

Curricular adaptations and schooling of deaf students from a social-historical perspective

Lucineide MACHADO PINHEIRO
Federal University of São Paulo, Brazil

Research Supervisor
Dr. Sueli Salles Fidalgo

School education of all students is tied to the curriculum, which is essentially a means to organizing the content and the route to be taken by the community, in order to build a meaningful teaching-learning process. It is an element that strengthens the education of pupils. It has the political-pedagogical project as a point of reference and it should be pervaded by initiatives that lead to the development of inclusive practices (BRASIL, 2003).

When it comes to school inclusion of deaf students in particular, what can be observed is that the initiatives sometimes implemented, that are not necessarily related to the curriculum, concern the integration of the Interpreter of Brazilian Sign Language – LIBRAS - in the classroom. Without ignoring the relevance of this professional's work, Góes (2004) states that, for a successful school inclusion to take place, several projects are needed instead of little adjustments only. Vygotsky had a similar view on this subject in the mid-1920s, stating that it is necessary to follow a different path from the ones taken for students who have no disabilities in order to achieve success in the education of a disabled student.

In this direction, it is essential that the guiding principles of inclusive education are achieved in all possible dimensions, by taking effective actions, such as: teacher education programs, appropriate infrastructure, quality teaching material, pedagogical practices that meet the needs of each individual in their uniqueness and adaptations in the curriculum outline (GOÊS, 2004). Otherwise, the school will go on including the student in the classroom as if their physical presence alone embodies the concept of the term inclusion.

When addressing the curriculum in inclusive education, it is important to point out that this does not mean redesigning it by suppressing contents or removing subjects, as if disabled students were not able to learn as much as the others. It should be adapted, instead, taking into consideration the features of these students, focusing on their capacities (not on what they lack) and the zone of proximal development, which is defined, in Vygotskian terms, as the distance between the real learning level and the potential learning level.

The curricular adaptations proposed by the Special Education Office of the Ministry of Education – MEC, in this regard, figure as possibilities to act upon the difficulties faced by the students (BRAZIL, 2003). They aim at “the search for solutions for the specific needs of each student, rather than on the failure, to enable the teaching-learning process” (BRAZIL, 2003, p.38). The

intent of such proposal is that the school adapts to the student, in order to offer the basic conditions for their access and continuance. In other words, it is in favor of quality education for all.

Based on the above considerations, it is key to investigate if and how the curricular adaptations have been implemented in regular schools where deaf students are enrolled.

Sustained by Vygotsky's Social-Historical-Cultural Theory (TSHC), this project's theoretical framework is founded on the national learning-teaching policy and of authors such as Bueno (2001), Fidalgo (2006) and Mendes (2006), who discuss the issue of inclusion. It is also anchored on the Qualitative Methodology of Critical-Collaborative Research – PCCol, in addition to Social-Discursive Interactionism (ISD; BRONCKART, 2006), which contributes in the organization of the discussion through the perspective of the linguistic embodiment of inclusion or exclusion ideals experimented in schools.

PCCol focuses on the work with educators, which is why it has been applied by collaborators and researchers in educational institutions throughout Brazil. It is founded in the Social-Historical-Cultural Theory, as well as in studies that adopt this methodological perspective (MAGALHÃES, 2011). In this theoretical and methodological framework, language is a founding element. It is the central tool used by an individual to interact with culture and organize experiences. It is through linguistic mediation that the human being builds relations and humanizes themselves; organizes thinking and expresses it with words, which have the power to signify the world, as a reflex of the re-definition of another being in social interactions (VYGOTSKY, 1934/2009).

The data was obtained in 2015 and 2016, with recorded monitoring of Portuguese language classes – taught by teachers who work in Elementary Education, in classrooms where deaf students are enrolled –, in addition to semi-structured interviews, reflective sessions (MAGALHÃES, 2006) were carried out with the school teacher that take part in the investigation, and documents that prescribe public educational policies were analyzed. This work, currently in the phase of data analysis and discussion, bears initial results in the sense that, due to the lack of adequate teacher education, (1) the curricular adaptations at the level of the curriculum developed in the classroom - adjustments in the didactic and methodological aspects that favor the active participation of the student on the activities –, and at individual level - actions focused on assessment and individualized care, in order to understand the factors that interfere and / or impair learning -, have not been implemented by the teachers, and (2) that there is still a perception of teaching-learning that sees deafness as a flaw, a gap and never as a challenge that can and must be overcome by the deaf student, as well as their classmates and teachers.

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