The Internationalization of the Curriculum Field: Dialogs and Differences

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Abstract
The concept of educational transfer is employed in the text to analyse the process of the internationalization of the curriculum field, as it is expressed in events and texts related to international associations and seminars, as well as in the perspectives of their promoters. Researchers who have defended or rejected the process were interviewed and their answers were analysed. It is argued that the process evolves dangers and possibilities.

Keywords: Educational transfer; curriculum field; internationalization; specialists' views.

I have known several professors of fascinating work – rethinking the place of the Caribbean in the world and unknown in Brazil. (...) Of course: many of these attempts are going to fail. However, diversity is good for that: the more different people attempting different things, the greater the chance for success. Therefore it is of growing importance to keep looking where "no one else looks".

Hermano Vianna

Origins, object and study objectives

My interest, in the directions taken in the curriculum field, date back to the 80s. In 1988 I presented my doctorate thesis at University of London, in which I focused on the emergence of the field in Brazil, under a strong North American influence, embodying the period of the 1920s and 1930s up to the end of the 1980s, when I finished the research. I worked with the educational transfer category, then understood as a movement of ideas, institutional models and practices from one country to another (Ragatt, 1983). I argued that, initially, corresponding to the period of the 1920s and 1930s to the end of the 1970s, there occurred in our country, predominantly, an instrumental adaptation of the North American curricular way of thinking, attempting to add local color so as to take better advantage of it on our context.

In the following decades, set off by political, economic and cultural changes, in Brazil as well as in the international scenario, there began a search
for promoting a critical adaptation of theories and practices coming from different countries, in order to guarantee greater autonomy to the development of the curriculum field. I then sustained, in the study under discussion, that the receiving of foreign material involved interactions, exchanges, interpretations, rejections and resistances whose intensity and whose subversive potential varied according to local and international circumstances. Educational transfer could not be seen as a simple instrument of control and domination, employed by central countries and easily imposed upon and received by the so-called peripheral countries.

Afterwards, in a study presented to the National Council of Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), in 1994, and supported by this agency, I sought to understand the features of the curriculum field in the 1990s and to verify why and how specialists and Brazilian professors received, interpreted and/or refused, new influences, new ideas, and new theories. The research centered on two major focus areas: curriculum thinking and curriculum teaching. Approached integrally, they marked the paths taken and supplied the subsidies so as to enable rethinking the other focus point: the phenomenon of transfer.

The second purpose of the study is then configured: to understand if and how the educational transfer was then processed. Would the category continue to be useful for analysis? To what degree would favor the understanding of our attitude in relation to foreign influence? The general objective of the study, in short, is thus formulated: to rethink the concept of educational transfer, in the 1990s, taking as a reference the development of the curriculum field in Brazil.

In a text derived from this research (Moreira & Macedo, 1999), it was suggested that the contradictory and complex character of contemporary societies, in a globalized world, would no longer allow a view of educational transfer based on what is seen as acceptable the mere transport of cultural elements produced in the First World. Analyses of the globalization process, then effected, have emphasized the intense movement of information and knowledge (always facilitated by unprecedented technological progress), which has spread and continues to spread, albeit unequally, in the different parts of the globe. Despite the possibility (and of eventual purposes) of cultural homogenization, the evidence of tensions, in an extremely complex process, are quite clear. Thus, if the process can cause homogenization, invasion and destruction of cultural manifestations, it can, on the other hand, stimulate a critical appropriation of ideas and theories elaborated by the “other”.

In this perspective, the possibility of ideas and cultural manifestations in a pure state are rejected, likely to be translated from one space to another. The concept of educational transfer, as it was employed in the 80s, would need to be re-elaborated so as to be useful in the analysis of multiple and intense exchanges which took place, at that moment, in our globalized world. The categories cultural hybridism and cosmopolitanism, then, are proposed to be used in an effort to rethink and deepen the notion of educational transfer (Moreira & Macedo, 1999).

The thematic is retaken, at this moment, to approach the internationalization current of the field. Taking into consideration the obvious and significant transformations in the world over the past ten years, it makes sense to rethink the cultural exchange processes which occurred (even more so when promoting them is explicitly sought, as in current efforts of internationalization).
The general objective of the research – the basis of the present text – may thus be formulated: to understand the current process of internationalization of the curriculum field, as it is being expressed in events and texts associated with the International Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies (IAACS), the Luso-Brazilian Seminars on Curriculum Questions, as well as the perspectives of their principal promoters. I conceive perspective, in this investigation, as the ways of thinking and acting which are considered as natural and legitimate by the members of the group (Coulon, 1995). Therefore the need to interview the principal names in the movement.

Reflections on the internationalization process

The bibliographical revision undertaken during the research has allowed for certain considerations on the process to be presented. According to authors associated with the IAACS, internationalizing curriculum research needs to be understood as a process of the creation of transnational spaces, in which academics of different nationalities work together so as to reconfigure and decentralize their own traditions to negotiate the reciprocal trust necessary for a collective project. One of the first steps should be to admit the local character of curriculum focuses.

This perspective implies calling attention to the characteristic forms, by which western genres of academic textual production tend to present to their readers the local knowledge as a universal discourse (Gough, 2003, 2006).

The International Association (IAACS), created in great part thanks to the efforts of William Pinar, constituted itself to support a transnational field of curriculum studies that is not characterized by uniformity. It must be recognized that a great part of the work carried out in the curriculum field continues to occur inside national frontiers. At the same time, economic globalization processes make flexible nation-state frontiers and destabilize national authority which deal with curricular decisions. It is important, then, to examine the impact of globalization on the curricular process, particularly in national and international debates on subjects such as human rights, social justice, native people demands, poverty and social exclusion. That is, an analysis needs to be made of the interrelations between local, national, regional and global spheres, in what refers to curriculum policies, practices and theories. In this sense, it may be considered that transnational investigation in curriculum sets a space to develop research, produce intercultural understanding and give value to diversity.

Gough (2004) suggests that the solidarity necessary so that the work among researchers develop needs to involve both a solidarity based on shared identity (that includes the circle of those who think as we do) and a solidarity based on shared responsibility (which includes the circle of those from whom we demand help and to those whom we feel obliged to help). As the second modality is potentially much broader, we are dealing with the advent of a global, universalist and inclusive view of solidarity as a shared responsibility. The challenge for curricular imagination becomes to delineate the construction of networks of researchers who share this view of solidarity and are willing to express it in their investigations.

In this process of internationalization, however, there are dangers, as well as possibilities. The dangers correspond to the lack of control, on the part of the
educators, of the teaching and the curriculum, at a time in which they tend to reinforce political pressures referring to accountability, appreciated through results obtained in competitive examinations. However, the possibilities also emerge under the form of critical and creative resistance to the globalization movement, associated with the recognition that worldwide it is required that curriculum studies go beyond national borders in the direction of transnational spaces (Carson, 2009).

For this to occur, there has to develop a global dialog that approaches possible futures for both individuals and societies. It is then worthwhile to ask: what responsibilities do we all have, involved in decisions and reflections on curriculum, in the schools, universities and educational systems, in the projection and materialization of those futures, by means of complicated conversations (Pinar, 2004) that extrapolate the national scope and head for a more cosmopolitan perspective than the time in which we are living? What have we done and what should we do, in our work, so as to make it part of a broader project in the construction of common cultures and environmental contexts? (Wang, 2006; Apelbaum, 2012).

The carrying out out of interviews and their use in this text

I examine those and other questions on the process of internationalization, focusing on different interpretations of this process. In order to do this, I am supported by interviews with researchers who have defended and stimulated the internationalization of the field, as well as others who have accompanied and analyzed the process referred to. I interviewed 3 North American specialists (1 man and 1 couple), 1 Chinaman, 1 Finn, 2 Englishmen, 1 Portuguese and 1 Brazilian researcher. All are undeniably recognized academics, nationally as well as internationally, for their contributions to the field of curriculum studies.

For the interviews, I made use of my participation at the IAACS Meeting in Rio de Janeiro in 2012, from my recent senior training at the Institute of Education at London University and my presence at the VI Luso-Brazilian Seminar that took place in 2012 in Belo Horizonte. Even though I still intend to carry out more interviews up to the end of the research, I consider those finished so far already make possible a first analysis of the researchers' points of view on the direction of the internationalization of the curriculum field. I have attempted, in summary, to identify the perspectives that those professionals maintain in relation to the process.

In the non-structured interviews which took place I requested the researchers to speak freely of their views concerning the process – their strategies, their advances, their setbacks and their challenges. My argument is that the speeches of those researchers, from different universities and countries and important references in curriculum studies, allow for the perception of how today the movement that marks the field is conceived, stimulated and interpreted - such movement considered by William Pinar, one of its principal promoters, as a new paradigm.

Even though my purpose is not to criticize the investigators' points of view, I opt not to identify them, so as to work more freely with their arguments, beliefs and positions. I then proceed to hear them, organizing their perspectives into thematic sections, which I consider capable of contributing to a greater
understanding of the process in question. The thematic blocks were generated a priori, based on questions directed to the specialists. They are: (a) conception of the internationalization process; (b) strategies suggested to increase the process; (c) advantages, limitations and challenges. I have attempted, with selections from the interviews, to make their positions evident in relation to such thematics.

I present, then, commentaries that emphasize: distinct valuations in the internationalization process; the importance of conferences and research to promote it; the recognition of the difficulties caused by cultural differences implied in the process (these difficulties analyzed differently); the question of the predominance of the English language in meetings and publications; as well as the problem of the necessary resources for the holding achievement of the conferences. These sub-themes emerged from the revelation, on the part of those interviewed, of their perspectives.

I present initially the talks of those interviewed, saving for later my points of view in reference to the process under study.

The specialists’ viewpoints on the process of field internationalization

For the South African researcher, who cannot be included in the group of those who stimulate internationalization, this movement may be understood in two different manners. In accordance with the first, pointed out by John Meyer and his collaborators in their texts, internationalization corresponds to a convergence of curricula, which has presented similarities, in many countries, in function of evaluation tests carried out globally. As to the second, internationalization implies a greater approximation among scholars of differing origins, who have constantly resorted to works by others, sharing ideas and paradigms. For the one interviewed, this second case involves a more complex process, being that the communities of curriculum researchers are mostly national.

In the words of the specialist:

“The field of curriculum studies in the United States presents distinct characteristics from that of England. In the two countries, the field of curriculum studies is approached differently. In spite of common references, the national differences have not been effaced by the greater global contact”.

The local-national relationship is differently approached by one of the English researchers. In his opinion, the process of universalizing specialized knowledge is less difficult than it may seem. There may be processes referring to learning that are universal and can be applied to distinct countries, circumstances and contexts.

In his words:

“The context is really important, however, in a certain sense, there are some components, parts, descriptions, notions, or whatever we may call them that can be considered universal”.

The influence of evaluations in the homogenization of curriculum studies was also mentioned by the one interviewed, who emphasized: “they not only describe, but really do change the curriculum”. The homogenization movement is also favored, adds the professor, by globalization – “people travelling, reading, hearing, interacting”. But the phenomenon is even more profound. “It is a
rationalization process”. It can cause the exclusion of local knowledge, deprecated by scientific knowledge. It then ends up by imitating natural sciences.

For the other English specialist, committed to the sociological analysis of the curriculum, globalization is not going to go away. People are moving around the world more and more and end up living in countries they were not born in and did not went to school.

It can be said that education in different countries is tending to become more homogenous in its traditions. The curriculum field inevitably becomes more universal, favoring a growing number of meetings, conferences and diffusion of texts throughout the world. "A professor who works with curriculum studies, in Teheran, sent me a message: he has been reading my articles. Even in an Islamic country, curriculum theory is important”. “I think that it is good that this is so, so that the theories and curriculum studies are not restricted to the colloquial”.

However, there are different versions of what internationalization is, affirms the English professor. “That of Pinar seems to be the most well known in the field of curriculum studies. Nevertheless, the work I do in South Africa, Australia and New Zealand also involves the internationalization of curriculum studies and theory.

The Brazilian researcher considers that the current internationalization movement had its origins in the United States. “This movement is an opening of part of the members of the North-American field to the existence of the field in other countries. What is done in other countries has to be understood”. The internationalization which comes about through the International Association, she adds, is an internationalization promoted by a very specific group. “It is a movement very close to the reconceptualization of the 70s, engendered by the same heads, even though today it includes more other heads”.

When they began the movement, they created the American Association, to guarantee an institutional base for the process. What difference is noted between the 70s movement and that of today? For the researcher, in that decade “there was a counter-position to the Tyler discussion. Today there is a counter-position to the maintenance of the internal discussion of the United States and an attempt of opening up to other countries”.

Pinar’s preoccupation, in the beginning, was: “we need to consider that there are things being produced in other places”. The professor adds: the internationalization is not to be considered as “let’s impose the reading of our texts, but let’s bring to the United States something from the production of these people”.

**Specialists’ views on strategies capable of improving the process of internationalization**

Still, according to the Brazilian researcher, an important strategy to intensify internationalization has been the organization of collections, by Bill Pinar, reuniting the scientific production of the curriculum field in different countries. A book on South Africa and another on Brazil have already been published. Thus, internationalization makes it easy to offer, to the researchers of a given country, greater visibility in the American publisher’s market. More space is opened up to pedagogical literature in certain countries.
On the other hand, for the South-African researcher, the collection organized by Pinar has had no significant effect, in his country, neither with the academics who study the curriculum nor with the schools.

“For the South-African academics already recognized internationally, the book does not make the least difference. I do not believe it has made them better known. I think what is most important would be to invite the South-African researchers to international conferences. (...) Maybe their voices could be heard more. (...) If one of us goes to an important conference with something important to say, he will be heard. So it is thus that the dissemination of knowledge occurs in the field. New mechanisms do not always work. (...) Who reads the books? I did not read the book on Brazil. (...) It would be interesting to know who reads these books”.

Distinct visions on the strategy of collections have been explained in the Interviews.

For the Chinese professor, the most effective strategy to initiate internationalization was the creation of the International Association (IAACS) in 2001. A productive exchange of ideas then began to take place. However, for this to occur, a respect for the point of view of the other has been indispensable. Only thus does the researcher see as possible a closer collaboration among academics and specialists from diverse nations.

In the case of China, a favorable posture for the opening of internationalization can be observed in many areas, including in education. “We have sent professors to other countries, to Europe, to North America, where they discover and study problems of other countries and begin cooperating with their colleagues, taking advantage of the experiences of these countries”. It is a process of internationalization, argues the researcher, which has included the practice as well as the theory.

One of the North-American specialists and his wife, interviewed together, also emphasized the importance of the international association and of conferences organized by it. Those that have already taken place (in China, Finland and Brazil) plus the one that will occur in Canada have given evidence to how much the internationalization process has been promoted in different continents, covering practically the whole world. Added to that is the organization of the North American association, as well as, more recently, other associations in numerous countries. The researcher states:

“The roots are migrating from one place to another, from one country to another, throughout the world. One of our hopes was that we would need to work hard to promote that growth which needs to be nurtured by others. From this conference in Rio, it is evident that this is now happening. The Association has demonstrated itself to be in fact international”.

He emphasized that, in the conferences, contacts with academics of various nationalities have been possible, which for him is admirable.

“We have done many things together; I have begun to understand myself better through the other and the other also understands himself better through contact with me. I always talk to people from other countries. It is fascinating, because the cultures are so different, (...) I learn a lot from these differences, (...) For this reason, it is important that there be a difference”.

The North American specialist added: “there is no learning unless it is through the difference. (...) If there is no difference, we do not learn. (...) Only
when we begin to confront our differences do we learn”. In this respect, the professor added: “but we need to preserve our individualities, which become enriched through contact with the difference”. For him, our situations are not similar, but we can learn based on distinct experiences. This perspective intensifies the internationalization process: “to emphasize the problems we have in common, even though they may be in different degrees and in different forms”. In spite of possible disagreements, the discussion of these problems enriches the process. It has been verified that the interference of cultural differences, in the perspective of both, does not seem to constitute a major impediment to communication.

The researcher considered that in the meeting in Rio people were more comfortable in their relationships with others. This took some time to develop, but there was no longer a feeling of inferiority, on the part of some, that in the first events made any dialog difficult. The people are more open, wanting to share and exchange ideas. The professor, her husband, confirmed this atmosphere of trust at the conference, when a certain sense of community became evident and the conversation could reach a more profound level. Solidarity and the desire to contribute with the other seem to have increased. The ambient for an easier, more fluent and more authentic dialog took some time – three conferences – to consolidate itself.

The researcher added that in the conference in Rio, for the first time, research projects in conjunction were suggested, including investigations of different origins. This proposal indicates that a higher level of collaboration and dialog has been attained. Its fulfillment will certainly intensify even more the internationalization of the field of curriculum studies. The Brazilian specialist also pointed out the importance of research in conjunction. “The best internationalization strategy, for me, is made when people are able to produce knowledge together; that is what I understand by internationalization”. But she did admit that the difficulty in getting the necessary resources and the lack of time constitute an impediment to the development of investigations.

The publication of articles was also valued by the Brazilian researcher, in spite of recognizing that the journal *Transnational Curriculum Inquiry*, which could widely divulge internationalization, has had difficulties in the selection of good articles, because of innumerable rejections.

The strategies proposed by the researchers involved, in synthesis, the holding of conferences, the creation of associations of curriculum studies, research in conjunction, and the publication of articles in periodicals that favor the exchange of ideas and experiences.

**Specialists’ views on impasses and difficulties in the process**

What are the problems felt in the internationalization process? For the Chinese professor they are beyond doubt the difficulties implied in the communication between the specialists.

“At the cultural level, we need to understand the other. However, problems are inevitable. Because of the different cultures, the different capacities. It is improbable that two different cultures are suddenly able to understand each another. It is surely impossible. (...) But it is important. Through certain basic attitudes we can reduce the problems and do good things. To consider the other,
respect the qualities of other countries and other cultures. We can live together, in spite of the historic difficulties. People with different theories can then work together and cooperate with one another. (...) It is a good basis for the development of curriculum studies”.

For the Brazilian professor, the notion of complicated conversation, used by Pinar in referring to curriculum studies, is just a term. It presents no theoretical basis. It is valid from the point of view of articulation, but is more operational than theoretical.

“I work with the question of dialog as impossible, but necessary. (...) It is the paradox of the impossibility of a thing which is necessary. (...) Our being conscious of the impossibility of translation, our knowing the impossibility of dialog does not imply giving up translation, giving up dialog (...) impossible for me is the absolute fulfillment of a thing. This thing may be necessary and not possible”.

The Brazilian specialist also called attention to another problem: the fact that the conferences required elevated expenses. Resources are not easily obtained and the North American researchers have not received the assistance that is needed for them to travel, despite the importance of establishing closer relations with other countries.

The researcher added:

“In the process of research in conjunction, in internationalization, no one from outside will come if we do not pay transport and accommodation. (...) After all, the payment is ours. (...) The desire for internationalization, the good will toward internationalization (...) all this is true, but the payment is not going to come from them, it is going to come from us”.

The expenses with internationalization refer to another central problem: the difficulty with the institutionalization of the process.

“How do you institutionalize all this? It is all very fine to speak of internationalization, but someone has to act, someone has to do voluntary work for the association (...) for the journal, send articles to journals that have not been classified”.

Another question is also raised, according to the Brazilian professor. When speaking of internationalization, “what is our place in this process? Because we know of theirs.”

The language used in the process is also an important question. I continue with the Brazilian’s talk:

“What we really have is an internationalization in English. It is something I discuss all the time: the intention, in the conference of Rio, was to place everyone speaking various languages. People did not send texts, but at least the resumes are in two languages, to guarantee this idea. (...) Normally people who are interested in internationalization speak some English. (...) They do not even try to speak Portuguese and the English I speak they understand, then everything is OK. (...) They are somewhat worried. They are never going to learn Portuguese, but they are worried about that”.

The problem of language was also emphasized by the Finnish professor, who stated that the internationalization process began, fundamentally, in the United States. English predominated. In spite of this hegemony, spaces were opened for more countries. Today the United States and Canada are not the only countries who participate. The high quality of research in Brazil has guaranteed the visibility of the Brazilian field, already clearly recognized in the curriculum
community. China too has appeared in evidence. Europe is less present, due to its greater preoccupation with Didactics. However, the contacts that have been established in meetings will certainly allow the process continue, with the possibility of more exchanges and the formation of networks between the researchers. The problem of language does not end up interfering with the rhythm of the process.

For the English professor engaged in curriculum sociology, the English language is spoken by the majority of researchers. If it were not for the United States, it could be Spanish. In his opinion: “I do not think it is anything worrisome. It is not anything good or bad; it is a fact. The English language is a temporal phenomenon. There is no way to deny it or demonize it. It is a part of history”. Maybe soon, he added, curriculum studies will be in Chinese, which could become the common language.

Commenting on the researchers’ talks and concluding

It can be verified, from the researchers’ talks, that the internationalization process has been understood differently. The first mode of doing it corresponds to a perspective of convergence of the curricula proposed in schools, facilitating as much by the process of globalization as by international systems of evaluation. According to this focus, the path takes the direction of uniformity, more than a shared proposal.

This perspective may be criticized. Uniformity corresponds to a production that occurs in a globalized world: it is the fruit not of a necessity, but of a standard that generalizes itself, of merchandise that mass produced. It expresses, then, the principle of functionality. According to Francois Jullien (2009), the uniform derives from the imitation: there is no rational argument that justifies it; only its frequency seems to authorize it. Beyond globalization, the evaluations on a world scale also impose uniform models, understood “as the only imaginable scenery” (Jullien, 2009, p. 33).

With this, the curriculum studies end up resulting in a “discrete dictatorship”, presenting only superficial variations, which try to give some local color to the proposals. Nevertheless, still according to Jullien, while uniformization anesthetizes, due to its regularities, the difference can create tension, discussion, creative action. The uniform, in synthesis, contributes to its devaluing itself and even the richness of cultural differences is lost.

A second view of internationalization implies the force to understand how, in different countries, emerging problems or themes are being dealt with at a time of globalization. In this sense, it is indispensable to discuss the views of the school, the curriculum, the curriculum policy, culture, the teaching, the professor, and the student that, in different countries, attempt to guarantee to all the students a successful learning experience. As an expression of this experience, it is worthwhile to register the dossier organized by Lyn Yates and Michael Young (2010) and published in the European Journal of Education. The two specialists commissioned researchers from 5 countries (Sweden, England, Australia, Norway and Belgium), articles that took into account the following questions:

(a) How should the curriculum respond to global economic pressures?
(b) To what degree and how can curriculum policies approach questions of inequality and of persistent failure of schools of children from less favored groups in society?

(c) To what measure, despite common global pressures, does the curriculum in each country continue to reflect national traditions and preoccupations?

(d) Do global economic pressures induce a more integrated curriculum for all students or a curriculum that differentiates those who plan to go to the university from those who tend to look for jobs as soon as they leave school?

(e) How do educational policies interpret the knowledge that constitutes the basis of the curriculum? Is it considered anachronic to base the curriculum on subjects separated by clear boundaries? What alternatives have been proposed?

Subjacent to these questions there is the thematic of the relative autonomy of the curriculum. Is this autonomy to be defended or is it to be judged that the curriculum constitutes an instrument so that broader political, social and economic proposals be fulfilled? These and other questions indicate the position of those who are more concerned in interpreting effects and dilemmas of the internationalization process, examining the impact of globalization on the curriculum, instead of stimulating debates, meetings and associations as it is done in the last perspective referring to internationalization.

This third modality of understanding internationalization, strongly defended by the group associated with William Pinar, implies an exchange of experiences, of points of view, of ideas. It implies a greater number of congresses, frequent publication of texts that promote the process, intensification of the reading of articles and foreign books, collaboration among researchers from different countries. It is emphasized that the proposal is mutual enrichment, not homogenization. In this effort, there has to be the articulation of the global and the local, without the national histories and interests becoming erased or diluted.

Nevertheless, the risk that, in this process, the local is annulled by a supposedly scientific posture in search of universal knowledge has been correctly brought up by an academic and should not be secondary.

Still: it is important that the most powerful voices do not dominate the dialogs, as it is necessary that the attraction by theories produced in hegemonic nations not overshadow the critical vision that always needs to be maintained. Thought cannot be allowed to surrender to the uniform, impoverish and contaminate itself by “less noble” interests that may, even though unconscientiously, underlie the forces of cooperation. In the research in conjunction that has come to be developed, there needs to be a space reserved for the problems and necessities that mark the local educational scenarios. There needs to be, in addition, a well thought and cautious adoption of themes, methodologies and theoretical references.

It is also fitting to consider the question of the predominance of English. The internationalization of a language cannot be understood without the proper contextualization, that is, without considering the political and economic phenomena that support it. In other words, language is not only an instrument of communication; it is also an instrument of power. The diffusion of English in the
world has increased by the unprecedented expansion as much by the North American economy as by the American way of life in the 20th century. It became a highly rated product.

Their hegemony gained, then, legitimacy, through evaluation criteria that attributed value to the language of politically and economically powerful nations in the international scope.

Today, English attends to the need for understanding matters of relevance, as the diffusion of knowledge and science. However, in the process of diffusion, many other voices are silenced. "Much of what is thought in other languages is not shared as knowledge among all peoples" (Almeida-Santos, 2012, p. 249).

In addition, new publications in English contribute to the strengthening of this language. The greater the number of publications, the greater the number of readers, a number that increases as the access to such publications become necessary. Thus, a vicious circle is created. Additionally, the volume of scientific production in English motivates researchers who speak other languages to publish their articles in English, which guarantees greater visibility for their productions. (Almeida-Santos, 2012).

Evidently, the language under discussion facilitates communication and the investigators today tend to dominate it. Yet we cannot refrain from asking ourselves, at a time when specialists from oriental countries have constituted a significant presence in the conferences and associations, if the shared ideas and theories are expressed with the same facility in all languages. We cannot forget, Jullien (2009) warns us, that we think in language. What are the implications of this acceptance in the process of the field internationalization? How to better deal with it? Some strategies have been proposed, as publications of texts in more than one language, in journals and annals. What degree of effectiveness have they presented? Is there an alternative or do we all have to study English and think in English? Do we need to adapt our habits and make an effort to dominate the language for a more effective participation in the international market?

For Almeida-Santos (2012), in the globalized society in which we live, we are still far from the day when another language will replace it. For the time being, the preponderance of English in the internationalization of the curriculum field cannot be disconsidered. Its implications should be constantly analyzed.

We come to the question of the dialog between different cultures, that is, to cultural translation. For some specialists, the difference enriches, promotes growth. For others, it is a difficulty to be confronted. I wish to argue that the question has been little developed by the specialists, except by the Brazilian researcher.

I consider that Susan Harris’s theory (2011) on cultural translation may be useful for the discussion. For her, cultural translation does not represent an attempt to accommodate linguistic differences; it does refer to the nature of the meaning. The possibility of translation is, in reality, a condition for the meaning.

But language does not transport the meaning; it constitutes what we are as human beings. In this sense, a translation that limits itself to perform a transmission is not a good translation, for to be considered as good, it needs to involve mystery and the unattainable; it needs to associate the impossible and the necessary. It never becomes an absolute translation, but translation cannot
be eschewed; especially in situations experienced by different speakers of the same language (Moreira, 2012).

A translation cannot be seen, thus, as an end, but definitely as a beginning, a transformation, a renovation. However, there is always an element of translation that refuses a posterior translation, which implies admitting what is foreign, what is different, which is quite untranslatable. This acceptance is not necessarily negative: there is inside it a value that needs to be recognized.

The emphasis on the impossibility does not lead to apathy, for what is in question is the condition itself of the meaning. The impossibility condemns us not to give up trying. Whenever we move toward something, we never reach a final point. It is an orientation, more than just a route. The richness of the idea of the non-translatable makes absolute understanding in fact impossible: there will always be limits in relation to what we can understand of the other and of ourselves. However, this impossibility is the condition itself of the meaning, bringing with itself the ethical imperative which impedes giving up. It is an ethical responsibility that calls us: we must answer; no one can answer for us. The concept of translation shows itself, then, central for our existence as human beings: we are always in translation.

The impossibility refers to the fact that the translation is never totally attained. What we are able to get will always be a partial conquest, imperfect. However, if the translation is never complete, which practically disables internationalization, it is worthwhile to emphasize that this process reveals itself, then, as even more instigating.

In relation to cultural translation, I suggest that other theories that analyze it may be useful to warn us of partial and temporary advances that we may eventually achieve.

The acceptance of our limits will keep us from the temptation of disregarding questions, of attempting to understand perfectly similarities and differences, of getting definite answers. Despite uncertainty, insecurity and incompleteness, there is a need to insist on the effort to commitment for all of us, curriculum researchers, as much in dialog as in translation, so that new perceptions of the other and of ourselves may emerge.

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