

2017 HIGH SCHOOL REFORM: THE CONTRADICTIONS OF THE DISCOURSE OF MODERNITY AND ITS IMPACTS



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ABSTRACT

The present work aims to unveil what is behind the discourse of modernity propagated with the new reform of High School, through law No. 13.415 of February 16, 2017, which modified the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education of 1996 and, consequently, the school curriculum. In view of this, in order to understand the dangers brought by the new law to the schooling of high school students, we resorted to the analysis of the French discourse, affiliated with Michel Pêcheux, in which it is possible to consider discourse as human *praxis*, as it is constituted in historical and social relations, materializing in language. Therefore, in order to understand its meanings, it is necessary to have a process of analysis that considers the relations between language, history and

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ideology. To achieve this intent, the conditions of discourse production that enabled the constitution of this discourse will be investigated, here the constitution of neoliberalism is considered as an important factor to understand this process. For analysis, the *research corpus* was constituted from a discursive sequence of the text of the law that discusses the contents, methodologies and forms of evaluation of High School so that at the end of this stage the students begin to demonstrate mastery of the technological and scientific precepts that guide modern production. From this analysis it was possible to understand that other reforms of High School have already been carried out, in similar contexts, and it is interesting to note that there is a return to other discourses. However, we now see a deeper, neo-fascist and authoritarian neoliberalism, which uses the term "modernity" to succumb more and more to the right to life of the working class. For this reason, students in the last stage of basic education are directed to a superficial education that has as its "focus" a false scientific and technological training based on modernity, to disqualify future workers and consolidate the ideology of non-employment.

Keywords: Reform of Secondary Education. Discourse Analysis. Neoliberalism. Modernity. Working class.

INTRODUCTION

The present work aims to unveil what is behind the discourse of modernity propagated with the reform of High School, through law No. 13.415 of February 16, 2017, which modified the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education of 1996 and, consequently, the school curriculum. This research is necessary to obtain a critical reading of the discourse of modernity presented in this law, since, as it will be possible to understand at the beginning of the analysis, modernity is a concept that popularly produces the sense of significant advances, of change, being related to what is new. However, it was possible to perceive that this law echoes old reforms of basic education, as well as produces new meanings, from this concept of modernity.

It is understood that this law presents dangers for the schooling of high school students of basic education, so the theoretical-methodological assumptions of the French Discourse Analysis (DA), affiliated with Michel Pêcheux, will be used, since this theory is pertinent because it considers discourse as human *praxis*, constituting itself in historical and social relations, materializing in language. In the process of discourse analysis it is necessary to investigate the conditions of discourse production that enabled the constitution of discourse, in this work it is considered that the law nº 13.415 of February 16, 2017 has its roots in the emergence and consolidation of neoliberalism as a system of production that guides social practices.

From this, the *research corpus* was constituted considering how the discourse of modernity is presented in the text of the law and, with this, a discursive sequence was listed for the deepening of the analysis. This was done in order to understand the need for a high school student to demonstrate mastery of the technological and scientific precepts that guide modern production at the end of this stage of basic education.

In this way, it was demonstrated that other reforms have already been carried out and that their memories are evoked and masked in this law as being innovative. The contradictions of the current production system make it possible to understand that what is aimed today for basic education is a superficial education, having as its "focus" a false integral education, considered scientific and technological based on the need to update education to meet the modern demands of society, this causes the disqualification of future workers, since they are doomed to an emptied and meaningless education for this student, consolidating the ideology of non-employment, in which there is the valorization of

entrepreneurship and individual attitudes that guarantee other occupations to this student without the State being directly blamed for it.

METHODOLOGY

This work is guided by the theoretical-methodological framework of the French Discourse Analysis (DA), affiliated to Michel Pêcheux. DA considers discourse as human praxis, and it is possible to analyze it through investigations around language, history and ideology. According to Orlandi (2015, p. 15), DA, as its name indicates,

[...] it does not deal with language, it does not deal with grammar, although all these things interest him. **It deals with the discourse.** [...] with the study of discourse one observes the man speaking. **In discourse analysis, we seek to understand language as meaning, as symbolic work, part of the general social work, constitutive of man and his history** [emphasis added].

In DA, discourse cannot be presented as an instrument with a mere communicational function, its concept extrapolates any possible simplification around it. For Pêcheux (2015), any and all discourse makes it possible to destructure and restructure, as well as to shake the socio-historical affiliations of identification of the subject. Discourse makes it possible to reproduce, but also to transform social relations. This occurs mainly due to the way ideology operates within the social relations of the current model, which seeks to define what is correct and what must be reproduced.

In the analysis process, the first step to be considered is to investigate the Conditions of Discourse Production (CPD). The CPD can be defined as the set of elements that enable the production of a discourse, and it is possible to consider: the social and historical conjuncture, the subjects who produced this discourse, the place from which they speak, the image they make of the other and of themselves, among others. Always with the main objective of seeking to understand the effects of meaning that are produced from these elements. Regarding PCD, Orlandi (2015, p. 28-29) states that:

fundamentally understand the subjects and the situation. Memory is also part of the production of discourse. The way in which memory 'activates', makes it count, the conditions of production is fundamental [...]. We can consider the conditions of production in the strict sense and we have the circumstances of enunciation; It is the immediate context. And if we consider them in a broad sense, the conditions of production include the socio-historical, ideological context.

It is important to highlight the subject, because, when producing a discourse, he is inserted in a very broad social process, in which he has immediate relations with culture,

society, the economy, among other factors. However, these instances have an establishment in society long before this subject produces his discourse, long before he constitutes consciousness. Therefore, during the analysis process, it is necessary to understand the subject who enunciates the discourse and the place he occupies, because when he is in a situation in which he needs to manifest himself — whether to support or cause divergence or even seek conciliation — he assumes an ideological position. Thus, it is possible to identify to which ideological formation the discourse is affiliated and how it produces meanings, from the subject who enunciates it. Pêcheux (2015, p. 134) also says that

[...] the material objectivity of the ideological instance is characterized by the structure of inequality-subordination of the 'whole dominant complex' of the ideological formations of a given formation, a structure that is nothing but that of the contradiction of reproduction/transformation that constitutes the ideological class struggle.

In the capitalist production system, which permeates Brazilian society, conflicts are due to the existing class divisions between the dominant class, which owns capital and the means of production; and the dominated class, which does not own capital or the means of production, ends up having to "subordinate" itself to the dominant class, which makes it sell its labor power to have minimum conditions for survival in this system.

The dominant class, as the owner of the means of production and the main interested party in the maintenance of the capitalist production system, guides social practices, so it is not uncommon for a worker who belongs to the dominated class to enunciate a discourse aligned with the dominant class. Thus, when analyzing law No. 13,145 of February 16, 2017, it is possible to start from the assumption that this law meets certain interests of the subjects who constituted its discourse, and it is possible to understand that this process produces meaning and significance from the constitution of the CPD, as well as from the constitution of the *research corpus* that will be presented later.

THE CONSTITUTION OF NEOLIBERALISM

By following the theoretical-methodological assumptions of the French DA, it will be sought to understand the conditions of discourse production (CPD), which enabled the enactment of law No. 13.145 of February 16, 2017. This law substantially changed the school curriculum of the last stage of Brazilian basic education.

PCD is a fundamental concept, since for Pêcheux (2009, p. 146) "meaning is determined by the ideological positions that are at stake in the **socio-historical process** in which words, expressions and propositions are produced (i.e., reproduced) [emphasis added]", that is, to understand the meaning of a discourse it is necessary to investigate the ideological positions that are present in the socio-historical process, since the analysis of a discourse is not possible by itself. In this sense,

[...] intellectual production is concretely organized and made explicit in the form of discourses. This means that it **is as a discourse that this intellectual production has effects of meaning, acts in reality and provokes changes in the same social relations that originate it. Thus, the analysis of the conditions of discourse production includes both the historical determinations of this discourse and the effects of meaning that provoke changes in the reality in which it is produced** (AMARAL, 2005, p. 27) [emphasis added].

Thus, it is assumed that education is a social policy that finds legal support in the Federal Constitution of 1988, when it guarantees citizens social rights, after years of struggles and tensions to overcome the period experienced during the military dictatorship (1964-1985). In this context, the Magna Carta was born at a time of the realization of democracy and progress in the social field. Therefore, public policies of an educational nature emerged as a means of guaranteeing the social right to a public, secular, free and quality education socially endorsed for all (LOMBARDI, 2018).

In this scenario, the public policies that emerged at the time had the scope of building an emancipatory education. Like these, current public policies are also implemented with intentions and purposes to be achieved, as well as the type of citizen that one wishes to see materialized in society. In this sense, depending on the real intention of public policies, which may or may not be apparent (MARTINS, 1994), society is built and directed towards the intended directions, and education is the mechanism used to achieve this end. According to Souza (2006), public policy refers to the government's decisions, whether actions or omissions, implemented through the strategies and measures it adopts.

In this context, it is significant to analyze neoliberalism as a political-ideological system that emerged in Switzerland in 1947 and whose scope was to imprint conceptions of individuality and rationality in political and economic practices. In these practices, the diminishment of the State as a provider of social rights prevailed, which began to act as an evaluator and regulator. It should be noted that the consolidation of neoliberalism occurred in the world from 1973 onwards, with the economic crisis caused by the post-war period that led to a period of recession and, due to this, it was suggested that reforms be

implemented according to this conception, with the aim of removing the world from the economic chaos in which it was inserted (SILVEIRA, 2009).

The neoliberal conception perceives the State as the most relevant institution and that for this very reason its performance should be limited within the economic sphere, in order to enable citizens to be free to pursue their interests. In this way, the system sees social inequality as necessary for economic balance and is opposed to the social welfare state (SILVEIRA, 2009). In this sense, spending on social rights is perceived as obstacles and interferences with economic and social development, in order to curtail competitiveness, entrepreneurship, free enterprise and the balance that the market itself is capable of generating (HYPÓLITO, 2008).

Neoliberal policies have shaken many countries, as they have been employed as models for development programs led by international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB), and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Thus, it was constituted by the Washington Consensus that the relevant resources would go through "[...] budgetary discipline, tax reform, elimination of barriers to international trade, privatisation and deregulation, with the consequent erasure of State intervention" (Barroso, 2005, p. 741). Over time, the most rigid neoliberal theories retreated and thus allowed space for the emergence of alternative ideas that aspired to harmony between the State and the market.

In Brazil, the neoliberal project was later implemented in relation to other Latin American countries, although it was inspired by the experiences of neighboring countries, such as England, under the government of Margaret Thatcher (1979-1990), and the United States, during the government of Ronald Reagan (1981-1989). In the Brazilian context, neoliberalism was gradually consolidated, as a result of political struggles between classes.

In this sense, after the failure of the economic plans of the 1980s, the neoliberal project took shape as a political program that saw the crisis as a structural problem. In the 1990s, the opening of the economy and privatizations strongly marked the arrival of the "Liberal Era" in the country.

However, even though neoliberalism had its first appearances in Brazil during the government of Fernando Collor de Mello (1990-1992), its success and consolidation only happened during the government of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995-2002), in order to reveal itself in the vast changes implemented in the set of public and social policies. With

these transformations, the government was able to achieve economic stability caused by the Real Plan and from then on state reforms aimed at modernization were initiated.

The suggested reforms were contrary to many social rights acquired in processes of struggles and tensions and that were constitutionally guaranteed through the Magna Carta of 1988. Thus, in the educational area, the reforms pointed to new orientations in the field of management, curriculum and educational evaluation. The changes brought about in Brazil followed the practices and experiences that occurred in other countries that propagated more flexibility in management, more administrative, pedagogical and financial freedom, raising the idea of transferring responsibilities from the federal entity to the states and municipalities (OLIVEIRA, 2011).

In this scenario, the government of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, which successfully implemented neoliberalism, was responsible for the proposals for constitutional amendments suggested, especially tax, social security and administrative reform (1995). However, of these three reforms, the only one that was successful was the administrative reform, which managed to overcome bureaucratic public administration through the implementation of a managerial public administration. The management management model aimed to develop more autonomy and accountability of government agencies, aiming to achieve the guiding principles of this management, which are efficiency, effectiveness, productivity and quality of public services (PEREIRA, 1999).

Based on this discourse, neoliberalism and managerial principles were building a mechanism capable of involving the entire Brazilian territory. Thus, the country is immersed in this system in such a rooted way that it is not perceived outside it, since the discourses are developed in such a way as to persuade society to believe that it is a conception capable of suggesting significant changes in the economic, social and cultural scenario. These changes, even if a minimum State policy is developed with a view to reducing public spending in the social sectors, will be able to bring about the improvement of public services with the generation of efficiency and quality.

It is observed that the implementation and concretion of neoliberalism have been gaining more strength with each government, so that it is increasingly difficult to imagine the implementation of another conception. However, it can be seen that neoliberalism took on its own meaning in the government of former President Jair Messias Bolsonaro (2018-2022), since he was associated with fascism. The marked presence of a conservative, neoliberal and authoritarian government became a concrete possibility in Brazilian territory

from the moment the coup d'état took place, when Dilma Rousseff (January 1, 2011 to August 31, 2016) was removed from power in 2016. From this, profound changes occurred in the Brazilian political process, allowing the return of anti-democratic forces that were dormant (BOITO, 2020).

Thus, a neo-fascist and neoliberal era began, since, according to Boito (2020), fascism is a mass reactionary regime that defends and justifies dictatorship. Based on this understanding, this movement began to gain strength after the deposition of former President Dilma Rousseff. Therefore, a good part of the bourgeoisie and the middle class, as well as some landowners and liberal professionals who have assumed/taken the discourse of anti-corruption, anti-communism and anti-left, assume the discourse and start to fight advances already acquired in the struggle for freedom and diversity.

Therefore, it is essential to develop an educational policy that promotes emancipation, historical ruptures, improvement of the teaching and learning process, school management and use of resources. For this, the active participation of all those involved is necessary, from planning to execution, in order to avoid the mere continuity of what has been established without a critical evaluation of education (HOFLING, 2001).

UNVEILING THE DISCOURSE OF MODERNITY

Before starting the analysis of the chosen discursive sequence, it is essential to contextualize the recent sanction of Law No. 14,945, of July 31, 2024, which instituted the National High School Policy. This new legislation repeals parts of the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (Law No. 9,394/1996) and Law No. 13,415/2017, which reformed High School in force until 2021. As of 2022, the so-called "new" High School began to be implemented (GOV.BR, 2024). However, due to criticism from students, professors, academics, intellectuals, and researchers, the government of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, which began on January 1, 2023, promoted efforts to repeal the 2017 reform.

Although Law No. 13,415/2017 was partially amended, many of its provisions remained. Among the most significant changes are: i) the return of the workload of 2,400 hours for basic general training, leaving 600 hours for training itineraries; and ii) the reinsertion of disciplines previously removed from the obligation, such as history, sociology, geography, physical education (GOV.BR, 2024). In addition, on November 21, 2024, Resolution No. 3 updated the Curriculum Guidelines for Secondary Education, originally

established in 2018, aligning them with the guidelines of the new National Secondary Education Policy.

Despite these changes, the 2024 reform, introduced by Law No. 14,945, faces substantial criticism. The lack of clear regulation stands out, particularly on issues such as the use of technologies and the recognition of extracurricular experiences, which can lead to inappropriate practices and disrespect for distance learning standards. In addition, risks of widening inequalities between public and private schools persist, aggravated by the scarcity of resources, precarious infrastructure, and historical monitoring failures. The flexibilization of technical education, without strict supervision, threatens the quality of training, while the long process of reforms that began in 2017 has created a scenario of uncertainty that negatively impacts students and educators (JORNAL DA UNESP, 2024).

Another significant challenge is the short time for schools to adapt curricula and train teachers, compromising the effectiveness of the implementation planned for 2025. These obstacles reinforce the need for detailed regulations, efficient coordination between government spheres, and adequate investments to ensure that the objectives of the reform are achieved without compromising the equity and quality of secondary education (JORNAL DA UNESP, 2024).

Having clarified these points, it should be noted that this study does not intend to deepen the discussion on Law No. 14,945 of 2024. The inclusion of this context seeks only to situate the reader in relation to recent updates on the topic addressed. However, it is evident that the reforms of Secondary Education and their impacts on society remain themes that demand continuous debate and reflection.

In view of this, the following excerpt from the 2017 High School Reform Law chosen to compose the *research corpus* for analysis will be presented, this being the focus of this study:

SD1 - [...] § 8 - The contents, methodologies and forms of procedural and formative evaluation will be organized in the education networks through theoretical and practical activities, oral and written tests, seminars, projects and online activities, in such a way that at the end of high school the student demonstrates: I - mastery of the scientific and technological principles that govern modern production; [...] (BRAZIL, 2017) [emphasis added].

The discursive sequence above was cut from the text of Law No. 13,415 of 2017, more precisely article 3, paragraph 8, item I and points out the perspective for which the contents, methodologies and forms of evaluation of the High School reformulated in 2017

should be based. Considering that the objective is to make the student complete this phase of teaching demonstrating mastery of the scientific and technological principles that preside over modern production, it is understood that the pedagogical conception that will underpin this curriculum considers modern production as a starting point.

According to Laks (2016), in the philosophical conception elaborated by Habermas (1985), the concept of modernity refers to a uniform, continuous and unambiguous process, which is close to Marx Weber's thought on Western rationalism, which is the idea that the daily life of society is transformed by the growth of social and cultural rationalism that eliminates humanity's traditional ways of organizing. In this aspect, traditional societies based on work are altered and also modify the social body, with the idea of individualization. Because

[...] In place of these identities that were based on the work functions performed in traditional societies, new models of socialization emerge that form subjectivities and abstract identities of the self, thus providing an idea of individualization of the social body. This relationship between modernity and Western rationalism establishes the concept of modernity as a concept of epoch: the new times are the modern times (LAKS, 2016, p. 19).

In view of the thought of Laks (2016) elaborated from the ideologies of Habermas and Weber, it is clear that the meaning of modernity can still be understood as an idea of new times. This temporal conception considers the separation between the Middle Ages and the Modern Ages, both contemplate some European historical events, namely: the Protestant Reformation, the Discovery of the *New World* and the Enlightenment. By cutting the historical context of the Enlightenment era, it is clear that both a pattern of social and political systematization was created and the point of view that approaches modernity as part of a natural path of historical evolution.

These perceptions generate implications for society, especially when considering modernity as the embodiment of Western rationalism. This view tends to treat it as a natural event of universalization of Eurocentric culture, supposedly driven by history. In this context, it is highlighted that "this system of thought creates a logic of cultural superiority that masks the possibility of thinking of modernity as a complex and heterogeneous geopolitical dynamic" (LAKS, 2016, p. 20). Thus, the discourse that presents modernity as "technically innovative" ends up attributing, to the so-called peripheral modernity, the idea of backwardness.

Modernity as standardization and exaltation of Eurocentric culture is a result of the capitalist system, as defined by Laks (2016), when bringing the concept by Marshall Berman (1986), who says that there are socioeconomic processes of *modernization*. In this sense, it is the experiences of time, space, crises and overcomings shared among all people in the world that define what modernity is. The transformations that "modern" life undergoes are part of the set of social processes and these are related to different events, such as the industrialization of production, the development of the mass communication system, the empowerment of nations stimulated by the capitalist world market, among others (LAKS, 2016). To this end, the following definition of the terms in question is reached:

[...] modernization refers to a set of socioeconomic transformations generated from a logic of *capitalist development*. Modernism, in turn, refers to the development of a specific vocabulary to translate the experience of modernity that precedes it. In this sense, for Berman, the development and stabilization of the capitalist system is the fundamental condition for the establishment of modernism as an aestheticization of forms of life (LAKS, 2016, p. 22).

In this understanding, modernism functions as a cultural result of the experience of modernity, understood as "capitalist modernization" (LAKS, 2016). This places the discourse of modernity as the one that is born to ensure the perpetuation of the capitalist economic system. Thus, the novelty that the word modernity carries should not be directly related to the sense of innovation, which is created to benefit society, since its existence derives from production processes that aim at profit, for the hegemonic classes, from the exploitation of the alienated worker. With this, this conception of modern is taken to say from what place the subject who enunciates the discourse of modern production, listed in the text of the 2017 High School law, speaks.

Therefore, as SD1 indicates, what would be modern production? And why do students need to complete high school mastering the scientific and technological principles that preside over it? Wouldn't it actually be a contradiction what they call modernity, since the basis of this modernity is the capitalist economic system and, with that, these students would access a period of regression?

Bruseke (2002) says that although there are divergences in the understanding of what modernity essentially is, there is something common that permeates all these compressions, which is its technical character. In this sense, the aforementioned author names this process technical modernity, exposing that it is the technique of work and that it

has been this way since ancient times to the present day, that is, "technique has always been a means used by man to achieve certain ends" (BRUSEKE, 2002, p. 138).

In this case, if modernity in all its forms is essentially a technique of work, there is nothing new, since work has existed since the dawn of humanity. In view of this, the modern production pointed out in High School refers precisely to the different types of work that enable the production of consumer goods, but now with the help of automated systems and information and communication technologies, as can be seen below:

[...] The introduction of new means of communication has enabled new forms of action and interaction combined with new types of social relationships. In this sense, the advance of computerization brings with it both new objects (cyberspace, virtual reality, etc.) and new modes of perception and representation (fractal geometry, computer representations of reality, etc.), which in themselves require new modes of thought and cognition (CARDOSO, 2012, pp. 51-52).

Hence the need for high school students to receive training aimed at meeting these precepts, which are actually the needs that the current job market demands. However, the controversy that is posed is due to the fact that the problem of this curricular change is not only in focusing on the scientific and technological principles that preside over modern production, but also in the way this knowledge will be mediated in school.

Providing high school students with access to knowledge that is important for the functioning of production in the country and enabling meaningful learning is indeed essential, so that they can not only understand the world in which they live, but so that they are able to assume a good position in the professional environment. However, given the reality in which Brazil is inserted, with little investment in the education sector, with public and private schools competing with each other, with the lack of appreciation of teachers and several other difficulties faced, achieving a project like this, which requires numerous resources, escapes the country's concrete possibility.

With this, we turn our attention to the question of what will be the effective conditions for the implementation of this curriculum in public schools. One can turn to the text of law No. 13,415 of 2017 to find some clues, for example, only the teaching of Portuguese and mathematics will be mandatory during the three years of High School, the organization of the curriculum will be divided into two parts, one of them with a workload of 1800 hours for the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) and the other with 1200 hours for the training itineraries. These are different curricular arrangements, that is, they can be offered through projects, short courses, disciplines and others (BRASIL, 2017).

The BNCC is organized by areas of knowledge, namely, languages and their technologies; mathematics and its technologies; natural sciences and their technologies; applied human and social sciences (BRASIL, 2018). With the exception of Portuguese and mathematics, there is a compilation of the subjects of the previous curriculum and the exclusion of others. These points already show a setback in Brazilian public education and, thinking specifically about the case of modern production, there is no feasibility for offering this knowledge in a school that suppresses content.

Considering that it was necessary to contemplate the systematized knowledge of humanity to develop the various aspects that make up the human being (such as cognition, sociability, corporeality, criticality, logical capacity, abstraction, measurement and many others) with the suppression of disciplines and resources such as laboratories, libraries, etc., it will be difficult to form an emancipated citizen. In this sense, what is evident, in general, is a project of flexibility of pedagogical practices and school knowledge, as well as the provision of a fragmented and fragile education. The basis of this project of society is based on neoliberal ideology and flexible learning.

What has been disseminated in the field of education regarding flexible learning is that it is the product of a new methodology that contemplates both technologies and the various dynamics of learning and interaction. Its objective is to make education grow in order to meet the demands and competitiveness of today's society. In addition, in its broad pedagogical format, it has been present among groups of professionals with common interests, who research with a focus on problem solving. In its more specific pedagogical aspect, it has been used in the Distance Education (DE) modality as a way to improve teaching and learning methodologies (KUENZER, 2017).

Although the flexible learning methodology has been used more emphatically by the distance learning modality, it has served several other intentions. The most common use has been in distance education courses, to make learning time more flexible, based on the possibility of more autonomy for the student to determine their own study schedules, compared to the inflexible schedules of face-to-face teaching (KUENZER, 2017). It is on this point that the flexibility of the curriculum in the reform of Secondary Education is supported, since

[...] the conception of flexible learning provides the reasons that justify curricular flexibility in high school: criticism of the single model for students with different trajectories and interests, content, disciplinarization, teacher-centricity, and little or no student protagonism (KUENZER, 2017, p. 337).

As stated in the justification for the request of Provisional Measure (MP) No. 746 on the previous High School not meeting the expectations of students, being exhaustive due to the number of disciplines it offered and being misaligned with the new demands of the world of work, this proposal brought a discourse that with the flexible curriculum there will be more autonomy and freedom for students to choose what to study (BRASIL, 2016).

In this flexible learning methodology, the student must create their own study projects, defining their schedules and content according to their own wishes. In theory, this would be a way to enable the student to learn to learn on his own or with the help of other classmates and teachers; In addition, he would be directed to learn to work as a team, in a shared way, overcoming individuality. Another issue would be the role of the teacher, who from being a mediator of learning would only pass to a tutor who monitors the activities developed by the study groups, in which the students themselves would command the process (KUENZER, 2017). However, the reality that is presented in the text of the 2017 reform law goes a little beyond that,

[...] It is in the epistemological framework of flexible learning that it is located and justified. In principle, flexible learning would be the result of the advancement of the microelectronic base; Reducing it, however, to this dimension is a simplification that serves only ideological interests. The accurate analysis of this proposal, in order to be adequate, needs to seek its roots in the material bases that generated it, which goes beyond the limits of technology, reaching the relations of production that configure the regime of flexible accumulation, cemented by the postmodern ideology (KUENZER, 2017, p. 338).

At this point, it can be seen that the text of the reform law enunciates a discourse of modern production, but has its bases fixed on a post-modern ideology, which already demonstrates a contradiction. For, when the creators of the reform spoke of modern production, they intended to produce effects of meaning that students would learn important concepts demanded by contemporary society. However, in the implementation of this curriculum itself, what can be seen is the focus on technical work processes, a return to what was previously seen about the concept of modernity, that is, work technique, but in a superficial and worsened way.

It is in the relations of production that flexible accumulation arises, from which flexible learning came. Therefore, the need to propagate a discourse that conceals the real interests of the reform, since, with the term "modern production", an attempt was made to soften the impact of the change and incite in the population the desire for it to occur and the benefits it would bring. This act, well thought out, silenced the harm that the economic

precepts of flexible accumulation will cause to the school and professional training of high school students. That is

If there is a combination of unequal and differentiated work along the production chains, there are also differentiated (and unequal) demands for workers' qualification, which can be quickly met by flexible learning strategies, which allows hiring to be defined based on a worker profile with contributions of general education and the ability to learn new processes. and not from qualification. Hence the 'flexible' character of the workforce: prior qualification is less important than adaptability, which includes both previously developed cognitive, practical or behavioral skills, as well as the competence to learn and submit to the new, which presupposes disciplined subjectivities that adequately deal with dynamicity, instability, and fluidity (KUENZER, 2017, pp. 340-341).

With this, it would not make sense to offer education with quality referenced in emancipatory, citizen and progressive education, if there is an immense demand for workers with low training, with a high level of adaptability (which in fact concerns more the urgency and effort of the worker to remain at work, to meet the needs of survival, than in fact an adaptation competence), who accept low wages and poor working conditions. That is why the importance of silence is based on the 2017 High School reform. From this perspective, the ideal of education is changed, in which "[...] historical-critical education, aimed at the formation of critical citizens who are aware of their social reality, has been considered outdated since the first half of the twentieth century, when education began to act in accordance with the capitalist logic of the market" (SILVA; SILVA; SANTOS, 2023, p. 72). It is in this bias that neoliberalism is linked as a political strategy, managing to forge a new type of individual through a variety of institutional instruments, both political and legal (DARDOT; LAVAL, 2016).

Neoliberalism adopts a constructivist and interventionist approach, representing a normative logic that is policy-driven, going beyond the mere expansion of markets. Essentially, it represents a form of governance-governmentality that encompasses not only the economic sphere. The normative logic in question is a form of rationality that transcends the limits of the capitalist economic system, as if capitalism had disentangled itself from itself, being replaced by a political and cultural logic (which left the framework of the capitalist economy, as if capitalism had left itself). This new political and cultural logic removes capitalism's mode of operation and applies it in other spheres (DARDOT; LAVAL, 2016).

Within this capitalist rationality there are two distinct spheres. The first of these emphasizes that all social and human interactions must follow the principle of competition,

imposing the norm of competition on all individuals and institutions. Consequently, in many countries, competitiveness has become almost a constitutional norm, influencing all public policies in all areas (DARDOT; LAVAL, 2016).

The second sphere refers to the business model, which, according to Foucault, applies universally, including to individual subjectivities. As a result, individuals become entrepreneurs of themselves, since the neoliberal system requires them to be competitive. What prevails in this norm is the model of competition, leading each individual to consider himself an asset and seek the accumulation of value, valuing himself in all his activities. Therefore, the concept of human capital comes to dominate all over the world, with education becoming a factory for the production of neoliberal subjectivities, where individuals acquire skills to "sell" themselves in the market (DARDOT; LAVAL, 2016). In other words, "[...] much because of the rooting of neoliberal ideas here in Brazil, the Neoliberal view that education ceases to be part of the social and political field to enter the market and function in its likeness and for its development begins to be reproduced" (SILVA; SILVA; SANTOS, 2023, p. 73).

All this without taking into account the condition of the schools that will implement/have implemented the teaching of entrepreneurship, through the training itinerary of technical and professional qualification, as a way to make students accept that there will be no *locus* of work for everyone, or that it will be "well" better to open their own business, aiming at financial independence and even enrichment. With the inculcation of entrepreneurship, students will be manipulated in such a way that they will accept that taking the risks for their own success or failure is their responsibility and that the state has no reason to interfere or intervene. These young students will also not be clarified that certain enterprises or autonomous work are nothing more than one more mechanism of subjectivation and control of bodies and minds.

As an example, there is the provision of services through applications, such as UBER, IFOOD, which use the strength and life time of the people who affiliate with them to sell their products and profit from the work developed by third parties, but without offering any labor protection, such as in cases of accidents and non-receipt of payment by the customer, among other situations. To this end, "The objective of the New High School is to form a mass of proletarians who act as supposed 'entrepreneurs' and who go in search of their personal 'achievements', instead of seeking a possible education focused on knowledge" (SILVA; SILVA; SANTOS, 2023, p. 73). This is the discourse implemented

through the reform, of a reality in which students, future or even already workers, will be able to study what they like, and that they will have professions that will provide them not only with personal satisfaction and pleasure, but also high monetary gains, not measuring or clarifying what is behind all these "possible benefits".

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The shift towards neoliberalism does not lie in the idea of further reducing the role of the state, but rather in the conception of a liberal state intervention that promotes competition between private actors. In this sense, what drove people to self-govern based on competition and the valorization of capital were the mechanisms of control and other strategies of power, not the fundamental changes in the economy, as if these were responsible for the ideological transformations. In this great change of society towards the neoliberal logic, an ideological battle took place, with propaganda and education aimed at popularizing pro-inequality ideas, promoted by groups of *think tanks* (organizations responsible for developing research in the areas of public policies, economy and society, in order to create proposals for the improvement of these agendas) and market defenders. The dimension of neoliberalism also manifested itself as an application of elitist political-economic austerity policies, especially in the governments of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. In the case of Brazil, this is reflected in the fiscal adjustment during the government of Dilma Rousseff, in the labor and social security reforms, in the New Fiscal Regime of Michel Temer and in the Reform of Secondary Education of 2017 (BORGES, 2018).

Brazil, as a country in the process of growth, followed the guidelines of the most advanced countries. It was based on the guidelines of Thatcher, who stated that there is no alternative but to reduce labor costs, discipline the workforce, privatize companies and the public pension system, reduce government spending and solidarity and social assistance mechanisms. All this without ever questioning the tax benefits granted to the elites, nor the priorities in the allocation of the public budget, as the problem is the lack of initiative of the less favored, without individual responsibility, which will be solved through austerity that will force people to adapt (BORGES, 2018).

The neoliberal approach has dominated public administration, influenced by the theory of Public Choice, which rejects the idealized idea of the altruistic public servant, replacing it with a more skeptical view, seeing public servants as just as selfish and

interested in their own benefit as any other individual. Business management must transform the civil servant into another entrepreneur, subject to the rules of competition, leading the State to follow the standards of the market. Therefore, neoliberalism is understood as an all-encompassing logic, promoting business subjectivation and the search for competitiveness. This implies the formation of individuals who are, in essence, companies in themselves, building a lifestyle that requires total dedication from the subject-company to achieve competitive efficiency and self-valorization (BORGES, 2018).

In general, although it originated from a clear interest of the Brazilian elite in remodeling High School, so that it works according to their own perspectives and needs, the reform was perceived by a large part of the population as legitimate, since it promotes an improvement in the physical and educational apparatus for its beneficiaries. This, in fact, is what has been disseminated socially through the media and its instruments of alienation, which has made it possible to convince those who are not aware of the country's political and educational issues.

It is important to highlight that the widely propagated discourse on modernity has not convinced those who lead progressive and critical-reflective educational processes. On the contrary, it is these subjects who, through their studies, have revealed and questioned the aspects that the authors of these reforms try to cover up. In this context, the struggle and demands of educators, researchers and high school students for the reforms, of 2017 (mainly) and 2024 to be reviewed and improved, remain active. These actors, with a critical understanding, see the interests underlying these reforms and their impacts on the formation of the middle level of the Brazilian population, especially the working class.

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