

## **In boundaries: the proposal of the *trivium curriculum* in the context of Portuguese for Haitians**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This article is a clipping of a doctoral research project, developed in the Graduate Program in Education of the University of São Paulo (FEUSP). It aims to present the first approaches of the research, with Haitian students in a learning project of Portuguese. Through participant observation in the classes, the first stage of the project took place in an Centro Integrado de Educação de Jovens e Adultos (CIEJA) in the city of São Paulo. We raise elements belonging to the borders that cross the Haitian diaspora of the students participating in the Portuguese. Considering the theorizations of the Ethnomathematics Program, Freire's concept of the theme and the possibilities of a proposal based on trivium knowledge (materacy, literacy and tecnoracy) and approaching the reality of the students, we identified the theme generator Work, as an element that can mobilize knowledge that surrounds it in daily life. We hope that the life history of Haitian students and the elements that limit them socio-culturally can, in addition to bringing school knowledge, to remove them from the borders of invisibility and racism.

**Keywords:** Boundaries; Haitians; Ethnomathematics Program; Trivium knowledge.

## **En las fronteras: la propuesta del *currículo trivium* en el contexto del Portugués para Haitianos**

### **RESUMEN**

Este artículo forma parte de un proyecto de investigación doctoral desarrollado en el Programa de Posgrado en Educación de la Universidad de Sao Paulo (FEUSP). Su objetivo es presentar los primeros aproximaciones de la investigación, con estudiantes haitianos en un proyecto de aprendizaje de portugués. A través de la observación de los participantes en las clases, la primera etapa del proyecto tuvo lugar en un Centro Integrado de Educación juvenil y de adultos (CIEJA) en la ciudad de São Paulo. Levantamos elementos pertenecientes a las fronteras que cruzan la diáspora haitiana de los estudiantes que participan de las clases de portugueses. Teniendo en cuenta las teorizaciones del

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Programa Etnomatemática, el concepto de Freire del tema del generador y las posibilidades de una propuesta basada en el conocimiento *trivium* (materacy, literacy y tecnoracy) y, acercándose a la realidad de los estudiantes, identificamos el generador temático Trabajo, como un elemento que puede movilizar el conocimiento que los rodea en la vida cotidiana. Esperamos que la historia de la vida de los estudiantes haitianos y los elementos que los limitan socioculturalmente puedan, además de aportar conocimientos escolares, colaborar para sacarlos de las fronteras de la invisibilidad y el racismo.

**Palabras clave:** Fronteras; Haitianos; Programa Etnomatemáticas; Conocimiento *trivium*.

### **Em fronteiras: a proposta do *curriculum trivium* no contexto de aulas de Português para haitianos**

#### **RESUMO**

Este artigo é um recorte de um projeto de pesquisa de doutorado desenvolvido no Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação da Universidade de São Paulo (FEUSP). Tem como objetivo apresentar as primeiras aproximações da investigação, com estudantes haitianos em um projeto de aprendizagem de português. Por meio da observação participante nas aulas, a primeira etapa do projeto se deu em um Centro Integrado de Educação de Jovens e Adultos (CIEJA) na cidade de São Paulo. Levantamos elementos pertencentes as fronteiras que atravessam a diáspora haitiana dos estudantes participantes das aulas de português. Considerando as teorizações do Programa Etnomatemática, o conceito de tema gerador de Freire e as possibilidades de uma proposta pautada no conhecimento *trivium* (materacia, literacia e tecnoracia) e, aproximando-nos da realidade dos estudantes, identificamos o tema gerador Trabalho, como um elemento que pode mobilizar saberes que o cercam no cotidiano. Esperamos que a história de vida dos estudantes haitianos e os elementos que os limitam sócio-culturalmente, possam, além de trazer conhecimentos escolares, colaborar para retirá-los das fronteiras da invisibilidade e do racismo.

**Palavras-chave:** Fronteiras; Haitianos; Programa Etnomatemática; Conhecimento Trivium.

#### **1. Introduction**

Migration today affects almost all regions of the world. Whether due to political, economic or environmental crises, millions of people leave their countries of origin in search of better living conditions. According to Wenden (2016), around the world, there is a tendency towards regionalization of migratory flows in which there is a complementarity between departure and reception areas due to geographical proximity, historical, linguistic and cultural ties, to the construction of networks transnationals built by migrants and by finding factors of supply and demand for labor.

Brazil, especially the city of São Paulo, has long been a destination for immigrants from different countries. At the beginning of the 20th century, the main migratory movement followed the North-South course, when the city received millions of people from Italy, Japan and Portugal, for example. However, since the early 2000s, a new dynamic of migration, due to the phenomenon of

regionalization of displacement, has been observed. The city of São Paulo has become a destination for migrants from South American and Central American countries.

Regarding the person who migrates, we must remember that it is not just about moving from one country to another. According to Seixas (2016), whatever the reason for migration - voluntary or forced - this process causes an identity crisis with multiple dimensions.

The migrant finds that he does not belong entirely to the culture of the place to which they migrate. In many ways, the migrant is "different" from the people who are there and is "equal" to them. [...] It follows that the migrant will compose imaginary (a representation) that will imply the reformulation of his own cultural identity, which will be the possible, hybrid synthesis of at least two cultural symbolic systems (SEIXAS, 2016, p.14, free translation).

In this process, then, knowing a new social and cultural reality brings the need to know new languages, new meanings, new perceptions and new interpretations to deal with everyday situations. For people who migrate, there is a process of negotiation with the new cultures, "without simply being assimilated by them and without completely losing their identities" (HALL, 2015, p.52, free translation).

In view of this need, immigrants who currently arrive in São Paulo seek, in principle, to learn the Portuguese language and, through education, have access to better conditions to settle in the new country, but the language barrier is not the only one that they face. Upon arriving in Brazil, after crossing borders between countries, immigrants, mostly from peripheral countries, remain on borders: urban borders, designed mainly to differentiate individuals in terms of social class.

In this perspective, this article presents an excerpt from a doctoral research, in progress, which seeks to articulate ideas from the ethnomathematics program in an educational scenario for immigrants. The context in question is the Integrated Center for Youth and Adult Education (CIEJA), located in the neighborhood of Perus, in the city of São Paulo. Among Brazilians and immigrants, the school serves around 1500 adult students, of which 800 are Haitians who attend classes for different reasons: some have not been literate in Haiti, others have completed basic education in Haiti, but do not have the documentation to prove their schooling; however, most go to school just to learn Portuguese.

Thus, we seek to investigate, in the perspective of the Ethnomathematics Program, firstly, what are the borders that cross the trajectory of Haitian immigrants in São Paulo; and subsequently, the acquisition and development of trivium knowledge - literacy, math literacy and technology (D'AMBROSIO, 2016) - by Haitian students from CIEJA Perus.

We are dealing here with the first stage of the research, which aimed to understand the context, the reality of Haitian students, and to group socio-cultural elements. For this, we use, as a methodology, participant observation in the classes of a Portuguese language project for Haitians.

As part of this first stage, we discuss the trajectory of the Haitian immigrant based on studies that seek to increase knowledge about migratory flows in Brazil.

Then, we explore the different understandings of boundaries that support our conception of the term. Considering the frontier as a place of distinction and social exclusion, we rely on the studies of Santos (2010) on the abyssal lines and on the “recognition of the plurality of heterogeneous knowledge” (p.53). The author proposes a break with modern Western forms that guide thought and action, in order to condition post-abyssal thinking, placing the epistemological perspective “on the other side of the line”.

For a political and educational proposal that does not reproduce the abyssal line, we have based our research on the ideas of Paulo Freire (2011, 2019) and D'Ambrósio's Ethnomathematics Program (2017), mainly because the two authors show, throughout their work, the concern with the critical understanding of reality, with respect to the individual's culture.

## **2. From Haiti to Brazil: the Haitian diaspora**

People migrate for different reasons - political, economic, and environmental - their countries of origin and destination are different. Based on the assumption that we initially seek to understand the reality of Haitian immigrants, we consider it essential to understand the characteristics of Haitian migration.

Haiti was the first State in the world to emerge from a slave uprising. It was also the first country to abolish slavery and the second in America to proclaim independence. It was precisely what determined his destiny.

The Revolution of Haiti lasted about 30 years (1791 - 1825). According to Seguy (2014), after 1825, the Haitian State borrowed from French bankers 30 million francs in an attempt to settle part of the so-called “Independence debt”. Thus, it assumed a double debt, which is considered “after colonization, the main socio-historical root that plunges the Haitian working classes into precariousness and restarted preparations for a human catastrophe like that of 2010” (SEGUY, 2014, p. 160, free translation).

In this sense, we highlight,

[...] There is no ancestral or religious curse linked to the fate of the black Haitian people, but a historical and conscious colonizing intervention by the great capitalist powers to stifle and prevent the free and independent expansion of that suffered, but

noble, nation, to take advantage of the labor force extracted from the misery to which Haiti has been reduced (RIBEIRO, 2010, p. 7, free translation).

A complex history, marked by injustices, violent conflicts, debts and invasions, left the country in a permanent state of social, economic and political vulnerability, placing it among the poorest in the world.

After the January 12, 2010 earthquake - the catastrophe to which Seguy (2014) refers above - the situation in Haiti has worsened further. About 300,000 people died and more than a million were left homeless.

According to the Regional Diagnosis on Haitian Migration<sup>3</sup> (2017), the Dominican Republic, a country neighboring Haiti, was one of the first to show solidarity after the disaster, opening the border and enabling the opening of immediate aid channels in camps close to the border, with the help of the UN.

Soon South American countries like Venezuela, Chile and Ecuador offered regularization strategies for Haitians who were in their territories, as well as facilitating family reunification with resident Haitian immigrants. However, such measures were not formalized at that time, except for Ecuador.

A few months later, a new migration movement begins: Haitians now have Brazil as their main destination. The reasons for and choice of Brazil as a migration destination, according to the Regional Diagnosis on Haitian Migration (2017), were not clear. On the one hand, there is an imaginary constructed regarding work options, since, at that time, Brazil appeared as the new emerging world power. On the other hand, it is considered that the presence of Brazilian troops from the United Nations Mission for the stabilization of Haiti<sup>4</sup> (MINUSTAH) may have contributed to the idea of Brazil as a country of opportunity.

In some cases, Brazil was considered a transit country, whose final destination was French Guiana (to reach France), the United States or Canada. In this case, as pointed out by Fernandes and Farias (2016), one of the factors considered is the presence of trafficking networks that recruited citizens in Haiti with the promise of work and study in Latin American countries, the United States and Europe. However, these networks directed their victims to Ecuador, where they abandoned them.

These authors point out that, at the beginning of the migratory flow (2010-2012), the most common trajectory started from Port-au-Prince or the Dominican Republic, by air passing through

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<sup>3</sup> Study developed by the Mercosur Institute of Public Policies on Human Rights (IPPDH) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

<sup>4</sup> Created by Resolution by the UN Security Council, it remained in Haiti from 2004 to 2017.



Panama City. From there, some went to Quito or Lima, from where - by land or river - they reached the border with Brazil, where they enter irregularly, in the states of Amazonas or Acre.

Fernandes and Farias (2016) point out that, in 2010, Argentina, Chile, Ecuador and Peru did not require a visa for Haitians to enter their territory, but even so, these countries did not become the final destination of high-volume Haitian migration. The entry of a greater number of Haitians may “indicate that this migration is not caused solely by the ease of entry into the country, [...], but is determined by the intention to arrive and settle in the destination region” (idem, p. 104, free translation).

At the end of 2011, there were already about 4 000 Haitians in Brazil and, at that moment, what could be called a migratory crisis at the borders began: “the newcomers are added to a few hundred who were already in each city waiting for regularization and, in many cases, in a precarious situation” (IPPDH; IOM, 2017, p.34, free translation).

Thus, the need for normative instruments and the discussion on a new migration law was perceived. From this, the Normative Resolution 97 (RN-97), of January 2012, was established, which determined the granting of a permanent visa, for humanitarian reasons, to the Haitian immigrants.

Such a resolution authorized the issuance of only 100 monthly visas by the Brazilian Embassy in Port-au-Prince. In 2013, it was extended through Normative Resolution 102 (RN-102), which now permits the unlimited issuance of visas. Even so, irregular land immigration has not decreased.

According to the document by the IPPDH and IOM (2017), two hurricanes hit the Haitian region in 2012. In 2013, a political and diplomatic crisis between Haiti and the Dominican Republic removed the nationality of 200,000 people whose parents were undocumented, mainly affecting the descendants of Haitians. These two facts contributed to the intensification of Haitian migration.

The period between 2014 and 2016 marks what can be identified as a second migratory phase, whose main characteristics were: family reunification / integration; feminization of Haitian migration; diversification of the social, economic and geographical origins of new immigrants. We thus see the process of consolidating Haitian migration to South America and a new mobility of some migrants to new intra-regional destinations.

According to Fernandes and Farias (2016), in 2015, an agreement between Itamaraty and IOM expanded the visa issuance capacity by the Brazilian Consulate in Port-au-Prince. Such an agreement allowed the issuance of 500 visas a week.

Table 1 below shows the number of Haitian migrants in a regular situation in each South American country.

From the table, we see that Brazil was the country that received the most Haitian immigrants in recent years, despite all the difficulties in obtaining a visa.

To apply for permission, the applicant must have a current passport, be a resident of Haiti (which must be confirmed by a certificate of residence) and present a certificate of good standing. With all documents in hand, you must also pay US \$ 200 to issue the visa (FERNANDES; FARIA, 2016, p.102, free translation).

Table 1- Estimated quantity of Haitian migrants and relative proportion by country in South America.

Country	Amount	Period	%
Argentina	1 165	2011 - 2015	< 1%
Bolivia	905	2011 - 2015	< 1%
Brazil	67 226	2010 - 2016	5,5 %
Chile	17 849	2011 - 2015	2,8 %
Colombia	1 375	2010 - 2016	< 1%
Ecuador	776	2011 - 2014	< 1%
Paraguay	15	2016	< 1%
Peru	56	2016	< 1%
Uruguay	2	2012 - 2016	< 1%
Venezuela	6 509	2016	< 1%

Source: IPPDH; IOM. Regional diagnosis on Haitian migration. 2017

According to data from the Federal Police in November 2019, 118 323 Haitian records remain active in Brazil.

According to the above, we were able to get an overview of Haiti and Haitian immigration, covering some elements of its history and the situations that resulted in the Haitian diaspora.

Brazil, in particular, played an important role in welcoming these immigrants. However, we must consider, as highlighted by Fernandes and Farias (2016): on the one hand, the migratory movement initiated “a process of discussion of migratory legislation, introducing in the debates the vision of respect for the human rights of immigrants” (idem, p.104). On the other hand, the perception of the presence of Haitians in Brazil was viewed with suspicion by society. This distrust was reinforced by some press organizations, which compared Haitian immigration to an “invasion”.

According to what was discussed, we can understand that, in Brazil,

[...] many Haitians encounter different adaptation difficulties and have to deal with the prejudice, often explicit, of part of the Brazilian population on a daily basis. Reinforced prejudice, as it results from the sum of strangeness to foreigners in general (especially non-Europeans) with racial discrimination, added to the

economic crisis that increases unemployment (MOREL, 2017, p. 19, free translation).

It must be remembered that both the poorest Haitians and qualified professionals with university degrees deal with similar situations. In view of the urgency to supply basic needs such as food and housing, they are directed to “sectors highly marked by precarious work, such as the textile industry, meat slaughtering, civil construction, domestic services, among others” (VILLEN, 2016, p. 47, free translation).

Although, according to the report by OBMigra (2019), Haiti occupies the first positions in number of immigrants in the Brazilian formal labor market, the Haitian immigrant is the one with the lowest average monthly income, R\$1,306.

In addition to all the obstacles that the black Haitian people face in displacement, they not only live the experience of crossing political borders (from one country to another), but also experience other types of borders, which we will address below.

## **2. Borders, ethnomathematics and curriculum**

Migration experiences imply borders. These boundaries are not just known political boundaries; they can be understood in different ways.

Hannerz (1997) associates the idea of frontier with limits of culture, attributing to the concept the characteristics of discontinuity and obstacle. For him, it is “a clear line of demarcation, in relation to which a thing is either inside or outside” (HANNERZ, 1997, p.15, free translation). On the one hand, the author considers that “being inside” or “being outside” refers to the idea of belonging. From the perspective of social identity, “the limit would be clearly demarcated, involving, in most cases, selected cultural forms, dichotomously distributed and understood as emblematic of the condition of being a member of the group” (idem).

On the other hand, however, he considers that cultural flows shape and dissolve the limits, since,

As culture moves through more specific currents, such as the migratory flow, the flow of goods and the flow of media, or combinations between them, it introduces a whole range of perceptual and communicative modalities that are likely to differ greatly in the way of fixing your own limits; that is, in their discontinuous distributions between people and by relationships. (HANNERZ, 1997, p.18, free translation)

In this way, he notes that, metaphorically, “boundary” can be combined with the idea of “border” or “border zone”, understanding that the latter terms “do not imply sharp lines but regions,



in which one thing gradually becomes another, where there is indistinction, ambiguity and uncertainty” (idem, p.20, free translation).

From another perspective, we understand that Martins (2019) contributes to the discussion on borders, as it leads us to reflect on the place where the research takes place, on the encounter with the other.

What is sociologically more relevant to characterize and define the frontier in Brazil is precisely the situation of social conflict. [...] In my interpretation, in this conflict, the frontier is essentially the place of otherness. This is what makes it a unique reality. At first glance, it is the meeting place for those who, for different reasons, are different from each other, such as the Indians on one side and the civilized sayings on the other; like the big landowners, on the one hand, and the poor peasants, on the other. But the conflict makes the frontier essentially, at the same time, a place of discovery for the other and of mismatch. Not only the disagreement and conflict arising from the different conceptions of life and worldviews of each of these human groups. The frontier mismatch is the mismatch of historical temporalities, since each of these groups is situated differently in the time of history (MARTINS, 2019, p.133, free translation).

Balibar (2002) discusses, more specifically, about the borders experienced by immigrants and refugees, anticipating that answering “what is a border?” it is not a simple task. For the author, “we cannot attribute to the border an essence which would be valid in all places and at all times, for all physical scales and time periods, and which would be included in the same way in all individual and collective experience” (BALIBAR, 2002, p 75).

When arguing about the meanings of frontier, Balibar (2002) resorts to three characteristics: overdetermination - historically, frontiers motivated by cultural demarcations or economic interests; the polysemic nature - referring to the fact that borders do not exist in the same way for individuals from different social classes; and heterogeneity - which considers that the various functions of demarcation and territorialization, carried out by the borders, show the social distinction and the distinction of rights, for example.

With these characteristics, the border, for Balibar (2002), is not only a very difficult obstacle to overcome, but the place where the immigrant from a poor country resides: “a home in which to live a life which is a waiting-to-live, a non-life” (idem, p.83).

In general, we see that borders are established as a region of separation. Particularly, as pointed out by Balibar (2002), currently, borders are projected.

not merely to give individuals from different social classes different experiences of the law, the civil administration, the police and elementary rights, such as the freedom of circulation and freedom of enterprise, but actively to differentiate between individuals in terms of social class (BALIBAR, 2002, p.81).

In this way, we approach Mesquita (2014) by recognizing here, the urban boundaries, understood, lived and felt, as a material substrate of our contemporary urban society and worked as an economic phenomenon.

We can consider, then, that Haitian immigrants cross the borders from one country to another and remain on cultural borders, for example, when they encounter difficulties with the Portuguese language; when they notice the differences between them and the local residents; in the confrontation with the other's identity repertoire. And also, on the social frontiers, when they see themselves, for example, "working and living on the periphery of capitalism" (VILLEN, 2016, free translation), in precarious conditions.

In this cultural and social difference that is imposed, we recognize what Santos (2010) calls abyssal thinking: a system of visible and invisible distinctions, in which the invisible are established through radical lines that divide the social reality between the universe "on this side of the line" and the universe "on the other side of the line". "The intensely visible distinctions that structure the social reality on this side of the line are based on the invisibility of the distinctions between this and the other side of the line" (SANTOS, 2010, p.33, free translation), thus creating exclusionary practices.

Regarding the field of knowledge, the author considers that the abyssal line gives modern science a monopoly on the distinction between what is true and what is false and tends to eliminate any reality that is "on the other side". With this, the knowledge produced on the other side is seen as belief, opinion, magic, idolatry or intuitive and subjective understandings, as not knowledge. However, Santos (2010), recognizes the existence of a plurality of heterogeneous knowledge and, therefore, proposes post-abyssal thinking as "a radical break with modern Western forms of thought and action" (p.53).

Bearing this in mind and looking for conceptual and political instruments that, according to Santos (2010), do not reproduce the abyssal lines, we find in the work of Paulo Freire and in the Ethnomathematics Program the theoretical basis of our research.

Throughout Paulo Freire's work, we see his political position against oppression and in favor of liberation. This liberation is based on the praxis of the search and on the knowledge and recognition of the need to fight for it.

In the proposal of the pedagogy of the oppressed, he highlights that it is

one that has to be forged with him and not for him, as men or peoples, in the incessant struggle to recover his humanity. Pedagogy that makes oppression and its causes the object of reflection by the oppressed, which will result in their necessary engagement

in the struggle for their liberation, in which this pedagogy will be carried out and refined (FREIRE, 2019, p.43, free translation).

For the author, when the oppressed are objects in the process of learning to read and write, they are forced to “passively receive packaged knowledge” (FREIRE, 2011, free translation). The author points out that,

learning to write and read, as a creative act, here involves necessarily a critical understanding of reality. The knowledge of previous knowledge, which literacy students reach when analyzing their practice in the social context, opens up the possibility to new knowledge: new knowledge, which goes beyond the limits of the previous one, unveils the reason for being of the facts, demystifying thus, the false interpretations of the same. Now, there is no separation between thought-language and objective reality, hence the reading of a text demands the ‘reading’ of the social context to which it refers (idem, p.39).

Based on this, Freire (2019) considers that the organization of the syllabus of education “will be based on the present, existential, concrete situation, reflecting the set and aspirations of the people” (p.119). For the author, this happens through the investigation of a set of “generating themes”.

This investigation necessarily implies a methodology that cannot contradict the dialogicity of liberating education. Hence it is equally dialogical. Hence, it also raises awareness, at the same time, the apprehension of “generating themes” and the awareness of individuals around them (FREIRE, 2019, p.121, free translation).

According to Vergani (2007), the work of Paulo Freire and Ubiratan D'Ambrósio are related by “the same critical conscience, the same charisma that creates alternative routes, the same deep desire for authentically comprehensive justice” (p. 24, free translation), as we can observe when knowing the Ethnomathematics Program.

According to D'Ambrósio (2016, 2017), creator of the term and the Ethnomathematics Program, different cultures develop knowledge systems. These systems are understood as forms, styles and techniques of making, explaining, understanding and teaching. According to the author, knowledge “is the 'dynamic set' of knowledge and actions accumulated and socialized throughout the history of each individual” (D'AMBRÓSIO, 2016, p. 287, free translation), the result of the search for survival and transcendence and that therefore, it gives rise to techniques and styles of behavior.

Based on this, D'Ambrósio was led to the study of knowledge systems in general, taking into account the cycle of knowledge generation, organization and diffusion in different groups and explains:

[...] to compose the word ethnomathematics I used the roots tica, matema and etno to mean that there are several ways, techniques, skills (tics) to explain, understand, deal with and live with (matema) different natural contexts and socioeconomic aspects of reality (etnos) (D'AMBRÓSIO, 2017, p.63, free translation).

In a way, therefore, distant from the so-called academic mathematics, Ethnomathematics recognizes the knowledge of the other and breaks “with modern rationalism and with the uniqueness in the ways of 'producing knowledge'” (CLARETO, 2003, p.177, free translation). The Ambrosian approach analyzes knowledge beyond academia and “seeks to think about culture and cultural diversity beyond the homogeneity and hegemony of Western culture and beyond the bonds of elite cultures” (CLARETO, 2003, p. 54, free translation), placing “the thought of science in locus, on the fertile soil of human experience, where sensitive intelligence rises to work the world” (VERGANI, 2007, p.35, free translation).

In the context in which the research is carried out, the political dimension is associated with the educational dimension of ethnomathematics. Politics because it puts us in front of the search for “real possibilities of access for the subordinate, for the marginalized and for the excluded” (D'AMBROSIO, 2017, p.42, free translation), with respect to the culture of the individual.

In addition, Vergani (2007) recognizes that the pedagogical potential of ethnomathematics lies in being a culturally dynamic methodology, rooted in social reality, a life-giving observation of behavioral practices and an authentically socio-significant action. Besides that,

Ethnomathematics education is an anthropological process that conveys all components of our concept of culture: semiotic, symbolic and communicational aspects; socio-political aspects, labor relations, power relations; cognitive aspects, ways of knowing; technological aspects. (Vergani, 2007, p.34, free translation)

D'Ambrosio (2016) realizes the connection between politics and education when proposing the trivium curriculum. According to the author, it is “an educational response to the expectations of eliminating inequity and violations of human dignity, the first step towards social justice” (p.101, free translation).

D'Ambrosio's proposal (2016) is a path to educational action strategies based on the critical teaching of three instruments - communicative (literacy), analytical / symbolic (materacia) and materials (technoracia). Literacy refers to an individual's ability to deal with everyday situations in a critical way, associating the skills of reading and writing with interpretation, in order to offer him an awareness of his humanity and his autonomy.

The material refers to mathematical knowledge, but not just the codes and results themselves, but the knowledge necessary for symbolic analysis. “The criticism of codes and results allows to

recognize implications and interpretations and to analyze consequences and future possibilities” (D’AMBROSIO, 2016, p.110, free translation).

For technoracia, the author defines two goals: the first is about responsibility for technology consumption; the second, on responsibility in technology production, thus encompassing the “critical analysis of the objectives, consequences, ethics, history and philosophy of technology” (D’AMBROSIO, 2016, p.112, free translation).

In addition to building a curriculum, our interest, in the second stage of the research, is the acquisition and development of new skills in literacy, materials and technocracy. Here, inspired by the work of Vieira (2013), we call these skills knowledge trivium.

For this, we intend to use the research proposal of generating themes by Paulo Freire (2019) based on elements obtained in the first stage of the research that will be presented in the following item. Such proposal will be implemented through pedagogical actions that aim at a critical understanding of reality, investigations around generating themes will be guided by the elements of the trivium curriculum, so that also the mathematical knowledge that circulates among Haitian immigrants can be analyzed.

### **3. Portuguese for Haitians: first approximations**

In the development of the research, the first approximations were made using participant observation as a methodology, complemented with records written in a field notebook. The choice for this methodology is justified considering the statement by Ludke and André (1986), as it allows

a personal and close contact between the researcher and the researched phenomenon, [...] the observer can use personal knowledge and experiences as aids in the process of understanding and interpreting the studied phenomenon (p.26, free translation).

The objective of the first phase of the study was to understand the context and dynamics of relations with Haitian immigrants. In addition, the observation provided contact with reality, helping to survey socio-cultural elements that could be explored to understand the borders that Haitian immigrants cross in Brazil. In addition to highlighting possible generating themes from the coexistence of realities, contributing to the planning of the second stage of the research, based on trivium knowledge.

The following report was elaborated from the notes in the field notebook and the observation of the first author of the text in weekly classes in a Portuguese project for Haitians at CIEJA-Perus in the city of São Paulo.



From March 25, 2018, I started attending CIEJA-Perus weekly, observing, participating and, eventually, providing some assistance to students and teachers, in the so-called 5th and 6th periods (from 17:30 to 19:40 and from 20:10 to 22:20, respectively). The three teachers I followed always welcomed me and introduced me to the students as a teacher and researcher.

At first, my presence was seen with a certain strangeness by students, both Brazilian and Haitian, but the dynamics of the classes allowed me to get closer and, in a short time, the strangeness was dissolving.

In the first trips to school, I followed the Portuguese language classes common to Brazilian and Haitian students. In these classes, about a third of the total students present were Haitians with different levels of fluency in the language. Some expressed themselves well and, therefore, helped, making translations, those who did not understand the teacher's instructions. However, in general, it was possible to notice that many students did not follow the class discussions due to the difficulty of understanding.

Following my trips to CIEJA, I started to participate in History classes. In one of these classes, the teacher approached the topic of autobiography from the construction of a timeline and asked each student to produce his own. I was able to help some students, mainly Haitians, who had not understood how to carry out the task and, thus, it was possible to learn about some immigration trajectories.

One of them, for example, told me that when he was 17, after the 2010 earthquake, he went to live in the Dominican Republic with a brother to work. Then he had to return to Haiti, where his mother had remained, but with the difficulties that the country faced, he decided to come to Brazil, alone, four years ago. He took a plane to Panama and then another to São Paulo, which confirms research on the Haiti-Brazil flow.

From May, then, I started to participate in Portuguese classes for Haitians, on Mondays, from 17:30 to 19:40, as a tutor. In this position, she helped students with the activities proposed by the teacher and answered many questions about words and expressions used in everyday life. Usually, they wanted to know about the use and meaning of slang they heard in the workplace, but also about writing rules in Portuguese.

Those classes took place in a meeting environment for Haitians, where they seemed more free to talk to each other - always in Creole - and to express themselves in Portuguese. The interaction between them was, for the most part, relaxed and permeated with lots of laughter, despite the visible fatigue after the workday.

In May 13th class, about words that express emotions, not everyone wanted to talk about how they felt at that moment. Although some declared to be happy, others expressed other types of feeling:

- I miss my father (Haitian student, 9 months in Brazil); - I'm in bad shape, because I think of my son (a Haitian student, 10 months ago in Brazil, one of the children stayed in Haiti).

With the classes totally directed to communication in Portuguese, it became easier to learn more about immigrant students. For example, that they do not live near the school (district of Perus), as I imagined. Many works in the Lapa neighborhood or in downtown São Paulo and live in places like Morro Doce (West Zone of São Paulo) or the municipality of Francisco Morato.

Another point to consider is in relation to work. Haitian immigrants reported that their main occupation was working in civil construction, as plumbers, as painters, with cleanliness, as cooks. It became evident the need to enter the labor market, for example, in the case of a student who reported that he has training as a civil engineer, but, in Brazil, he needs to work as a bricklayer or construction assistant. On the other hand, the unemployment experienced by some revealed in the speech of another student: "Brazil is bad, it has no work". Such a statement may also indicate that there was an expectation relating the coming to Brazil with the possibility of getting work.

Another student reported that he came to Brazil about 2 years ago with his wife. They first went to Peru and, by land, arrived in Manaus, where they had their first child (he showed me the photos of the child on his cell phone). As in Manaus, according to him, it was very difficult to find work, he came to São Paulo.

Being in contact with this group of Haitians made me realize that "being Haitian" is something that unites them. However, life histories are varied and, therefore, each person's experience is different.

In addition, I could see from the issues that circulate among Haitians, that, in fact, work is one of their main concerns. For this reason, I believe, based on Freire (2019), that in an educational context, with a cultural specificity, the "reading" of the students' reality can start from the analysis of their social practices, as immigrant workers, that is, having work as a "generating theme".

From the survey of the generator theme, we will start the development of the second stage of the project. The proposal is to shift the methodology of participant observation to action-research, promoting pedagogical actions focused on literacy, material and technology skills, in the context of teaching Portuguese to Haitians.

#### **4. Considerations or being "on borders"**

The first motivation of this research was to get closer to the reality of Haitian immigrant students who are at CIEJA-Perus, in the city of São Paulo, with the purpose of learning Portuguese.

For this, we started the investigation looking for data on the migratory flow of Haitians to Brazil. Then, through participant observation, we were able to get closer to the study context and raise elements about the reality of Haitians in Brazil, from personal experiences.

The reality we perceive reaffirms what we discussed about borders. Haiti is one of the poorest countries in the world, the Haitians who migrate, project a better life in another country. In the migration process, as we have seen, there are countless difficulties in crossing the borders from one country to another. Upon arriving at the destination, they remain on social and cultural boundaries, when they encounter communication difficulties because of the language, when they are outside the labor market, when they face the prejudice of local residents.

Haitians occupy the informal labor market, experiencing diasporic experiences on political, social and cultural boundaries. The fact that they are in this invisibility space, still carries the difficulty with language and precarious conditions - working and living on the outskirts of cities - and, unfortunately, racism.

The Portuguese project for Haitians from CIEJA-Perus in the city of São Paulo, can be seen as an affirmative action to welcome Haitians, with their identity and culture. With the proposal to implement the proposal for a trivium knowledge, we hope to add cultural practices of these students, contributing to the circulation of everyday knowledge in the theme that generates work involving materia, literacy and technoracia.

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