

ARTICLE

CRITICAL INTERCULTURAL DIDACTICS: REFLECTIONS BASED ON TEACHING PLANS¹

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ABSTRACT: This article aims to analyze whether and how the perspective of interculturality is present in the teaching plans of the didactic component in the Bachelor's Degree in Pedagogy courses of some higher education institutions in the Brazilian Northeast; to identify how interculturality is present in the objectives and programmatic contents of these same plans. Document analysis was used as a research methodology, reaching the following results: both in the objectives and in the contents, the aforementioned perspective was not shown to be recurrent. It is emphasized that the relations between didactics and interculturality are a recent construction and are still in a phase of internalization/resignification in teaching thought/actions. There is a need for its implementation, fostering a different interpretation of historical dynamics and reality.

Keywords: Critical didactics, Interculturality, Teaching plans.

A DIDÁTICA CRÍTICA INTERCULTURAL: REFLEXÕES A PARTIR DOS PLANOS DE ENSINO

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RESUMO: Este artigo tem como objetivo analisar se e como a questão da interculturalidade, enquanto perspectiva decolonial, está presente nos planos de ensino do componente didática nos cursos de Pedagogia de instituições de ensino superior do Nordeste brasileiro, considerando os elementos estruturantes: objetivos e conteúdos. Utilizou-se a análise documental como metodologia de pesquisa chegando aos seguintes resultados: tanto nos objetivos como nos conteúdos, a referida perspectiva não se mostrou de forma recorrente. Ressalta-se que as relações da Didática com a interculturalidade são uma construção recente e ainda se encontram numa fase de internalização/ressignificação em pensamento/ações do ensinar. Há necessidade de sua implementação fomentando uma leitura outra dos dinamismos históricos e da realidade.

Palavras-chave: Didática crítica, Interculturalidade, Planos de ensino.

ENSEÑANZA INTERCULTURAL CRÍTICA: REFLEXIONES DESDE LOS PLANES DOCENTES

RESUMEN: Este artículo tiene como objetivo analizar si y cómo la perspectiva de la interculturalidad está presente en los planes de enseñanza del componente Didáctica de las carreras de Licenciatura en Pedagogía en algunas instituciones de educación superior del Nordeste brasileño; identificar cómo la interculturalidad está presente en los objetivos y contenidos programáticos de estos mismos planes. Se utilizó el análisis documental como metodología de investigación, llegando a los siguientes resultados: tanto en términos de objetivos como de contenido, la perspectiva antes mencionada no apareció de manera recurrente. Es de destacar que las relaciones entre Didáctica e interculturalidad son una construcción reciente y aún se encuentran en una fase de internalización/resignificación en el pensamiento/acciones docentes. Es necesario que su implementación fomente una lectura diferente de los dinamismos históricos y de la realidad.

Palabras clave: Didáctica crítica, Interculturalidad, Planes docentes.

INTRODUCTION

Didactics is a field of pedagogy that focuses on teaching as its object of study, showing its dynamism through its development, including mapping, analysis, interpretation, debate, and research. It represents a continual process of self-creation and re-creation. This perspective is valid when we perceive teaching, first as a human activity influenced by diverse elements and shaped by subjective, economic, social, cultural, and political forces.

In this research, within the field of didactics in permanent (de)construction, we are interested in reflecting upon the necessity of conceptualizing and enacting it, considering the urgency of an alternative teaching process that advocates for and contributes to a project for an alternative society. This society is attentive to other forms of thought, establishing differences and distances, and actively combating the logic of coloniality.

Reflecting on the need for other didactics means paying attention to the trajectory of its construction, highlighting its greatest prominence in the 1980s, a period considered a kind of “refoundation” of reflection and research in the field of didactics. The 1990s were marked by a decline in the convergence of ideas, yet maintained a critical perspective, delineating themes such as: the teacher-researcher, teacher identity, and everyday school life (Candau; Koff, 2006).

In this trajectory, the author highlights the “risk of dispersion” in the current period, a time in which we face several issues that have touched us deeply: a regression toward a technicist didactic, a pragmatic perspective on teacher education, ultraliberal policies in the field of education, and the prospect of the criminalization of institutions.

Beyond these conflicts, which we do not seek to explore in depth in this research, but it remains pertinent and vital to acknowledge them, we will focus on reflecting upon the construction of other didactics, considering the demands established by the clamorous pluralities present in the classroom, and the rise of fundamentalist, conservative, and oppressive conceptions within our society. In this context, the field of didactics begins to highlight aspects such as: the daily life of the school, teachers' knowledge, and the relationship between school and culture.

The relationship between school and culture refers to a process of recognizing and valuing individuals as learners, and to the multidimensional nature of teaching. Thus, it points to didactics that, when conceived through a critique of modernity, align with an intercultural perspective. This perspective fosters struggles for social transformation while simultaneously placing at the very center of its existence the exclusion, invisibilization, negation, and subjective, epistemic, and social devastation experienced by oppressed groups and individuals.

In this perspective, intercultural didactics intertwines with decoloniality, in the sense of forging paths of resistance and struggle, from both a pedagogical and a human point of view, toward a reconstruction of teaching processes that privilege exclusively a single Eurocentric, negationist, and colonialist perspective regarding forms of knowing, knowledge, experiences, history, societies, life, and existence (Dias; Abreu, 2019).

When we reflect upon the urgency of constructing and enacting didactics, we aim in this research to analyze whether, and how, the issue of interculturality is present in the teaching plans for the Didactics component within Pedagogy programs at selected higher education institutions in the Brazilian Northeast, and identify how interculturality manifests within the objectives and programmatic content of the teaching plans developed by instructors of didactics.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Based on the objectives, we outline the methodology of this study. It is qualitative research, as it addresses a social and human phenomenon, and examines events within their multifaceted and complex social environment. In this context, we identify documentary analysis, supplemented by bibliographic research, as the methodological approach best suited to meet the demands established by the set objectives. Thus, in this work, we will first present data pertaining

to the bibliographic research, before proceeding to the empirical phase through an analysis of the teaching plans of didactics instructors at federal universities located in Brazil's Northeast region.

We have Flick (2009) as a reference, noting his assertion that documentary research employs document analysis to understand how, or whether, such documents intervene in the trajectory of human life, gathering information while simultaneously facilitating a deeper exploration of the issue under investigation.

Cellard (2008) states that the document has an intimate relationship with past and contemporary histories experienced by subjects across multiple contexts and historical periods. Furthermore, documents can provide descriptive evidence of various aspects: temporal, political, cultural, economic, and social. The author emphasizes that the document embodies the sense of evidence as a written device.

Thus, in federal universities across the Brazilian Northeast, we identified undergraduate Pedagogy programs that included the discipline of Didactics in their curricula. We gained access to eight federal higher education institutions (HEIs). The states represented were: Ceará, Rio Grande do Norte, Paraíba, Pernambuco, Alagoas, Sergipe, and Bahia. We searched the institutional websites of these HEIs to identify available course syllabi and analyzed them.

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The process of building a field of knowledge is characterized by nonlinear movement, marked by barriers, setbacks, and various challenges. Didactics are shaped by, and continue to shape, the historical, political, and cultural contexts of societies. By considering teaching as our focus of study and viewing it as a political and social action, we acknowledge its deep connection to reality. Consequently, as we trace its trajectory of construction from the 1980s onward, within our specific context, a pivotal turning point was established through a movement of resistance against the technocratic and pragmatist-oriented didactics implemented during the military dictatorship.

In response to the atrocities committed by the military dictatorship and recognizing that many educators were developing an awareness of education's political role, a resistance movement not only emerged but also a political movement within the field of didactics. This latter development is most notably evidenced in the seminal work *A didática em questão* by Vera Maria Candau, a work which, according to Franco (2022), constituted, in large measure, the "epistemological turn" of didactics.

Didactics paved the way for the construction of a critical didactics, conceiving teaching as a multidimensional process, and articulating technical, human, and political dimensions. It states that the creation and development of didactics are structured upon "[...] the analysis of and reflection on concrete experiences, seeking to continuously engage with the theory-practice relationship" (Candau, 1996, p. 21).

Committed to transcending the pseudo-neutrality advocated by the technicism implemented during the military dictatorship, didactics, in its critical approach, seeks to advocate a

contextualized form of teaching, in which pedagogical practice is a consequence and a generator of meaning. From this perspective, teaching the text was insufficient; above all, it was necessary to teach students to reflect upon the context. Thus, the aim was to establish a relationship between theory and practice within an educational framework situated in a world inhabited by subjects who are both constituted by and constitutive of identities.

Concerning the 1990s and notwithstanding the movement to reframe didactics, and with it, the construction of a necessary critical consciousness regarding teaching and education, we emphasize that, during this particular decade, the formulation and implementation of public policies in the country became aligned with the World Bank and major corporate groups. This alignment entailed the implementation of measures grounded in principles of deregulation and privatization, establishing the principle of “more market, less State.” The 1986 document “Financing Education in Developing Countries: An Exploration of Policy Options” clarifies the operational mechanisms through which the World Bank’s directives were implemented within the education sector (Leher, 1998).

Thus, in the education field, policies guided by this logic established models for teacher training and professional practice centered on standardization and control, aimed at aligning with a market-driven logic. This approach fostered the dominance of this logic in curriculum development processes, the outsourcing of personnel in public schools, an outdated system of fixed-term teacher hiring, school meal programs, and large-scale learning assessments, and, consequently, in the work of teachers. According to Candau (2018), this period in the didactics field was characterized by an interest in the dynamics of daily school life, teachers’ professional knowledge, and the relationship between school and culture, a topic we will explore in greater depth later on.

Before studying the relationship between didactics and interculturality, particularly during the 2000s, it is worth emphasizing the deepening of market-driven logic within education, as well as the wave of fundamentalism that permeated (and continues to permeate) the educational landscape, perpetrating serious consequences for teaching. In a turbulent political context, we witnessed the implementation of Law 14,945/2024 (Brazil, 2024a), which establishes the National High School Education Policy and superseded Law 13,415/2017 (Brazil, 2017), the legislation regulating the National Common Curricular Base, which was partially repealed. We also saw the ratification of Opinion CNE/CP 4/2024 (Brazil, 2024b) by the Plenary Council of the National Council of Education, which voted in favor of approving the National Curricular Guidelines for the Initial Higher Education Training of Teaching Professionals in Basic School Education, thereby replacing Resolution No. 2 of 2019 (Brazil, 2019).

We observe that the laws we have cited were originally part of a set of implementations grounded in the subjection of public education to commodification. Consequently, the fundamental argument of these legal texts was centered on the formation of the productive worker for the perpetuation of consumer society. “The perspective is one of forming individuals who lack a critical view of social reality” (D’Ávila; Santos, 2023, p. 959). We emphasize that the first two laws have

since been superseded and, currently, distance themselves somewhat from the aforementioned logic.

Thus, we reaffirm the big relationship between lived experience and teaching. In this context, we encounter a pedagogy marked by setbacks stemming from the encroachment of the logic of capital, a pedagogy that deals with standardized educational processes, establishing a productivist logic within teaching practice while disregarding the autonomy of educational institutions, teachers, and diverse cultures (Abreu, 2020).

Therefore, a declared disregard for the principle of the inseparability of theory and practice is observed. The movement advocating for and defending this principle has deep historical roots, standing in opposition, for instance, to an educational approach based on competency-based pedagogy. The latter is the foundation for the now-revoked National Curriculum Guidelines for the Initial Higher Education of Teaching Professionals in Basic School Education (Resolution 02, 2019), aiming to foster the subjection of formative processes while simultaneously attempting to revive a technical-instrumental and prescriptive model of didactics.

Another challenge during this period happened in the didactics and, consequently, teaching was the rise of authoritarian, conservative, and fundamentalist ideologies that emerged in the country starting in 2016. Legislative proposals authored by individuals disconnected from the reality of schools promoted an anti-institutional discourse, leading to accusations against teachers, of undermining the democratic order. This created an atmosphere of hatred and mistrust regarding their professional integrity, and even called into question the importance and very existence of the schools as educational institutions. These proposals “[...] intentionally fostered the social and psychological attrition of teachers in the face of their work—which was subjected to countless tensions—and brought about a kind of demoralization of the profession, thereby calling their social role into question” (Abreu, 2020, p. 171).

Thus, it is worth reflecting on the paths that critical didactics has been pursuing to resist this scenario. According to Dias and Abreu (2019), although the relationship between didactics and the intercultural perspective emerged in this country in 1980, with fundamental didactics, in the 2000s, it began to gain visibility and align itself with the thinking of Catherine Walsh, pointing to possibilities regarding both thought and practice, in opposition to the reality described above.

For the author, the conceptual construction of interculturality is linked to geopolitical questions of space and place, stemming from the enduring state of resistance of Black and Indigenous peoples, and extending to their articulations of “[...] a social, cultural, political, ethical, and epistemic project oriented toward decolonization and transformation” (Walsh, 2019, p. 4). It is important to emphasize that the author does not conceive of interculturality as a mere interrelationship, or even as harmonious communication, between distinct cultures. The centrality of the concept lies in creating, implementing, and defending alternative modes of knowledge, politics, and social power, other forms of thought, emerging from and standing against modernity/coloniality.

“It reflects a mode of thought that is grounded neither in Eurocentric colonial legacies nor in the perspectives of modernity; and, finally, because it does not originate in the geopolitical centers of academic knowledge production, that is, in the Global North.” (Walsh, 2019, p. 9). In this sense, one of the foundational pillars of intercultural thought lies in the colonality of power, which, according to Mota Neto (2015), gave rise to recent decolonial thought. A decisive factor in this decolonial thought is the construction of the “modernity/coloniality” matrix, bringing together figures such as Dussel, Mignolo, Quijano, and Walsh, among others. For these authors, decolonial thought is characterized as a form of inquiry and indignation in the face of the various forms of domination, violence, negation, and subalternization imposed by modernity/coloniality.

Thus, interculturality, as a decolonial perspective, asserts against the salvational and oppressive discourse of modernity. This discourse has been the foundational principle of a historical era driven by supposedly more evolved nations and grounded in the argument of progress, establishing multiple forms of domination, exploitation, and marginalization. Consequently, interculturality is established as something extending beyond a merely oppositional mode of thought, one that seeks not simply inclusion, but rather the transformation of social and historical structures; and one that views difference not as additive, but as constitutive, thereby putting an end to the sense of non-existence experienced by subalternized peoples (Walsh, 2019).

The concept of critical didactics emerges from studies on interculturality conducted by Candau and Koff (2006), along with their dialogue with Catherine Walsh, emerges. This approach critiques the modern education system and argues for its reconfiguration to meet the challenges imposed by a diverse and pluralistic society. It highlights the need to develop new fields of knowledge and expertise within discipline of didactics, which is continually tested by current issues. The intercultural approach is framed as a potential avenue for the reconfiguration of didactics.

Based on these pillars, critical intercultural didactics established, as one of its foundations, the principle of difference as a source of centrality and richness. Didactics foster dialogue and exchange among diverse individuals and social groups regarding their cultures, experiences, practices, and forms of knowledge. Thus, Dias and Abreu (2019) draw our attention to the fact that the perspective of critical didactics, originating in the 1980s, is incorporated into the framework of interculturality as a means of seeking answers, fostering reflection, and devising strategies in the face of the challenges posed by a diverse, unequal, and complex society.

Based on the perspective of critical intercultural didactics, it is fundamental to problematize the university context, a setting which, despite significant efforts by various collectives of faculty, students, and administrators, remains far from truly understanding and practicing teaching as a living, historically situated act. Driven by advancements in research and practice within the field of higher education pedagogy, the processes of teaching have been subjected to considerable critical scrutiny. Consequently, many faculty members have committed to seeking new pedagogical perspectives and to utilizing technologies and methodologies that align with the demands of the contemporary world. However, for these new processes to be effectively realized,

action must not originate solely from the professors; it must also come from the administration, specifically through the creation, implementation, and monitoring of new policies, as well as the provision of the minimum structural support necessary for the courses to function properly. Given this lack of synchronization in actions, it is not uncommon to encounter a university culture, despite the efforts of professors and researchers in the pedagogical field, that remains centered on a transmissive, reproductive, and hierarchical model of instruction, in which the professor occupies the absolute center of the process. Furthermore, there exists a prevailing set of mindsets and practices that merely juxtapose the activities of teaching, research, and extension, while prioritizing and placing a disproportionately higher value on research.

Critical intercultural didactics faces a significant challenge due to the erosion of educational practice, a result of the severe influence of the global privatized education market. This market often disguises its true motive, to maintain the capitalist structure and accumulate financial wealth, under an inclusion and respect for differences. As we previously stated, the core issue goes beyond respect and inclusion. It involves advocating for structural change and actively combating the coloniality of power.

We would like to highlight the fact that we often deal with an educational system centered on a colonial mindset, both in pedagogical approaches and curricular frameworks. It is not uncommon, for example, to find a reality in which the core purpose of education is understood as the mere transmission of specific content. Content that is, in large part, Eurocentric. Thus, the global perspective regarding the commodification of education dictates the design of the social structure and its perpetuation by using education as a vehicle for meeting demands tied to the process of globalization. This dynamic deepens the crisis of a dialogical, critical, reflective, and contextualized pedagogy, entrenching the belief that quality education is achieved through an instrumental logic, one that detaches from a fundamental, intercultural theoretical foundation necessary for comprehending reality in all its complexity.

University culture presents yet another challenge: the preparation of students, particularly those in teacher-training programs, who are thirsty for prescriptive strategies to facilitate teaching that fosters learning. When a course component on didactics encourages a discussion that prompts reflection on teaching as an act influenced by social, political, and cultural issues, it often leads to discomfort and a feeling of frustration. There is a strong desire to quickly learn and apply techniques and methodologies without first gaining an understanding of the diverse contexts involved or engaging in self-knowledge and self-discovery, which includes exploring one's own personal history.

Such difficulties have long been present. However, in a context where we discuss critical intercultural didactics, this perspective emerges as a recent possibility. Judging by the research output in this field, it is evident that this is an approach being understood and embraced.

To understand how this specific field of research has been configured, we conducted a survey of scientific articles across two databases: the SciELO scientific literature platform and the

Capes Journals Portal. We carried out the search using the following descriptors: decolonial didactics and intercultural didactics. To refine the search on the SciELO platform, we applied the following filters: Brazil, Portuguese, Human Sciences, and Article. On the Capes Journals Portal, we used the same descriptors and, for refinement, the following filters: Article, National Production, Human Sciences, and Portuguese.

RESULTS OF THE BIBLIOGRAPHIC SEARCH

There are three types of literature within the scope of scientific research development: a) “grey” literature, derived from theses and dissertations; b) scientific literature, undergoing peer review; and c) professional literature, produced by professional associations, entities, and confederations.

In this section, we present a brief overview of the current state of research, through which we analyze the body of work produced within the scientific literature, based on a search for articles published in scientific journals addressing the theme of intercultural didactics. The survey focused on a timeframe spanning the last thirty years. The search for these studies was conducted in September 2024.

While fully recognizing that the central focus of this survey lies in the terms decolonial didactics and intercultural didactics, we also conducted a search using the descriptors decolonial teaching and intercultural teaching. Although we did not undertake an in-depth analysis of these terms, we considered the inherent interrelationship between didactics and teaching to gain a clearer perspective on the full scope of the research field. We observed that on the SciELO platform, the terms decolonial teaching and intercultural teaching appeared in 16 and 34 articles, respectively; on the CAPES Journals Portal, each of these descriptors yielded 30 articles. When employing the term teaching instead of didactics, we noted a tendency toward a more diverse distribution of research topics. Consequently, we identified studies on teaching, viewed through decolonial and intercultural lenses, that encompassed fields such as educational management, Portuguese, French, and German languages, geography, history, digital curation, environmental education, mathematics, English, music, philosophy, and feminism.

Table 1 – Scientific Articles on the SciELO and Periódicos CAPES Platforms

Plataforms	Descriptors	Total of articles	Articles by descriptor	Articles related to the descriptors
SciELO	-Decolonial Didactics -Intercultural Didactics	6	-Decolonial Didactics (1) -Intercultural Didactics (5)	4

CAPES Journals	-Decolonial Didactics -Intercultural Didactics	50	-Decolonial Didactics (20) -Intercultural Didactics (30)	10
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Source: created by the researchers (2024).

According to Table 1, four of the six studies identified by the SciELO platform were focused on the descriptors used. Also, ten of the 30 studies located on the CAPES Journals Portal had a direct relationship with the descriptors employed. In the table below, we highlight these studies, along with their authors, scope, and year of publication.

Table 2 – Studies Showing a Direct Relationship with the Descriptors

Authors	Focus of the Study	Year
ROSA SUANNO	It presents intercultural didactics as a means of implementing engaged actions—actions committed to expressing indignation in the face of injustice and to transforming reality.	2022
CRUZ, BATALHA, LAHTERMAHER E CAMPELO	It places on the agenda the discussion of education from a democratic perspective committed to social justice. Among other authors, it draws upon Candau in its advocacy for intercultural didactics.	2022
RODRIGUES PEREIRA REGO	It advocates for “transvergent curricula” as alternative forms of research, pedagogy, practice, and education. It calls for transformation through a counter-hegemonic and anti-/counter-/decolonial mode of action.	2021
DIAS E ABREU	It traces a lineage of decolonial didactics in Brazil, based on bibliographic research and document analysis, drawing upon references from the Modernity/Coloniality Network and the field of didactics in Brazil.	2020
ROSA SUANNO, SILVA OLIVEIRA E MAGALHÃES	It analyzes the Proceedings of the 19th ENDIPE (2018), based on the descriptors of multiculturalism and interculturality, taking into account the categories: a) openness; b) recognition and redistribution; c) democracy and justice; d) prejudice, discrimination, and monoculture; and e) culture, identity, and empowerment.	2020
FRANCO	It analyzes the necessity of didactic work from a decolonial perspective that fosters an educational practice linked to the challenges of reality.	2019

DIAS E ABREU	They engage with historical and conceptual elements that delimit decolonial thought, decolonial pedagogy, and critical intercultural didactics, elements that contribute to the unveiling and the state of resistance of subalternized peoples.	2019
CANDAU E KOFF	They present possible pathways for the reinvention of a new didactics from an intercultural perspective, one capable of fostering the reorganization of time and space, the roles of students and teachers, knowledge, curricula, learning and assessment practices, rituals, and management strategies, among other dimensions.	2015
CANDAU E LEITE	They articulate the challenges involved in implementing interculturality within educational practices, considering the following axes: multiple narratives, alterity and estrangement, and deconstruction and resistance.	2007
SIMÃO E KOFF	They analyze how didactics professors understand interculturality, considering: the tension between the social and the cultural, the articulation of equality and difference, as well as the problematic of universalism versus cultural relativism.	2006

Source: created by the researcher (2024).

Based on this survey, we identify several convergences among the works listed above: the first concerns the need to implement a critical intercultural pedagogy that fosters, within teaching processes, viewed as both human and professional formation, an alternative reading of historical dynamics and reality, aiming to cultivate a stance characterized not only by nonconformity regarding injustices and oppressions, but also by attitudes that bring about concrete changes in the prevailing modern/colonial structure.

A second area of convergence focuses on the movement to understand, historicize, and conceptualize critical intercultural didactics. There is a concerted effort to develop a critical understanding of the Modernity/Coloniality Network by engaging in a thorough discussion about power relations, specifically those arising from the European colonization of the Americas. This colonization led to genocide, ethnocide, and racialization, which are foundational elements of the capitalist system. In parallel, there is a movement to reconfigure didactics, aiming to go beyond teaching practices that merely folklorize cultural traditions. Such superficial approaches fail to address the complexities of historical events and reality. There is a deliberate effort to forge intersections between critical didactics and interculturality, to think and act from the standpoint of difference and through the lens of decolonization. These differences should not only be a means of identification but also a starting point for constructing an educational framework capable of influencing the emergence of a new societal structure.

As a third point of convergence, we highlight an effort to clarify teachers' modes of understanding regarding interculturality, as well as the implications of this perspective for the teaching process and the dynamics of educational institutions. In this context, Candau and Leite (2007) sought to identify the central elements for the resignification of didactics, from this particular perspective, and to determine how to address them within initial teacher education. The authors deemed it essential to disrupt the naturalization of the school's monocultural profile. To this end, they consider it fundamental to initiate a dialogue with teachers regarding conceptions of culture and multi/interculturalism, specifically concerning:

[...] the various dimensions of difference and the multiplicity of their manifestations within educational spaces; teachers and students as sociocultural subjects; issues concerning the selection of content, knowledge, and values, language and communication, teacher expectations, and prejudice and discrimination in daily school life. (Candau; Leite, 2007, p. 743).

We can observe how cultural imposition occurs through the colonality of history, politics, bodies, knowledge, and ways of life, particularly through teaching methods like prescriptive didactics. These studies emphasize the urgent need to conceptualize and implement critical intercultural didactics, an approach committed to human and professional development and integration into the workforce. This approach seeks to engage with social, political, and epistemic spaces that have been historically marginalized and aims to reconceptualize these spaces in ways that address the ongoing recolonization of power. The goal is to work towards the creation of an alternative civilization (Walsh, 2019, p. 25).

Therefore, in this survey, we observed a limited number of studies addressing this issue, which led us to conduct the present research on didactics course syllabi at federal institutions in the Northeast region. How does this limited number of studies manifest in the conception and implementation of these syllabi? We will attempt to clarify this inquiry below.

RESULTS OF THE DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH ON COURSE SYLLABI IN FEDERAL HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN NORTHEASTERN BRAZIL

In this research, we seek to analyze whether, and how, the issue of interculturality, as a decolonial perspective, is present in the teaching plans for the Didactics component within Pedagogy programs at higher education institutions in the Brazilian Northeast, considering the structuring elements: objectives and content.

In this documentary research, we examine, analyze, and interpret the teaching plans for the Didactics course as primary documents within the scope of this study. We consider their historical nature, understanding that the existence of these plans needed a prior process of construction involving diverse individuals and distinct contexts. Furthermore, as written artifacts, these documents attest to the actual implementation of the course in question within its respective

institutions. This documentation is part of the public and institutional domain, which “[...] commonly comprises: governmental archives (federal, regional, school-based, or municipal), civil registry archives, as well as certain archives of a notarial or legal nature” (Cellard, 2008, p. 296).

According to Cellard (2008), the first phase of the documentary analysis consisted of a preliminary analysis aimed at identifying the author of the document and verifying its authenticity. During this phase, spanning the period from September 1, 2024, to September 15, 2024, we visited the official websites of the universities in question to access the curriculum flowcharts for their Pedagogy Licentiate programs, which, in most cases, hosted the teaching plans for didactics.

Regarding authenticity, most of the course plans are in the public domain and were registered within their respective institutions' Academic Activity Management Systems (SIGAA-*Sistema de Gestão de Atividades Acadêmicas*). In cases where a plan was not registered, we relied on the cooperation of the instructors responsible for the course component, who submitted the files to us. In some instances, Bachelor's programs in Pedagogy are offered with various specializations, and in the case of more than one academic center, the institutions' systems list multiple curricular frameworks, and consequently, more than one teaching plan for the Didactics course.

Table 3 – General Data on Teaching Plans

Institutions	Plans	Period	Workload
7	12	2012 to 2023	60h a 75h

Source: created by the researcher (2024).

We obtained twelve course syllabi for the Didactics curricular component from seven distinct institutions. These syllabi covered the period from 2012 to 2023 and were structured around a workload ranging from 60 to 75 hours. They exhibited a high degree of similarity in their structural elements, generally including the following components: course description, objectives, content, methodology, competencies and skills, instructional resources, assessment, and bibliographic references.

In the second phase of the documentary analysis, the context in which it was written and published, Cellard (2008) focuses on describing the context in which the document was constructed. In the context of federal public universities, we do not refrain from expressing our permanent state of resistance in the face of a historical neglect of educational policies for this field.

During the 2019–2022 period, the federal administration not only implemented destructive measures but also revived a discourse and image portraying educational institutions as enemies of society and democracy. The pandemic caused by SARS-CoV-2 in 2020 deepened economic, social, and educational inequalities, as well as poor conditions regarding physical

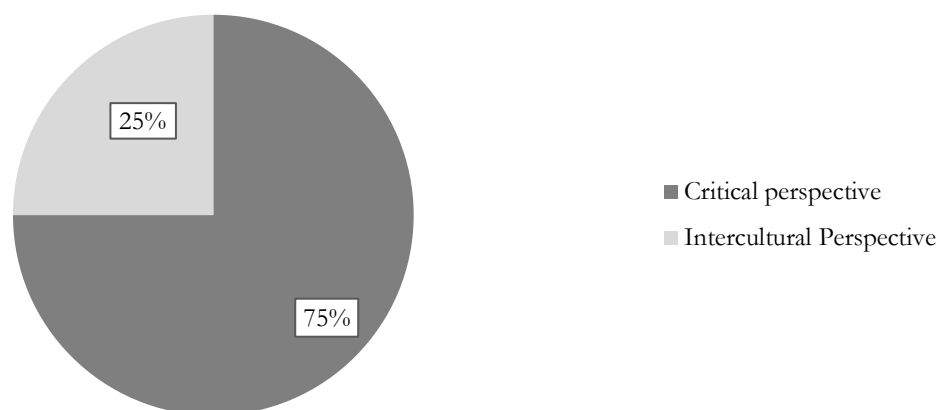
infrastructure and human resources. This generated a direct impact on the work of educators, exacerbated by successive budget cuts to universities in recent years, and, more recently, by measures mandated under the new fiscal framework (PLP 93/2023), justified by the need to control public debt within the country.

In this scenario, the Undergraduate Degree Program in Pedagogy and all teacher training programs in the country in 2019 were obligated to adapt their curricula to Resolution 02 of 2019. This resolution mandated the National Common Curricular Base (*BNCC-Base Nacional Comum Curricular*) as the central body of knowledge within the curricular structure for initial teacher education throughout the national territory, “[...] in the service of prevailing neoliberalism. The underlying rationale is the formation of a submissive, low-cost workforce” (D’Ávila, 2020, p. 87).

As previously mentioned at the beginning of this text, this mandatory requirement is rendered null and void following the ratification of Opinion CNE/CP 4/2024 (Brasil, 2024b), issued by the Full Council of the National Council of Education. This council voted in favor of approving new National Curricular Guidelines for the Initial Higher Education Training of Teaching Professionals in Basic School Education. These guidelines are currently under analysis and discussion within scientific and academic circles, as well as among associations representing the teaching profession. Thus, we have outlined some of the broader context that led to the development of the teaching plans in question, while also considering the unique circumstances specific to their respective institutions.

In the third and fourth phases, respectively, identifying the key concepts that appear most frequently, and conducting data analysis based on the entire study of the document to conclude the research, and in accordance with Graph 1, we observe that 25% of the plans contain content from an intercultural perspective, while 75% focus on the perspective of critical didactics. Admittedly, we acknowledge the possibility that the intercultural perspective may be present in the process in a transversal manner, specifically in the extent and methods used to approach the content during the implementation of the aforementioned plans. On the other hand, these data prompt us to reflect on the factors that have determined such choices and decisions.

Graph 1 – Course Syllabi for the Didactics Component: Critical Perspective and Intercultural Critical Perspective



Source: crated by the researcher (2024).

As one of its central principles, critical didactics establishes the understanding of individuals as learners; it comprehends the teaching process in its multidimensionality; it highlights the inseparable link between theory and practice; it seeks to analyze teaching practices in their concrete form; it commits to an educational perspective articulated with social transformation; it seeks to conceptualize and implement teacher education grounded in collegiality, advocating for the teacher as an intellectual; it fosters the retention of children and youth in school through high-quality, contextualized instruction; and it seeks to establish a connection with the community to construct a curriculum that meets its needs (Dias; Abreu, 2019).

Intercultural didactics, which is also critical, clearly expresses its intention to promote teaching based on dialogue and

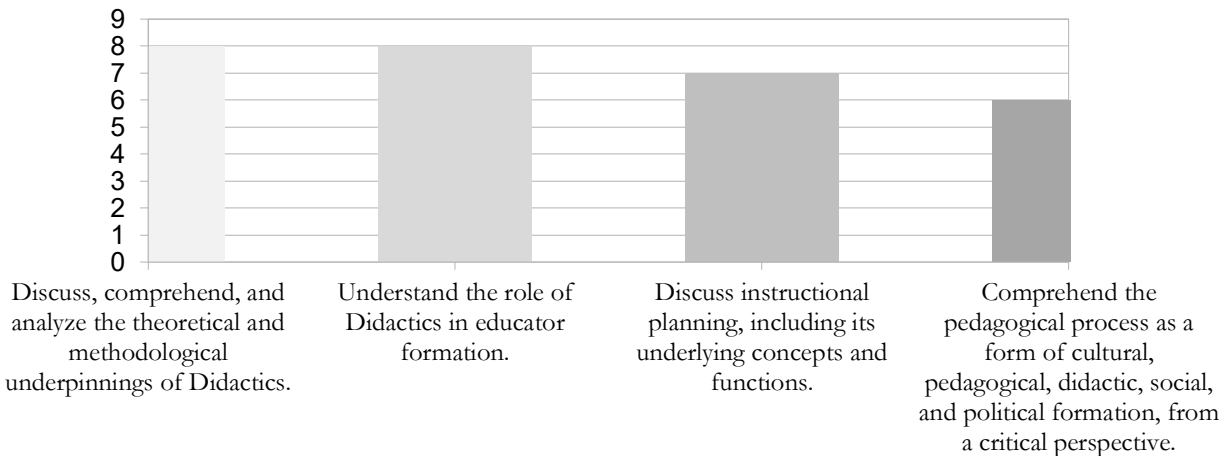
[...] exchange between different groups, whose cultural identity and the individuals who constitute them are open and in a permanent state of construction, resulting from intense processes of cultural hybridization. (Candau; Koff, 2006, p. 475).

This approach to education does not view culture as uniform or free from sources of conflict. It recognizes that differences must be accepted within the context of the generation and implementation of public policies. In this sense, we can see a connection to a political agenda committed to the transformation of prevailing social structures. Otherwise, it would amount to nothing more than yet another discourse grounded in a panacea, serving merely as window dressing for established colonial practices.

Thus, the choices articulated in the didactics course plans lead us to conclude that we are, in large measure, encountering a form of didactics that deepens its critical character, situated within a landscape that, on the one hand, highlights the voracious encroachments of neoliberal agendas seeking a return to technicist approaches; and, on the other, strives to demand a

perspective and a set of actions that provoke reflection on the necessity of constructing a different kind of society, one grounded in, and indeed requiring, an epistemic rupture with a history marked by domination, exploitation, and marginalization. Are we, perhaps, in the process of building the bridge that will lead us toward critical intercultural didactics? We draw upon Freirean optimism, emphasizing the need to keep one foot planted in the realm of dreams and the other in reality, so that we do not become hardened, but rather survive with enduring resilience.

Graph 2 – Most Recurrent Objectives in the Teaching Plans for the Didactics Course Component



Source: created by the researcher (2024).

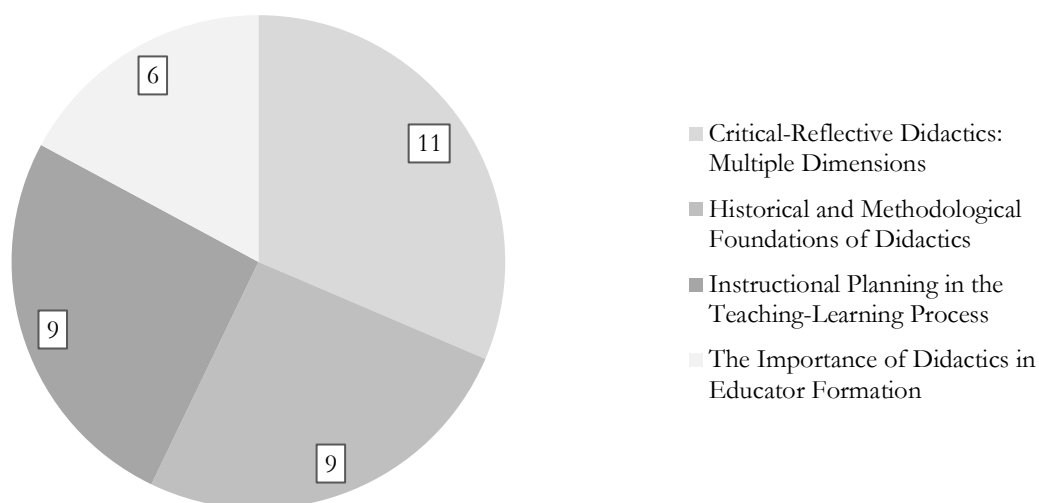
Graph 2 aims to highlight the most frequently recurring objectives found in the teaching plans. According to the scale, the two most recurrent objectives are the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of didactics and their connection to educator formation. Following these and occurring with lower frequency are objectives related to instructional planning and the pedagogical process, viewed from a critical perspective. We underscore that we identified only two objectives linked to intercultural thought.

The graphic shows our commitment to discussing, understanding, and analyzing the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of didactics, specifically in relation to educator and instructional planning in its current form, from a critical perspective. However, the steps toward intercultural didactics remain quite tentative and are being explored by a very small group. As early as 2006, Candau and Koff pointed out “[...] the need to seek new frameworks for engaging with new contexts, new subjects, and new issues [...]” (Candau; Koff, 2006, p. 486).

The search to thoroughly understand these new frameworks and to implement them within the structure and practice of the field of didactics strikes us as increasingly urgent. In recent decades, classrooms have become increasingly permeated by discussions and experiences centered on racial, gender, and decolonial issues. In this sense, interculturality, by identifying diversity as a pathway toward constructing an alternative form of education, broadens the scope of reflection and expands the possibilities for action.

One must reflect upon the fact that interculturality is far more prevalent in research than it is in teaching and in the classroom. The challenge is immense, for in this instance, we are dealing with a theoretical framework that deconstructs that which was imposed through disrespect, violence, and the symbolic, as well as actual, erasure of lives and cultures. When we speak of the need to construct an “alternative” form of education, we are referring to a pedagogy that implements a dynamic of recognizing and valuing diversity, one that rejects colonizing culture and education, and that remains vigilant, in a permanent state of denunciation, against the impositions of capital.

Graph 3 – Most Recurring Content in the Syllabi for the Didactics Course



Source: created by the researcher (2024).

Graph 3 shows that the content most prevalent in the teaching plans converges toward critical-reflective didactics and its multiple dimensions. We emphasize that this does not exactly correspond to the specific content explicitly evidenced in the plans; rather, we created representative categories for the themes that appeared most prominently. Within this category, for instance, we grouped content such as: the historical-political-social perspective of didactics and its

importance for the democratization of education; progressive conceptions in Brazilian education; and critical didactics in the face of neoliberal policies.

The historical and methodological foundations of didactics are significant topic to be addressed, guiding the discussion toward the origins of didactics, its historical trajectory, and its methodological reconfiguration in accordance with the historical context. Subsequently and of equal importance, as illustrated in Graph 3, instructional planning within the teaching-learning process is highlighted through an examination of its conceptualization, its structural elements, and its political and contextual implications. The role of didactics in educator training is identified as the fourth most frequently mentioned topic in the instructional plans. This topic exhibited few nuances in the manner in which it was recorded within the plans.

We emphasize that content related to an intercultural perspective, Multiculturalism, interculturality, diversity, and difference; Pedagogical trends and perspectives on the decolonization of teaching and the teaching-learning process; and Anti-racist and decolonial conceptions of teaching-learning, appears in fourth place, recorded across three plans and in equal number relative to “Conceptions of Learning Assessment” and “The School Daily Life as an Expression of Pedagogical Action.”

Instructional content partially reflects prevailing curricula that remain a constant subject of debate due to their intrinsic link to the construction of identities. In this context, an analysis of the plans in question raises critical questions: What kind of educators are we shaping? For what model of society? We undoubtedly face colossal challenges, particularly when taking into account the historical precariousness of the teaching profession at all levels, inadequate working conditions, neoliberal educational policies, and the successive attacks, perpetrated over the last decade by conservative factions and religious groups, against curricula, educators, and educational institutions.

We believe that it is precisely at this critical juncture that demands for change arise, impetuses to move toward a critical intercultural pedagogy, and resistance to the logic of oppression and violence perpetuated by empires. It is within this reaction that the origin of decolonial practice proposals lies, proposals that adopt a political and epistemological stance by exposing the fallacious discourses implemented by coloniality, thereby evoking more humane educational pathways that affirm the lives of the subjects directly affected.

Therefore, we refer to intercultural didactics that, beyond understanding teaching as a political and social act, establishes a counter-project to the hegemony of colonial knowledge, one capable of perceiving cultures as generators of multiple forms of knowledge that move “from colonial difference toward the construction of a different world” (Walsh, 2019, p. 15).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this study, our objective was to analyze how the issue of interculturality is present in the teaching plans for the Didactics component within Pedagogy programs at selected higher

education institutions in the Brazilian Northeast. By framing our analysis around objectives and content, serving as the structural elements of the teaching plan, we were able to observe that, in both respects, issues related to work, viewed from an intercultural perspective, remain at a very nascent stage.

In terms of both objectives and content, the aforementioned perspective did not appear with any regularity. At the same time, the relationship between didactics and interculturality is a recent construct, and one that is still in a phase of internalization and re-signification within the thought processes and practices of teaching. The bibliographic research conducted for this study corroborates this fact, insofar as it reveals a limited number of materials addressing this relationship, materials that highlight: the need to implement a critical intercultural didactics capable of fostering an alternative reading of historical dynamics and reality; the ongoing effort to understand, historicize, and conceptualize critical intercultural didactics; and the importance of clearly grasping teachers' modes of understanding regarding interculturality, as well as the implications of this perspective for the teaching process and the dynamics of educational institutions.

We are facing a significant challenge. As the demands of the world and the complexities of various subjects grow, it is essential to map, understand, analyze, and address these demands. Critical intercultural didactics is not rooted in a perspective of reification; instead, it offers a viable approach to developing an alternative form of education. This education is based on dialogues that enhance students' active participation in their learning processes, affirm their cultures and identities, and critically examine their lived experiences. It creates spaces where diverse experiences can be integrated into the content being studied.

The constitutive elements of a didactics grounded in an intercultural perspective converge toward a decolonial pedagogy—one that establishes a movement against the processes of subalternization imposed by Eurocentric culture and by individuals educated under its hegemony. It is fundamental that we move toward critical intercultural didactics that challenge the naturalization of power dynamics, as well as the naturalization of exploitative and domineering labor relations—patterns reinforced by routines that engender unreflective automatisms.

To conceptualize critical intercultural didactics is, above all, to establish humanization as the core of formative processes, grounded in the struggle for the affirmation of subjects who have been stripped of their alterity by forces of domination and power. May we, with one foot in the realm of dreams and the other in reality, implement and embody alternative modes of teaching capable of contributing not merely to a project of an inclusive society within a neoliberal framework, but to the creation of the means to transform that very structure.

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The data underlying the research text are contained within the manuscript.

AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTIONS

Author 1 – Project coordinator, active participation in data analysis, and revision of the final manuscript.

Author 2 – Data collection, data analysis, and writing of the text.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding this article.