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THE INVISIBLE THAT COMMUNICATES: A STUDY OF NONVERBAL LANGUAGE, POWER DEVICES AND SUBJECTIVATION IN THE CONTEXT OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

Laís do Nascimento
Psychology undergraduate student - Unifacef

Milena Moscardini Nabelice Guasti Lima
PhD student in Liguistics-Unifran Capes Scholarship

Abstract: The aim of this article is to analyze the non-verbal parameters evidenced in the school context, from an ethnographic perspective guided by school psychology and based on Foucauldian theory, seeking to (re)update and understand the demands in the educational environment. From a Foucauldian perspective, concepts such as biopower and disciplinary devices were used to analyze how institutional practices shape subjectivities in the school environment. The methodology adopted and applied was ethnographic research focusing on the interactions between teachers, students and the architecture of the school space in a public school located in Franca, São Paulo state. Direct observations were made in the ninth year of elementary school. Additional data was collected from interviews with teachers and analysis of institutional documents. By analyzing the historical development of formal education and the influences of psychology, we sought to understand the social and cultural aspects that shape the way society works. Michel Foucault analyses the school as an institution that exercises disciplinary power through surveillance, standardization and control of conduct. For him, practices such as separation into classes, strict timetables and punishments promote the docility of bodies, placing the school in the same disciplinary context as prisons and hospitals. School not only transmits knowledge, but also reproduces hierarchies and behavioral patterns that shape subjectivities useful to society. Thus, from the earliest years, pedagogical mechanisms such as constant surveillance and assessments consolidate disciplinary power, structuring both the behavior and values of individuals. For Foucault, the school is a microcosm of society, where discipline and the power exercised over bodies are manifested in the conduct of teachers and staff, architecture, teaching methodologies, routines and other pillars that support the material and subjective dimensions of educational institutions. In Brazil and in other global contexts, advances in knowledge about education and legislative developments have brought significant achievements, but have also exposed remnants of periods marked by oppressive practices. The expected results seek to contribute to a broader understanding of educational practices, promoting reflections on the relations of power and subjectivation in the school environment, and providing subsidies for interventions aimed at improving pedagogical conditions.

Keywords: Biopower. Discipline. Ethnography. Foucauldian. Hierarchy. Surveillance.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this article is to analyze the non-verbal parameters observed in the school context from an ethnographic perspective guided by school psychology, based on Michel Foucault's concepts of discipline and power. The aim is to (re)update the perspective of school psychology by exploring how the historical, social and cultural aspects of formal education are reflected in the daily dynamics of educational institutions, highlighting the role of architecture, pedagogical practices, routines and interpersonal relationships in reproducing society's operating logics.

Since ancient times, educational models have aimed to meet the specific demands of societies, such as the training of citizens in ancient Greece, where philosophers such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle profoundly influenced pedagogical thinking with ideas about the importance of questioning and ethics in human development. Plato, in particular, proposed an education aimed at the moral and intellectual development of the individual, while Aristotle emphasized training aimed at the realization of human potential, thus influencing the concept of education as preparation for citizenship (Chauí, 2003).

In the medieval period, education came to be strongly influenced by the Catholic Church, with the creation of the first universities in Europe and a curriculum that integrated theological and philosophical studies. In this context, learning was geared towards religious knowledge and mastery of the sacred arts (Costa, 1995). With the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, new models of education emerged that reflected an appreciation of the individual and of scientific knowledge. John Locke, for example, proposed a pedagogy based on the idea of the "blank slate", where the individual is born without prior knowledge and education is the way to form skills and morality. This view opened up space for more secular and rational approaches to education, preparing the ground for the emergence of more structured and systematic pedagogical models. (Costa, 1995)

In the 19th century, with the Industrial Revolution, education came to be seen as an essential tool for economic development and the training of skilled workers. The educational models of this period were strongly influenced by positivism, such as that of Auguste Comte, who advocated an education that valued scientific knowledge and practical skills to meet the demands of industrial society.(Costa, 1995)

> The classical school, in the wake of the consolidation of the Industrial Revolution at the beginning of this century, was represented by three movements: Taylor's scientific administration, Fayol's general administration and Weber's bureaucratic administration, which originated from a dysfunction of rationality. These movements have kept their principles present in current administrative practices (Hora, 1998, p. 36).

It was in this context that the first public schools emerged, with curricula aimed at teaching technical and scientific subjects. Influenced by positivism, Edward Thorndike, an American psychologist, developed studies on mechanical learning and the laws of stimulus and response, which influenced educational practices in a model of direct instruction and repetition (Moreira, 2022).

> Through the division of knowledge into specialties and the bureaucratic hierarchization of specialists, our societies have produced incompetence everywhere. Thus, for example, certain trends in the social sciences have managed to convince the family that it should be and should function in a certain way (be "authentic", living out all the feelings of love and hatred that exist within it without fear), but that it is not competent to understand and resolve what happens within it. Understanding and resolving conflicts must come from outside, through the intervention of specialists. The family can be the subject of its feelings, but it must be the object of explanation by those with knowledge (Chauí, 2014, p. 114).

Michel Foucault's perspective on the structure of the school emphasizes its role as an institution deeply linked to disciplinary power. For him, the school is not only a space for transmitting knowledge, but also a mechanism that organizes and regulates bodies, creating subjectivities that are useful to society. Its physical and functional structure, which includes divided classrooms, rigid timetables, hierarchies between students and teachers and constant evaluation mechanisms, is designed to enable surveillance and control. These elements create a logic of normalization, where individuals are classified, measured and shaped according to pre-established standards. Foucault points out that the school operates as a microcosm of the power relations present in other disciplinary institutions, such as prisons and hospitals, consolidating surveillance practices that discipline both bodies and minds (Foucault, 1979).

With the advent of psychology and the emergence of theories that consider cognitive and social development, educational models began to diversify in the 20th century. Jean Piaget, a Swiss psychologist, made an important contribution by emphasizing that cog-

nitive development occurs in stages and that education should respect these phases, promoting activities that encourage exploration and discovery. (Moreira, 2022)

Lev Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist, highlighted the importance of social interaction for learning, proposing the idea of the "zone of proximal development," in which learning takes place with the help of a mediator, such as the teacher, who helps the student advance in their knowledge. These theories influenced the emergence of constructivist and social-interactionist educational models, which are still widely used today (Moreira, 2022). Meanwhile, in the United States, John Dewey proposed a progressive education based on experience and problem-solving. Dewey argued that schools should prepare students for democratic life by encouraging collaboration, creativity and critical reflection (Moreira, 2022).

In Brazil, education has undergone significant changes, especially since the 1930s, with the creation of the New School, inspired by Dewey's ideas and the principles of the progressive movement. Educators such as Anísio Teixeira and Fernando de Azevedo sought to implement an educational model that broke with traditional teaching and promoted the active participation of students in the learning process.

> An alienated society is not aware of its own existence. An alienated professional is an inauthentic being. Their thinking is not committed to themselves, they are not responsible. The alienated person does not look at reality with personal criteria, but with someone else's eyes. That's why they live an imaginary reality and not their own objective reality. [...] Alienated society does not know itself; it is immature, has exemplary behavior, tries to know reality through foreign diagnoses. The leaders solve problems with formulas that have worked abroad. They import problems and solutions. They don't know the native reality (Freire, 2023, p. 45-46).

This model also inspired the creation of educational policies and the valorization of public education. Paulo Freire, another important Brazilian educator, proposed a critical and emancipatory educational model, focusing on dialogue and social awareness. His pedagogy of the oppressed argues that education should enable students to question reality and actively participate in social transformation. (Moreira, 2022)

Bell Hooks, intellectual, feminist and activist, has offered transformative contributions on education, especially in *"Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom"*. Inspired by Paulo Freire, she advocates an emancipatory education that promotes critical thinking and challenges oppressions. Hooks proposes teaching based on dialogue (Hooks, 1994, p 44), challenging conventional power hierarchies (Hooks, 1994, p 77), rejecting authoritarian and traditional methods, prioritizing practices that integrate students' voices (Hooks, 1994, p 47). For Bell, the goal of education is the practice of freedom (Hooks, 1994, p 22). Education often becomes the ground where we begin to build dreams of freedom (Hooks, 1994, p 55), where we learn to fight for justice and against various forms of domination. For her, the classroom must question racism, sexism and classism, preparing individuals to act ethically. Hooks values integral education, considering emotions and subjectivities, and seeks inclusive and fair spaces. Education is never neutral, requiring ethics and continuous transformation; true education only happens when authoritarianism is rejected and knowledge is embraced as a collective practice (Hooks, 1994, p 135).

> The insistence on removing our personal experiences from the classroom perpetuates forms of domination that prevent us from transforming the learning space into a place of fulfillment and freedom.(Hooks, 1994, p. 87)

In this context, school psychology plays an important role in adapting these models, helping to understand the impact of technologies on students' emotional and cognitive development. In addition, psychology helps to identify the new skills needed for learning in the 21st century, such as digital literacy, collaboration in virtual environments and critical thinking. Psychology contributes to the development of intervention programs that take into account the emotional, social and cultural factors that influence learning, as proposed by authors such as Howard Gardner, with his theory of multiple intelligences, and Carol Dweck, with the concept of growth mindset. These models show that, rather than homogeneous teaching, education must respect diversity and promote the integral development of each student.

> Humanist philosophy sees the learner primarily as a person. The important thing is the person's self-realization, their personal growth. The learner is seen as a whole - feelings, thoughts and actions, not just as an intellect. In this approach, learning is not limited to an increase in knowledge: it is penetrating, visceral, and influences the individual's choices and attitudes. Thoughts, feelings and actions are integrated, for better or worse. It makes no sense to talk about behavior or cognition without considering the affective domain, the feelings of the learner: he or she is a person, and people think, feel and do things integrally (Moreira, 2022, p. 5) The humanistic approach, on the other hand, primarily considers the student as a person. They are essentially free to make choices in every situation. The important thing is the person's self-realization. Teaching should facilitate self-realization and personal growth (Moreira, 2022, p. 114).

These transformations reflect the evolution of educational models throughout history and the constant need to adapt to social, economic and technological changes. The integration of school psychology and educational practices allows for a more inclusive and effective approach, capable of training critical citizens who are prepared to face contemporary challenges. One of the main functions of the school psychologist is to promote the mental health and well-being of students, addressing issues such as anxiety, bullying and adaptation difficulties. Their work is essential for creating preventive and interventional programs in partnership with teachers and school managers, with the aim of minimizing negative impacts on learning and promoting a welcoming environment.

In Brazil, the presence of school psychologists faced resistance until the enactment of Law 13.935/2019, which made their inclusion in public schools mandatory. Before that, limited public policies neglected the role of this professional in comprehensive education. The law represents a step forward in understanding education as a process that integrates academic learning and emotional formation, although its implementation still faces challenges related to infrastructure and budgets. Lack of resources in schools, high demand for cases and lack of adequate spaces make preventive interventions difficult. In addition, there is a lack of understanding of the role of the psychologist, who is often limited to solving specific problems, rather than taking a systemic and holistic approach. However, as proposed in the Technical References for the Psychologist's Work in Basic Education, 2013, the psychologist's work should be comprehensive, working in collaboration with the entire school community to promote a healthy and inclusive learning environment, where all aspects of the student's development are considered.

The multidisciplinary approach, which involves the psychologist working in partnership with teachers, social workers and other professionals, is fundamental for a broader and more effective approach at school. This collaboration allows psychologists to develop integrated projects that address issues such as inclusion,

diversity, socio-emotional development and tackling issues such as prejudice and exclusion. However, this practice is still limited by the lack of policies that encourage the integration of the school's various professionals in collective projects and by the lack of time and resources to enable this joint work. Another important aspect of the school psychologist's work is mediating conflicts, which can arise between students, between teachers and students, or even between families and the school.

Mediation aims not only to resolve the conflict, but also to provide an opportunity for everyone involved to develop communication, empathy and problem-solving skills, which are fundamental for social interaction. Through mediation, the psychologist contributes to building a culture of respect and cooperation in the school, creating a more welcoming environment conducive to learning. The school psychologist plays a crucial role in professional and vocational guidance, helping students to explore interests, aptitudes and plan their paths, promoting self-knowledge and reducing anxiety during the school transition. In addition, they contribute to the training of teachers and staff, offering workshops that improve skills in dealing with emotional and behavioral issues and conflicts in the school environment.

> The need to promote links between the school and the community it serves is fundamental. The understanding that the school is not a body isolated from the global context of which it is a part, must be present in the organizational process so that the actions to be developed are geared towards community needs. As well as being required to have technical-scientific knowledge and a critical understanding of educational policy and the workings of society at the service of the school community, it is also necessary to be alert to the educational dimension of grassroots organizations in their relations with the school, through knowledge of the political movements of the community in which it is inserted. In this sense, it is necessary to understand the conceptions of community and the relationships that the school establishes with its immediate social context (Hora, 1998, p.59).

This paper is the result of an ethnographic investigation at the EE. Prof. Carmem Munhoz Coelho; a state-run, full-time institution, with elementary and high school stages; in the city of Franca, São Paulo in the year 2024. Considering the importance of the geographic, social and temporal clipping for subsequent developments.

METHODOLOGY

Within this multidisciplinary approach, ethnographic methodology has stood out as a valuable tool for investigating school reality in an in-depth and contextualized way. Through ethnography, the school psychologist can insert him/herself into the educational environment and observe the daily lives of students, teachers and other school agents, capturing nuances of the interactions and symbolic exchanges that take place in the educational space.

> It is a deeper level of explanation of school practice, which takes into account its totality and multiple determinations, which can be done neither abstractly nor in isolation, but on the basis of everyday school situations, in a constant movement from practice to theory and back to practice in order to transform it (De André, 2012, p. 44).

This methodology allows for a detailed understanding of the social and cultural processes involved in education, going beyond quantitative analysis and offering a richer and more subjective view of the school experience. By using ethnography, the school psychologist is able to develop interventions that are more in tune with the reality of the students and the specificities of the school environment, promoting actions that take into account the complex cultural and social influences on students' development.

The ethnographic methodology for investigating the school environment, as discussed in the book Ethnography of School Practice by Marli André, seeks to capture the complexity and richness of the interactions and practices that make up the daily life of a school. This approach proposes an in-depth immersion of the researcher in the school environment, where he or she experiences daily life alongside the students, teachers, coordinators and other professionals involved.

> In order to learn about the dynamism of school life, it is necessary to study it based on at least three dimensions: the institutional or organizational, the instructional or pedagogical and the sociopolitical/cultural. These three dimensions cannot be considered in isolation, but as a unit of multiple interrelationships, through which we seek to understand the social dynamics expressed in everyday school life. (De André, 2012, p. 42).

This immersion allows the researcher to build a holistic and detailed view of school dynamics, understanding them not just as isolated educational processes, but as complex social practices rooted in values, beliefs and norms shared by members of the school community.

> Empathy has long been pointed out as an essential characteristic of fieldwork researchers. It is one of the basic principles of phenomenology, which is at the root of qualitative studies. According to this principle, the observer must try to put themselves in the other person's shoes in order to better understand what they are saying, feeling and thinking. It is therefore an important component in situations where the researcher interacts with subjects in order to obtain the data that will allow them to better understand the phenomenon under study (De André, 2012, p. 62).

A fundamental aspect of ethnographic methodology is participant observation, in which the researcher takes an active stance, observing and often integrating themselves into the school's activities and routines. By taking part in the day-to-day running of the school, the researcher is able to capture details of the interactions, conflicts and coexistence strategies between school actors, revealing aspects that are unlikely to emerge from structured interviews or questionnaires. This participant observation allows us to grasp informal practices, daily rituals and implicit norms that guide the behavior of those involved.

> The process of investigating the classroom will basically involve direct observation of teaching and learning situations, as well as analysis of the teaching materials used by the teacher and those produced by the student. Another fundamental dimension in the study of everyday school issues is the socio-political/cultural dimension, which refers to the broader socio-political and cultural context, i.e. the macro-structural determinants of educational practice. This sphere of analysis includes a reflection on the historical moment, the political and social forces and the conceptions and values present in society (De André, 2012, p. 44).

The methodology, therefore, is not restricted to an objective survey of information, but involves engaging with the lived experiences of the participants, promoting a closer understanding of reality and the meanings attributed by the school actors themselves to their practices.

ANALYSES

The classical era saw the discovery of the body as an object and target of power, marking the beginning of disciplinary practices that shaped control over individuals. The body began to be observed, manipulated and trained, becoming a central element in the exercise of power, with the aim of maximizing its usefulness and docility. Institutions such as schools also incorporated these techniques, transforming the body into a component regulated by social norms and the demands of disciplinary power (Foucault, 1975).

But as a multiplicity of often minimal processes, from different origins, from sparse locations, which are remembered, repeated or imitated, which build on each other, distinguish themselves according to their field of application, converge and gradually outline the facade of a general method. We find them at work in schools, very early on; later in elementary school (Foucault, 1975, p. 136).

The school that opened its doors for information gathering was a full-time state school located in the city of Franca. The school offers breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. The institution was receptive, but with some restrictions: only one classroom was to be visited; this was accepted. The principal and vice-principal didn't get in touch, and the school employee was the one who pointed out the classroom: Ninth Grade A (9A).

The organization of a serial space was one of the major technical changes in elementary education. It made it possible to overcome the traditional system (one student working for a few minutes with the teacher, while the confused group of those waiting is left idle and unattended). Determining individual places made it possible to control everyone and work simultaneously. It organized a new economy of learning time. It made the school space function as a machine for teaching, but also for monitoring, hierarchizing and rewarding (Foucault, 1975, p. 144).

Discipline, according to Foucault (1975), depends on the art of distribution, which organizes individuals in space to optimize control and efficiency. Elements such as enclosure delimit specific spaces, while organization into fixed places and ranks establishes hierarchies and functions. This distribution not only allows for continuous surveillance, but also facilitates the standardization of behaviour, integrating individuals into a disciplinary system that regulates both bodies and actions. The establishment of series prescribes each person at their level, in their position, in a differentiating role. In the art of distribution,

discipline first distributes individuals in space by surrounding them. Colleges function within this logic of insidious and efficient imprisonment. Combined with this, the control of activities and the timetable is essential. Time penetrates the body, and with it all the minute controls of power.

The principle of "enclosure" is neither constant, nor indispensable, nor sufficient in disciplinary apparatuses. The latter work space in a much more flexible and finer way. And first of all according to the principle of immediate localization or gridding. Each individual in their place; and in each place, an individual. Avoid group distributions; break down collective deployments; analyze confusing, massive or elusive pluralities, Disciplinary space tends to be divided into as many parts as there are bodies or elements to divide. The effects of indecisive divisions must be annulled. The uncontrolled disappearance of individuals, their diffuse circulation, their unusable and dangerous coagulation; a tactic of anti-desertion, anti-vacation, anti-agglomeration. It is important to establish presences and absences, to know where and how to find individuals, to establish useful communications, to interrupt others, to be able to monitor each person's behavior at every moment, to evaluate it, to sanction it, to measure qualities or merits. A procedure, therefore, for knowing, mastering and using. Discipline organizes an analytical space (Foucault, 1975, p. 140).

Ninth grade A was a small class with around 20 students. Apparently, the class has a lower social level, but it is not a school on the outskirts, even though it is a central school, and was considered the second best in the city and among the 100 best in the state of São Paulo. The desks lined up in a row had a fixed place assigned to each student on the "Room Map", which had to be respected at all times. There were no inclusion students in the classroom.

> By organizing "cells", "places" and "rows", disciplines create complex spaces: architectural, functional and hierarchical at the same time. They are spaces that fix and allow circulation; they cut out individual segments and establish operative links; they mark places and indicate values; they guarantee the obedience of individuals, but also a better economy of time and gestures. [...] it is both a technique of power and a process of knowledge. It is a question of organizing the multiple, of obtaining an instrument for traversing and dominating it; it is a question of imposing an "order" on it. (Foucault, 1975, p. 145).

> This closed space, cut out, watched at every point, where individuals are inserted in a fixed place, where the slightest movements are controlled, where all events are recorded, where an uninterrupted work of writing connects the center and the periphery, where power is exercised without division, according to a continuous hierarchical figure, where each individual is constantly located, examined and distributed (Foucault, 1975, p. 192).

You can see the teacher's strategy of being the student's friend, avoiding hierarchical confrontations whenever possible. She is rigid at times, but at others she gives way to relaxation. Discipline, as analyzed by Foucault (1975), manufactures "docile" bodies, at once submissive and trained, shaped for maximum usefulness and efficiency. Through practices such as punishments and rewards, it regulates behaviour and modulates actions, ensuring that norms are internalized. In the school corridors and even inside the classroom, we can find manifestations of a traditional school, where discipline is overvalued, or perhaps the only way to get students to stay in class. Wearing a uniform is compulsory, but if a student is not wearing one, the staff will contact those responsible so that the uniform can be brought in as soon as possible. This process is sustained by the normalizing sanction, which not only corrects deviations, but establishes standards that guide individuals, integrating them in a functional way with economic and social demands.

> At the heart of all disciplinary systems is a small penal mechanism. It benefits from a kind of privilege of justice, with its own laws, its specified offenses, its particular forms of sanction, its instances of judgment. The disciplines establish an "infrapenality"; they square off a space left empty by the laws; they qualify and repress a set of behaviors that escaped the great systems of punishment due to their relative indifference. [...] In the workshop, at school, in the army, a whole micropenality of time (delays, absences, interruptions to tasks), of activity (inattention, negligence, lack of zeal), of manners (rudeness, disobedience), of speech (chatter, insolence), of the body ("incorrect" attitudes, non-conforming gestures, dirt), of sexuality (immodesty, indecency) functions as a repressor. At the same time, a whole series of subtle processes are used as punishment, ranging from mild physical punishment to minor deprivations and humiliations. At the same time, it is a question of making the smallest fractions of conduct punishable, and of giving a punitive function to the apparently indifferent elements of the disciplinary apparatus: taking it to the extreme, everything can be used to punish the smallest thing; every individual is trapped in a punishable-punishing universality (Foucault, 1975, p. 175).

Training and docilization reflect the ability of disciplinary power to exercise absolute control over the body of individuals, transforming it into a manipulable, useful and intelligible instrument. This policy of coercion seeks to subject the body to strict control, imposing limitations, prohibitions and obligations through constant and uninterrupted coercion. The body, converted into an object of use and improvement, becomes docile even in the smallest operations, while showing the functioning of an organism subjected to conditions of surveillance and discipline. Disciplinary power not only organizes the body into an analytical and "cellular" individuality, adjusted to economic and social demands, but also recognizes and acts on its "organic" dimension, integrating

natural aspects into the functioning of broader control systems (Foucault, 1975).

> Disciplinary punishment has the function of reducing deviations. It must therefore be essentially corrective. Alongside punishments copied from the judicial model (fines, flogging, dungeons), disciplinary systems favor punishments that are of the order of exercise - intensified, multiplied, often repeated learning (Foucault, 1975, p. 176).

In the school corridors and even inside the classroom, we can find signs of a traditional school, where discipline is overrated, or perhaps the only way to get students to stay in class. Wearing a uniform is compulsory, but if a student isn't wearing one, the staff will contact those responsible so that the uniform can be brought in as soon as possible.

> In discipline, punishment is just one element of a dual system: gratification-sanction. And it is this system that becomes operative in the process of training and correction. The teacher must avoid using punishments as much as possible; on the contrary, he must try to make rewards more frequent than punishments, the lazy being more incited by the desire to be rewarded like the diligent than by the fear of punishment; for this reason it will be very profitable, when the teacher is obliged to use punishment, for him to win the child's heart, if he can, before applying the punishment". (Foucault, 1975, p. 177).

The history teacher, who was helpful and had been in the profession for over 20 years, tried to understand and collaborate with the research. Her teaching was not robotized; she was very committed and used participatory methodologies. She was always attentive, listened to the students' stories and questions and acted out what it would feel like to be under censorship with a piece of tape over her mouth and eyes. She used a number of playful resources to help the students understand the theme of the Military Dictatorship - songs, mind maps, videos - which referred to the theme and the historical period. The class was generally attentive to everything the teacher said. According to Prensky (2010), technology does not replace the role of the teacher in the classroom, but rather helps to guide and present the content in a different way, such as using images or videos.

The lesson was marked by creativity and a different didactic approach. The teacher says that this way of teaching is her attitude towards the subject, because the state has strict learning guidelines and most teachers just do what the material asks them to do in the classroom, using standard digital material. She personally chooses to contextualize the themes, making theoretical references, with a stance of resistance to standardized teaching. Traditional school methods tend to form a shapeless mass, where the automatism of habits creates perpetually available individuals, similar to "machine men". This approach reduces the soul to a materialistic perspective, prioritizing conformity and control over subjectivity. The aim is not just to increase skills or deepen subjection, but to establish a relationship in which the same disciplinary process makes the individual more obedient and, at the same time, more useful within the social system.

> The training of schoolchildren should be done in the same way: few words, no explanations, at most a total silence that would only be interrupted by signals - bells, clapping, gestures, a simple look from the teacher, or even that little wooden device that the Brothers of the Christian Schools used; it was called par excellence the "Signal" and was supposed to signify in its machine-like brevity both the technique of command and the morality of obedience. [...] The pupil must learn the code of signals and automatically respond to each one. The mutual school will take this control of behavior even further by the system of signals to which one must react immediately. Even verbal orders must function as signals (Foucault, 1975, p. 163 and 164).

When teaching is reduced to training, it ceases to be a means of critical liberation and becomes a tool for functional training. This approach prioritizes the reproduction of habits, technical skills and the docility of bodies, neglecting the formation of subjects capable of questioning and transforming reality. From this perspective, learning is limited to adapting to institutional norms and requirements, aligning itself with economic and social interests that maintain power relations. Instead of promoting autonomy and critical thinking, teaching as training reinforces passivity and conformity, preventing the full development of individuals capable of resisting and creating new horizons of meaning.

> Surveillance becomes a decisive economic operator, insofar as it is both an internal part of the production apparatus and a specific cog in disciplinary power. The same movement took place in the reorganization of elementary education; surveillance was specified and integrated into the pedagogical relationship. The development of parochial schools, the increase in their number of pupils, the lack of methods to simultaneously regulate the activity of an entire class, the disorder and confusion that resulted from this made it necessary to organize controls (Foucault, 1975, p. 172).

The professional understands that the methodology of her way of teaching stems from the demands of a generation that values a more horizontal, participatory relationship and more dynamic teaching, as well as being completely saturated with technology in all environments. The students, for the most part, were respectful of the teacher, even with little side conversations. Inspection works at all times. The eye is everywhere.

> Hierarchical surveillance: The exercise of discipline presupposes a device that compels through the play of the gaze: an apparatus where the techniques that allow us to see induce effects of power, and where, in return, the means of coercion make clearly visible those on whom they are applied (Foucault, 1975, p. 168).

From the perspective of school psychology, this stance not only favors student engagement, but also contributes to the development of critical and reflective skills, in line with pedagogical practices that promote subjectivation and student protagonism. This initiative, however, is seen as an exception, as many educators remain restricted to curricular impositions, which highlights the challenges of balancing teacher autonomy and centralized educational policies. Another aspect to be observed is the evaluation model of traditional schools, which also raises alarm bells from a Foucauldian perspective.

> The exam combines the techniques of the hierarchy that watches and those of the sanction that normalizes. It is a normalizing control, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, classify and punish. It establishes a visibility over individuals through which they are differentiated and sanctioned. This is why, in all disciplinary devices, the exam is highly ritualized. It brings together the ceremony of power and the form of experience, the demonstration of force and the establishment of truth. (Foucault, 1975, p. 181)

The traditional architecture of the school, characterized by bars on all the windows, directly refers to the Foucauldian concept of the discipline of bodies and Panoptism. This model of surveillance, as described by Foucault and expanded by Castro (2024), does not focus on relations of sovereignty, but on relations of discipline, concentrating on the distribution of individuals in a grid space and the formation of a data collection system.

> A whole problematic then develops: that of an architecture that is no longer made simply to be seen (the grandeur of palaces), or to monitor the outside space (the geometry of fortresses), but to allow an interior control, articulated and detailed - to make those who are in it visible; more generally, that of an architecture that would be an operator for the transformation of individuals: to act on those it houses, to give control over their behavior, to bring the effects of power back to them, to

offer them knowledge, to modify them. [...] Just as the school-building must be an operator for training (Foucault, 1975, p. 169).

In panopticism, surveillance is exercised over individuals not so much in terms of what they do, but in terms of what they are and what they can do, and everything can be seen at all times. The Panopticon, as described by Foucault, is compared to a real zoo, where man replaces the animal, individual distribution gives way to the specific group, and the king gives way to the machinery of a stealthy and impersonal power.

Functioning as an experimentation machine, the Panopticon is designed to modify behaviour, train or retrain individuals, making it a powerful instrument of control and standardization. It also operates as a laboratory of power, whose effectiveness and penetration into human behavior is amplified by the mechanisms of observation. This increase in knowledge allows power to discover and normalize new objects of knowledge in all the areas in which it operates, expanding and reinforcing its reach.

Activity control (strict start and finish times) is indispensable for discipline. The principle of no idleness: it is forbidden to waste time (Foucault, 1975). There are strict entry and exit times, and the use of cell phones in the classroom is not allowed under any circumstances. The tests follow the traditional assessment model with mock tests and exams. The two fans in the classroom are noisy, forcing the teacher to speak louder. The demonstration of this rigidity in timetables, together with the ban on cell phones in the classroom, shows the application of disciplinary devices which, when used, seek to ensure control over students' bodies and attention. The physical environment is also a hindrance to learning, requiring teachers to try to communicate in the classroom. The break takes place between classes and lasts 15 minutes. The environment is very airy, with good ventilation and light.

There is plenty of space in the playground. The students sit in small "tribes", where communication occurs not only through verbal language, but also through gestures, postures and the use of cell phones. The tribes suggest a discursive dynamic of social belonging and identity construction.

There was only one wheelchair user in the school environment, which may suggest that there is a stance of exclusion or false social inclusion, and that the school is not fully prepared to interact with bodies that are outside the norm, the marginalized who don't fit the standards set by the social norm, operating physical and social barriers. If wheelchair users are not integrated into the "tribes" mentioned or into classroom discourse, this may suggest that they occupy a peripheral space in social and educational interactions. This is a major challenge for people with disabilities in terms of social participation, as the absence of other students with disabilities can also reflect exclusionary practices in enrolment processes, inadequate transport or a lack of specialized support, indicating that there are more external factors contributing to this reality.

CONCLUSION

The article sets out to analyze non-verbal parameters in the school environment from an ethnographic approach and based on Foucauldian concepts of discipline and power. It highlights how the architecture, pedagogical practices, routines and interpersonal relationships of educational institutions reflect the logics of social control and normalization. The history of education demonstrates a continuous process of adaptation to cultural, social and economic changes, from antiquity to modernity, showing transformations in curricula and teaching methods. Models such as Locke's "clean slate" and Dewey's progressive proposals have shaped contemporary teaching principles, incorporating democratic and rational values.

School psychology and educators such as Paulo Freire and Bell Hooks have brought approaches centered on the individual, defending inclusive practices that favor critical thinking and the fight against inequalities. In Brazil, the inclusion of school psychologists was formalized by Law 13.935/2019, reinforcing the importance of addressing socio-emotional aspects in learning. However, implementation faces challenges related to infrastructure and multidisciplinary integration. The advances indicate the need to articulate formal education and community context, promoting a school environment that respects diversity and fosters critical and socially engaged citizens.

The ethnographic methodology stands out as an important tool in investigating the school environment, as it allows for deep and contextualized immersion in everyday educational life. Through participant observation, the school psychologist can understand the social, cultural and pedagogical dynamics, taking into account the totality of school practices, their multiple interactions and influences. This approach is not limited to the analysis of quantitative data, but seeks to understand the meanings attributed by the participants, considering the organizational, pedagogical and socio-political/cultural dimensions of the school. The method facilitates the construction of interventions that are more attuned to the reality of the students and the school environment, promoting a more holistic and complex understanding of educational relations.

Discipline in the school context in the light of Foucault's ideas, highlighting how power is exercised over the bodies and behaviors of individuals. In the classical era, the body began to be seen as a target for control, either through techniques aimed at its obedience, or through the organization of spaces and times in order to shape it efficiently. The school emerges as a crucial institution in the application of these techniques, transforming the bodies of students into disciplined and docile objects by controlling surveillance and distribution in space.

The organization of schools, according to Foucault, implies the creation of a series of procedures aimed at efficiently controlling students by occupying specific spaces. This control not only physically organizes individuals in predetermined locations, but also distributes them in hierarchical systems, allowing them to be monitored, evaluated and punished according to pre-established norms. Surveillance is applied ruthlessly, trying to eliminate confusion and idleness, behaviours that are standardized.

In the specific case of the Franca State Comprehensive School, we observed an institution that imposes disciplinary practices by regulating space and behavior. The desks lined up in rows with fixed places are designed to create a functional order, allowing each student to have their performance monitored and judged. The school environment is carefully designed to ensure control, and the architecture itself is a tool of discipline.

The function of discipline is not only to control, but also to correct deviations through punishments, which can be physical or psychological, and rewards. This relationship is central to the education system, with the aim of transforming students into obedient and functional individuals within the social system. The uniform requirement and the penalties for not wearing it are examples of this sanction, which seeks to ensure conformity. Discipline results in a normalization of bodies, subtracting the ability to resist and question.

However, the history teacher's analysis reveals a different stance within the traditional school. She seeks to offer a participatory and creative approach, using playful and multidimensional resources to promote learning, contextualizing the content and stimulating

critical reflection. This methodology is opposed to the technical approach that simplifies teaching to a mere repetition of skills. The teacher positions herself as a resistance to standardized teaching and rigid guidelines, proposing a more horizontal relationship focused on the role of the students.

Finally, the space of the school, reflecting the Foucauldian concept of "Panoptism", allows constant control over the students. Surveillance takes place in a subtle way, through the environment and the physical structure, which impose limits on the forms of interaction and behavior of the students. At the same time, the analysis highlights the exclusion of students with disabilities, revealing how the school structure is not always inclusive or accessible, reflecting practices of marginalization that still persist in society. Discipline and control, applied disproportionately and impersonally, function as forms of social control that limit students' freedom and critical potential.

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SÓ PQ EU SOU SINDICALISTA

ATENÇÃO ALUNOS!

PARAR NESTE LOCAL PARA CONVERSAR APENAS O NECESSÁRIO.

OBRIGADA.

A DIREÇÃO

REGRAS MÍNIMAS	NÃO TEM NEGOCIAÇÃO
1. Não conversar durante as explicações.	2. Realizar as tarefas individuais em silêncio e com dedicação.
3. Canetão na lousa, caneta no caderno. Caderno organizado.	4. Manter a sala limpa e organizada. Mapa de Sala SEMPRE.
5. Celular é guardado. Não é na mesa. É guardado.	6. Respeito com os colegas. Postura na sala.

7. Todos os lugares têm regras. O uso do uniforme é obrigatório.