

Inclusion in Higher Education: what are we talking about?¹

Inclusão na Educação Superior: do que estamos falando?

Solange Pereira Marques Rossato²

Sônia Mari Shima Barroco³

Hilusca Alves Leite⁴

Ana Paula da Paz Tavares⁵

ABSTRACT

The objective is to discuss College Education in the face of the challenges of inclusive education, in its correlations with a critical psychology, established in the ethical and political commitment to the development of genericity in all subjects. To this end, Historical-Cultural Psychology was chosen, which argues that the constitution and development of consciousness and the human psyche are of a social and cultural nature. College Education, despite the contradictions created by the capitalist mode of production and the meritocratic teaching system, increasingly needs to move towards valuing and legitimizing the diversity and inclusion of all, seeking to meet their specific teaching and learning needs. It is concluded that Psychology can contribute to the understanding and reflection of inclusive education in College Education, in its complexity, in its mediating function of appropriating

RESUMO

Objetiva-se discutir a Educação Superior ante os desafios da educação inclusiva, em suas correlações com uma psicologia crítica, firmada no compromisso ético e político com o desenvolvimento da genericidade em todos os sujeitos. Para tanto, elege-se a Psicologia Histórico-Cultural, que defende que a constituição e o desenvolvimento da consciência e do psiquismo humano são de natureza social e cultural. A Educação Superior, apesar das contradições ensejadas no modo de produção capitalista e no sistema meritocrático de ensino, precisa cada vez mais caminhar para a valorização e legitimidade da diversidade e inclusão de todos, buscando atender suas especificidades de ensino e aprendizagem. Conclui-se que a Psicologia pode contribuir para a compreensão e reflexão da educação inclusiva na Educação Superior, em sua complexidade, na sua função mediadora de apropriação da experiência acumulada do gênero humano e para a formação da

¹ English version by Leticia Cristina de Sousa Dias. E-mail: lpbattistam2@uem.br.

² Professor, Department of Psychology, State University of Maringa, PR, Brazil. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4698-774X>. E-mail: solangemrossato@gmail.com.

³ Graduate Program in Psychology – Federal University of Rondônia, Brazil. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4136-8915>. E-mail: smsbarroco@uem.br.

⁴ Professor, Department of Psychology, State University of Maringa, PR, Brazil. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8954-4252>. E-mail: haleite2@uem.br.

⁵ Phd from the Graduate Program in Psychology, State University of Maringa, PR, Brazil. Office of Education, City Hall of the Municipality of Maringa, PR Brazil, Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2131-9742>. E-mail: tavaresana01@gmail.com.

the accumulated experience of the human race and for the formation of the consciousness of people with or without disabilities, in the constitution of a strong notion of belonging to the community and towards the transformation of reality.

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consciência das pessoas com ou sem deficiência, na constituição da forte noção de pertencimento à coletividade e em direção da transformação da realidade.

Palavras-chave: Ensino Superior; Psicologia Histórico-Cultural; Educação Especial.

1 Introduction

Over the last decades, there has been a significant growth in the debate on the development of studies, research, and the formulation of legal and guiding documents (national and international), as well as the defense of practices that affirm the need for inclusive education. This education should be a reality at all levels and modalities of schooling and encompass the full development of all people in line with their singularities and educational needs (BARROCO; TAVARES, 2020; LEONARDO; BARROCO; ROSSATO, 2017; SIMIONATO; FACCI; LEMES, 2018).

The defense of inclusive education and the construction of actions in this sense have presented challenges for the entry, permanence, and genuine access to human elaborations, in the domain of the historically elaborated culture that operates in favor of the probabilities of becoming, regarding the different ways of existing and participating in society, as possibilities essentially made available for the development of people, whether with or without disabilities.

These are possibilities that are necessarily conjectured with/by state policies, with investments in the physical structure and human resources, in the training of educators for basic and higher education levels, with the strengthening of Special Education, transversal to them, and with the consolidation of educational institutions in the direction contrary to the processes of exclusion endorsed in capitalist society.

It is therefore essential to take steps against the history of marginalization of opportunities for access to development, and both material and non-material wealth by those who learn and develop differently from standard. To move forward in this sense, we need to recall important documents, such as the Salamanca Statement (BRASIL, 1997), Law of Lines of Direction and Bases of the Education No. 9394 (BRASIL, 1996), National Policy of Special Education in the Perspective of Inclusive Education (BRASIL, 2008), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2011), Brazilian Law on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (BRASIL, 2015), among others, concerning the national education system, from early childhood education to higher education.

Besides the afore documents, considerations are necessary regarding inclusive education and Special Education in the emergence of these being legitimized by guidelines raised in conceptions designed in/for the potential of these people and educational institutions. As well as for public policies and actions that strengthen resources, assistive technologies, materials, mediating instruments of communication and pedagogical and methodological practices, architectural and attitudinal accessibility, and a series of adaptations and flexions to guarantee the real accessibility and learning of students.

Thus, from this approach, we highlight the growing access of people with disabilities and other specific educational needs, in Higher Education (BRASIL, 2022), and of people who have historically been on the margins of possibilities to enter this level of education, whether to the detriment of economic, cultural, social, linguistic factors and we question how and for what this education has been oriented.

As explained by Leonardo, Barroco and Rossato (2017), when we look at the educational process, we must consider that the interests of the capitalist system do not commune with a formation aimed at human emancipation and the formation of a consciousness in the direction to

transform reality. In this context, higher education, in its arduous task of fostering the appropriation of knowledge, has the challenge of considering the singularities, the objective and subjective relationships that constitute the heterogeneity of the subjects, of the university space, and of the different social groups that compose it.

In this context, the theoretical and methodological frameworks of Cultural-Historical Psychology (CHP), with its main Russian theorists, can lead us to a critical and contextual understanding of this educational reality, in its correlations with all the complexity that engenders it and the rescue of conceptions that can strengthen the appropriation of generic human achievements and support praxis in the opposite direction of ableism and reductionist explanations.

In this sense, this bibliographic paper aims to bring reflections on higher education, which is placed under the challenges and auspices of inclusive education in its connections with the defense of education and psychology guided by a critical perspective grounded on ethical and political commitment to the development of humanity. Such reflections highlight the mediated and socio-historical character of human formation, in social activity and the processes of appropriation and objectification of culture.

2 Higher Education in 21st-Century Brazil

It is important to remember that the constitution of Higher Education (HE) in Brazil had as an example the European model and notably it has kept the elitist bias. We emphasize that this has been evident since the formation of the first centers of higher education, from 1808 to 1889, which marks the passage of Brazilian territory as a colony to the headquarters of the Portuguese empire, and later, the struggle for independence. The conception of elitist education persists for a long time, without the confrontations about it taking shape. Bortolanza (2017) points out that the numerous Reforms and Laws triggered advances and setbacks in the construction of both general and university education systems with institutional solidity in the country. Higher Education (HE) had significant

quantitative growth at the end of the last millennium and the beginning of the 21st century, but it remains questioned in its quality and structuring, given the continuous government policies to the detriment of a state policy on education.

The in-force Law of Lines of Direction and Bases of the Education (LDB), Law No. 9.394/96 (BRASIL, 1996), defines, among other things, the organization and operation of the education system in Brazil, including Higher Education. Such Education, by this law, comprises courses after high school and programs offered by universities, colleges, university centers, and other institutions, aiming at the training of higher education professionals and the performance of research and academic outreach.

According to data from the Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira (Inep), and according to the last census released at the end of 2022, there are 2,574 institutions of Higher Education in Brazil with the following picture: it is observed that 2,261 of these institutions are private and only 313 are public; together they made 8,986,554 enrollments in 2021 and the private sector encompassed 6,907,893, while the public registered only 2,078,661 enrollments. Thus, more than 90% of vacancies in undergraduate courses were offered by private institutions (21,850,441), while the public ones (827,045) had participation of just over 6% in the total number of vacancies offered in the country (22,677,486). It is worth mentioning that of these, 16,736,850 are vacant in the Distance-Learning (DL) modality, marking the large expansion of this teaching modality at HE, which with the development of technologies and information also causes changes in the face-to-face education process. (BRASIL, 2022).

In 2021, we had almost 4 million newcomers to HE, about 7% more than in 2017. There are so many transformations that an in-depth look is necessary to analyze what is really behind this information, so studies like this are necessary and important. As for the graduates of higher education courses, in 2021, 219,342 were registered in public institutions against 1.107.846 in private ones (BRASIL, 2022).

The National Plan for Education (PNE, in Portuguese) (2014-2024) is an instrument with planning for the development of education in Brazil. In the context of higher education, the PNE establishes several goals that aim to foster the democratization of access, quality, inclusion, and internalization of the institutions of education, financing, and affirmative actions (BRASIL, 2022). Goal number eight provides for the expansion of access to the HE, increasing the gross rate of enrollments for the age group of 18 to 24 years and reducing regional and socioeconomic inequalities in access. With more than 6,9 million students, the private institutions continue to grow, between 2020 and 2021 it increased by 3%. In public institutions, there was an increase in the number of enrollments, registering 6% between 2020 and 2021 (BRASIL, 2022).

The PNE also emphasizes the importance of affirmative action policies such as racial and social quotas to promote the inclusion of groups historically excluded from higher education. The PNE plan also provides for the improvement of the quality of this education, focusing on teacher qualification, the evaluation and regulation of courses and institutions, and the promotion of policies to encourage research and innovation.

One of the goals is to foster the development of higher education institutions (HEI) in the inner parts of the country, bringing access to less-developed regions. This has been happening in a way, but it needs to advance; in 2021, enrollment in federal institutions was a fact in 931 Brazilian municipalities, through *campuses* with face-to-face courses or distance education centers. There are 101 municipalities in the North region; 315 in the Northeast; 249 in the Southeast; 174 in the South; and 92 in the Midwest (BRASIL, 2022, p. 30).

The PNE (BRASIL, 2014) also addresses issues related to the financing of higher education, aiming to guarantee adequate resources for its expansion and improvement. It is important to note that the PNE is a long-term instrument, and its goals are periodically reviewed to monitor the movement/results in the HE fields.

By endorsing inclusion as one of the goals related to this stage of teaching, Special Education has been one of the ways to achieve it. It is marked by numerous legal documents that reveal a path with advances and setbacks over the years. In the 21st century, Special Education (SE) in higher education has experienced significant expansions in the inclusion process with the support of students with disabilities and/or specific educational needs. Increasingly, such students and other marginalized people in society have been reaching higher education institutions, forcing it to provide accessibility; support, resources, and adaptations necessary for them to fully participate in academic life.

Special Education is defined by Law No. 9.394/96 (BRASIL, 1996) as a teaching modality that permeates all levels and modalities of teaching, and it seeks to guarantee specialized educational service, preferably in regular education. This Law also establishes that SE must be carried out in a complementary way to regular education, considering the specific needs of each student, and aiming at their full inclusion in society. It also emphasizes the importance of teacher qualification and the promotion of inclusive pedagogical resources and strategies.

A comparison of census data on the number of enrollments of students with disabilities in undergraduate courses, global development disorders, and high abilities and giftedness in Brazil reveals the growth in enrollments of students targeted by Special Education. In 2011 we had 22,367 enrollments, a percentage of 0.33% concerning the total number of enrollments in undergraduate courses. In 2021, we had 66,404 enrollments and reached 0.71% (BRASIL, 2022, p. 71).

The target audience of Special Education, according to Law no. 9394/96 (BRASIL, 1996), are students with disabilities, Global Developmental Disorders (GDD), and high abilities or giftedness (HA/G). According to INEP (2022), the type of disability most present in SE is physical disability (20,206), followed by low vision (20,172), hearing impairment (7,910), intellectual disability (7,141), GDD (4,018), Blindness

(3,482), Deafness (2,592), High Abilities - Giftedness (2,146), Deafblindness (318). (BRASIL, 2022, p. 71). The fight for Special Education from the perspective of inclusive education is to ensure that students with special educational needs have access to quality education that meets their specific needs, fostering their inclusion in society and the educational system. This may involve curricular adaptations, specialized pedagogical support, and accessibility resources, among others, according to the individual needs of each student. Many universities have implemented strict policies and regulations to ensure support professionals, architectural accessibility, teaching materials, and online platforms that are accessible to all and offer specific programs for students with disabilities by providing additional guidance, advice, and resources.

Tavares (2014) reveals that the accessibilities required by most of the target audience of SE in higher education are mainly around pedagogical accessibility and attitudinal accessibility. This also involves providing information on the real needs of students, as well as awareness and training on knowledge related to SE. Therefore, instrumentalize teachers, staff, and students to create an inclusive environment.

In addition to these factors, the promotion of academic and scientific research in the field of SE is an important means that can present elements for understanding society, school education, and its impacts on human development. Tavares (2022) analyzed academic productions resulting from a doctorate, that dealt with SE in HE in Brazil, between 1996 and 2018. After a scan of the Higher Education Personnel (CAPES Brazil) website, in the catalog of theses and dissertations, 45 were selected, and 43 were found and analyzed. As a result, it was identified that Education is the field of knowledge that produces most theses on SE in HE. Nine more frequent themes were found, with an emphasis on public policies and perceptions of the inclusive process. A period of 22 years was investigated, two theses from 1996 to 2007, and 41 from 2008 to 2018. The researcher concludes that the work contributes to the identification of the

production related to this type of teaching at the doctoral level, which is put into perspective with the provisions of SE policies and that this content should reach basic and higher education institutions, subsidizing the educational work developed by different professionals.

We understand that SE in Higher Education in the 21st century seeks not only to meet the demands of students with disabilities and other specific needs but also to promote equal opportunities and full participation in academic life, preparing them for a successful transition into working life and society at large. Education in the 21st century, despite the contradictions, increasingly needs to move towards valuing the diversity and inclusion of all, seeking to meet all needs and specificities of teaching and learning, independently of their individual characteristics.

3 Cultural-Historical Psychology in Higher Education: the development of Youth and adults with and without disabilities

Moving forward, it is important to address, albeit succinctly, the conception of development proposed by Cultural-Historical Pedagogy (CHP) and some of its propositions about this process when talking about the subject with disabilities.

Seeking to overcome innatist conceptions of psychology that consider the existence of a previously given human essence, Cultural-Historical Psychology studies propose to capture the movement between the singular subject and the cultural appropriations that he/she makes that allow its constitution, that is, the formation of their essence. In accordance with Vygotsky, culture originates special forms of conduct, modifies the activity of psychic functions, and builds new levels in the developing system of human behavior. “In the process of historical development, the social individual modifies the ways and procedures of his conduct, transforms his natural inclinations and functions, elaborates and creates new forms of specifically cultural behavior” (VYGOTSKI, 2000, p. 34).

The appropriation of human productions enables each singular subject to objectify themselves as belonging to the human genus, that is, to acquire and reproduce characteristics of the human species that are not necessarily those transmitted by genetics (DUARTE, 2013). Thus, when we learn to eat using certain instruments (cutlery, plates, cups, for example) we are at the same time appropriating instruments produced through human activity and we are also affirming ourselves as a human genus since it is characteristic of this species to use specific instruments to eat meals. Similarly, when we appropriate language in its most varied expressions, we are objectifying ourselves as subjects belonging to the human race, because in language there are circumscribed meanings that, once internalized, begin to mediate thought forms, increasingly differentiating us from other living beings that belong to the animal kingdom. It is worth considering, however, that such appropriations of generic human productions occur within a given historical particularity, and therefore, the human psyche maintains a relationship of dependence concerning life and social activity. According to Shuare (1990), the psyche, in its phylogenesis, shifts throughout the course of humanity and, in the same way, during individual, ontological development, therefore, it also changes in terms of structure and functionality. Thus, about disability in a broad way, we can think that throughout history, as the development of the productive forces and the way of explaining the reality of a given society changes, so does the conception of disability and the explanations that underlie it, which in turn will have implications in the scope of the singular development of the subject with disability, since the possibilities of rethinking their appropriations concerning generic human productions are given.

Bringing back the discussion on human development and also bringing such assumptions to the understanding of ontogenetic development, Vygotsky (2000) explains that the insertion of the child in civilization occurs together with their organic maturation because this development process is mediated by the insertion of the child in

civilization. The processes of biological and cultural development merge, constituting a process of biological-social formation of the child's personality. To the extent that organic development takes place in a cultural environment, it becomes a historically conditioned biological process, constituting a dialectical unit between two lines that, in principle, are essentially distinct (biological development and cultural development) and it is the task of psychology to understand these two lines and their intertwining in the developmental stages of the child, whether she/he is disabled or not.

In this intertwining between biological and cultural advocated by the Russian authors, what characterizes development, according to Vygotsky (2012a), is the occurrence of what the author called qualitatively new formations – neoformations. The author calls new formations:

[...] new type of structure of the personality and its activity, those mental and social changes which first appear at a given age level and which mainly and basically determine the consciousness of the child, his relation to the environment, his internal and external life (VYGOTSKY, 2012a, p. 254).

In the first stages, a maximum pace of development of those premises that condition the later development of the child is observed and at each stage of age, a new central formation is always possible - a kind of guide for the entire development process - which characterizes the reorganization of the entire personality of the child on a new basis. Around the new central constitution of each age, the new partial formations are grouped, related to isolated aspects of those of previous ages. Vygotsky (2012a) calls the *main lines of development* of age the development processes that relate more or less immediately to the new main formation, while the other partial processes and the changes they promote in each age are called *accessory lines of development*.

It is observed, then, that the processes that are the main lines of development at one age become accessory lines at the next age, and vice versa. This is because its specific meaning and importance are modified in

the general structure of development, transforming its relationship with the new central formation. In the passage from one age to another, its entire structure is rebuilt. Each age has its specific structure, unique and not repeated at other times of development (VYGOTSKI, 2012a).

In this process of restructuring that occurs with the passage from one period to another of development, consciousness is also reorganized, since the psychological functions (perception, memory, attention, thought, etc.) – that compose it – are reconstructed. By way of example, if at the first moment of our development the impact of what is captured by our perceptual processes is preponderated on the organization of consciousness, and later on, with the development of thought (which only occurs with the internalization of the signs of language), the perceptual processes are subordinated to those of thought, so that, the subject (being in a certain activity that requires cognitive engagement, even if he/she captures different stimuli from his/her surroundings), manages to ignore them to maintain himself/herself in that main activity.

After this brief overview of the main aspects of human development, one of the questions that emerges is how this process occurs when talking about the subject with disabilities. Vygotsky explored this question in his writings on the field of study that at the time was called defectology. The author works with the concept of overcompensation to explain this condition, stating that it is the body's own search for organic compensation when it is affected by viruses, bacteria, or even the loss or overload of a certain organ (VYGOTSKI, 2012b).

However, overcompensation can and should also be thought of for cases that go beyond the issue of occasional organic weakness. According to the author, this serves as a psychological basis for theory and practice in the education of children with disabilities, since many perspectives are open to those who educate them when one knows that the disability is not only a lack, a weakness but also a possibility of forces and attitudes that exist in a certain positive sense (VYGOTSKI, 2012b).

The author explains that the education of children with different

disabilities must be based on the fact that along with the so-called "defect", there are also psychological tendencies of the opposite orientation, i.e. compensatory possibilities to overcome what is "lacking". Precisely, such trends stand out in the foreground of the development of children with disabilities and should be included in the educational process as their driving force. Vygotsky (2012b) uses as an example the issue of the deaf child, for the author, although in appearance, we see the deaf child as if they were isolated from the world, disconnected from all social bonds, in essence, there is no minor social instinct in them, on the contrary, there is a desire for communication, but it needs to find other ways to happen which differ from oral language. According to the author, their psychological capacity for language is inversely proportional to their physical ability to speak. Likewise, the development of the blind subject should not be oriented towards blindness, but towards the possibilities that are open from the development of perception through ways other than visual perception.

However, it would be naivety and methodological incoherence to believe that deficiencies compensate naturally. Vygotsky (2012b) explains that thinking and working on disability through the prism of overcompensation requires solid criteria and lucidity in the elaboration of the educational path of these subjects since the path of development is very difficult and, precisely for this reason, it is much more important to know the correct direction. Education in these cases must always be oriented towards the social direction of the process, tensioning all existing functions to develop to compensate for those that are missing. To this end, it is necessary to propose tasks capable of developing the subject and doing them in order that respond to the gradation of the process of formation of the entire personality from a new angle. The final aim to which the educational process is oriented must be social validity, that is, the conquest of a social position by the subject with disabilities.

Thus, we can think that people with disabilities who enter higher

education have already gone through a development process that allowed them to develop compensatory mechanisms and functions for their disabilities, which in part can be considered true. However, as this scope of education is also a fruitful field to foster development, it must be recognized that the acquisitions made in the undergraduate sphere can and should continue to foster development in all those who participate in it.

In this case, the higher education institution is required not only to be aware of the different deficiencies and singularities that entail development, but it should also propose to think of strategies capable of ensuring that the student with disabilities and other specific educational needs who attends an undergraduate course (whatever it may be) has the same condition of appropriation of scientific productions as other students, because as previously said, it is in the appropriation of generic human productions - among them, science - that we humanize ourselves as well.

4 Inclusion in Higher Education: for the *full* formation of subjects

This recovery of Vygotskian studies takes place in the middle, as we have exposed, to the defense of school inclusion, taken as the practice of serving the student target public of Special Education in the common educational institution, attending the regular classes, with the support of different international guidelines documents and national laws and policies. Since the 90's, its defense has been systematized in the aforementioned *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education* (BRASIL, 1994)⁶. As we pointed out, among other aspects, the need for equal opportunities, must be resumed since it makes a call for governments, society

⁶ In the original version the title appears as: UNESCO. **Declaración de Salamanca y Marco de Acción sobre Necesidades Educativas Especiales**, SALAMANCA- ES, 1994. It derives from representatives of 92 governments who met in Salamanca, Spain from October 7 to October 6 in 1994, considering the advancement of the objective of Education for All (UNESCO, 1990), but focusing on the examination of the fundamental policy changes necessary to favor that all people could participate in school education, under the perspective focused on inclusive education [in Spanish, it is "integradora"]. There was an urgent demand to concretely train schools to serve children, especially those with special educational needs.

in general, and the school community to build an inclusive educational system (in the Spanish version, *integración*, but with a different connotation from that of *integração* as an *era* in which the focus would be on leading the student to normalize to be a participant in school and society).

The Statement is considered one of the main global documents regarding social and educational inclusion, fundamentally contributing to the defense of inclusive education - which results from the decades-long struggle for human rights during the preceding years. Although much has already changed in these 30 years, certainly, students, professionals of education, families, and different segments of society continue to highlight the marks that inequality, exclusion, prejudice, and ableism leave on everyone: the individual or collective suffering caused by violence and the daily practice of imposing violence and suffering individually or collectively.

Thus, it is necessary to mark the understanding of the defense of school inclusion and expose the contributions of Psychology, when schooling is recognized as an inalienable right for all people. However, even with this and other documents, and with Law No. 13,146/2015, Brazilian Inclusion Law (LBI), there are still many barriers to be faced for the entrance, permanence with dignity throughout the stages and levels of education, terminality with appropriation of the planned contents, and insertion in the labor market within the scope of the certification achieved in higher education for people with disabilities.

The basis of these defenses, as pointed out earlier, had already been theorized by Vygotsky (1997a), in the decades of 1920 and 1930, arguing that when providing educational services to people with disabilities, it was necessary not to be so attentive to biological limits, to the point of ignoring the many layers of potential that they had. He analyzed that when this occurred, for example, pedagogy lost its object - since it was not a medical science and could do little in this field of biological limits if it did not pay attention to how to create alternative ways of teaching and development. Likewise, he pointed out that Psychology also did not assume its scientific character when it lost its object or when it did not

advance beyond suffering from the absence of the ideal conditions of these people for the achievement of typical development.

From this perspective, Vygotsky made a great contribution from Psychology to ordinary and special education, managing to lay the foundations so that he could investigate what Rubinshtein wrote that would be the object of this science. In his studies on a new defectology, Vygotsky (1997b) repositioned the role of the biological factor in the studied phenomena, and recognized the founding role of culture, which impacts from the organization and functioning of the central nervous system to epigenetics itself (PEDROL TROITEIR, 2015).

By defining the object of this science, and by the central thesis of the CHP that the constitution and development of the consciousness and psyche of the humanized subject are of a social and cultural nature, Psychology has much to contribute to inclusion in higher education in the 21st century. Despite the distance of about 100 years, and the great technological advances in subject-world mediation, such as that provided by artificial intelligence, there remains a need to understand the impacts of class society on the constitution of subjects. Given the ontogenic plan here, cultural-historical psychologists discuss how much the development of the psyche requires intentional interventions, deliberate, conscious or not, from adult subjects or more experienced peers, and how much this is linked to the main activity, director of each developmental period.

After so much time has passed and so many studies and guiding documents can be counted on, it appears that each newborn, baby, or small child should already have before them the real possibilities that the properly human characteristics would be formed in them and that they should not be mere candidates for so much. For this to actually happen, the process of providing education on material and non-material human creations must be carried out, promoting contact with them, and leading them to master the contents of culture through education.

Education, therefore, can be understood as part of a socio-historical process of leading the new generations to the *appropriation* of what has already been conquered, what has already been produced and collected by humanity, and

which has become foundational so that the level of development already achieved is present in all subjects. The creation of the school as a classic space for this, allows us to think that those who pass through it (students) and work in it (teachers) achieve for themselves the human-generic achievements.

From this perspective, higher education should continue to make available and provide opportunities for access and appropriation of the most complex contents, seeking to equip professionals and students to understand the real, crossing the appearance of it and disseminating it in common sense.

The target audience of higher education, in theory, would already have to rely on the superior psychological functions developed at a level that would guarantee them the conditions to effectively participate in teaching, research, and outreach projects, taking a continuous process of abstraction. This level of education, in addition to contemplating the disciplinary content specific to each qualification course, should reveal what Davidov theorizes: that “[...] the essence of an individual's activity can be discovered in the process of analysis of the content of interrelated concepts such as *work, social organization, universality, freedom, conscience, the statement of an objective whose bearer is the generic subject*” (1988, p. 27, emphasis from the author, our translation). Yet it would need to place the scope of the subject studied in this analytical perspective.

When it comes to inclusion in higher education, we are not only defending the right of all people to study but also going beyond the theoretical-methodological collection circumscribed to each course, occupying ourselves with identifying the problems affecting the different areas of science and life and responding to them. This is defended based on what cultural-historical psychologists have guided: a strong notion of belonging to the collectivity, to a project of society, and to the challenge of building a new science is essential – since science itself may not be emancipatory, if it does not lead to the understanding of the laws that govern society and nature. On the contrary, without other mediations, science - the founding content of higher education - can be employed to subjugate peoples and nations.

By not explaining and elucidating the multiple determinations that are at stake when choosing a given object for study, the questions that are asked about it, the way to investigate it, the results obtained, the conclusions derived, in short, all of this can allow digressions of all kinds to be made by it, to overshadow it, confuse it, and paralyze any effective intervention in its direction.

Returning to the beginning of this topic, it can be considered that people or groups do not learn for those reasons mentioned, and disclose this repeatedly, to become a convincing discourse, naturalized and taken as true.

Thus, the essential contribution of Psychology, which we highlight in School Psychology, is the warning not to succumb to practices such as this, so that the science taught and practiced in higher education does not lose its *negativity* of questioning the apparent real, or of opposing it. This alert encourages the use of thought, of rationality in its radicality, that is, it stimulates the search for the root, for the genesis of the phenomenon that one wants to understand, recovers its processuality, and identifies the multiple determinations implied and the contradictions generated, considering the knowable objective reality. This practice of calling teachers and students to assume the role of knowing subjects allows another level of awareness about the world and themselves, and this is essential so that a set of ideas and conceptions are not assumed just because they are conveyed daily.

Concerning objective reality, therefore, opposing what is criticized for the problem of non-learning and subsequent school failure, it is important to remember that from early childhood, children appropriate cultural contents, since they coexist, learn, and share current uses and customs, values and beliefs reiterated daily, the modes of provision/guarantee and reproduction of existence, as exposed by Heller (1991). Until then, they can be considered as subjects capable of learning, relying on the use of technical resources/tools and psychological instruments that are common to their group/community, as theorized by Vygotsky (2000), Vygotsky and Luria (2007), among others.

However, over the several years of basic education, they can be recognized by others and by themselves as non-learners, as incapable of being so, without suspecting that the structural logic of class society creates deterrent mechanisms or hinders the appropriation of school knowledge that should be presented to them and, therefore, this starts to impact the formation of genericity, as much as possible.

The hindering to this human-generic education, which would allow us to understand the real, follows its course and is evident in higher education, where qualification may also not be satisfactory. This results in another phenomenon that he studies: graduates from socially excluded groups, even after having their degrees, have great difficulties in entering the market to occupy better-paid vacancies or with formalized labor records.

Perversely, school and professional failure falls on them and their groups of origin. These graduates are not able to exercise the principles of citizenship or enjoy its rewards, as recommended, in other words, by LDB 9.394/1996. In it, the relationship between education and work is explicit and should be sought.

All this leads to reflect how in the years before higher education the process of excluding the appropriation of human-generic elaborations, which can be apprehended, making them theirs, was already underway. Students from low-paid families, as shown by the data of the various Basic Education Census elaborated by the Brazilian government, do not benefit, as they could, from the organization of intentional work, which is concerned with teaching them school knowledge, organized and systematized curricula and curricular components.

This is worrying because when studying the link between the psychic elaborations of human beings as a whole and of singular subjects and the objective conditions of existence, on the phylum and ontogenetic planes, cultural-historical theorists began a dense argumentation and proof of their existence. They demonstrate how the access and appropriation of school educational knowledge revolutionizes the psyche and personality of the subjects, which are being provoked to more complex levels of development

when they rely on the exercise of the classic function of educational institutions, schools: teaching, as Saviani (2003) writes.

The audacious project of building a new psychology to explain the psychological phenomena studied by Vygotsky and other authors continues to inspire education. Through their studies, it is possible to defend that students receive, through the most careful and scientific education, resources for their full formation, that is, that intellectual formation becomes possible in them, and based on the cognitive affective unit, the formation of their emotions, their affections, the understanding of their experiences, etc., and with this, they can be committed to society, just as everyone else should be.

Contrary to what is postulated today for higher education, in the exacerbation of the logic of the commodity, it is sought as much as possible, based on the above, that it should not corroborate the partial formation of subjects, with emphasis only on the domain of its matter, but that is capable of thinking about life and its direction in capitalist society, in its current stage of reproduction.

5 Conclusion

The discussions woven here, based on Cultural-Historical Psychology and a critical perspective of human formation, had as a scenario higher education, concerning inclusive education and the defense of a propositional teaching, in a dialectic apprehension of cognitive subjects linked to social, historical, and cultural, institutional contexts.

The expansion of the process of democratization of access to higher education demands other challenges and necessary struggles in the construction of an inclusive education. This education, which needs to be based on epistemological references that consider the potential of students and the educational institution, envisions actions and transformations beyond the blaming of the subjects, the stigmatization of school failure advocated in the direction of individual deficits, and the denial of all the complexity of the processes of human constitution.

Questioning, therefore, inclusive and special education, leads to the scope not only of the processes of insertion and permanence of the historically excluded from Higher Education, consolidated by a meritocratic education system. There is a necessary debate about science, the processes of its acquisition by which the 21st-century university has been proclaimed, in the diffusion of scientific knowledge. A knowledge that is constituted at first by a perspective of social class and by the modes of production engendered in the society in which it is formed, therefore requiring the radicality of its ideological unveiling and the inquiry of who (or what) is science serving (for).

Psychology needs to expand the strengthening of such reflections and the understanding of inclusive education as a complex phenomenon - synthesis of multiple determinations and its real function in the social totality of the mediating process of appropriation of the experience accumulated in the course of the social history of humankind and the formation of each individual with or without disabilities, creator of new achievements. We defend Cultural-Historical Psychology, in this sense, according to an explanatory theory of human development, and forceful in the understanding of educational purposes and their possible reaches in class society.

Inclusión en la educación superior: ¿De qué estamos hablando?

RESUMEN

El objetivo es reflexionar la Educación Superior ante los desafíos de la educación inclusiva, en sus correlaciones con una psicología crítica, firmada en el compromiso ético y político con el desarrollo de la genericidad en todos los sujetos. Para ello, se elige la Psicología Histórico-Cultural, que defiende que la constitución y el desarrollo de la conciencia y el psiquismo humano son de naturaleza social y cultural. La educación superior, a pesar de las contradicciones en el modo de producción capitalista y el sistema meritocrático de enseñanza, necesita cada vez más caminar hacia la valorización y legitimidad de la diversidad e inclusión de todos, buscando satisfacer sus especificidades de enseñanza y aprendizaje. Se concluye que la Psicología puede contribuir a la comprensión y reflexión de la educación inclusiva en la Educación Superior, en su complejidad, en su función mediadora de apropiación de la experiencia acumulada del género humano y para la formación de la conciencia de las personas con o sin discapacidad, en la constitución se da una fuerte noción de pertenencia a la colectividad y hacia la transformación de la realidad.

Palabras clave: Educación Superior; Psicología Histórico-Cultural; Educación Especial.

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