

## **Internationalization of the graduate curriculum: questions for debates**

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### **Abstract**

This article aims to analyze the treatment that Brazilian researchers have given to the theme: internationalization of higher education. The research used articles available on the Portal de Periódicos of the Brazilian Federal Agency for Support and Evaluation of Graduate Education (CAPES). The study sought to link the analysis of the context of the planetary era to the inequalities between Western Europe and underdeveloped countries. The research undertaken here showed, among other things, that the internationalization between non-hegemonic countries and developed countries has been seen as a unilateral transference, rather than as solidary cooperation, and it points to the need for an international curricular project and critical and dialogic propositions, within a context in which diversity is delineated as a universal project.

**Keywords:** Internationalization. Higher Education. Curriculum.

## Resumo

O presente artigo tem como objetivo analisar o tratamento que pesquisadores brasileiros têm dispensado ao tema “Internacionalização do ensino superior”. A pesquisa utilizou como fonte os artigos disponíveis no Portal de Periódicos da Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (Capes). Procurou-se vincular as análises ao contexto da era planetária com as desigualdades entre o Ocidente Europeu e países subdesenvolvidos. A pesquisa aqui empreendida demonstrou, entre outras coisas, que a internacionalização entre países não hegemônicos e países desenvolvidos tem sido vista como uma transferência unilateral, em vez de uma cooperação solidária, e aponta para a necessidade de um projeto curricular internacional, com proposições críticas e dialógicas, no interior do qual a diversidade se delineie como projeto universal.

**Palavras-chaves:** Internacionalização. Ensino Superior. Currículo.

## Resumen

Este artículo pretende analizar el tratamiento que los investigadores brasileños han dado al tema “Internalización de la educación superior”. La investigación utiliza como fuente los artículos disponibles en el Portal de Periódicos de la Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (CAPES). Se buscó vincular los análisis al contexto de la era planetaria con las desigualdades entre el Occidente Europeo y los países subdesarrollados. La investigación realizada aquí demostró, entre otras cosas, que la internalización entre países no hegemónicos y países desarrollados, se ha visto como una transferencia unilateral, diferente de una cooperación solidaria y apunta hacia la necesidad de un proyecto curricular internacional con proposiciones críticas y dialógicas, dentro del cual la diversidad se delinee como proyecto universal.

**Palabras clave:** Internacionalización. Educación Superior. Currículo.

## Introduction

The central argument of this article based on specific bibliographic review and on articles found on the theme, in CAPES portal, aims to stimulate the reflection about the need for an international curriculum project and critical and dialogical propositions, within which diversity is outlined as a universal project. It is important to highlight that the fundamental mental support of this text, both theoretical and conceptual vision, involves the Brazilian experience, or the perspective of a Brazilian researcher, having as a filter researches and theories produced in this context. It is important to signal that the way of approaching the theme is based on the idea that internationalization between underdeveloped or developing countries and developed countries has revealed itself as a unilateral transference, rather than a partnership.

Pedagogically, this text is divided into five subtitles. In the introduction, I present the discussion. I start, already in the second, to mention some theories in order to contextualize the debate. The third part aligns some researches on internationalization in the Brazilian context. The link between the critical curricular theories and the challenges for curricular internationalization of non-hegemonic higher education institutions is weaved in the fourth chapter. In the last one, I make some analytical considerations of what was globally expressed in the text.

The contemporary sciences teach us that we are experiencing the globalization of markets, cultures, relationships, knowledge, problems, conflicts and crises. It is the planetary era, where space-time became a fine line between the parts that constitute the world. Information technologies, communication and Internet improve every minute in the process of breaking down frontiers. This stage demands a way of globally thinking the relationship between the parts and the whole, able to grasp the universalism and, at the same time, the unit and diversity of human condition. According to Morin's views (2005), it is necessary to develop a polycentric thought nurtured with the world cultures. So, to educate for this thought would be the aim and the challenges of education today.

In this context it is pertinent and, somewhat, urgent to think about a pedagogical-political curriculum that accounts for suitable education to the students and other educational professionals who live in this new era. Here, I specifically address the curriculum of undergraduate courses, without undermining the equal importance of (re) thinking projects for the postgraduate or elementary education.

Growing up in an area of global communication, with technology and information as practically extension of the body, most of the academic young people, at least in the Brazilian case, are anxious for an educational experience enriched by internationalization. Faced with the student demand and the requirements of contemporary history, the federal Brazilian institutions of higher education have been expanding options of studies and educational experience in other countries to students. However, it is also necessary to consider the preparation of these students. They need to have an academic curriculum, which will allow the development of attitudes, skills and knowledge to enable them to act in a globalized, interconnected and multicultural world.

However, the curricular internationalization process requires complex and joint actions, both political and pedagogical. It requires, in the first place, rebuilding the concept of training/education practiced, as well as curricular reformulation and interinstitutional integration policies. In addition, internationalization of teachers through the opportunity to teach, research and work abroad, associated with the development of disciplines with international content international politics, international relations, conflicts, cultures, etc. Closing the circle, it requires courses or disciplines for training in foreign language, among other requirements.

On that basis, to internationalize the curriculum of higher education courses goes beyond reaching agreements and providing students' mobility among countries, but, mainly, imbue a concept of education/training and research in global collaboration network and, thus, to develop a natural ability of the human spirit in order to situate knowledge in its context, its complexity and its entirety (Morin, 2005). All this without losing sight that the global cannot supplant the local, neither the other way around.

## Theoretical presuppositions

To understand the meaning and the importance of the discussion shown here, namely, the curricular internationalization, concerning hegemony and non-hegemony, with the aim of contextualizing the discussion, I based myself on two texts by Edgar Morin (2005): “*Method 5*” – specifically in the chapter: *The planetary identity* – and “*Seven Complex Lessons in Education for the Future*” (2002). In relation to the curricular discussions, they will serve as background of the arguments to the critical and post-critical curricular theories, among them the texts organized by Apple (1994); Silva and Moreira (1995); Moreira and Silva (2002); Sacristán (2002) and Moreira (2009) among other thinkers of the curriculum, in the face of new political and cultural maps.

Edgar Morin (2005) and others authors who think about the perspective of planetarization of mankind are in unison to state, as well as reality shows us, that we live in a world without borders. This characteristic comprises access to information, consumption of technological products, clothing, food and also cultural products, specially films, music and literary works. The era of computer and the Internet included, as they take people all around the globe. In the Morin’s words:

Globalization also materializes in the fact that each part of the world is increasingly part of the world, and the world as a whole is increasingly more present in each one of its parts. This does not occur only with nations and peoples, but with individuals as well, in the same way that each point of a hologram contains the information of the whole of which it is part, the world, henceforth, as a whole is more and more present in each individual (MORIN, 2005, P. 229).

One cannot overlook that, at the same time in which there is a planetarization of science, technique, industry, capitalist economy, cultures and habits, there is also the planetarization of misery, of which some countries of the Globe participate – Africans, Asians and South-Americans – that are antagonistically relegated to unequal conditions, regarding participation, and submitted to the “leftovers”. Although “for better or worse, each one, rich or poor, from the south, north, west, carries in himself/herself, without knowing, the whole planet”. (...)

The planetarization is, at the same time, evident, subconscious and omnipresent (MORIN, 2005, P. 230).

Similarly, it is important to consider that the counter-hegemonic forces are also there, active and persistent, forming, globally, countercurrents: they are resistances against biosphere degradation, for quality of life, opposed to unbridled consumerism, in favor of local and group cultural identities rather than universalist cultures which seek economic alternatives based on solidarity and exchange. They manifest against the prosaic life and, opposite to this, they seek more human dimensions: poetry, love, fascination, and passion, to the party. In addition, they position themselves against violence, of any origin or purpose whatsoever. These currents tend to intensify and to combine in the search for global solutions, by bringing the logic of creating a new virtuous circle (Morin, 2005).

As Morin himself thinks (2005), there are two globalizations in one: one, mainly technical and economic – led by the capitalist elite –, based on profit; the other, in which an awareness of belonging to a terrestrial part – led by counter-hegemonic movements –, preparing a planetary citizenship. Although antagonistic, these positions are inseparable. The second globalization progresses at the same time of the first. It can only strengthen in the development of the virtuous circles, in the expansion of a world culture fed by different cultures and in the advance of the planetary consciousness.

According to anthropologists, human society has always been in connection. Marcel Mauss (2003), for example, in the *Essay about gift*, researched so-called primitive societies – among them Melanesians, Polynesians and others from the American northwest – which were also called archaic, and noticed an exchange system that involved people, groups and nations. And this system included different institutions: religious, juridical, political, economic, family, of production and consumption. In the understanding of these societies, the exchanges provide political, economic, juridical and diplomatic alliances, including the personal relationships of hospitality and urbanity (CASTILHO, 2011).

Contemporarily, on the other hand, the scholars of the New Information Technologies, among them Pierre Lévy (2008) and Castells (2000), inform us that the new paradigm of the computer technologies, which emerged in the late twentieth century, in which the internet is its essence, provide material base for the sharp expansion in the whole social structure. It comprises all the spectrum of human communication, in each country. Castells (2000) observes that the architecture of net formation reproduces in local and regional centers, in such a way that the system becomes interconnected in global terms. According to this author, what characterizes the new communication system is its capacity of inclusion and coverage of all cultural expressions:

The new communication system changes radically space and time, the fundamental dimensions of human life. Places are divested of their cultural, historical and geographical sense and reintegrate in functional nets or in overlapping of images, providing a space of flow, which replaces the space of places. Time is erased in the new communication system since past, present and future can be programmed to interact with each other in the same message. The space of flows and timeless time are the main bases of a new culture, which transcend and include diversity of the representation systems historically transmitted: the culture of real potentiality, where the make-believe becomes reality. (p. 398)

However, in the light of Morin's line of thought (2002), the planetary era, which began in the sixteenth century with the establishment of communication among all the continents, in which every part of the world becomes solidary, was also marked by oppression and domination that devastated humanity and still have not disappeared. The domination of the West of Europe over the rest of the world provokes civilization catastrophes mainly in the Americas and Africa. Thus, the planetary era opened and developed in and with violence, destruction, slavery and exploitation. In this sense, we agree with Edgar Morin (2002): it is necessary that education develops the natural aptitude of human spirit to situate knowledge in a context and as a whole. In other words, at the same time it is necessary to see the world with its unity and diversity, with its complementarities and antagonisms.

The author also adds that knowledge of developments of the planetary era, which tends to grow in this current century and the

recognition of earthly identity that will become more indispensable to each and every one, must become one of the main objects of education. It is needed allied to this, to teach understanding and respect for others.

It is relevant to point out the warning of this author: to know and recognize the planetary context, to know and recognize its articulations and essential problems to the reformulation of thought, but one that is in a paradigmatic and not programmatic proposition. Here is one of the fundamental issues presented to education of our time, since this same education, in our societies, is imbued with the ability to create, organize, systematize and distribute knowledge.

### **Internationalization of higher education: researches and trends**

The internationalization of higher education, through academic mobility, is still a very timidly discussed theme in Brazil. In the CAPES portal only three articles about the theme were found. Nonetheless, it is a much-needed debate in the academia because of the complexity that involves the process. When searching for bibliographies that addressed the theme, I found a small number of papers written by Brazilians in relation to the Brazilian reality. However, it was noticeable that great part of the studies are restricted to reflections such as: a) the relationship between internationalization of higher education and the process of capitalist globalization; b) the relationship between the university policies of internationalization of higher education and education as a commodity serving the private interests of the market (European and American); c) the curricular internationalization as proposals of hegemonic countries of “western supremacy” for their own interests. I will review some of these studies, with the aim to elucidate the approach about the theme further on, from the perspective of the critical curricular theories.

Lima and Maranhão (2011) addressed the internationalization of higher education, through bias of the multiculturalist proposals, taking into account that the internationalization of higher education is justified in the light of two arguments: (1) higher education institutions should be organized based on multicultural arrangements; (2) students and/or

teachers increase their employability, becoming more attractive for the work market; they would also develop the confluence and recognition of the cultural diversity.

However, the authors conclude, based on the studies of reports of multilateral international agencies – particularly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) – that instead of the promotion of cultural diversity, one has the defense of a particular form of culture. Its legitimations sought through the standardization of the curriculum, course programs, languages and cultural experiences.

The researchers, based on these reports, also prepared a brief overview of the curricular internationalization in higher education, worldwide, and noticed a fast growth of the numbers, which reveal the increase of higher education internationalization between 1995 and 2005. However, when they concentrated on the destination of international students, they noticed the blatant hegemony exerted by the North American and European institutions (Western Europe). While both regions have been able to attract a significant number of international students (1.851.018), four others – South Asia and Western Asia (10.303), Central Asia (33.958), Latin America and Caribe (36.536) and Sub-Saharan Africa (59.801) – manage to attract less than 10% of the international registration (140.328).

Considering the data concerning the school calendar 2006, only seven countries (United States of America, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Australia, Canada and Japan) were responsible for more than two-thirds of the world's registration – 1.871.005 of the 728.480 students flow –, according to the following table provided by UNESCO-2008:

**Table 1 - Top recipient countries (2001-2006)**

Countries	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
United States of America	475.169	582.996	582.996	572.509	590.128	584.814
United Kingdom	225.722	225.722	227.273	300.056	318.399	330.078
Germany	199.132	219.039	240.619	260.314	259.797	259.797
France	147.402	147.402	221.567	237.587	236.518	247.510
Australia	105.764	120.987	179.619	166.954	207.264	207.264
Canada	40.033	40.033	40.033	40.033	132.982	75.546
Japan	63.637	74.892	74.892	177.903	125.917	130.124

Source: UNESCO (2003, 2004, 2005, 2006).

In examining these data, the authors point out that, not coincidentally, the countries with the greatest capacity of attracting students are those that hold the political and economic power in the global scenario. See the analyses:

a) six of them have consolidated systems of higher education, both in quantitative and qualitative terms; b) four of them have private higher education systems (United Kingdom and Australia) or predominantly private (Japan, USA); c) six are located in the northern hemisphere – USA, Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, France and Japan; d) six integrate the G-7 – United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, France and Japan – of which, three are ex-British colonies (USA, Canada and Australia) and two are still part of the British Commonwealth; e) four of them are English-speaking – USA, United Kingdom, Australia and Canada; f) all of them have an institutionalized policy to attract students and, for this reason, they invest significant resources in the dissemination of their systems of higher education.

The second research refers to Filipetti's studies (2007). Based on a dossier released in 2007, the author affirms that some clues collaborate to think about this question of why the countries recognized by their ability to attract and host the students are precisely those who hold the political and economic power worldwide. Amid the possible answers, they present those that indicate gains, which besides capitalizing the direct and indirect financial resources, the process contributes to: a) expand

the global net of European political and cultural influence; b) select the best brains; c) benefit from qualified workforce – even for a specific time –; d) promote transference of technology; e) create multicultural work and learning environment; f) renew the research and resist the brain drain; g) they also face non-controlled immigration. The explicit views like this one corroborates the Milton Santos' thoughts (2002, p. 113) since the geographer argues “the history of international relations of the last three centuries is also the history of devaluation of the knowledge of others”.

In the same proposition, the authors conclude in their studies:

Together, the indications suggest that the internationalization of education carried out through student mobility programs will hardly contribute to the promotion of multiculturalism, expressed by integration based on respect for different cultures, ethnicities, religions, etc. It is clear, instead, that internationalization has served as a channel for specific types of culture (that of the countries of the world-economy center), making them paradigms of quality, citizenship and success for the cultures considered to be less important (those of the periphery and semi-periphery countries).

The third research addressed in this article is the one by Wielewicki and Oliveira (2010). The authors conducted studies from the Bologna Declaration, revealing the European rationality in creating higher education internationalization policies. In this research, the authors indicate that, as Europe wants to establish international partnerships, which expand its range of options for higher education, one can assume that the agenda tends to point to Europe's own interest. So the authors infer:

It is also important to resist the temptation of – in the name of the alleged need for internationalization – assuming positions that have as raw material the suppression of debate, contradiction and even consideration of the experiences systematically excluded from the agenda. The university – either European or Brazilian – must exert, therefore, in the fullness of its status of privileged *locus* of critical, propositional and, especially, prospective analysis. (p. 231)

According to Cervo (2008), the intellectual distrust invades, with ethical strength, the domain of theories of international relations. The roots in which they are based on link them to specific interests of certain societies that constitute its observation field, as well as to values that these societies cultivate and, also, to patterns of behavior which suggest and praise as ideals. While they promote such specific factors, they discard interests, values and behavior patterns of other societies.

In relation to limiting factors for Academic Mobility, Filho, Cardoso and Vaz (2010), based on his research on students from Porto Alegre, focused on the international mobility, states that the most limiting factors for this increased mobility in the scope of the undergraduate courses are mastering the English language and the availability of scholarships - resources to finance the stay abroad and housing. According to Charle et al. (2004) the barrier to mastering a foreign language is less strong for the students from wealthy social classes, however the financial barrier continues to be decisive, since the financial costs to live abroad for one year or so are high.

Lima and Maranhão (2009) also point out that, due to the high costs required, the international education is still an experience accessible to few. Azevedo (2007) raises, in addendum, that those students who are integrated into international research groups become actors in the international mobility scenario: therefore, it is not enough to master the foreign language, it is necessary to produce academically. In this sense, conducting in cooperation with universities abroad, it may be devised in order to also involve undergraduate students, thus increasing the possibility of international modalities.

Zamberlan et al.'s studies (2009) fully corroborate with the issues presented in the researches, previously reviewed and, based on studies with foreign students in the process of mobility in Porto Alegre (Brazil), it reveals several contradictions already experienced that hinder the process of integration and maturity of the students. The authors highlight: a) poor solidary participatory methodology; b) paternalistic practices demanded by many students and some institutions; c) social and cultural concepts brought by many students that minimize certain

fundamental values of Brazilian society rejection of work as an instrument of survival; individualism in the search for satisfying their own demands; isolation in ghettos, repudiating the new in which it is placed; lack of associative spirit...

In light of these studies it is possible to argue that Brazil or Latin America, as well as the African continent and others considered peripheral or semi-peripheral, need to reflect on their policies in more detail. In addition, they need to assume a position for discussion and negotiation that considers fundamental the notions of alterity, diversity and difference.

### **Internationalization of higher education in the perspective of the curricular critical theories**

In this presupposition, being the curriculum the center of the educational and formative activity, it is of paramount importance to examine how the critical theories of this same curriculum can contribute to this debate. According to Zabala (2002, p. 53), “the curriculum [...] must provide the means to enable analysis of local and global situation, creating an awareness of active commitment [...] enabling instruments for intervention in social transformation”.

Moreira (1995), in studies carried out between 1984 and 1988 in Brazil, regarding the process of educational transference – movement of ideas, institutional models and practices from one country to another –, verified that between 1920 and 1970, an instrumental adaptation of the North-American curricular discourse dominantly took place in the country, in the effort to give the local color to the material transferred and take more advantage of it for our reality.

However, in subsequent decades, due to political, economic and cultural changes, both international and local, one attempted to promote a critical adaptation of the material received from different countries, with a view to a more autonomous development in the curriculum field. Thus, according to the author’s analyses, the reception of foreign material

gathered readings, confrontations and resistances, whose intensity and subversive potential varied according to the local and international circumstances.

Moreira (1995) supported the argument that these educational transferences do not occur in a mechanic way from one country to another. Mediation processes inherent to the receiving context affects how a certain foreign theory or practice is received, disseminated and applied. Therefore, this phenomenon cannot be reduced to a simple instrument of control and domination, used by the First World countries and, easily imposed and received in the Third World country. “Despite the possibility (and eventual purposes) of cultural homogenization, the evidence of tensions, contradictions, oppositions, convergences and divergences are clear” (p. 371).

With the intensification of the globalization process (unequal), facilitated by technological advance, contemporaneously, greater risks are outlined, in which the images of reality and visions of the world system are those that benefit the most powerful social groups. However, if the process can cause homogenization, invasion, destruction or dullness of cultural manifestations and different local knowledge, it may also, on the other hand, stimulate a critical appropriation of ideas and theories developed by the “other”. Besides the attempts to homogenize, there needs to be strong counter-homogenization movements, claiming fair participation, the right to difference, recognition of identities and local cultures.

Accordingly, Silva’s thought (1995) can be enlightening by arguing that the curriculum cannot be thought outside the reality of our world, where knowledge and power are interlinked. Therefore, a national and international curricular perspective is extremely important, which will allow the development of alternative views in relation to domination and subordination between cultures and nations. On the other hand, it is necessary to contextualize that, in the center of globalization, there are relationships of power that seek to undermine, marginalize and repress certain groups and cultures in favor of others. Thus, a curriculum that allowed students, professors and managements an opportunity to

examine and discuss these relations of power would be imperative, as well as its discursive character and the productive characteristics of the process of cultural representation of the other.

Thinking about curricular higher education internationalization requires, above all, that the non-hegemonic countries think taking into account the experience of their places, imbuing the critical epistemological, political and sociological concepts that direct to the implicit or explicit ideological character in the international curricular higher education propositions, almost always gestated outside the national womb. In addition, it is necessary to uncover the relationship of these proposals with the concepts of power and interest that are not always consistent with those of the non-hegemonic countries.

Moreira and Silva's propositions (2002) contribute to this thought, by claiming that, in this presupposition, the ideology has nothing to do with true or false ideas, but it is related to the divisions that organize the set of States and Nations, and with the power relations that underpin these divisions. Does this mean that, most of the time, the curricular content and its management tend, implicitly or explicitly, to express a social view which serves the interests of those that are in a position of advantage in the social organization, in this case planetary? Therefore, as argued by the authors we have cited, to think about the ideological nature of the curriculum is to think which relative advantages and power relations they justify and/or legitimate.

The curriculum as a field of production and symbolic and cultural creation, instance of creation of meaning, signification and subjects must be understood as a battlefield, with the confrontation between different and conflicting concepts of life and the social. Therefore, it can never be something we are given, but something for which we fight: there is not a more legitimate universal culture to be transmitted, but rather, knowledge that must be exchanged, negotiated. In this bias, the curriculum that would meet international ambitions, mainly those of the so-called universities of peripheral countries, would be the one configured as the field of production and cultural policy, in which the existing materials function as

raw material of creation, recreation, especially of contestation and transgression (MOREIRA; SILVA, 2002).

As Paulo Freire (1978) stated, education is fundamentally a political act. Thus, the curriculum, the backbone of education, is an expression of power. Despite its aspect worth of debate, what counts as valid knowledge expresses the interest of those that are in an advantageous position in the relations of power, leading to this question: “whose knowledge is better?” Thus, the curriculum, depending on the trend, may constitute individual and social identities that will help it to strengthen the existing relations of power, causing subjugated groups to remain subjugated (MOREIRA; SILVA, 2002).

The critical theory of the curriculum (Apple, 1994; Silva, 1995; Sacristán, 2002) emphasizes that the curriculum is never simply a neutral set of knowledge. It is always part of a selective tradition, a result of somebody’s selection, some group’s vision of what legitimate knowledge is. It is a product of tensions, conflicts and cultural, political and economic attributions that organize and disorganize a people. According to Silva (2004), the curriculum is one of the privileged places where knowledge and power are interwoven, representation and domain, discourse and regulation. It is also the curriculum that condenses the relations of power that are crucial for the process of social subjectivities formation. But it is a fight site as well. It is through these fissures that countries considered peripheral in the world of knowledge should infiltrate and expose their needs, proposals and counter-proposals, making them clear.

This paradigm of curriculum encourages us to think about projects and national and international curricular policies that counteract those that tend to reinforce the inequalities present in the planetary structure. As Bourdieu (1998) aptly asserts, “Transgressing... is a prerequisite for... advancing”. This means that it is not enough just to aim at the “tip of the iceberg”, forgetting what lies beneath and in the depths of the sea, and very specific seas. Prior to the curriculum, or rather, to its guise, it is primarily necessary to abandon the “third-world” fundamental view of overrating the “other”, instead of “us”, and accept proposals, most of the time uncritically.

In the Brazilian case, in the view expressed by Prudente (2012), it is equally fundamental to know and recognize that the worldview of the amalgam ibero-afro-Amerindian, sign of the Brazilianness of the Portuguese language, is not present in the relations of curricularity of the educational process. Commonly, this is ruled in the European universe, given the privilege attributed to axiology exogenous to our formative cultural dynamics. It is necessary to abandon a possible kind of pathology with schizophrenic nature coordinator of the national mentality, considering that Brazilians, with this, probably live the contradiction of having an Ibero-Afro-Amerindian body of Lusophone character, but a soul of perceptible European nuance. As aptly stated by Sacristán (2002), “it is necessary to think back on a balance between what is next to the subjects and what it is distant, but affects; between the own and the other which inevitably contaminates them” (p. 94).

It is worth considering, in line with Sacristán (2002), that curriculum is all real experience lived by the student in school situation. It is the sum of all kinds of knowledge and absences that the student experiences as a consequence of being educated” (p. 86). We must also point out that the curriculum internationalization, which in fact, corresponds to the desires of non-hegemonic countries, is one that will favor cultural enrichment, professional potentialities, empowerment of the person and his/her country, equality in the production and distribution of knowledge, etc. In the wake of this concept of curriculum, it is not possible to deny that we have complex structural curriculum challenges to be faced.

In the Brazilian case, some political measures have been taken, even though they are still in a documental level, they signal some mobilization so that higher education institutions compass the global appeal for the internationalization and, at the same time, give answers to the local needs and aspirations. Among them, I cite the proposals of Expansion, Excellence and Internationalization Program of the Federal Universities, proposed by the National Association of Directors of Higher Education Federal Institutions (ANDIFES), which aims to present guidelines for a new cycle to be experienced by the federal universities (ANDIFES, 2012).

The document, in the pursuit for excellence and internationalization of higher education, proposes the following actions:

- To adequate the university academically, in its qualitative and quantitative aspects, to the new demands, dynamics, scales and to the new roles and global contexts arising from the society of knowledge and, increasingly strengthened at the beginning of the century;
- To strategically train qualified workforce for the social and economic needs and with appropriate sustainability standard for this new cycle of growth and development which is currently expressed in the country and worldwide;
- To produce science, technology and innovation to enter the country, with sovereignty, in the new world order of knowledge;
- To produce and transmit knowledge that will promote equality, inclusion and assist in the formation of emancipated citizens and holders of ethical and human concepts.

Among the several guiding principles of actions, the document reveals the internationalization of the federal university and then shows some guidelines for the implementation of the proposal, especially: a) to expand the programs of student mobility; b) to expand programs for receiving foreign students and teachers; and c) to promote higher internationalization of the Brazilian research post-graduation (ANDIFES, 2012).

In relation to the curriculum, in the aspects of contents and disciplines, the document emphasizes the need for academic and curricular restructuring to provide greater student mobility, flexible career training, interdisciplinary and humanistic training and development of the critical thinking. It is designed to ensure that it can better interact in a world in which science knows no borders. Therefore, it must be able to dialogue and interact with counterparts in better quality in all the countries.

It is noteworthy that the document mentioned is not free from inaccuracies and superficialities when addressing the theme, specifically, in relation to internationalization of higher education. However, in

relation to this theme it is a great innovation. Because of this, one cannot dismiss its importance in facilitating discussions pertaining to the theme, recognizing the need for an education, at a higher level, which will give answers to the political moment, together with the needs of the new time. It is undeniable that the proposal will eventually raise important debates, which will certainly expand it.

### **Final considerations**

It is relevant to point out that none of the researches and theories presented, not even the arguments are direct contrary to internationalization of higher education. Since it is a historical phenomenon in progress: bar it, impossible; ignore it would be nonsense. In Sacristán's words (2002), education cannot escape this context and cannot avoid the dilemma of having to choose between localism resistance and the intelligent use of the new training possibilities.

In contrast, the argumentative discourses organized here indicate that the major challenges of Latin America, as well as the African continent, are operating policies and agreements aimed at effective exchanges, through the process of higher education internationalization. On the other hand, as it is also basic to better prepare our students to join in this process, through curriculum reformulation which develops emancipated citizens, holders of ethnic and humanitarian concepts, from local to global. In addition, it is equally essential to invest in the debate in an organized and systematized way, adopting critical attitudes not to continue navigating in this precarious inclusion as shown by academic researches and statistics. As Bourdieu would say (1998), we should avoid remaining excluded in the interior.

The current context, permeated by the globalizing capitalist consequences, tends to exacerbate the ethnocentrism, the individualism, the mercantile interest, profit, and the coldness of human relationships. This results in exclusionary and discriminatory attitudes. On the other hand, there are demands for those who are "of the other side of the river" too, and it has been required that socializing institutions, including

educational institutions, think of new social practice. The intention is to seek the development of basic positive social bonds among people and societies: affection, understanding and recognition of the other, respect, solidarity and intercommunication, linked to the positive vicious circle. It is, likewise, necessary to think of knowledge as something more than an instrument of access to the work market, attributing the value of collective good that must enter the trading circuit to it, aiming at the development of people and humanity, in order to draw a more caring and, consequently more egalitarian world (CASTILHO, 2011).

Seeking to base myself on the authors cited, I state that it is essential that higher education institutions, mainly those of the so-called third world, when establishing international partnerships and cooperation agreements of high education, preserve their autonomy and critical capacity, to avoid rushed adhesions to strange proposals to the purposes and local and specific interests, in order to define clearly, the reciprocity of benefits. The emergence of a counter power which paralyzes the overlapping of international policies created from the center to the center is necessary, that unbalance them, creating another balance based on exchanges relationships, between different, effectively. It is necessary to review our “third-world” position before positions and impositions of imperialism, of the ‘new’ colonialism position, marked by dependence. The arguments shown in this article join the voices of those who claim the non-permanence of some people or nations at the mercy of others in the scenario of academic training and political decisions.

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