




FORMATIVE ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS WORKING IN A MUNICIPAL SCHOOL OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this work was to analyze the training of teachers working in Special Education, and how this reverberates in the constitution and human formation of students who are the target audience of Special Education. Legal documents (CF, 1988; LDBEN 9394/1996; CNE/CEB Resolution No. 02/2001) guarantee access and permanence in school spaces, however, in addition to being in school, it is necessary to focus on learning, that is, the right to learn. For the realization of this right, one of the conditions is the training of teachers and among these, specifically the training of teachers working in Special Education. Special Education is a school modality aimed at students with disabilities, global developmental disorders and high abilities or giftedness, and should preferably be offered in the regular school system. To obtain the data, a qualitative research was carried out, with the intention of analyzing, through a questionnaire, the answers of teachers working in the field of Special Education. To this end, the scenario selected for the present analysis was a Municipal School of Special Education in the municipality of Salto de Pirapora, SP, which has a unique characteristic of the public: that of Special Education. The text emphasizes the need for training that goes beyond the specificities of disabilities, seeking the humanization of subjects and considering the diversity present in society. The complexity and challenges of Special Education in the Brazilian context are highlighted, emphasizing the importance of teacher training as a crucial element to promote inclusive practices and ensure access and consolidation of knowledge for all students. To this end, the studies of Bueno (2016), Diniz (2012), Kassar (2014), Lüdke and André (1986), Martins (2010), Michels (2011, 2017), Padilha (2014), Saviani (2013) and Triviños (1987) were used as theoretical foundations.

Keywords: Teacher Training. Special education. Target Audience: Special Education.

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INTRODUCTION

According to the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education No. 9,394, of 1996, Special Education is a school modality aimed at students with disabilities, global developmental disorders and high abilities or giftedness, and should be offered preferably in the regular school system (Brasil, 1996).

In addition to the public policies that guarantee access to the modality, the training of the teacher who will specifically teach these students is also considered. To this end, the specialist teacher of Special Education, according to Resolution CNE/CEB No. 02/2001, is the professional who develops the necessary skills to identify special educational needs, define and implement strategies for flexibility and curricular adaptation, in addition to working in partnership with the regular education teacher. For effective performance, they must prove their training through degree courses in Special Education or related areas, preferably concomitant with the degree in early childhood education or in the early years of elementary school. Although the Resolution advocates teacher qualification as something segmented, corroborating Martins' statement, "[...] we advance that we conceive the training of any professional, especially that of teachers, as a trajectory of training individuals, intentionally planned, for the effectiveness of a certain social practice" (Martins, 2010 p. 14).

In this context, in addition to entering and remaining in school spaces, it is understood that providing students with disabilities with knowledge historically constructed and organized in the form of school knowledge is the primary function of the school. Saviani (2013, p. 14) states that "the school exists, therefore, to provide the acquisition of the instruments that enable access to elaborated knowledge (science), as well as access to the rudiments of this knowledge", and reiterates that it is necessary to identify the "cultural elements that need to be assimilated by individuals of the human species so that they become human and, on the other hand and concomitantly, to the discovery of the most appropriate ways to achieve this goal" (Saviani, 2013, p. 14).

Thus, we understand that the educational work developed by the teacher is one of the key ways for the humanization of the subjects. However, teacher training needs to have a solid theoretical basis to provide them with the "most appropriate forms" of teaching (emphasis added) and, in this way, guarantee the learning of students with disabilities, as a right provided for in the Federal Constitution (1988) through the "III - specialized educational service to people with disabilities, preferably in the regular school system"⁴ (Brasil, 1988, p. 124).

⁴ Currently, the correct terminology is "people with disabilities".

Teacher training sometimes focuses on the student's disability, considering biological factors as determinants of the ways in which subjects can or should learn. In this sense, the intrinsic singularities of individuals become barriers, limiting their learning possibilities. Bueno (2016) states that the discourse of inclusion can treat the unequal as equals, without recognizing that a specific disability requires specific teaching processes. The practice of teachers, both in Special Education and in regular education, is intrinsically linked to the pedagogical theories with which they had contact throughout their training. Sometimes, it is observed that the didactics employed are based on theories based on clinical knowledge, which focuses excessively on disability and neglects the inherent potentialities of the subjects. In fact, this happens "[...] because the disability has not yet been freed from biomedical authority" (Diniz, 2012, p. 11), in addition to the common infantilized practices, which, subjectively, disqualify the student's ability to advance in the systematization of new knowledge. The medical-pedagogical model integrates hegemonic thinking in education in general, contributing to the common sense discourse that school failure is caused by biological factors related to the individual characteristics of students and often disregards the social factors in which the student is inserted (Michels, 2011).

The educational function, regardless of the modality, must promote the integral formation of the human being, providing teaching that contemplates the development of individuals. For this to occur, it is essential to understand the role of education. As already mentioned, such action will depend on access to the knowledge made available to teachers during their training trajectory.

In addition, if teacher training has gaps in terms of knowledge and functionality, it is necessary to consider all those who make up the school: families, students, the community as a whole, in addition to the permanent professionals and outsourced workers who are also part of this environment. Mazzotta (2011) states that, when the role of school education is understood by society, the functions of both regular education and Special Education begin to make sense. It is in this educational space that the emergence and strengthening of public educational policies can occur, especially those aimed at teacher training.

However, the policies that regulate this training still do so in a sparse way, both for the teacher and for those who will be trained by this subject. The curricula of the teaching degrees present minimum requirements on the subject and, often, only one discipline is obliged to deal with the issue in a very superficial way. Thus, the responsibility of seeking training that brings subsidies for professional performance falls on the teacher, who needs to make an effort to expand his knowledge in an autonomous and complementary way.

Sometimes, some institutions do not seem to systematize the knowledge that should be transmitted and consolidated in the training of teachers, resulting in generic contents. Often, training is based on biologizing theories, on approaches that do not take into account the historicity of Special Education.

METHODOLOGY

To obtain the data, a qualitative research was carried out, with the intention of analyzing, through a questionnaire, the answers of teachers working in the field of Special Education. This type of research strengthens the relationship between the subjects — as protagonists of the research — and the researcher — as a participant — by actively engaging "in the reality that he studies on the margins of it, of the phenomena to which he seeks to capture its meanings" (Triviños, 1987, p. 121). In this sense, it allows us to understand the subjectivity of the subject, who "has the natural environment as his direct source of data and the researcher as his main instrument" (Lüdke and André, 1986, p. 11).

To this end, the scenario selected for the present analysis was a Municipal School of Special Education in the municipality of Salto de Pirapora, SP, which has a unique characteristic of the public: that of Special Education.

The participants of the research were the teachers who work in this educational institution, chosen based on the relevance of the educational work for the functioning of the school. The questions addressed the initial and continuing education of these people, whose objective was to understand how the training is articulated with the field of action. Therefore, the faculty is composed of 12 women, aged between 29 and 62 years. Of these, 10 participated in the answers to the questionnaire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The public educational institution where the questionnaire was applied has 38 years of history and is located in the central region of the municipality of Salto de Pirapora-SP, occupying half of the block. It expresses, in a panoramic way, an accessible and spacious ground floor structure, with a garden, sports and sand courts, heated swimming pool, rooms for pedagogical and therapeutic work, computer room, teachers' room, cafeteria, among others.

This institution is organized to serve the target audience of Special Education, in the field of education, with 10 rooms of Specialized Educational Service (AEE), 02 rooms of Exclusive Special Education (EEE) and 01 Social Integration workshop that works with young people and adults, with professionals specialized in Physical Education and Art. The

teachers have *lato sensu specialization* in the area of Special Education and the school has a management duo: 01 director of basic education and 01 pedagogical coordinator.

As a profile of the students, currently, 19 students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), 02 with Visual Impairment (DV), 09 with Physical Disability (FD), 62 with Intellectual Disability (ID), 16 with multiple disabilities, 06 with Down Syndrome and 05 with Hearing Impairment (AD) are served, totaling 119 students.

To contextualize, SEA is a complementary and/or supplementary service to the schooling process, aiming at the autonomy and independence of students, both in school and outside it. This service should not be a substitute, nor should it be carried out in isolation. It is offered, as a priority, in the Multifunctional Resource Room of the school itself or in another regular educational institution, in the shift opposite to schooling. In addition, it can be carried out in a Specialized Educational Service Center, public or private non-profit, in agreement with the Department of Education (Brasil, 2009).

Enrollment in Exclusive Special Education (EEE) classes is allowed only for students whose form contains information about one of the categories of disability, within a framework that includes cases diagnosed, by a neurologist or neuropsychiatrist, as Autism Spectrum Disorder, with behaviors typical of syndromes or other serious neurological disorders, which make it impossible to include them in the regular school network, in accordance with the parameters established in Resolution SE No. 54, of August 12, 2011. These classrooms have both regular and substitutive characteristics in relation to the common teaching classes of the municipal network (São Paulo, 2011).

The Social Integration Workshop carries out several activities with groups that attend on different days and at different times. In it, proposals are developed that help in global and fine motor, sensory-perceptual, cognitive, communication, socio-emotional and self-care coordination, favoring the maintenance and improvement of existing functions. These actions promote independence, individual and collective creation, socialization and recreation, ensuring human functionality, with a view to benefiting artistic and physical development. In this way, they provide a better quality of life to this public, through: games and adapted circuits; rhythmic and visual arts activities; Crafts; digital inclusion; Aerobics; among others.

In the field of health, the institution has professionals who carry out the therapeutic process of the target audience of Special Education of the entire municipal school network, which are 02 speech therapists, 03 physiotherapists, 01 occupational therapist, 02 psychologists, 01 psychopedagogue, 01 neuropsychopedagogue, 02 psychiatrists, 01

administrative assistant and 01 health coordinator. It is worth noting that this service provided is outsourced and funded by public funds.

The school is managed by the city hall and serves only the target audience of Special Education. His philosophical conception is based on "[...] defense of the rights and appropriation of the pedagogical knowledge of each student target audience of special education" (PPP, p.04, 2023) and intends to provide "[...] a continuous service focused on quality, equity, inclusion, and diversity, in which this student is considered the reference center for the search for the improvement of practical and scientific knowledge (PPP, 2023, p. 04).

The educational approach has been aligned with the National Policy on Special Education in the Perspective of Inclusive Education (PNEEPEI, 2008) which aims to:

[...] ensure the school inclusion of students with disabilities, pervasive developmental disorders and high abilities/giftedness, guiding education systems to ensure: access to regular education, with participation, learning and continuity at the highest levels of education; transversality of the special education modality from early childhood education to higher education; offer of specialized educational service; training of teachers for specialized educational service and other education professionals for inclusion; family and community participation; architectural accessibility, in transport, furniture, communications and information; and intersectoral articulation in the implementation of public policies (Brasil, 2008, p. 14).

According to the Pedagogical Political Project (PPP, 2023), this educational institution went through a historical assistentialist path at the beginning of its trajectory and, currently, deals with the perspective of PNEEPEI (2008), with the purpose of transforming the educational environment "[...] in a privileged place of analysis, discussion and reflection of reality, requiring changes, commitment and the participation of all those involved in the teaching and learning process" (PPP, 2023, p. 21-22). Thus, it seeks to formulate and promote strategies that favor the cognitive development of students, considering all aspects of their global development, "[...] working on them according to the routine pre-established in the Individualized Development Plan (PDI) that articulates and contemplates systematized, functional and flexible strategies, which meet the real educational needs of each student" (PPP, 2023, p.21 - 22).

Regarding the teacher training aspects, according to the data analyzed provided by the answers to the questionnaire, based on the question "Was your initial training in a private or public institution? In which course?", it was found that half of the interviewees completed their initial training in public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), while the other half graduated in private HEIs. It was identified that, among the respondents: 03 had studied teaching; 04 did not answer the question; 01 graduated in Pedagogy; others had the same degree, but with an emphasis on specific fields of Special Education, such as

Hearing Impairment and Visual Impairment (01) and Intellectual Disability (01). Special Education is addressed in the training courses for multipurpose teachers, since it integrates all basic education.

In the question "Did your training take place in person or at a distance?", it was identified that 40% of the responding professors took *lato sensu* postgraduate courses exclusively in person, 30% only through Distance Education (DE) and 30% attended both modalities. The characteristics of this survey indicate that the proportion of teachers who opted for distance education courses has increased in recent years.

To this end, the specializations are focused on specific fields of Special Education and the needs of students enrolled in the school institution, such as postgraduate courses with an emphasis on Intellectual Disability, as well as in the areas of Psychology, Neuropsychology, Psychoanalysis, Neurolinguistics and Psychopedagogy. Other training covers broader or generic areas, such as graduate studies in Music; the postgraduate degree in Literacy and Literacy; the postgraduate degree in School Management; the postgraduate course in Curricular Proposals and Teaching Methods.

None of the teachers had master's or doctoral training and this may indicate that the search for training courses tends to focus on specializations that address the practical contexts of everyday life and that are directly related to the reality experienced in the school institution. Investigations at *the stricto sensu* level, due to their scientific and academic nature, focus on studies that often seek to answer complex questions based on certain objects, and may not address the daily experiences and immediate needs faced by professionals in the area of education in that given context.

Regarding the question "Was your continuing education in a private or public institution? Name the main ones that engage their work as a teacher in the field of Special Education", it was observed that 01 obtained her training through a public university, another through public and private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), while most of the teachers (08) took courses in private institutions.

In the question "How long have you been working in the area of Special Education?", the experience in the modality revealed that: 30% have been working in the educational field for a short time (01, 03 and 05 years); 40% have a relatively average length of service (10 and 12 years); and 30% work in a period considered long (21, 25 and 38 years).

For a better understanding of the question "What are the theoretical references of your education?", the answers were organized according to the following table:

Table 1: What are the theoretical references of your training?

Books, magazines and documents that deal with continuing education, special education, inclusion and Specialized Educational Service
Perfect
Vygotsky, Piaget, Paulo Freire etc.
Emphasis on various disabilities, such as Hearing and Intellectual Disabilities, neurological disorders and specific learning difficulties
J. Venturini, Thomás D. Cutsforth, all CAPE São Paulo training, engaging several authors and trainers
Socio-constructivism
Constructivist Authors
Simone Capellini, Jean Piaget and Wallon
Celedon, Ferreira Filho, Khater, Montoan, Mazzota and Sasaki
Paulo Freire

Source: Prepared by the authors, 2023.

The intention of the question was to identify which theory was used as a basis for learning in the training of teachers. In the answers, it was found that: 01 stated that he uses books and magazines that deal with continuing education, Special Education, inclusion and Specialized Educational Service; 01 mentioned some researchers and the Specialized Support Center (CAPE) of the state of São Paulo; 01 recorded only the verb "Perfect"; 01 emphasized the various disabilities, such as Hearing and Intellectual Disabilities, neurological disorders and specific learning difficulties; 02 stated that they use authors of the constructivist theory; 04 were more specific when mentioning: Vygosty (01); Piaget (02); Paulo Freire (02); Wallon (01); and current researchers, such as Capellini, Celedon (01), Ferreira Filho (01), Khater (01), Montoan (01), Mazzotta (01) and Sasaki (01). In these answers, it was identified that theorists from different currents are used as references to the studies, which does not confer linearity in the conception as a formative requirement. Still, in relation to current researchers, it was found that there are divergences, since they are based on different conceptions for their scientific investigations.

In general, the analysis of the answers obtained through the questionnaire demonstrates that the teachers working in Special Education have qualifications that meet the practical demands of the school daily life in which they are inserted, demonstrating the individual concern in the improvement and improvement of the teaching practice itself aimed at students with disabilities. On the other hand, it was identified that the diversity of training paths and theoretical references reflect a lack of linearity in the conception that, according to Padilha (2014), the format that prioritizes the resolution of simple and practical problems faced by students with disabilities at school and that focuses on immediate needs and fragmented issues, does not provide enough space for the theoretical and methodological conceptions that should be a fundamental part of the training process and, consequently, gaps may arise in the continuing education of teachers.

CONCLUSION

The text addresses some policies related to Special Education, highlighting its importance and recognition in the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDBEN 9394/96). However, it also highlights the contradictions and challenges faced by this educational modality, which, historically, has been treated separately from ordinary education.

A critical analysis is presented in relation to the training of teachers specialized in Special Education, highlighting the competencies allowed to work in this area. Still, the text emphasizes the need for training that goes beyond the specificities of disabilities, seeking the humanization of subjects and considering the diversity present in society. Even pointing out that this training should be for all teachers, it emphasizes the idea of the need to train a "specialist", as it brings more the specific issues related to disability than the concern with teaching (Michels, 2017, p. 40).

The reflection on pedagogical practice highlights the importance of the pedagogical theories in which the teachers were trained. In addition, the challenges of a disability-centered approach and the need to overcome infantilized practices are discussed, seeking the rise of human development. Therefore, Kassir (2014) portrays that "it seems to us that we are facing a great challenge, considering that there is no consensus – within the area itself – in relation to the appropriate training of teachers to satisfactorily educate the population historically identified as 'in special education'" (Kassar, 2014, p. 222).

A research developed at the Municipal School of Special Education in the municipality of Salto de Pirapora, SP, provides a more practical view on the initial and continuing education of teachers who work in this context. The results indicate a variety of training, both in the face-to-face and distance modality, with emphasis on specific fields of Special Education.

The analysis of the teachers' answers reveals a significant experience in the area, with most of the participants having experience in the educational modality. The diversity of theoretical references used reflects a multifaceted approach, generating a divergence of conceptions that can lead to training gaps and impact on the pedagogical practice of teachers.

In short, the text highlights the complexity and challenges of Special Education in the Brazilian context, emphasizing the importance of teacher training as a crucial element to promote inclusive practices and ensure access and consolidation of knowledge for all students.

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