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CHOICE OF KNOWLEDGE IN INDIGENOUS SCHOOLS: TWO GUARANI CASES (SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL)

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Abstract

What social processes determine the choice of the knowledge that circulates in indigenous schools? This question may shed light on the modalities of power that contribute to forging collective meanings of education in local communities. The article presents research aimed to answer this question. We made direct observation of two schools in Guarani territories in SP and conducted interviews and informal conversations with their teachers and leaders. The results describe the influence of governmental conduct, teaching conceptions, and community preferences on the conformation of school work. The performance of indigenous teachers stands out, who produce circumscribed practices of autonomy that, in the small-scale perspective of the logic of educational innovation, overcome the colonialist norm which historically shaped schools for indigenous people.

INDIGENOUS SCHOOL • GUARANI • INNOVATION • CURRICULUM

JEPORAVO ARANDU NHEMBO'E: NHEMBO'EAPY NHANDE'VA'E SÃO PAULO PY GUA

Resumo[1]

Mbaeixa tu ojeporavo arandu regua oiko iny avã nhembo'e nhande py? Ko porandu ma omoenxakã iny mbaexapa nhembo'e mbaraete oaxa omomba'rupi vy ma jogueroguata nhembo'e regua rupi. Kova'e kuatia para ma tekoa oexauka kova'e porandu regua. Rojapo reve mokoi tekoa nhembo'e apy, roexa mbya rekoa apy S.P. py. Ha'egui rojapo avi roporandu rojogueroayvu ombo'eva'e kuery reve ha'egui hu'vixa kuery reve. Ko ipara pa mavy jaexa jurua ruvixa kuery ojapo va'ekue ombo'eva'e kuery oikuaa aru pi ha'egui nhande va'e kuery oipotaa'arami ko nhembo'e ko mbaeapo nhemboeapy, ha'evy ma ojekaa rai mbya ombo'eva'e kuery; ha'e va'e rive'i rupi mã ojekaa mba'eapo regua ete ha'e vy ma petei anhetenguá aynguigua nhembo'earupi, imbaraete ve ju etava'e kuery regua gui.

NHEMBO'EATY • NHANDE'VA'E • NHEMOI PORÃ • NHEMBO'E KUATIA PARA REGUA

1 Translated to Guarani by Márcio Boggarim, leader at Tekoa Yvy Porã (Jaraguá), whom the authors wish to thank.

ESCOLHA DE SABERES A ENSINAR NA ESCOLA INDÍGENA: DOIS CASOS GUARANI EM SÃO PAULO

Resumo

Como se escolhem os saberes que circulam nas escolas indígenas? Essa pergunta serve a iluminar as formas de poder local e extralocal que definem os sentidos coletivos da educação em comunidades locais. A pesquisa apresentada neste artigo enfrenta esse problema. Fizemos observação direta de duas escolas em aldeias guarani de São Paulo e realizamos entrevistas e conversas informais com seus profissionais e lideranças. Os resultados são descrições da influência de condutas governamentais, concepções docentes e preferências comunitárias sobre a conformação do trabalho escolar, em que se destaca a atuação dos professores indígenas: estes pontualmente configuram práticas de autonomia que, na perspectiva de pequena escala da lógica de inovação educacional, superam um molde colonialista.

ESCOLA INDÍGENA • GUARANI • INOVAÇÃO • CURRÍCULO

ELECCIÓN DE SABERES PARA ENSEÑAR EN LA ESCUELA INDÍGENA: DOS CASOS GUARANÍES EN EL ESTADO DE SÃO PAULO, BRASIL

Resumen

¿Cómo son elegidos los saberes que circulan en las escuelas indígenas? Esta pregunta sirve para iluminar las formas de poder local y extralocal que definen los sentidos colectivos para la educación en comunidades locales. La investigación presentada en este artículo enfrenta este problema. Hicimos observación directa de dos escuelas en aldeas guaraníes de São Paulo y realizamos entrevistas y conversaciones informales con sus profesionales y líderes. Los resultados son descripciones de la influencia de las conductas gubernamentales, las concepciones docentes y las preferencias comunitarias en la conformación del trabajo escolar, en las que destaca la acción de los docentes indígenas: ellos crean puntualmente prácticas de autonomía que, en la pequeña escala propia de la lógica de la innovación educativa, superan un molde colonialista.

ESCUELA INDÍGENA • GUARANÍ • INNOVACIÓN • CURRICULUM

CHOIX DES SAVOIRS À ENSEIGNER DANS LES ÉCOLES INDIGÈNES: DEUX CAS GUARANI DANS L'ÉTAT DE SÃO PAULO, BRÉSIL

Résumé

Comment choisit-on les savoirs qui seront enseignés aux écoles indigènes ? Cette question peut éclairer les formes de pouvoir local et extralocal qui définissent les sens collectifs de l'éducation dans des communautés locales. Les recherches présentées dans cet article affrontent ce problème. Deux écoles des collectivités guarani de l'état de São Paulo ont été étudiées par moyen d'observations directes, d'entrevues et de conversations informelles avec leurs professionnels et dirigeants. Les résultats décrivent l'influence des comportements gouvernementaux, des conceptions des enseignants et des préférences de la communauté sur la configuration du travail scolaire, mettant en évidence l'action des enseignants indigènes : ceux-ci façonnent ponctuellement des pratiques d'autonomie qui, dans la petite échelle qui est propre de la logique de l'innovation éducationnelle, surmontent le modèle colonialiste.

ÉCOLES INDIGÈNES • GUARANI • INNOVATION • CURRICULUM

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THIS STUDY SHOWS THE PARTIAL RESULTS OF AN INTERDISCIPLINARY LINE OF RESEARCH originated in the sociology of education field, and dedicated to identifying aspects in which current indigenous schools in Brazil overcome the colonialist character of schooling historically imposed upon indigenous peoples in this country.[2] By focusing on *who* chooses the knowledge to be taught and *how* it is chosen, we compared two schools in Guarani territories in the state of São Paulo. One is the Djekupe Amba Arandy State School, located in the Jaraguá Indigenous Land, in the city of São Paulo, the state capital. The other one is the Txeru Ba'e Kua-i Indigenous State School, in the Ribeirão Silveira Indigenous Land, municipality of Bertioga, in the state coast.

Our team's previous projects at Alto Rio Negro, in the state of Amazonas, validated the hypothesis that colonialist schooling has been overcome in aspects regarding, for example, the convergence between the knowledge taught in schools and the projects which the communities enunciate for their future (Abbonizio, 2013; Pellegrini, 2014; Ghanem, 2016), although limited by education departments' standardizing patterns. Such phenomena have been interpreted as a scenario in which the colonialist school mold can be overcome in the scale of the local practices covered by the "logic of educational innovation" – a theoretical angle by Ghanem (2018) which aims to both assess the situated advances and examine the obstacles proper to this order of initiatives.

Maintaining the goal of detecting aspects in which the current indigenous schools overcome the historical colonialism which first defined them, this stage of research focuses on the actors and conditions intervening on the choice of knowledge to be taught. Aiming at a greater comparative reach, we involved indigenous communities from Baniwa groups (in the state of Amazonas), Guarani-Kaiowa groups (in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul), and Guarani groups (in the state of São Paulo). This study addresses the Guarani cases.[3] We seek to identify who chooses the knowledge put into circulation in schools, and how this choice occurs in terms of autonomy conditions (freedom, information, and community influence). We carried direct observation in school environments, and listened to school professionals and leaders during recorded interviews and many informal conversations, in the methodological option of the "conversing researcher" (Spink, 2008).

In the next two sections, we relate our research problem to the studies in educational innovation, and place it in the debates on curriculum and knowledge regimes in indigenous schools. Then, in the two final sections, we expose the information collected for each school concerning the difficulties they experience; the community influence in guiding their work; the objectives set for their existence; and the educational practices which take place in them.

Why talk about innovation in indigenous schools?

By framing these schools as cases of innovation, we adopt the definition of *educational innovation* as one of the three logics of action which may rule the initiatives to change educational practices in a given context, in the sense which Ghanem (2018) proposes, developing ideas found in Torres (2000).

2 Projects conducted by Centro Universitário de Investigações em Inovação, Reforma e Mudança Educacional [University Center for Research in Educational Innovation, Reform, and Change] (Ceunir), from the Faculdade de Educação da Universidade de São Paulo [Faculty of Education of USP] (Feusp), and financed by the Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo [São Paulo Research Support Foundation] (Fapesp) and Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico [National Council for Scientific and Technological Development] (CNPq).

3 Estimates suggest that, in 2008, the Guarani population in Brazil totaled about 51,000 people, including the Kaiowa (31,000), Nhandeva/Tupi-Guarani (13,000), and Mbya (7,000). Its territory extends throughout the whole meridional part of South America (Instituto Socioambiental, 2021).

In contrast to the "logic of reform" (defining the large educational changes, conceived and managed by governmental or supranational structures), the "logic of innovation" describes the typical movement of small-scale initiatives aimed at altering educational processes in the local dimension. They need not be unprecedented practices: it is enough that they contradict the usual ones in a given place or group, usually following processes of conception and execution in which the prominence and freedom of teachers are determinant.

Avoiding certain common paths in dealing with the acutely diverse phenomena called "innovation" in education[4] (for example: focusing too much on the types of results obtained by those practices, or not distinguishing the kinds of actors who might originate initiatives of educational alteration, or else, reducing the scope of the term only to technological innovation), Ghanem's conceptualization is rather interested in the endogenous, creative, empirical, and mobilizing traits involved in the very making of those experiences.

It also points out the constitutive ambivalence of the logic within which such practices typically operate: although they are relevant for their great local pertinence, inventiveness, and aggregating potential, they remain restricted to the small scale, poorly visible, little articulated, and weakly supported by regular budgets and institutional frames – and thus reliant on strong voluntarism, and prone to ephemerality or intermittence.

In addition to facing these inherent difficulties, such experiences clash, by their very singular and divergent aspect, against the official logics of educational intervention ("reform") that, operating "from the top down," direct public resources and provide firm support and visibility to certain lines of action conceived and implemented under strong hierarchical, centralist, bureaucratic, and standardizing traditions.

Indigenous schools, "trapped between two logics," notably exemplify the impasse described by Torres (2000), since neither modality of action can produce the changes the actors yearn for. Ghanem denominates "logic of change" the one supposedly capable of producing the desired systemic alteration in education (or, at least, capable of deliberately directing and dosing the rapid change which is the norm of contemporary societies).

If Coloniality is at the core of the great cultural schemes of Modernity (Ballestrin, 2013), overcoming the former means, at the limit, the same as overcoming the latter. Thus, overcoming colonialism in indigenous schools refers to a horizon of systemic "change" in education – which ultimately coincides with the historical-cultural social levels of change.However, research in indigenous schools has been suggesting the punctual overcoming of colonialism in the scales of educational innovation and reform, achieving successes characteristically inscribed in the potentialities and limitations of these respective logics.

School knowledge, indigenous knowledge, and indigenous child education

The colonialist schooling historically imposed on indigenous peoples of the Americas adopted, under certain variations (Oliveira & Nascimento, 2012), the same eurocentric sets of propositional knowledge, which still prevail as a tacit "official curriculum" in the large mass of non-indigenous Brazilian schools.Although such selection claims to be legitimized by the republican ideal of popularizing the heritage of scientific knowledge, the school itself represents, organizes, and exposes such knowledge as static truths, rather than as fruit of permanent scientific questioning.

4 For a review of how the educational field has handled the disputed term "innovation," see Tavares (2019).

The indistinct application, over numerous territories, of this fixed menu of universalizing topics (separated from their processes of origin and revision) meets scant local relevance, and inspires a rarefied intellectual engagement among teachers and students.

Reacting to the hegemony of this pattern, the inclusion of so-called "traditional" themes among the objects of knowledge prioritized by indigenous schools – a measure strongly recommended within the innovative field that in Brazil has been called "differentiated indigenous school education" (Grupioni, 2008, p. 48, own translation) – has proved to be an equally incomplete and ambiguous way of recognizing the legitimacy and importance of autochthonous knowledge.

Firstly because this solution might also meet external agendas, such as the influences and expectations of allies, trainers, and advisors. Secondly because it is also subject to "pitfalls," as Gallois (2013) warns, since such knowledge emanates from its own production, learning, and circulation regimes, with their own criteria of authority and truth, and specific procedures and definitions on who can transmit them, and how, and to whom. When brought to the school practices, they undergo didactic transpositions which (as they do with scientific knowledge) sever them from such regimes of origin and meaning. The Guarani knowledge of plants, for example,

> . . . implies a specialized knowledge, linked to social distinctions which go against the proposal of making an inventory, recorded in textbooks and video . . . . As one of the *tamõi* [the same as *xamoĩ*] said, "you have to pray the medicine, or it doesn't work." (Macedo, 2009, p. 140, own translation).

In fact, the education of children in Amerindian societies takes place in a variety of ways, often incompatible with schooling. Cohn (2000), for instance, refusing to examine the indigenous facts with only a shallow understanding of socialization as a simple inculcation performed by adults over immature generations, described how Kayapó-Xikrin children not only *receive* care and teaching, but also play active roles in shaping their own inscription in the social world.

In such types of active formative procedures, the children's freedom for daily circulation and conviviality between peers and with other generations would be indispensable. Subtracting them from the periods and spaces in which they would learn in customary contexts, what could the school model do to favor the bodies of knowledge whose situated learning was thus abdicated?

With a similar concern, among the Mbya, Testa (2008, p. 293, own translation) argues that, "instead of making an inventory of ways of life, or of knowledge as a set of cultural characteristics and products," the discussion about native knowledge should "accompany the exercise of the knowing processes." To this intent, the author begins by "taking seriously the idea, often repeated by the Mbya, that everyone's life is their way of seeking and learning" – an idea which reverberates the recognized "importance that the Guarani give to mobility" as the "productive search for places and relationships" (*-guatá*, "walking" and, especially, relating to otherness when walking). She concludes that "transmission of knowledge, and learning, can also be approached as processes of displacement and communication between different spaces and interlocutors."

Studying Mbya knowledge, thus, "is not restricted to the listing of what people know, but means exploring the question of how one knows, and understanding the paths giving access to this knowledge" (p. 293, own translation). Testa (2008) argues that the production of knowledge among these groups resides precisely in the shamanistic practices of kinship formation, and in the care around births, diseases, deaths, travel, etc., inferring that,

> . . . unless we insist on reducing knowledge to school education, the processes of producing, acquiring, and transmitting knowledge are at the center of the Guarani daily life of walking between and relating to family, other humans, and non-humans. (2008, p. 295, own translation).

Such Mbya emphasis on a *relational* sense of knowledge implies that "people do not have the definite possession of the knowledge they acquire, but rather access it continuously in order to set it into circulation." Thus, the prestige is placed "not upon he who has much knowledge, but upon he who shows the ability to access and mobilize it, whether in healing, in the leadership of a group, or in counseling" (Testa, 2008, p. 297, own translation).

This perspective is in line with the emic sense which Nogueira da Silva (2015, p. 18, own translation) collected for the term *conhecimento* ("knowledge") in the Mbya use of the Portuguese language: an "ability to confront the agents causing spiritual ills".

This author testifies that an important place to learn the Guarani way of living is the *opy* (house of prayer), place of daily spiritual meetings, singing, and dance. There, the children sing, and the young learn to ask for protection from deities, or for their intermediation to pacify relations with non-human subjectivities.

One also learns, in the daily life among families and kin, about crops, conviviality, social relations, and spiritual affairs. Dreams are means for all to communicate with the deities, and it is customary to tell them to relatives in the morning around the fire, preparing *ka'a* (the traditional *mate* infusion), so elders can interpret them and make decisions. Similarly, the use of the smoking pipe (*petỹgua*), the singing-praying (*poraei*), or the preparation of medicines (*poã*) involve widely circulating knowledge and shamanic practices.

During *xondaro*[5] training, one learns physical dexterity, collective work, and defenses in the face of dangers coming from the *jurua* (non-Guarani, "white"), from other ethnicities, or from non-human agents. The youth there receives guidance, makes solidarity bonds beyond kinship, and visits other villages for dancing and collaborating in rituals.

Other occasions to learn are the meetings of leaders,[6] the meetings on land demarcation, or the contact with the non-indigenous, situations to which the young people are called and urged to listen and observe.

The Jaraguá Indigenous Land and Tekoa Ytu

The Jaraguá Indigenous Land[7] was instituted in 1987. Spanning only 1.7 hectare, it is the smallest TI (*Terra Indígena*, Portuguese for Indigenous Land) in Brazil. In 2015, an additional (yet still small) area of 532 hectares (5.32 km^2) was recognized, and is now awaiting approval.

According to the 2013 Demarcation Report, 586 people inhabited that TI. This area partially overlaps with the Jaraguá State Park, but its surroundings have strong urban densification. It houses six *tekoa* ("villages" in the usual translation, or "place where one lives the [Guarani] way of life"), called Ytu, Pyau, Itakupe, Yvy Porã, Itavera, and Itaendy. The Djekupe Amba Arandy School is located in Tekoa Ytu.

Testa (2008, p. 294, own translation) notes that, within Guarani groups,

> . . . the occasional division of one group from another, which may result in the constitution of a new *tekoa* within the same indigenous land or in another place, is a characteristic of the mbya social organization, for which the fluid relational dynamics is highly productive.

5 Nogueira da Silva (2015, p. 134, own translation) elucidates that "xondaro is neither an age group nor a post, but a position which gains existence from its relationship with another position, the uvixa (chief, leader), which, in turn, is also contextual, i.e., existing only in the course of an event."

6 See Perrone-Moisés (2015, p. 24, own translation) for a discussion of the term-category lideranças (roughly "leaders") in the "indigenous-spoken Portuguese."

7 The description of this Indigenous Land and of the Djekupe Amba Arandy School was largely based on Nogueira da Silva's work (2015).

However, the concentration in a small area can potentiate particularities and divergences, resulting in difficulties in building consensus over the territory as a whole. Living in each other's vicinity does not make the relationships between the residents of Tekoa Pyau and Tekoa Ytu – the two main *tekoa*, situated in the largest housing conglomerate of the TI, separated only by a street, and respectively known by *aldeia de cima*, the "upper village", and *aldeia de baixo*, the "lower village" – much stronger than those they establish with any other villages in which they have kinship connections.

There is a separate *opy* in each of these two contiguous *tekoa*. The villages are commonly polarized in conflicts of varying intensity (Nogueira da Silva, 2015, p. 69). But the relative independence between both *tekoa*'s daily lives in the political, economic, and ceremonial aspects is permeated by kinship and shamanic relations.

The narrow size of the area renders food production impossible, requiring the inhabitants to purchase the food supply. Income is sought from commercialized crafts, retirement benefits, social programs, and the salaries of those who work in the health center and in the schooling facilities. A few gardens, spanning from 4 m^2 to 6 m^2 (43 to 64 sq. ft.), aim only to maintain traditional crops, used as gifts between relatives and allies and to instruct children.

In our team of five researchers, one had dedicated 16 years to studying with the Mbya from Jaraguá, especially at Tekoa Pyau. Leaning on these consolidated relationships, we conducted field work during the second half of 2019.

We initially presented our research at a meeting at the Tekoa Ytu *opy*, a few meters from the main school building, with teachers and students of the morning classes.

Outside the prayer house, a *jurua* teacher said he was bothered by the smoke from the *petỹgua* and the fire inside, condemning the use of pipes and calling himself "anti-smoking." He expressed his frustration to the indifference that the students' parents showed toward schooling: they would fail to encourage attendance and to see the importance of studying to obtain jobs.

The Djekupe Amba Arandy Indigenous State School

This school is expressly identified as the domain of the extended family who was at the forefront of its creation, and who is still involved in its operation. Whether by occupying posts and managing resources, including meals, or by concentrating opportunities for dialogue with non-indigenous agents, this preponderance is a factor of projection for this kin group in the social landscape of the village. The group's hegemony also influences the pedagogical guidelines of the school, making it a target to criticism from other internal groups.

The students speak the Portuguese language, commonly used in the school environment and in fluent communication with the *jurua*; but outside the school, and without the presence of the latter, they speak predominantly Guarani.

Difficulties

The school was inaugurated in 2000, by being officially detached from the *jurua* state school that initially harbored its classes. The students come from the six local *tekoa*. Those from Tekoa Itakupe, farther away, were not attending, for lack of transportation. It was estimated that five from all the children living in the land were studying in *jurua* schools outside the territory.

Despite believing that "*everything in the environment can be used as part of learning,*" one teacher lamented the school's lack of "*a good structure,*" including computers and larger classrooms to adequately serve the students, whose number already reached about 200. There wasn't a room dedicated to storing books or other learning materials. The facilities of a former cultural center were divided by steel cabinets to create four more "*classrooms,*" only two of which had blackboards.

Despite these limitations, two teachers said they had good conditions to develop their work. One of them even said he used to wake up feeling excited about the ideas he had for the classes. For him, the state government could offer a specialization course for teachers in "*differentiated indigenous school education*."

Another teacher said she observed a lack of indigenous teachers and managers with more "*propensity for culture*," "*more indigenous* nhandereko[8] *at heart*," who would more strongly debate with the *jurua*, refuse the government-sent material and decide to work by "*our indigenous ways*." For this to happen, leaders would also need to take interest in the school, and the faculty would need to ask for more support from them. This kind of collaboration was said to be hampered by the division with the upper village. She claimed the people were "*colonized, still, in education*."

Community influence

There had been a "general meeting" about the school at the beginning of the year, where it was decided that the Guarani language would only be taught from the fifth grade onward, and that first grade classes should move from the morning to the afternoon. At the bimonthly "*parent meeting,*" teachers talked about each student but did not address any other school issues. Although meetings are open to the community, it is always "*half* [of the parents] *or almost no one who comes.*" A teacher believes fathers and mothers are "*a little ashamed,*" and said teachers always invite them and the leaders to discuss school issues and see whether they are satisfied with "*the contents we teach.*"

Although the toddlers and young children enrolled at Centro de Educação e Cultura Indígena [Center for Indigenous Education and Culture] (Ceci), a municipal differentiated kindergarten school located in the upper village) are all supposed to study in the lower-village state school later on, the establishments do not interact. While the upper-village Ceci was created after requests for a public schooling service which would receive kindergarten children "*to maintain Guarani culture and practice,*" at the lower-village state school, subjects are taught in Portuguese due to the parents' demand – since the village is effectively enclaved in the city, and children must go out to shop in the surroundings, or to sell crafts further away, and would need to know Portuguese and mathematics to be able to trade.

Seeking greater collaboration with parents, the school coordinator said that, in addition to "*normal, bimonthly*" meetings, they had implemented other gatherings with teachers, leaders, and parents, "*focused on youth care, drug involvement,*" and issues such as pregnancy, marriages, and dropout rates. Attendance to those gatherings was high; parents thanked the coordinator, saying they did not know how to act on those subjects before, and valued such meetings since they showed "*the school also cared about the children*."

A teacher attributed great importance to the participation of the *xeramoĩ* in the school. When this instructor goes to the prayer house with his students, he asks the elder to observe what he says and to teach him how to speak correctly.

However, a female leader declared that the wisdom of the *xeramoĩ* "*is only spiritual,*" meaning it has no connection with the school.

She said she was not "*too involved in education,*" and that leaders don't have strong connections with the school. The reason she gave for that is the alleged rigidity of the Secretaria da Educação [Department of Education], which would rule over any issue, providing a kind of alibi for the school team to ignore the issues mobilizing the leaders. She feels the leaders have been waiting an invitation to participate in classrooms, which never arrives. She recalled, however, a leader who is also a teacher.

8 Freely translated as "our way of living", "our culture".

Another teacher deemed the community involvement in the school as a very oscillating one. He finds the collaboration is more intense when there are projects, or else in the Escola da Família program activities. This program, whose name means "School for the Family", is promoted by the Secretaria da Educação, offering leisure activities on weekends ("*which are not something of ours*"). He finds those activities insufficient to guarantee that the knowledge of *nhandereko* remains with the children: "*There must be a greater participation, especially of elders, who have very rich wisdom, and who we are unable to include* [into schools]." There were doubts about whether or not to pay them wages, with which budget source, and whether this would be good for the "*culture*." However, it was said the school should avoid becoming the focus of the existence of the *tekoa*: it must be part of it, but not try to teach everything.

According to another teacher, the school first aimed to include the community by inviting the presence of elders and leaders to deal with "*the cultural side*." But Ceci eventually "*took on that part*," while the school distanced itself from it. Disagreements occurred between the people from Tekoa Pyau (the upper village, harboring Ceci), and those from Tekoa Ytu (the lower village, where the school is): the latter claim that the former accuse them of speaking poor Guarani, of failing to attend the house of prayer, and of aiming to impose non-indigenous teaching. For this teacher, those from the upper village want to exert "*more dominance over the school*" and to "*include people as they will*."

The community evaluates teachers "*when it is needed,*" said another teacher, suggesting that this is not a regular practice. There is no local say in the choosing of which teachers to hire. Instead, a notice for registration is posted in the walls if vacancies emerge.

The same teacher also reported that the evening students couldn't attend the daily nocturnal rituals at the *opy*, a conflict of schedules whose solution was yet to be reached. For another teacher, these students could receive wisdom at the *opy* as well, but this did not exempt them from attending classes: "They must go to school."

Schooling objectives

According to Macedo (2009, p. 134), some Mbya *xamoĩ* have reservations about the school, which values whites' knowledge and ways of knowing, threatens the Guarani ways of living, and offers an inadequate environment to learn the *nhandereko*. In fact, in Jaraguá there are elders and leaders who would prefer the school to teach only *jurua* subjects.

For a Guarani teacher, the school is a survival weapon precisely for teaching Portuguese and whites' culture. She does not speak Guarani, and has worked for several years teaching Portuguese literacy. She complained about the children's lack of prior contact with writing ("*They do not even know what a pencil is*").

A female leader stated that the Guarani student wants to go to school only to work within the community, perhaps as a teacher. They do not intend to "*become lawyers, doctors, dentists,*" to graduate to work elsewhere, or to leave the *tekoa*, due to the "*spiritual connection between the village and the Guarani way of life*." For her, parents generally do not get involved: "*Children go to school and come back; it does not matter whether they have homework or not.*" They find more importance in playing, having space, working in the land, running, having a simple soccer field to play: "*This is the Guarani life*."

However, there are teachers who seek to reconcile the *jurua* schooling guidelines with a greater emphasis on "*culture*," while admitting the difficulty of reaching a consensus around this balance, or even doubting the viability of such a conciliation. One such teacher stated they wish to focus "*on our* nhandereko," but without depriving students "*of the world,*" for example, of "*requirements for becoming a lawyer.*" He wants to provide students with the conditions to do what

they want, working for the *tekoa* or elsewhere: *"Our concern must be to support them so they can follow their own path later."* He warned that the school can either teach "*the culture*" to the students, as it can also make them forget it.

School practices

The divergent preferences concerning the school objectives were reflected on the variety of school practices informed. A first-grade teacher said the children "*need to be controlled,*" because "*they com thinking it is all about playing and partying.*" In her class of 35 children, they "*made a mess, they yelled*." During her pre-service training, she was an intern at the Escola de Aplicação da USP [School of Application of USP], which she considered "*interesting, completely different from here,*" because the children "*were already well behaved, keeping tidy, remaining seated*."

Another teacher considers that the indigenous school is said to be differentiated because it has autonomy (to conduct projects without requiring authorization), but it rather fails to escape from the "*state*" curriculum, and lacks materials to teach the Guarani students. He stated he took his inspiration from people in the community, the *xamoĩ*, and the children. He invited outside partners for activities about plants, and took his students to the *opy* to listen to the *xamoĩ*.

Yet another teacher said he tried to follow the Secretaria's prescriptions concerning the subjects and the modes of teaching, until he perceived those prescriptions hindered his work and confused the students. For him, the indigenous person is born free in the village, which is the opposite of "*arresting*" children in the classrooms, and makes it very difficult to teach them theoretical content. He decided to "*do a quite differentiated work*" by taking them to the prayer house, by telling them the stories heard from the grandparents, by putting together a choir, by preparing traditional foods every week, by making trips to the woods and teaching students about this environment ("*Every place we go, there is always a protector there*"). He taught them when to cut trees or pick firewood, how to lay traps, and that one must avoid laying them in that region, to preserve the sparse forest in the city today.

This teacher tells he seeks to "*provide the content*" of the "jurua *system*" ("*mathematics, Portuguese, sciences*") and thinks students need to learn Portuguese – "*Who knows... in the future one of them might want to be a leader, fight for the indigenous cause, for health, for education, for the land.*" He teaches them the native language subject classes, during which only Guarani is spoken. In the other classes, he speaks in Portuguese and the students speak in Guarani. He also teaches mathematics, science, history, geography, and physical education. He finds it difficult to divide the schedules between the subjects, opting for "*differentiated classes*" in which he "*goes through some of those contents.*"

It was said that some older students, out of curiosity, occasionally looked for *jurua* schools, but eventually returned to the village school. A teacher finds that the outer schools show a greater requirement for study and written activities, fuller classes, indifferent teachers, and prejudice against indigenous people. In the village school, "*we are all* parente [indigenous, 'kin'] *and there are fewer students in the room.*" There is a smaller burden of lessons and greater respect for "*their customs,*" without impositions. She teaches English, arts, and the native language. Classes are inside, since activities outside the village would require transportation and food. Sometimes she walks around the village with her students; they write down words and search the internet on their mobile phones to translate them to English and hear their pronunciation.

The coordinator teacher reported that he used to forbid students from entering the classroom if they were 10 minutes late, and "*expected good performance*" from them. He taught mathematics in the fifth grade: he went on to more difficult subjects, found that his students reacted well, and demanded more from them. The themes were the "*content from the book,*" for example: "*from*

what I remember, potentiation", Bhaskara's formula, first- and second-degree equations. He was more rigid in some classes, "*to the point of not letting students get up from their chairs, because I knew that if they stood up they were up to something . . . maybe exit the classroom, or go up to a colleague and disturb them.*"

For this teacher, the system of assigning grades is "*a somewhat complex*" subject, since it is not fully put into practice. Teachers have to register the grades in an official online platform and, when it comes the time to assign them, they "*already know which student is good or bad. To those they feel have to learn more, they give the lower grades.*" According to him, the government is too much focused on results in terms of grades and goals. He also reports the demand of fulfilling deadlines for those online registrations: "*Registering the grades, the amount of ATPC hours ministered* [the Portuguese acronym stands for Collective Pedagogical Work Activities], *we have to type it.*"

He understands that, ideally, he should be helping teachers with their classes or students who have trouble learning, focusing "*only on the pedagogical part,*" but finds almost no time for it, devoting himself more to "*the bureaucracy part,*" helping the principal.

The coordinator believes that the ATPC hours should address the difficulties concerning the yearly planning or the students' attendance and dropout rates. The faculty addressed this latter issue by finding the high school absentees (who were about 15) and going to their houses to try and get them back to school. Among their reasons for dropping out, the coordinator reported that some felt discouraged, others said they didn't see the point in studying, and others still referred to the danger of dogs on the way to school.

The Ribeirão Silveira Indigenous Land

Located on the north coast of São Paulo, between the cities of Bertioga (4,310.61 ha of the total land), São Sebastião (4,036.40 ha), and Salesópolis (154.68 ha), this TI[9] has, according to Macedo (2009), a moderate amount of infrastructure and presence of public agencies. It was established in 1987, but the village that gave birth to it is thought to have been formed in the 1950s. The whole area is crossed by a main road, on which the school is located. The population gathers the Mbya and the Nhandeva Guarani partialities, among which there are many conjugal unions. Both dialects are spoken, Mbya being the most used. The group that the literature refers as Nhandeva are commonly called, and call themselves, Tupi or Tupi-Guarani. There were 350 people living in the TI in 2008, and 474 in 2021, but those numbers continuously vary due to the characteristic mobility of the Guarani.

The area holds geographical contiguity with the *jurua* world, at the same time as it maintains a separation. There are few regular external jobs, and those in the public facilities in the territory are the target of disputes, permeated by kinship relations and prestigious hierarchies. Other sources of income are retirement pensions, government social programs, the trading of plants or handcraft, and the providing of tourism guiding services. Almost all houses have a television, and relations of trade, donation or service provision are common, as is the increasing circulation of *jurua* in the area.

Dwellings are divided into five nuclei, each with their respective leadership. The whole is politically headed by a *cacique*, a "chief". Due to frequent interactions with the *jurua* in projects and in relationships with the governments, this function has specialized, so that no longer a chief is always the main spiritual leader of the village. During our visits, in the second half of 2019, a person

9 The description of TI Ribeirão Silveira summarizes the information compiled by Macedo (2009).

who was born in the southern state of Santa Catarina and lived in large cities held the position. He had learned Portuguese and had lead the management of land conflicts in several regions, including the TI Ribeirão Silveira. One of our interviewees finds that, as the *caciques* were instituted, "*spiritual leaders have lost some of their decision-making power*," and problems are no longer solved "*in the traditional way*."

The Txeru Ba'e Kua-i Indigenous State School

In 1996, the city installed a school in two containers, serving 70 students from preschool to the fourth grade, with one indigenous and three *jurua* teachers, besides a general services assistant, and a cook. It replaced the wooden school building that the residents had built up at the beginning of the decade, which had one Mbya teacher. An elder said: at the time, "*whoever had managed to study until the fourth grade, those were appointed to teach*."

At the end of 2000, the Nhembo'e'a Porã Indigenous Municipal School was inaugurated, a brick building, serving from kindergarten education to the seventh grade of elementary school, with five teachers attending indigenous pre-service teacher training at USP. The eighth grade was then introduced in 2006, and high school, in 2008. A 2009 administrative agreement kept the municipal school only with classes until the fourth grade and created, for the subsequent grades, the Txeru Ba'e Kua-i State Indigenous School. Macedo recorded that the positions in the school (then restricted to four teachers and two administrative assistants) were filled in 2009 by people from two particular families.

The teachers interviewed speak both Portuguese and Guarani well. They stated that, at the beginning of the state school, only two teachers were indigenous. In 2011, more Guarani teachers were hired among the first high school graduates of that very school, to teach elementary classes. High school continued for a while with many *jurua* teachers but, by 2019, most were already indigenous.

The first principal at Txeru Ba'e Kua-i school, working from 2009 to 2011, was a *jurua* employee, removed on community demand due to unsuitable conducts: saying that the children who went to school were dirty and that they should not attend barefoot, or require them to look into her eyes when she spoke, while the respectful custom is to look down. In 2012, an indigenous teacher took over, but the community expelled him after he was charged with a crime. In 2013, the school had no principal.

In July 2014, another *jurua* took over. She was removed at the request of the community in December, since they found her "*terrible*": "*She was like a soldier.*" According to a teacher, the removal procedure is accepted by the *Diretoria de Ensino*, the local management body of the Secretaria Estadual de Educação [State Department of Education], via a letter signed by "*cacique, leaders, community.*" In 2015, the school had no principal again. In 2016, another *jurua* was designated. He spent only three months, due to "*workload incompatibility.*"

Once the former principal (accused of a crime) was proven innocent, he returned to his position, but received criticism from the Diretoria de Ensino for his performance, and one group around the vice-chief ratified these critics. In 2017, another *jurua* took over, imposing Portuguese and mathematics as the school backbone, but eventually coming to understand that this guideline would be inadequate.

According to a Txeru Ba'e Kua-i teacher, in 2019, all five teachers at the Nhembo'e'a Porã municipal school were Guarani, and only its principal was *jurua*. He said it was difficult for the faculty and the principals from the two schools to talk, and it was "*hard for us to work together.*" He was unable to say whether the reason for the distance between the teaching groups would be due to lack of interest or "*because they dislike each other.*"

Difficulties

A teacher stressed the lack of leisure areas. The TI has a soccer field near the school, and children like to play soccer, but they lack a court or field in the school, or a playground for smaller children. Some of the small children exit the classroom at times, he said, acknowledging that "*it is boring to stay in the classroom*." Hence teachers try to teach some of their classes on the lawn.

In another teacher's opinion, the faculty lacks training, besides a principal who understands indigenous teachers, and materials to plan lessons, visits to the community, and a cultural center in dialogue with traditional activities to aid the school, for example, with weaving or ceramic workshops. She said the faculty has tried several times to develop their own organization and curriculum proposal. When the principal and most teachers were indigenous, they thought about leaving school once a week for "*cultural activities,*" and set to make a garden with the school engaging a *xejaryi* (elder, knowledgeable). However, the discontinuity in the principal's office hurt the process. Interruptions and impositions, she said, demotivate and disrupt the flow of a slowly developed work: "*When we have a* jurua *director who doesn't understand anything, until you explain everything to them, where we are, where we're going, and what is indigenous school education... I've told this story a thousand times*."

This teacher said that the Professores Coordenadores do Núcleo Pedagógico [Pedagogical Hub Coordinator Teachers] (PCNP) from the Diretoria de Ensino should support them, but they only criticize and pay attention to what teachers supposedly fail to do. The Secretaria da Educação had manifested support in reforming the physical structure, but this resulted from a complaint they made to the Ministério Público Federal [Federal Prosecutor's Office].

Another teacher also highlighted these demands, and stressed that the filling of class diaries was hard for beginning teachers, especially those who are mothers and must do domestic chores, prepare classes, read texts, and create and test teaching proposals. She also stressed the lack of television sets and other equipment, painting and scenery materials, and transportation for city visits, in order to encourage the students' interest.

Schooling objectives

For a male leader, children up to 12 years old should stay with adults, and learn how to lay traps and hunt up to 16 years of age, receiving family education on how to behave in adulthood. Early in the morning, families "*are left without their children*" since they all go to school, a "*non-indigenous behavior.*" The school is often far away, and adults need to leave their activities to take their children there. The routine of attending classes begins to tire students after three or four years, some are unable to learn, and others leave. He understands that studying from 6 to 20 years old is a struggle, which hinders "*attending a cultural event with the* xeramoĩ*, with the* pajé [roughly, shaman]." If someone is uninterested in going to university, to which schooling will be "*important in the future,*" studying for 15 years is needless: "*We do not have this* jurua *custom . . . there is no need for all indigenous people to take the same school journey.*"

He said he was satisfied with the bilingual school, and it was unnecessary for children to speak Portuguese very well, sufficing for them to know both languages and to always use Guarani to "*maintain traditionality.*" He thinks that vocational courses are necessary, although they are not discussed in the villages, if they enable research to serve communities and provide livelihood: "*If we could need the city less, it would be a very big step.*" People aged 16 years old and above could attend such courses rather than necessarily pursuing higher education in the city.

The transit through different cultural codes, and the interculturality which characterized the pre-service indigenous teacher training at USP, were perceived by Macedo (2009, p. 133) as surrounded by ambiguities. According to her research, residents felt divided between valuing school

attendance – to unburden the children from the difficulties experienced by those who cannot read or write, or to educate professionals to defend rights against the *jurua* – and condemning it (together with television) for they both opened "*wrong paths*" and decreased the attendance to the *opy*, where people get stronger and obtain knowledge to avoid being the target of diseases and misfortunes.

As is common, there is no consensual guidance among the community and teachers as to what directions the school is to take. Teachers support the development of differentiated curricula, dedicating part of the classes to teaching or strengthening elements of the culture, but worry about the students' insufficient training to continue their studies. A teacher told his experience at a university in the São Paulo countryside, which he quit. In addition to the distance from his relatives and the urban way of life, he felt unprepared for the activities. We also heard from another teacher that the faculty needs "differentiated" training to give "differentiated" classes.

Community influence

Another teacher, whose children also attend the school, said she estimated the presence of eight mothers at the "*parent meeting,*" which she considers very little for a student body of about 70 students. She believes that some parents "*don't have the knowledge of what school is, what it's for.*" She also thinks that many send their children to school to meet the requirements of the Bolsa Família [Family Allowance] program.

An experienced male leader claimed he never had studied, having always dealt with land demarcation, and would like to learn a little more about education. He had never been invited to talk about the school and joked that he was even saying "*everything wrong,*" since he had no experience in the subject. He believes that, in the long years of schooling, teachers and principals should deal with demarcation, legislation, and other such things, giving support for *xeramoĩ*, older leaders, and others to also expose their thinking in the school.

His youngest child is six years old, and he has not still sent him to school. His other children began attending from the age of 12 onward. He showed no concern about learning Guarani since they predominantly use it at home: "*In school, they only learn the official subjects: mathematics, Portuguese, and other things, official state things.*"

According to one teacher, the community is pleased with the work that is done with students, and cares little about the inclinations of the teachers. Most of school time "is taken" (by the *jurua* topics), with few activities related to indigenous culture. Teachers seek to balance both approaches, teaching the knowledge from the whites and from the "*culture,*" and continue "*struggling to make a differentiated curriculum*." He mentioned the PCNP activities, who would weekly check whether teachers are "*doing what they say.*"

A teacher had been appointed by the community for hiring, but also went through a selection process by the Diretoria de Ensino, consisting of a test about indigenous peoples. He was unsure if the community appointment procedure was still followed.

Leaders, one teacher said, give much attention to health, but are not very involved with education. They fail to understand that the food in school meals, for example, affects the students' health, or that censoring children who go barefoot to school affects the ways of "*being and existing within the* tekoa." She said there are wise elders who are critical about the school, saying it steals the children's time, and is indifferent to traditional aspects such as medicine, childbirth, and menstruation or postpartum caring periods. This would relate to the prevalence of the *jurua* system, "*a steamroller that swallows us: to think about the job market, to give birth in the hospital.*"

This teacher hypothesized that, being mostly men, leaders attribute secondary importance to the school. Concerned about demarcation, they would fail to conceive of the territory matters as comprising the matters from the world of women (*cunhãguareko*), which include topics such as abuse

against women and children, school, food, and dialogues between teachers and midwives. She said that many girls today ignore what was transmitted from generation to generation "*since she wakes up, runs to school, then comes back, gets on the phone or goes to the* [soccer] *field*." Studying would even get in the way of dreams, which students fail to remember since they wake up in a hurry. The role of the school would not be to enable entry into university: although there is a small portion that wants to become "*lawyers, teachers or dentists,*" the vast majority has no desire to leave the community. The school could also "*teach how to count money in order to sell the wooden animals outside*" the land, but it should be more than that, and give attention to Guarani knowledge.

School practices

A teacher who had received all his elementary education at the village school, where he started at the age of 6, became a teacher there in 2019, at the age of 20. He defined this school as "*differentiated*": "*We learn our own language, our own culture.*" However, one needs to learn the "*subjects*" to pass the university entrance exams or the Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio [National High School Exam] (Enem).

Another professor reported that, apart from the classes in native language and ethnic culture subjects, in the remaining classes each teacher "*exposes the theory in Portuguese*" and, since there are students who don't understand it, they give further explanations in Guarani.

An art teacher said they receive standard materials (called the Student Notebook) from the state government, along with the command to use it. He seeks to adapt it to "*our culture*" with practical classes: body painting, crafts, and research with elders so students can learn the original functions of the artifacts. He says, on the art of carving animals in wood: "*In the old days, we made this artifact for hunting, really. Now we do it to provide sustenance* [through its sale]." The results of the research are gathered in textbooks.

He also teaches theoretical classes, and claimed he has to teach about the European artists and painting schools that are in the Student Notebook, since the PCNP "*come and watch.*" Those requirements emanating from the management body go unchallenged, even though teachers feel there would be no punishment. Another teacher said she had taken home all the Student Notebooks of the elementary-, middle- and high-school grades, to search for relations with the reality in the village, finding nothing. There were questions that made no sense to the students, as those about theater attendance and museums.

The school art teacher does field research with the class. For instance, they focus on plants, their history and their use, and plan with the shaman the group's visits to the *opy* to obtain information about it. The shaman receives the groups with great affection and love, tells stories, tells his experiences, and gives advice. According to another teacher, they all go to the *opy* during outdoor classes, where they stay for two hours listening to stories or doing research. Beforehand, teachers talk and calmly smoke *petỹgua* with the *pajés*, and schedule the day of the group's visit. But "*the state has a whole curriculum, a system that we have to follow, so we can't go every day* [to the prayer house]."

Classes are "*spoken in Guarani*," whereas what is written is "*rather in Portuguese.*" There are two weekly classes for native language and two for ethnic culture, to "*do practice,*" reading, writing, counting, and playing games, "*all in Guarani.*" He said it was difficult to find a textbook in the native language, but they practice with other books sent by the state government and prepared by indigenous people during their pre-service training at USP.

The PCNP seems to bring further pression, rather than help: "*You have to keep the daily registers, . . . to assign scores to students, to register grades in the Diretoria* [de Ensino]." When teachers do not fulfill the instructions, the PNCP give them a deadline and threat them: "*You're*

not fit to be a teacher. Next year, you won't be." However, this teacher thinks that they should avoid excessively trusting "*everyone coming from the outside*" because, otherwise, "*we abandon the culture little by little.*"

A science teacher said he seeks to work in balance between "*the knowledge from the Guarani and scientific knowledge.*" The Student Notebook doesn't offer much "*content which is important to the culture,*" and some of which in particular are not "*what the community wants.*" He chooses to present theories and to highlight the importance of defending the nature on the TI. From time to time, practical activities include classroom exits for research, and project workshops. He coordinates one of those, on "*how garbage affects indigenous communities,*" since many whites enter the TI and leave waste. The class collects garbage and gathers information.

Topics such as violence, drugs, and drinking are scarcely addressed because "*it's not good to talk to students*" about them, and, according to one teacher, it is not common for students to leave the TI to consume drugs or alcohol.

Considering that some internal conflicts within the community have been dealt with through resorting to police or bureaucratic bodies, one teacher addresses these issues in her philosophy class: "*Knowing how to identify the problem and to think about traditional ways of solving it, i.e., to seek the voice of the* xamoĩ*, not that of the* cacique. *The* cacique *will always look at the political and bureaucratic sides.*"

Another teacher said that many students lose the desire to attend school since "*little is new*" in it: they take a *jurua* book, read it, do its exercises, and have to sit in a closed room all morning or all afternoon, despite rain or sun.

Conclusion

Specific characteristics of the Guarani kinship and social organization lead to an intense movement of composition and recomposition of local collectives, which greatly reduces the probability or the pertinence of collective options. The dynamic mosaic that is configured by this movement does not coincide with a stable picture of who makes up the categories of the "elders," the "leaders," the "parents," the "teachers," the "students," and even the "community."

At Jaraguá, neither the residents as a whole nor the village's most politically active portions can appoint the teachers to be hired, nor evaluate their work. The students' families do not deal with the general guidance of the school; just a few attend its meetings, where they enunciate sparse demands. Some teachers use the Guarani language, the same ones who take students to the house of prayer, where they find the *xeramoĩ*'s collaboration. These do not usually make proposals for the school teaching.

In this scenario, which suggests not balance but coexistence and tacit accommodation of divergent perspectives for the school, the teachers – in their individual decisions – are the ones who stand out as the agents in the choosing of the knowledge to be taught.

At the TI Jaraguá school, statements indicated that the *jurua* books are the predominant learning material; that the government-established system of grades is adopted; and that some *jurua* teachers oppose Guarani customs. The fixity and exogeneity which conventionally characterize the knowledge selected to be taught at school largely persist. The distance that the leaders take from matters of education leaves unhindered the strength of some conditions of permanence for the colonialist traits.

Classes have a predefined duration in number of minutes, the amount of school days is controlled, some teachers are restricted to the classroom and to the school building, and teachers are strongly subordinated to higher administrative bodies controlling the programs. Some teachers

value and incorporate indigenous knowledge, avoid confinement, and do not reduce the school to the goals of preparation for the non-indigenous behavior, knowledge, and labor market. Others attach importance to controlling the students' behavior, requiring them to remain "quite seated" or imposing rigid lateness policies.

There are those who, instead of opting for an exclusively *jurua* teaching orientation, report seeking ways to reconcile this with teaching the "culture," aiming to provide conditions for students to work either outside the TI or for the *tekoa*.

Since teachers belong to the multiple expressions of the "community," and considering their different perspectives on what and how to teach, we claim that the school harbors clear innovation paths aiming to consolidate conditions for autonomous decision-making over school practices. Likewise, there are practices decided under strong heteronomy which remain, represented by the administrative coercion prioritizing certain knowledge, conditions, and modes of teaching. Other limitations lie in the existence of rigid models and unvaried sources of information on the possible range of school practices, and in the circumscribed and oscillating forms of community involvement – also linked to the inadequacy of the conventional debate on "school participation" to deal with scenarios in which the norm may be one of high fragmentation and mobility among co-resident family groups, and a low propensity to create a stable image of "community."

Also at the Txeru Ba'e Kua-i school there are manifestations of the continuity of a colonialist model. Heteronomy is ostensible in the permanent determination and vigilance that the technicians from the Diretoria de Ensino exert over the teachers' practices. The legitimized place of Guarani language and culture – both seen as distinctive properties of a "differentiated indigenous school" – is reduced to the classes of "native language" and "ethnic culture". Those are taught alongside "the subject matters." The latter are mainly spoken and written in Portuguese and explained in Guarani, since some students do not understand the national language.

Teachers seek to adapt the prescriptions of the Secretaria de Educação by addressing "culture" elements, but the pressure to carry out the "state" curriculum (which they, as is usual among the general population, believe to be legally mandatory, manifesting the rigidity and narrowness of the available action models) limit these attempts. The insufficiency and inadequacy of school facilities, and the lack of teacher training providing inputs for the local decisions, aggravate these obstacles.

The essays of formulating a local guidance for the school had to wait for the successive entry of indigenous teachers with degrees. However, the process, as in Jaraguá, has not yet reached the point of aggregating a strong, cohesive group, much less of attracting state support, stable consulting partners, and financial aids, necessary conditions both to transcend the limitations inherent to innovation at local scale and to sustain the accumulation of its advances. At the Ribeirão Silveira school, this challenge is intensified by the discontinuity of people in management positions, in the midst of impositions and misunderstandings.

As is the case in the TI Jaraguá, there are no guidances coming from the group of residents at the TI Ribeirão Silveira as to how the school should work. The common internal political divisions add up to the diversity of attitudes toward schooling.

The school was created following the residents' mobilizations demanding a modest facility of their own, and subsequently claiming for a public school. Leaders, however, show no engagement in the disputes around the meaning of school education. While religious leaders eventually collaborate by receiving the students' visits to the *opy*, neither they nor the political leaders were said to be invited to expose their thoughts on education and school. Moreover, neither the hiring of teachers and principals nor the evaluation of the educational work is open to the influence of the various segments of the collectivity.

The category of "parents" seldom attend school meetings, and the leaders and other community members are said to be satisfied with the progress of the school, or to be indifferent to the orientation followed by the teachers. Most of the school hours take place inside its walls. However, sporadic activities are conducted "concerning the indigenous culture," and there are remarkable efforts to strengthen an ethnic identity. Individual teachers make initiatives to balance the addressing of the "two types of knowledge" and to "strive" within the school to "make a differentiated curriculum."

As with the TI Jaraguá school, the teachers are the main ones who choose, individually, the knowledge to be taught, conditioned by their own repertoire of personal conceptions, by the impositions of governmental management bodies, and the belief that they have to follow an official curriculum or to fulfill certain ingrained formats of dividing school time, organizing knowledge into subject matters, assigning grades, and maintaining records, although they don't rigorously follow some of these determinations. Educational innovation occurs in the intermittent, partial, or surreptitious solutions for respecting the native language and traditional customs. It is based on each teacher's personal understanding of what are the needs and aspirations of that Guarani collective. Decisions can be considered as the exercise of a form of community autonomy, in the sense that they still retain among particular agents from the village a relevant amount of the ability of choice over educational practices, especially in view of the official demands for control and standardization.

Our conversations in the villages do not suggest that the residents put pressure on the school or on the students to make them attend higher education. Even the teaching of the basic topics of non-indigenous school subjects was not justified by this type of goal, during the interviews. Young people's wishes to become "doctors or lawyers" are welcome, but there is great freedom regarding these choices, not unlike the freedom which marks the relationships of elderly and adults with young people and children among the Guarani.

Many teachers in both schools show a manifest desire for the community and the elders' participation in the school life and in the decisions around the knowledge put into circulation there. The so-called differentiated teaching in these localities has already been incorporating the occasional direct participation of male and female *rezadores*, prayer-sayers, with recognized authority.

The occurrence of endogenous but poorly informed decisions, or based on very weak participation, shows how the sparse variety of action models, and the concentration of power in few decision-makers, can condition even the locally based choice processes, favoring the continuity of old standards. The choices made not only within the collectivities themselves, but also framed from the point of view of their own subjectivities and their own relationship modes, under conditions of minimal regulatory pressure, and relying on adequate inputs, is what would represent a greater rupture of the colonialist mold at its core: the trait of external control instead of self-determination.

The investigation of who chooses the knowledge to be circulated in the school is interested either in defined agents such as the "teachers" and the "shamans," or in diffuse ones, such as "the community," but the teachers are also the community within the school, and may, at the same time, be a shamanic agency. This is because the reference figures such as shamans and prayers do not hold the exclusivity in producing relationships with the non-human subjectivities. Young adults can also be recognized as strong shamans, and many people perform *benzimentos*, enchantments, to deal with spiritual diseases, concocting medicine or performing daily rituals indoors instead of attending an *opy*.

Thus, the indigenous knowledge that enters the school, although suffering modulations and transpositions, is not dismembered either from social relations and those with non-human subjectivities and deities, or from its own modes and contexts of production. The "practical activities" the teachers mentioned when describing their classes on traditional knowledge imply the addressing

of a broad set of knowledge which refers to a Guarani cosmovision and relates to the entanglement of multiple (cosmopolitic) agencies. The actions of teachers, as they elaborate their own take on Guarani knowledge, bring their own life experiences to the school.

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Note on authorship

Elie Ghanem: Study design. Theoretical foundation and general design of the research. Observation, conversations, and interviews with research participants. Selection, textualization, and organization of material collected in the field. Examination of literature relevant to the researched territories. Interpretation of information gathered and discussion of results. Writing and revisions of the manuscript. *Fabio Nogueira da Silva*: Observation, conversations, and interviews with research participants. Choice of material collected in the field. Interpretation of the answers against the background of kinship relationships, political group relationships, and cosmological relationships in the communities surveyed. Discussion of results. Contribution to writing and review. *Diana Pellegrini*: Study design. Interpretation of the information gathered; discussion and conceptual framework of results. Selection of works relevant to the theoretical approach. Articulation of the Guarani cases with the broader comparative panorama of the problem, and with the accumulations of the line of research in Indigenous School Education and Educational Innovation. Writing and revisions of the manuscript. Translation to English from the original paper in Portuguese by Diana Pellegrini (with contributions from Juliano Lima).

Data availability statement

The data supporting this investigation are not publicly available because they are handwritten notes with no protection of anonymity. The access request demands such adjustments but can be made directly to the authors by the email elie@usp.br.

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