

## **Contributions and Implications of the Cultural-Historical Theory in Teacher Education from the Inclusive Education Perspective**

***Eliane PEREIRA DOMINGUES***

*Federal University of São Paulo, Brazil*

**Research Supervisor**

*Dr. Sueli Salles Fidalgo*

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This research aims to investigate how the Vygotskian conceptions, especially the studies on Defectology (Vygotsky, 1924/1997), can contribute to teachers education taking as a yardstick the perspective of inclusive education. Teacher education is a continuous process which requires a systematic and dialogic investigational effort, since the challenges posed by contemporaneity demand a new view on pedagogical practices (Ferreira, 2014). Within this context, this paper proposes a reflection upon teachers' practices concerning the development and teaching of children with disabilities, and the Vygotskian Cultural-historical theory (1924/1997) will be used as the theoretical scope of this research.

This paper also aims to discuss the key aspects of the development of children with disabilities in the learning environment as well as the alteration of the teaching practice through the contact with theory and methodology, allowing the teacher to re-signify his/her work in order to meet the diverse needs of his/her students (Pietro, 2006). From the contributions of the Cultural-historical theory to education it is possible to highlight the studies on Defectology, which is understood in this research as the science which presupposes that the child whose development is somehow affected by a defect is not by any means less capable than his/her allegedly normal peers. Contrarily to what is supposed, this child just develops at a different pace (Vygotsky, 1924/1997). Vygotsky claims that a disabled child shows a qualitative singularity in each stage of his/her development. Based on that the systematic study of the work *The Fundamentals of Defectology* licensed the emergence and organization of a new means of teaching which, deriving from theoretical constructs, contributing to a better understanding of the development, teaching and characteristics of a student who shows disabilities.

The work on Defectology has as its main objective finding a system of positive tasks which facilitate the development of the disabled student's capacities and also paves the way to a methodology that aims to comprehend the development of superior mental functions and the deviations utilized for the development of these functions (Vygotsky, 1991). In methodological terms, the present work uses as reference the critical research of collaboration (Magalhães, 2003) which is a research modality which simultaneously focuses on the development of teachers and researchers and which intends to build a collaborative locus

which entices teachers to reflect upon their own pedagogical practice, tackling expectations, impacts and reflections experienced by them (Fidalgo and Magalhães, 2010) via continuous teacher education. The scope of the present work demonstrates a promising path for the grasping and analysis of questions concerning the process of inclusive education and the role it plays in teacher-education taking into account the studies on Defectology, derived from the insights of the Vygotskyan Cultural-historical theory.

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