

## ART IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION: CURRICULAR GUIDELINES, CHALLENGES, AND PEDAGOGICAL POSSIBILITIES

### ARTE NO ENSINO FUNDAMENTAL: DIRETRIZES CURRICULARES, DESAFIOS E POSSIBILIDADES PEDAGÓGICAS

### EL ARTE EN LA EDUCACIÓN PRIMARIA: DIRECTRICES CURRICULARES, DESAFÍOS Y POSIBILIDADES PEDAGÓGICAS



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Marta Rosangela Alves dos Santos<sup>1</sup>, Danielle Ventura de Lima Pinheiro<sup>2</sup>

#### ABSTRACT

This article is the result of a dissertation defended in a Postgraduate Program in Education that aimed to analyze Art as an essential field of knowledge in the integral formation of individuals, even though, historically, it has occupied a secondary position in school curricula. This study analyzes the curricular guidelines for the subject of Art in Elementary Education, identifying pedagogical challenges and possibilities. The investigation was based on bibliographic research, document analysis, and a review of academic literature (2013-2023). As a theoretical basis, the studies of authors Ana Mae Barbosa, Ferraz & Fusari, Paulo Freire Pérez-Gómez, Imbernón, among others, were consulted, in addition to normative documents (LDB, PCNs, BNCC). The results indicate a shortage of specialist teachers, weaknesses in infrastructure, and a predominance of traditional methodologies. However, they also point to innovative experiences that value cultural diversity and student protagonism. It is concluded that valuing art in the curriculum, combined with consistent public policies and ongoing teacher training, is a necessary condition for a critical, creative, and civic education.

**Keywords:** Education. Art. Curriculum. Pedagogical Possibilities.

#### RESUMO

Este artigo é resultante de uma dissertação defendida em um programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação que objetivou analisar a Arte como campo de conhecimento essencial na formação integral dos sujeitos, ainda que, historicamente, tenha ocupado posição secundária nos currículos escolares. Este estudo analisa as diretrizes curriculares da disciplina de Arte no Ensino Fundamental, identificando desafios e possibilidades pedagógicas. A investigação baseou-se em pesquisa bibliográfica, análise documental e revisão da literatura acadêmica (2013-2023). Como base teórica, buscou-se os estudos dos autores Ana Mae Barbosa, Ferraz & Fusari, Paulo Freire Pérez-Gómez, Imbernón entre outros, além de documentos normativos (LDB, PCNs, BNCC). Os resultados indicam a carência de professores especialistas, fragilidades na infraestrutura e predomínio de metodologias tradicionais. Contudo, também apontam experiências inovadoras que

<sup>1</sup> Master's student in Education. Yvy Enber Christian. E-mail: martaamanda1605@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Yvy Enber Christian. E-mail: advisor2@enberuniversity.com

valorizam a diversidade cultural e o protagonismo discente. Conclui-se que a valorização da Arte no currículo, aliada a políticas públicas consistentes e à formação continuada de professores, é condição necessária para uma educação crítica, criativa e cidadã.

**Palavras-chave:** Educação. Arte. Currículo. Possibilidades Pedagógicas.

## RESUMEN

Este artículo es el resultado de una tesis defendida en un Programa de Posgrado en Educación que tuvo como objetivo analizar el Arte como un campo de conocimiento esencial en la formación integral de los individuos, a pesar de que, históricamente, ha ocupado una posición secundaria en los currículos escolares. Este estudio analiza las directrices curriculares para la asignatura de Arte en Educación Primaria, identificando retos y posibilidades pedagógicas. La investigación se basó en la búsqueda bibliográfica, el análisis documental y una revisión de la literatura académica (2013-2023). Como base teórica, se consultaron los estudios de autores como Ana Mae Barbosa, Ferraz y Fusari, Paulo Freire Pérez-Gómez e Imbernón, entre otros, además de documentos normativos (LDB, PCN, BNCC). Los resultados indican una escasez de docentes especializados, debilidades en la infraestructura y un predominio de metodologías tradicionales. Sin embargo, también señalan experiencias innovadoras que valoran la diversidad cultural y el protagonismo estudiantil. Se concluye que la valoración del arte en el currículo, junto con políticas públicas coherentes y la formación docente continua, es una condición necesaria para una educación crítica, creativa y cívica.

**Palabras clave:** Educación. Arte. Currículo. Possibilidades Pedagógicas.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The teaching of Art is a field of great relevance in the integral formation of students. However, its presence in Brazilian public schools still faces numerous challenges, such as the lack of specific public policies, insufficient teacher training and the low valuation of the discipline in the school curriculum. This study aims to analyze the curricular guidelines of Art teaching, identifying the main challenges faced by teachers and pointing out pedagogical possibilities that can increase the effectiveness of Art teaching.

The research problem that guides this study is: how can the curricular guidelines of the discipline of Art enable innovative changes that are effective in pedagogical practices, considering the contemporary demands of teaching? Thus, the article is structured from the theoretical discussion, documentary analysis and the main results observed, bringing as a contribution the reflection on the importance of consolidating Art as an indispensable area of knowledge in the formation of citizenship.

## 2 ART AND ITS FORMATIVE FUNCTION

Art, historically marginalized in the Brazilian school curriculum, today occupies a space of growing recognition as an essential area of knowledge in the integral formation of subjects. Current educational legislation, such as the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB, 1996) and the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC, 2018), recognizes Art as a mandatory and indispensable component for the aesthetic, cultural, and critical development of students.

For Barbosa (1998), Art should be understood not only as an individual expression, but as a cultural language that enables the student to critically read reality. This perspective breaks with the utilitarian view that has historically limited the teaching of Art to manual or decorative practices, repositioning it as a fundamental social and cultural practice for the formation of citizenship.

## 3 CONTRIBUTIONS BY ANA MAE BARBOSA AND THE TRIANGULAR APPROACH

Ana Mae Barbosa is the main reference in the field of Art and Education in Brazil. Her proposal, known as the **Triangular Approach**, articulates three dimensions of Art teaching: **artistic making, reading of images and historical and cultural contextualization**. This perspective has transformed teaching practice, shifting the focus from the mere production of objects to the valorization of Art as language and knowledge (BARBOSA, 2004).

According to the author, the reading of images in contemporary times assumes a central role in the educational process, especially because we live in a society saturated with

visual and media images, which permeate different aspects of daily life. Each individual is constantly exposed to photographs, videos, illustrations, and digital content, many of which carry commercial, ideological, or cultural intentions, and are not always perceived critically.

For Ana Mae Barbosa:

"Art is a form of knowledge that manifests itself through sensitivity, intuition, and creativity. It enables the integral development of the human being, stimulating imagination, expression, and critical reflection. Education through art should be understood as a process that integrates doing, appreciating, and contextualizing, promoting a broader and deeper understanding of artistic manifestations." (BARBOSA, 2020. p. 45)

In this sense, the school has a fundamental role in providing students with tools and strategies to interpret these images consciously, developing skills that go beyond superficial recognition.

The critical reading of images involves understanding their explicit and implicit meanings, as well as the historical, social, and cultural context in which they were produced. When analyzing an image, the student must be able to identify who produced it, for which audience, and with what objectives, recognizing the possible manipulations or distortions present. In addition, it is necessary to consider the visual language used — colors, shapes, framings, and symbols — and understand how these elements contribute to the construction of meaning.

The author emphasizes that this practice is not restricted to the field of Visual Arts, but extends to multiple areas of knowledge, as the image has become a predominant form of communication in contemporary society. In this context, visual education should be incorporated in a transversal way into the school curriculum, promoting experiences that encourage reflection, interpretation and critical analysis.

To this end, the teacher must create pedagogical situations that instigate debate, problematization and investigation, encouraging the student to question, compare and contextualize different images. Tools such as media analysis, visual production workshops and discussions on visual culture can contribute significantly to the development of these skills.

By cultivating this critical stance, the school not only prepares students to deal with the excess of visual stimuli, but also enables them to understand the society in which they live, recognizing the discourses, values, and interests behind the images. In this way, the reading of images becomes an instrument of intellectual and cultural emancipation, in line with the

perspective that educating is to form citizens capable of interpreting, questioning, and intervening in reality.

#### **4 ART, CURRICULUM AND TEACHER TRAINING**

The role of the teacher in the teaching of Art is a fundamental element for the effectiveness of the curricular guidelines. Imbernón (2010) defends the need for constant teacher updating, highlighting that training cannot be seen as a completed stage, but as a continuous process of development. Nóvoa (2009) complements this view by emphasizing professional identity as a collective construction, which is strengthened in interactions between peers and in critical reflection on pedagogical practice.

Freire (2002) contributes by stating that teaching is always a political act, and that the teacher must assume a problematized posture, encouraging the student to be an active subject of his learning. In the teaching of Art, this means going beyond the reproduction of techniques, fostering creation, interpretation and cultural criticism.

#### **5 MULTICULTURALISM, DIVERSITY AND ART IN SCHOOL**

The contemporary school is a space of cultural diversity, and the teaching of Art must reflect this plurality. Canclini (2010) highlights the importance of understanding culture in its hybrid dimension, marked by the interaction between local and global elements. This view contributes to overcoming teaching models centered only on the European tradition, opening space for popular, indigenous and Afro-Brazilian manifestations.

Santos (2005) adds that globalization, while bringing cultures closer together, also generates exclusions and inequalities. In this scenario, the teaching of Art can function as an emancipatory practice, valuing silenced cultural identities and promoting intercultural dialogue.

#### **6 ART AND INTERDISCIPLINARITY**

Another relevant aspect is the relationship between Art and other areas of knowledge. Abramovich (2005) defends interdisciplinarity as a pedagogical strategy that favors more meaningful learning. In this sense, Art can be articulated with disciplines such as History, Portuguese Language and Science, enhancing the critical understanding of reality.

Ferraz and Fusari (1999) reinforce this understanding by pointing out that Art should not be treated as an isolated or minor discipline, but as a field of knowledge that dialogues with multiple knowledges, developing sensitivity, creativity and criticality in students.

## 7 THE TEACHING OF ART IN BRAZIL: TRAJECTORIES, CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES IN THE LIGHT OF PAULO FREIRE

The teaching of Art in Brazil has a trajectory marked by advances and setbacks, reflecting the historical, social and political context of the country. During the colonial period, artistic practice was strongly linked to Jesuit education, aimed at the moral and religious formation of the population, as well as training in artisanal activities. In this period, Art did not have an emancipatory or critical character, being essentially functional and subordinated to the demands of the Church and the Portuguese Crown. According to Barbosa (1995), "artistic training during the colonial period had a utilitarian and religious character, restricted to a few who had access to formal education, especially in Jesuit schools".

In the nineteenth century, the consolidation of Art as an elitist discipline can be observed, associated with the academies of fine arts, restricting access to aesthetic enjoyment and artistic production to a limited social stratum. This academic logic followed European standards and emphasized formal techniques, prioritizing the reproduction of classical models and despising popular cultural manifestations. Thus, Art remained distant from the social reality of the majority of the population, functioning as an instrument of social and cultural distinction.

It was only in the twentieth century, especially from the 1970s onwards, that the teaching of Art began to take on a broader critical and cultural dimension. The art-education movement, strengthened by authors such as Ana Mae Barbosa, contributed to the appreciation of multiple artistic languages, recognizing the importance of artistic expression for the integral formation of the individual. In this context, Paulo Freire (1996) offers essential contributions, emphasizing that education must go beyond the mere transmission of content:

"One cannot speak of education without the dimension of freedom and awareness. Teaching requires respect for the student, considering him the subject of his learning. Education, in order to be liberating, must enable the student to perceive reality in a critical way, understanding his social relations and responsibilities, so that he can transform it." (FREIRE, 1996, p. 52)

Freire (1996) thus reinforces the importance of a pedagogical practice that values dialogue and the recognition of the student as an active subject, capable of producing knowledge. Applied to the teaching of Art, this principle implies understanding the student as a central participant in the creative process, stimulating not only technique, but critical reflection on cultural manifestations, identities and social contexts.

The implementation of the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC, 2018) brought significant advances by structuring the teaching of Art in four languages — Visual Arts,

Dance, Music, and Theater — promoting the integration of different forms of expression and recognizing the country's cultural diversity. The BNCC also highlights the need for pedagogical practices that articulate artistic knowledge, aesthetic sensitivity, and the development of socio-emotional skills. However, despite the well-defined guidelines, the effective application of the curriculum faces persistent challenges, such as the shortage of specialist teachers, the precariousness of school infrastructure, and the lack of adequate continuing education.

From this perspective, Freire (1996) emphasizes:

"Education cannot be conceived as a deposit of information to be received passively by the learner. There needs to be an active participation, in which educator and learner dialogue, question, problematize and build knowledge together. Only in this way does education fulfill its function of liberation and social transformation, becoming an instrument of critical awareness and responsible action in the world." (FREIRE, 1996, p. 67).

From this conception, the teaching of Art should be understood as a space for dialogue, experimentation and critical construction, in which the student is stimulated to develop autonomy and reflective thinking. The Freirean approach contributes to breaking the elitist tradition of the discipline, promoting the appreciation of local cultural expressions, intangible heritage and popular artistic manifestations.

The shortage of qualified teachers represents a central challenge. Many Art teachers do not have specific training in the area or in the critical teaching methodology, making it difficult to implement pedagogical practices that stimulate creativity and critical thinking. In addition, insufficient school infrastructure — lack of materials, laboratories and adequate spaces for artistic practice — limits the student experience, compromising the development of skills provided for in the BNCC.

However, innovative initiatives have shown that it is possible to reconcile critical education with technical and artistic learning. Community art-education projects, integrated workshops and partnerships with cultural institutions favor the expansion of students' cultural repertoire and promote reflection on the role of Art in society. In this sense, Freire (1996) recalls:

"True education happens when the student is recognized as the subject of his learning. The educational process must be dialogical, problematizing and culturally significant, capable of engaging the student in the transformation of his reality and in the construction of meaning for his own life." (FREIRE, 1996, p. 71)

The articulation of the BNCC with these pedagogical practices allows us to consolidate an approach to teaching Art that goes beyond technique, incorporating social, cultural, and emotional dimensions. The challenge is to train educators capable of applying these principles consistently, promoting meaningful experiences that strengthen critical awareness and the integral development of the student.

In summary, the trajectory of Art teaching in Brazil reveals an evolution from an elitist and restricted discipline to a practice that seeks to integrate diversity, criticism and creativity. Paulo Freire's contributions are fundamental to understanding the emancipatory role of art education, emphasizing dialogue, problematization and valuing the learner as an active agent in the learning process. The BNCC offers modern and inclusive guidelines, but overcoming structural and formative challenges is essential for Art to consolidate itself as an instrument of social transformation and full cultural expression.

## 8 METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted in this study was designed to enable a comprehensive, careful and rigorous analysis of the teaching of Art in Elementary School. Considering the complexity of the research object and the multiplicity of dimensions that cross the field of Art and Education, a qualitative approach was chosen, with an exploratory and descriptive character. This choice is justified by the fact that qualitative research allows us to understand phenomena in their entirety, prioritizing the meaning of practices and discourses and not only their quantification.

According to Minayo (2010), qualitative research makes it possible to capture the essence of social and educational practices, since it values the representations, perceptions and meanings attributed by the subjects. In the field of Education, this perspective is especially relevant, as it allows for dialogue with pedagogical, cultural, historical and social dimensions. Art, as a school subject, cannot be reduced to the mere transmission of content, as it involves symbolic, sensitive and aesthetic aspects that require interpretative and critical analysis. Thus, the qualitative methodology proved to be adequate for this study, allowing deeper interpretations to be reached about the challenges and possibilities of teaching Art in the investigated municipality.

## 9 TYPE OF RESEARCH

From a technical point of view, the research was developed on three main fronts: **bibliographic research, documentary analysis and literature review.**

The **bibliographic research** was carried out based on classic and contemporary references of Art and Education, such as Ana Mae Barbosa (1988, 1998, 2004), Ferraz and Fusari (1999), Paulo Freire (1996), Pérez-Gómez (2006), Imbernón (2010) and Nóvoa (2009). These authors made it possible to build a solid reference for the analysis of curricular guidelines and teaching practices in Art.

The **documentary analysis** included the normative texts that guide Brazilian and local Education. Among them, the Federal Constitution of 1988, the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB, 1996), the National Curriculum Parameters (PCNs, 1997) and the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC, 2018). In addition, the curricular documents of the municipality of Rio Claro – SP, which structure the pedagogical performance of teachers of the discipline of Art in the municipal network, were examined. These documents were studied critically, observing both their theoretical foundations and their practical applicability.

The **literature review** focused on academic production published between 2013 and 2023, selected from the **BDTD** (Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations) and **CAPES databases**. The objective was to identify trends, challenges, and more recent contributions to the teaching of Art in public schools. Inclusion criteria were defined that favored works that addressed the discipline of Art in Elementary School, especially in the public network. Works from other stages of education (Early Childhood Education or High School) were considered only when they dialogued directly with the central discussion.

## 10 CONTEXT AND SETTING OF THE RESEARCH

The scenario delimited for the investigation was the municipality of Rio Claro – SP. The city, located in the central region of the State of São Paulo, has socioeconomic and cultural characteristics that directly influence its educational practices. According to IBGE data (2022), Rio Claro has an estimated population of around 210 thousand inhabitants, with educational indices in the process of consolidation. The Basic Education Development Index (IDEB, 2021) revealed advances in the municipal network, but also pointed out inequalities in relation to student performance.

The municipal education network is composed of approximately 59 school units, serving Early Childhood Education, Elementary School I and Youth and Adult Education (EJA) programs. Some units offer differentiated proposals, such as agricultural schools, which reflect the socioeconomic profile of the region. This characterization was essential to understand the concrete reality in which the Art curriculum guidelines are inserted.

## 11 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS AND TECHNIQUES

The instruments used consisted of the survey of normative documents, local curriculum texts and academic production in digital databases. The documents were obtained from official platforms, such as the MEC portal, government websites and archives of the Municipal Department of Education of Rio Claro. Academic production was searched in the **BDTD and CAPES databases**, through the use of descriptors such as "Art Teaching", "Basic Education", "Art Curriculum" and "Art in public schools".

The selection process followed inclusion and exclusion criteria. Works published between 2013 and 2023 that dealt specifically with the discipline of Art in Brazilian school contexts, with a focus on curriculum analysis, teacher training, and pedagogical practices, were included. Works that dealt only with isolated artistic languages unrelated to Basic Education were excluded, as well as studies that focused exclusively on High School or Early Childhood Education, without dialogue with Elementary Education.

## 12 ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

The analysis was organized into **three stages**:

1. **Organization and systematization of the collected data** – preliminary reading of the documents, initial categorization of the studies and bibliographic file.
2. **Categorization into analytical axes** – definition of four axes: (I) teacher training; (II) pedagogical practices; (III) structural challenges; (IV) pedagogical possibilities.
3. **Cross-referencing of data** – confrontation between literature, normative documents and local reality. This methodological triangulation allowed the identification of convergences and contradictions, ensuring greater scientific rigor to the findings.

## 13 SCIENTIFIC RIGOR AND VALIDITY

Scientific rigor was ensured through the constant confrontation between theory and practice, the critical analysis of official documents and the review of the most recent literature. Reliability was reinforced by the **triangulation** of sources, a methodological strategy that combines different perspectives to expand the validity of the results.

By opting for this methodology, it was sought not only to describe the reality of Art teaching in Rio Claro – SP, but also to understand its meanings and pedagogical implications, pointing out possible ways to strengthen the discipline in other school networks.

## 14 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results indicate that, although the municipal curriculum guidelines are aligned with the BNCC, their implementation encounters significant obstacles. Among the main challenges, the absence of teachers specialized in Art, the precariousness of infrastructure and materials, and the predominance of traditional practices centered on drawing and painting stand out.

In the literature review, it was observed that teacher training is one of the biggest obstacles, and it is frequent that the discipline is taught by teachers from other areas. In addition, the students' perception of Art remains restricted, associated with free activities and disconnected from their critical potential.

Despite this, innovative pedagogical experiences were also identified, especially in interdisciplinary projects that articulated music, theater, dance and visual arts. These initiatives contributed to broadening the students' vision, bringing Art closer to their daily lives and valuing local culture.

## 15 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The study shows that the teaching of Art reflects the challenges faced at the national level: lack of institutional appreciation, absence of specialists and scarcity of resources. However, it also shows that Art has great potential to transform pedagogical practice and contribute to the critical and sensitive formation of students.

It is concluded that the valorization of Art as a curricular subject requires investment in initial and continuing training of teachers, as well as public policies that ensure adequate infrastructure and materials. The promotion of interdisciplinary practices and the valorization of local cultural expressions emerge as ways to strengthen the teaching of Art in public schools.

Thus, Art should be understood as an area of knowledge that favors the integral development of subjects and strengthens the construction of a more critical, creative and citizen society.

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