but the courts don’t do anything”.

Regarding the internal resources used, the interviewee said that there are cameras and a guard. Regarding external resources, the interviewee believes that there is no feedback on the referrals made by the school: “there is no dialog between

the school and public bodies”.

According to the interviewee, there is no specific project to deal with violence at the school: “we don’t work on prevention, but on solving the problem”. PROERD is one of the actions carried out at the school to deal with situations of violence. However, “it’s not always possible to work with all the students”.

School 4

According to the principal and coordinator of this school, the reports of existing violence are: fights between students and fights between students and non-students related to dating, jealousy, disagreements and drugs. The interviewees identified *bullying* as the most frequent practice, and that physical aggression was once a “big problem both outside and inside the school”, and not only involved students, but teachers too.

The forms of mediation in the face of this violence vary according to “intensity and risk”: when it’s a “simple” situation, the teacher has a chat with the student, as a first attempt to resolve the problem; if the situation reoccurs, or in more serious cases, the parents are called to the school and/or a BO is registered.

The school maintains a “partnership” with the Military Police through the soldier mentioned in schools 1 and 2, who gives “talks, theaters and specific conversations with the students” about violence and drugs. When the management notices a student or a group with behavioral problems or involved in fights or drugs, this soldier is called in: “And when we see that it’s going to happen, we call again, we have the partnership of the police, (...) they already get into the rhythm.” As a result, and with the insertion of the police officer, the issue of *bullying* was “calmed down”. Based on an idea presented by five students in the classroom, with the support of a state deputy, actions were created to include PROERD in the Catarinense Youth Parliament Program, which aims to enable students to take part in a parliamentary journey in the Legislative Assembly.

Another strategy is the realization of projects that constitute an “established union between school and family”, because it is through the “collaboration and effective participation of parents” that they are well developed. The project Sacola Literária (Literary Bag) was mentioned, which aims to get parents involved in creating a reading habit in children, based on how it works: students take two different books home, one for themselves and one for their parents, so that they can read, discuss and record the story together (in a notebook), and then it is presented by the child to their class. The project has this name because “the students make the bag together, they make it look like the class, they get involved in making it”. It is believed that this involvement between the pupils creates bonds of friendship, promoting good coexistence between them.

They also report creating a bond of trust with the students, giving them a sense of security to air their problems. For this reason, they sometimes go to the coordinator/directorate before a fight breaks out and report it: “we know about things before they happen”.

The interviewees said that the school has video cameras and an intercom to help with security and, when necessary, referrals are made to the “appropriate authorities”: “we make two or three attempts and then we have to go to the legal authorities, right?” The school also states that it takes part in the RAIA, referred to in the methodology of this research, meeting every month.

The professionals evaluated that, after the start of the projects, the change of management and “new rules established and demanded”, the school made progress in mediating violent practices: “When we took over, we had a very serious problem both outside and inside the school in terms of violence (...). We had good results, our projects, our actions, everything (...). It’s not to say that we’ve eliminated it completely, but we’ve reduced it a lot”.

School 5

The principal says that the actions the school takes to deal with situations of violence are: with students, talks, individual and group guidance; and with parents, meetings when situations of violence occur, but also with a view to improving the school.

The actions taken by the school to deal with situations of violence depend on the “type”. In the case of verbal violence, the students are called to the Educational Guidance Service (SOE) and, after each party has told their side of the story, a verbal or written warning is given. Depending on the situation, parents are invited to come to the school to talk, usually in the presence of the management. In the case of physical violence, the student is guided by the SOE, “showing him how far he can go”. When there is “malice in the act”, the “aggressor” stays at home for up to three days, “rethinking his act”. The length of the suspension is decided by the educational coordinator. However, when it comes to physical violence, some parents choose to do BO, because “if we talk, we can see that the situation won’t stop”.

The school runs the project Mutirão do Embelezamento, in which families help organize the garden, in an attempt to “bring them closer to the school and make the students learn that it belongs to them too”. The school also takes part in the Environmental Protector project, run by the Environmental Police of Santa Catarina, with the aim of training environmentally conscious citizens. Students up to the age of 13 are selected who “must not get involved in violence”. In addition, during

the year of the research, the school held a series of lectures on family, values, laws and penalties for the 5th year of high school, under the responsibility of the military police officer.

These actions seek to deal with: “verbal violence”; “psychological violence between students”; “rival groups that promote space disputes, this geographically speaking”; “groups that form within the school”; “physical violence”, which appears with a low incidence; “fights that happen outside the school but are resolved within it”; “disrespect for the teacher through the use of offensive vocabulary”; “fights over misunderstandings arising from the use of *Facebook*”; “destruction of the school”; and “violence against students on the way to school, due to disputes between groups from other neighborhoods who seek to settle accounts, and the student seeks help at school”.

Regarding the resources used internally, there are cameras and gates. The doors are always closed for the students’ safety. The interviewee says that the use of the camera is aimed at protecting property, but that it helps “with the issue of student discipline”.

Regarding external resources, the school participates in RAI: “which holds meetings, but the problems are raised and we’ve been telling them for a long time that we need more specific referrals for offending students”. “We feel very alone, because what do we do with this guy?”. “I have two boys who can’t be in the same room. It’s a question of their safety. I have two gangs that clash in the same room, so what?”. “A student who is taken out of class with a loaded gun that isn’t locked is a risky situation. Anyone who hits his backpack, it goes off. So what?”.

That’s why they mention the lack of people qualified to develop projects, who can’t work in isolation and need other institutions. Thus, according to the social worker who works at the Forum: “today, I see this issue as very distant, we would have to be much closer to the Children’s Court”.

School 6

The principal and pedagogical coordinator report on the practices that the school carries out to deal with situations of violence. The teaching team goes into the classrooms to “talk about it”. She cites the following as an example: “In the last batch [of drugs] that we caught here and which appeared in the press, I went from classroom to classroom and talked about the media, the emphasis as a school, the proximity of the school to the neighborhood [referring to a neighborhood whose image is constructed as negative]”. He adds: “I said that they have to play their part and (...) change this to show society that this is not the case (...). Our school (...) has good things, but the media emphasizes these negative things.”

Projects are also implemented: Gymkhana, which takes place every year, aimed at socializing students, the pedagogical coordination and the management; and lectures for parents, addressing “the role of the family and the school” and “how parents can educate their children”.

The interviewees point out that in cases of physical aggression, “where blood comes out”, they call and ask the parents of the students involved to come to the school. Not all of them come and some of them “don’t want to talk, they just want to file a police report”.

These mediations seek to deal with physical aggression as a result of “flirting”; *bullying*, homophobia and fatphobia when classmates are called “fat, big-eared, poor, homosexual or bisexual”; “psychological violence”; “violence caused by drugs”; “fights over unresolved issues at the weekend that are resolved at school” and “over unresolved issues on *Facebook*”; “disrespect for the teacher”; “domestic violence that the school ends up mediating” and “parents against children due to lack of care, negligence”.

Regarding internal resources, the school has inactive cameras because there is no guard. Servants, the pedagogical coordinator or the principal “look after” the entrance and exit of the students. The doors are always closed for security reasons.

With regard to external resources, the school participates in RAI; several students attend a socio-educational non-governmental organization; and, with regard to the relationship with the TC, they report that there are parents who, out of fear, don’t know what to do with their children’s education: “Some come here: after the TC came and ruined everything, what do I do? I don’t know what to do with my child anymore. There are parents who come in saying, ‘So, I’m going to abandon you’”.

Discussion

As the results show, the main problem raised by the participants in relation to violence is what happens around schools, mainly the buying and selling of drugs and fights between groups. They say they have no control over these situations and that they deal with them when they enter the school building. In other words, the school is thought of within the confines of its walls, but the practices considered violent overflow that boundary, flooding outside, while those outside also extend into the establishment. So how can we think about the school space and violent practices beyond its physical boundaries? One way is to conceive of it as part of a network that is configured based on its connection with people, groups and organizations that, through their associations and actions, produce effects that transform the network (Latour, 2001).

Conceiving of the school as part of a network provides “a broader view of situations, allows integrated actions to be planned and responsibilities to be shared” (Ferreira, 2023, p. 204). To do this, the author suggests mapping out existing programs and political projects in the area of operation.

However, the integrated actions resulting from the configuration of the network should not be made up of disciplinary and/or legal control mechanisms, because

The problems currently faced by the school have been treated as threats to the control it intends to exert over bodies and populations. In this way, the proposals put forward reveal the school’s difficulty in thinking and questioning itself to find alternatives for dealing with contemporary problems without having to resort to disciplinary control mechanisms - which are not very efficient these days - or legal mechanisms based on legal rationality. (Amado, 2014, p. 399)

For Amado (2014), these mechanisms lead to the conclusion that it is advisable to prevent acts through strict security measures, however, these solutions represent, as Foucault (2012, p. 191) argues, “a way of multiplying the occasions to punish and of designating possible offenders in advance”. Foucault’s (1989) analysis shows that these actions not only control who you are and what you have done, but mainly what you might do, the virtualities, marking possible suspects.

Ubieto (2009, p. 23) states that “*opting for control as the central element implies leaving aside suffering, which always includes something that is not controllable*”. Since violence is invariably both an effect of suffering and produces it, we conclude that control strategies do not listen to the suffering of those involved. As an alternative, the author argues that “*Electing conversation as a strategy to address malaise (...) is to give a central place to this suffering, to take an interest in its particularity and to give back the capacity for action to the actors in this network*” (Ubieto, 2009, p. 23). We should therefore ask ourselves: the choice of disciplinary and/or legal control mechanisms to deal with violence, by avoiding what is uncomfortable, has produced what effects and subjectivities?

To get around discipline and judicialization, it is necessary for the actors in the school and others in the network to work inventively to build alternatives to the problems. We have therefore identified a variety of mediation practices, many of which are carried out through the use of disciplinary and legal mechanisms (which led to judicialization). On the other hand, there are others that prove to be inventive and collaborative: the Literary Bag project involves students and their parents, provides opportunities for dialogue, creation and cooperation between them, giving space for the expression of singularities; the Beautification Task Force also triggers collective action and brings parents and the school closer together, which can help them become actors in the school process.

Other powerful initiatives are dialogues between those involved in situations of violence and between schools and other organizations; the RAlA, where problems are discussed and alternatives built collaboratively; lectures on topics related to violence and education. These initiatives enable expression and creation, the empowerment of the actors, which increases the chance of success in finding solutions and establishes “the school as a place for encounters, for building other training possibilities, in short, as a space for expanding ways of existing” (Amado, 2014, p. 400). After all, there are ways of teaching in different cultural artifacts that are articulate with each other, which is why it is desirable to look not only at the inside of the school and what is explicitly taught in its curriculum, but also at the instances that interact with this institution and other pedagogies.

In this sense, the questions that refer to networks and territories teach that mediation practices need to involve organizations, actors and social groups in the territory, in a “collective work, beyond the school walls involving intersectoral public policies, investments in education, projects that help pedagogical practice, better objective working conditions” (CFP, 2018, p. 351). This idea appears in the research, but without thinking from a positive conception, but rather something unexpected or in some cases intangible. In other words, it is not in the logic of the schools’ work that practices should be thought of in the form of a network and linked to the territory.

Conversely, Ubieto (2009, p. 19) points out that the “*decline of absolute solutions and individualistic approaches has not only been evident in the public systems of social care, health or education, but above all, and in the first place, in social and political action*”. This means that networking “*is in the foreground as a result of the relevant changes that have taken place in the panorama of public policies and care for people: organizational, legal and methodological changes*” (Ubieto, 2009, p. 20), so that it is no longer a question of whether or not to opt for this form of action, but of knowing that:

Everything we do is relative to our place in the network, since the time of absolute knowledge and disciplines has passed. Today, malaise is dealt with through social and institutional distribution: everyone their share and the network its global share. (Ubieto, 2009, p. 40)

So, if there is nothing going on outside the network and the territory, the question becomes how each one recognizes and situates themselves in the attention to situations of violence, so that the possible mediations are always relative to this network. It is understood, then, that changes in socio-educational care depend on the repositioning of each entity and social actor, as well as the reconfigurations made in and by the network in favor of collaborative work aimed at “improving care, increasing knowledge of problems, resources and professional responses, and improving and innovating institutional

proposals” (Ubieto, 2009, p. 23).

In schools, there is a predominance of one-off, short-term actions to minimize violence. The interviewees say that, in general, there is no “preventive work”, but we question whether this is advisable. As we have discussed, we must be careful with this prevention, as it can be a form of punishment and designation of presumed “delinquents”.

Bauman (1998) shows that prevention is closely related to modern rationality. The author also highlights the “etiological myth” about the civilizing process, which underpins the idea that the Holocaust was “the failure of civilization (i.e. human activity with a purpose, guided by reason) to contain the natural morbid predilections of whatever was left natural in man” (Bauman, 1998, p. 32). However, by arguing that modern civilization was not the “sufficient condition” of the Holocaust, but its “necessary condition”, he demonstrates that modern rationality made Nazi-fascist atrocities possible: “Both creation and destruction are inseparable aspects of what we call civilization” (Rubenstein, 1978, p. 195, quoted by Bauman, 1998, p. 28). Therefore, civilization and violence are not antitheses, and the maintenance of violence in the modern world can be “seen as a product of the rationality that makes it possible” (Lopes, 2013, p. 27). Thus, the paradox of modernity would be “violence as obedience, as an expression of modern bureaucracy or the culture of rationality” (Lopes, 2013, p. 28).

The rationality of violence means that the institutional rules and measures in schools have not been able to prevent violent practices, so much so that the interviewees cite a broad spectrum of violence, which the institutions are unable to deal with using disciplinary instruments. It’s clear that instrumental rationality can’t prevent such events, but at most it can reduce or minimize their occurrence. This is also why prevention has its limits in terms of controlling undesirable behavior.

Taking violence as a “pattern of modern rational behavior” (Lopes, 2013, p. 32) implies “shifting its explanation from the violence-transgression relationship (irrationality, disorder) to the violence-obedience articulation (rationality, order); it also means shifting the scope of its origin from the individual, the personality, to the collective and social sphere” (Lopes, 2013, p. 28). Thus, the schools promote: talks by the pedagogical team in the classrooms on topics related to violence; individual conversations and guidance, with the aggressor and the aggressed or in groups; recording of violence in a book and operating system; suspension of the student’s attendance at school activities; lectures with the CT and the military police officer, and, in his case, the use of theaters and individual conversations with the student or group of students who present behavioral “problems” or are involved in drugs and fights; and projects such as PROERD. We noticed that even when schools broaden their focus from the individual to the group of students, the individualistic and blaming perspective persists, as they focus their actions on preventing and correcting students’ transgressions.

There is also the centralization of school actions on the students’ parents - individuals who need to reclaim their role - through conversations that take place especially when there are situations of violence that involve “more serious cases” (such as physical aggression), activities with families - such as meetings, lectures and projects - that seek participation and school improvement. In short, there are few actions that deal with broader aspects and that are built collectively and inventively in the process of the social actors living together.

On the one hand, there is little or no involvement of school professionals in existing actions and projects, with the management and pedagogical advisors being more responsible for mediating violence. On the other hand, there are video cameras in schools for the security of property and people. In short, it is increasingly noticeable that everyone is distancing themselves from collective care and giving it to others and to technological devices. Lopes (2013, p. 33) warns that “mediation, whether through bureaucratic procedures or sophisticated technological instruments, removes the subject’s responsibility for the consequences of their actions”. As a result, subjectivities are produced that are increasingly dependent on authority and, in the appeal for survival, there is an appeal to authoritarianism in the family, school, politics, law, the police, etc.

Sibilia (2012), when dealing with the dilemmas of the school as a technology, cites an artifact, a device invented with a normalizing purpose that contributed to the implementation of the project of modernity. According to the author, “people were taught to think and act in the way that was considered correct for the parameters of the time” (Sibilia, 2012, p. 19). Sibilia also mentions that one of the signs of the crisis of this institution, of the “loss of effectiveness in the smooth running of the gears” (Sibilia, 2012, p. 25), is that “both its components and its modes of operation are no longer easily in tune with the young people of the 21st century” (Sibilia, 2012, p. 13). He also points out that, in the face of the crisis of disciplinary society, the feeling of insecurity has increased to the point that the new technologies at school no longer serve the moral surveillance of disciplinary society, but the police surveillance of the society of control: “electronic networks seek to control this ‘lack of security’ that emerges as a fearsome ghost for the new regime” (Sibilia, 2012, p. 170).

We turned to Foucault (2000, 2007), who sees the subject as a discursive production, as an effect of power-knowledge relations, in order to understand practices in the face of violence as producers of subjectivities. Since there is no such thing as a subject, but rather what is said about them, individuals who perpetrate or are victims of violence are, above all, effects of discursive and non-discursive practices. This refers to the modes of subjectivation that are produced in the development of mediation practices that focus on individuals (students or parents). Subjectivation is understood as “heterogeneous practices and processes through which human beings come to relate to themselves and others as subjects of a certain kind” (Rose, 2001, p. 36). These ways allow us to understand, for example, *bullying*, which involves practices of prejudice and violence, but which are treated from an individual and pathologizing perspective, because there is supposedly only one

interpersonal relationship in which there are victimizers and victims. This reductionist and binary view produces modes of subjectivation engendered in schools: the bullying students and the bullied, the outsiders who invade the school and the insiders who suffer violence, the responsible parents and the irresponsible ones.

Based on Arroyo's (2012) critique of the hegemonic way of conducting school education, we conceive of "outsiders" (school invaders) and students who commit violence in the same way that he calls social groups historically excluded from or marginalized in schools: "Other Subjects", whose places, cultures, knowledge, values are classified as inferior, primitive, irrational. We would add, violent.

By reacting to being thought of and made subaltern, they deconstruct the self-identities of pedagogical thinking (...), they demand a retelling of this pedagogical history that segregated them as subjects and relegated them to mere objects, recipients of hegemonic pedagogies. They demand that their history be recognized (Arroyo, 2012, p. 11-12).

They react, they resist, often in a way that is intelligible to the school, as in situations of violence. "Their resistance revealed the arrogance of a colonizing, civilizing cultural enterprise marked by extermination, genocide and culturicide" (Arroyo, 2012, p. 219).

Thus, Arroyo (2012) calls for "Other Pedagogies" since the presence of "Other Subjects" in schools requires radicalizing policies, theories and practices. "These collectives show that the educational concepts and practices designed to educate and civilize them are conditioned by the ways of thinking about them, or by the pattern of power/knowledge of how they were designed to be subalternized" (Arroyo, 2012, p. 11). Therefore, it is not a question of increasing "the chorus of experts who assure us that human problems are a matter of the wrong policies and that the right policies mean the elimination of problems" (Bauman, 1998, p. 31), but of questioning the policies that think of others, the subalternized, the violent. Or as Gastaldo (2014, p. 13) proposes

(...) the creation of a narrative that, far from being neutral, is rigorous and engaged, allowing us to propose ways of seeing and thinking about phenomena. This movement politicizes the production of knowledge, however, conflicts with what is traditionally conceived as the production of scientific knowledge and authorized to guide programs and policies.

This goes beyond the idea that Bauman (1998, p. 31) that criticizes the "modern 'gardener' state, which sees society as an object of command, planning, cultivation and weeding", which divides what should be cultivated and what should be weeded.

Final considerations

In situations of violence, disciplinary and legal mechanisms are used, with a predominance of specific and immediate actions directed at the student body and implemented mainly by the school management and pedagogical advisors, namely: documentary records; conversations with aggressors and assaulted students; suspension of aggressor students; talks in classrooms about violence; lectures by the CT and the military police officer who works with PROERD, and even, in the case of this professional, conversations with "maladjusted" students.

The preventive work carried out by education professionals is practically non-existent, and is referred to PROERD, through the police officer who represents it. Schools also target parents: talks (in situations perceived as more serious) and, less frequently, activities that encourage family participation in school life.

On the other hand, and less frequently, there are inventive and collaborative practices, such as the Literary Bag project and the Beautification Task Force, which promote the collective protagonism of professionals, students and their families. Also, in interlocution with other public facilities, RAIA is an intersectoral device with territorialized action and referred to by the interviewees as something that goes beyond what schools should be concerned with. This initiative escapes the institutional ideology that exists, envisioned as an establishment that is self-sufficient.

In short, few actions involve intervention in broader aspects and are built with the participation of all the social actors concerned. This reality demonstrates the predominance of the individualizing, blaming and judicializing logic in dealing with the phenomenon of violence, as the focus is on the students and their families. Thus, even when the aim is prevention and the focus is on the community, mediation is configured as repression/punishment of reprehensible behavior and identification of potential criminals. It is no coincidence that there are video cameras in schools for the security of people and public property, and that schools are increasingly dependent on these instruments.

The modes of subjectivation produced in these mediation practices, which focus on individuals (students and parents), show that the individual, binary and pathologizing view reduces violence to an interpersonal phenomenon - involving culprits and victims - and ignores social, economic, cultural and historical factors. Consequently, the expansion of actions marked by collective care relationships is ruled out. It also highlights the fact that security is increasingly granted to authorities and technological devices, which reduces the autonomy of collectives and promotes authoritarianism.

In this analysis, we found that the strategies - both those involving people and resources inside and outside the

schools - are still marked by the logic of control, whether preventive (preventing violence from happening) and/or punitive (punishing what has happened), in order to maintain or re-establish control. Thus, investments are made to maintain order via institutional control, but the expected results are not achieved.

One way forward, based on some of the practices reported, is inventive and collaborative work involving the collective (network). In fact, the democratic inclusion and equal participation of all actors in school processes enhances their actions in the composition of new responses. In relationships with dialog and creation, violence is not established, because it is often a way of resolving conflicts when communication does not take place, and/or it is used as a language in social life. When we conceive of violence as an effect of suffering and as a device for producing suffering, we presuppose that dialogue sustains disagreements, conflicts and tensions; a field where forces are exercised that can act in the direction of welcoming subjects and engendering possibilities for building other forms of coexistence.

These reflections show that rationality and ethics have not followed the same paths, increasing violent practices and producing alienation in subjects in relation to what affects them. For this reason, school practices need to rely on ethics as the beacon of relationships and allow themselves to be questioned by other subjects, by the concrete and tense processes of their affirmation. To do this, we need to connect with educational challenges, not just to understand them, but to create moments of suspension of established meanings and spaces for building new possibilities, in order to multiply paths towards cooperative work in a horizontal relationship.

We would warn that if it is through the territorialization of practices and through networking that we can promote change, it is also in the territory and in the network that they can give in to the authoritarian appeal present in the current historical moment and thus be co-opted by a logic that supplants the power of creation, as is the case with actions that aim to transform reality but are crossed by discourses of violence prevention.

In this way, this study did not look exactly at the relationship between violence and prejudice and discrimination within and outside schools. Studies have focused on this, and we point out that new ones are needed, especially in a country where prejudices, with their social markers of difference, are structural and structuring of institutions and social life. We also point to the need for more research into the escalation of attacks on schools in the context of the rise of the Nazi-fascist discourse. There is also a need to discuss violence prevention programs, such as conflict mediation, which have been presented as a solution to the violent social situation affecting the educational reality.

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