

# Reflections on the social diagnosis in the extension project “Curriculum adaptations: actions for inclusion in educational institutions”<sup>1</sup>

Reflexões sobre o diagnóstico social no Projeto de extensão “Adaptações curriculares: ações para a inclusão nas instituições de ensino”

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## ABSTRACT

This study was prepared based on the activities carried out in the Extension Project “Curriculum adaptations: actions for inclusion in educational institutions”, coordinated by Professors of the Pedagogy major, from the Institute of Human Sciences of Pontal, Federal University of Uberlândia. The project was developed in a state school in Ituiutaba-MG with a group of 43 students from the initial years of elementary school, 17 volunteer students from the same major, and a scholarship holder in the second semester of 2019, being interrupted in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This work will deal with the preliminary assessment carried out with five of the 12 children evaluated by the scholarship holder and another major student. To carry out the social diagnosis (ANACHE, 2001), we analyzed the children's knowledge of reading, writing, and basic skills in mathematics. We found that some of the complaints presented by the school were not consistent with the initial assessment made by the scholarship holder and the volunteer student. The results revealed that some children had difficulties other than those indicated by the school. One of the cases was

## RESUMO

Este trabalho foi elaborado a partir das atividades realizadas no Projeto de Extensão “Adaptações curriculares: ações para a inclusão nas instituições de ensino”, coordenado por docentes do curso de Pedagogia, do Instituto de Ciências Humanas do Pontal, Universidade Federal de Uberlândia. O projeto foi desenvolvido em uma escola estadual de Ituiutaba-MG com um grupo de 43 alunos dos anos iniciais do ensino fundamental, 17 estudantes voluntárias do mesmo curso e uma bolsista no segundo semestre de 2019, sendo interrompido em março de 2020, devido à pandemia de covid 19. Neste trabalho será tratado sobre a avaliação preliminar realizada com cinco das 12 crianças avaliadas pela bolsista e outra estudante. Para a realização do diagnóstico social (ANACHE, 2001), analisamos os conhecimentos das crianças em leitura, escrita e habilidades básicas em matemática. Constatamos que algumas das queixas apresentadas pela escola não condiziam com a avaliação inicial feita pela bolsista e a estudante voluntária. Os resultados revelaram que algumas crianças apresentavam dificuldades diversas das indicadas pela escola. Um dos casos foi o de Antonella, indicada para avaliação por não saber ler e nem realizar as

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that of Antonella, who was recommended for evaluation because she did not know how to read or perform the four mathematical operations. However, the student did very well in the proposed activities, only being very shy.

**Keywords:** Social diagnosis. Portuguese language. Mathematics. Elementary Education.

quatro operações matemáticas. Contudo, a estudante se saiu muito bem nas atividades propostas, mostrando-se apenas muito tímida.

**Palavras-chave:** Diagnóstico social. Língua Portuguesa. Matemática. Ensino Fundamental.

## Introduction

This study was based on activities developed in the Extension Project entitled “Curricular adaptation: actions for inclusion in educational institutions”, scheduled to take place for 11 (eleven) months, between September 2019 and July 2020<sup>4</sup>. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the actions were interrupted in March 2020, when we were about to start the interventions with the children after a pedagogical evaluation<sup>5</sup>.

According to Aranha (2003, p. 34), “[...] curricular adjustments create [...] educational possibilities [...] towards learning difficulties [...]”, resulting in adjustments to the “[...] regular curriculum, when necessary, to make it appropriate to the peculiarities of students with special needs.” From this perspective, the proposal of the activities dialogued with the promotion of pedagogical practices that considered students with disabilities or other specific educational needs so that they could share the same experiences.

To this end, the proposal was developed in a public school in Ituiutaba-Minas Gerais with a group of 43 Elementary School students (1st to 4th grade), a scholarship holder (one of the authors of this study), and 17 volunteer Pedagogy majors from Federal University of Uberlândia, Pontal’s Human Sciences Institute. To meet the school’s demands, given the number of children, the undergraduates were divided into pairs. Each pair assessed a different number of students,

<sup>4</sup> The project was approved in the SEI PROEXC Notice No. 62/2018, of the UFU/Community Integration Extension Program (PEIC 2019-2020).

<sup>5</sup> It was resumed in 2021 but online at another institution.

considering each child's pace, class attendance, and other factors that impacted the project's execution process. The scholarship holder and a volunteer student evaluated 12 students, of whom five were selected since their productions were most significant for the purpose of this research.

The Extension Project Curriculum Integration “Curriculum adaptation: actions for inclusion in educational institutions” had the target audience of special education (people with disabilities, global development disorders, and high abilities) as a reference for the interventions. However, in the list of students sent by the educational institution, there were children who were not literate and children with difficulties in reading, writing, text interpretation, and mathematics without presenting any specificity originating from a disability/developmental disorder.

Therefore, we had to readjust the actions, taking into account the real demands of the children. This decision required meetings between the coordinators and all the undergraduates as well as bibliographical research, simulation of the activities to be developed, and organization of the teaching material to be used, among other actions. Initially, we carried out a social diagnosis of the students, understood by Anache (2001) as a systematized way of obtaining information in order to identify difficulties, guiding the knowledge of the problems and the needs within the school context, with an educational character for future interventions and not for classification purposes.

In defense of an approach that values historical and cultural factors, we understand that no child is born with all their potential ready just because of their biological conditions. Nor are they empty beings, devoid of experiences and knowledge when they enter school, or determined only by the conditions of the social environment in which they live. They internalize elements of their culture (signs or instruments) made available to them by someone with more experience, because “[...] the sign located outside the organism, like the instrument, is separate from the individual and consists, in essence, of an organ of society or a social environment” (VIGOTSKI, 2011, p. 864).

So, rather than focusing on what the child lacked, it was important to focus on what they could do, considering their development stimulated by elements of their sociocultural environment, as well as stimulating their higher psychological functions. From this perspective, we aimed to identify their potential and difficulties in basic Portuguese language (reading and writing) and Mathematics skills. Based on this, the intention was to plan interventions to meet their specific needs, which was not possible due to the interruption of on-site activities due to the pandemic context.

Considering the students assessment process, the actions were structured around meetings in which we analyzed their knowledge in the aforementioned areas. When we started the social diagnosis, we began to problematize and reflect on the referral of the students, noting that some of the complaints made by the school were not in line with the initial assessment made by the scholarship holder and the volunteer student.

These first impressions led to discussions based on the following question: In what way do the assessed children show their reflections, singularities, and knowledge?

In this sense, the general objective of this study was to identify the children's potential as opposed to the difficulties pointed out by the school. Concerning the specific objectives, we sought to conceptualize school complaints and social diagnosis; and to present the reasons why the school sent the children to this project, establishing common and different aspects between them.

Methodologically, the research is based on a qualitative approach, considering the particularity of what was investigated, the objective, and the research problem, with no intention of quantifying the information obtained (MINAYO, 1994). Based on its technical aspects, it is a participatory research, as the researchers were involved with the group of children, trying to find answers to the problematic situation. From this perspective, we, the researchers, and the children being researched were participants in the process, according to the specificities of our roles in the interventions carried out (BRANDÃO; STRECK, 2006).

To this end, we used as the procedure, the analysis of the children's productions, the result of seven activities consisting of: drawing of oneself, memory game and stick game, identification of the logical sequence of the children's story "The boy and the seed", dictation of words and identification of colors and geometric shapes.

We tried to encourage them to explore and reflect on concrete situations or problems in the areas of knowledge that are the focus of this project (Portuguese Language and Mathematics). In this way, they could reason, exercise creativity, test ideas and hypotheses, solve problems, and use their existing knowledge, linking it to the information covered in the proposed activities.

With these initial considerations in mind, this study has been organized into 4 sections, apart from this Introduction. The first presents the theoretical framework, which aims to dialogue with the literature produced on the subject, highlighting the concepts of school complaints and social diagnosis. The second refers to children, their learning, and the impact on their development, in dialog with the studies of Lev Vygotsky (2011, 2018, 2021). Later, in the results and discussion, we highlight the activities carried out by the children and the reflections arising from the knowledge they presented, as well as the reasons for their referral to the school. Finally, we present the final considerations, summarizing the main results of the research.

## **I Social diagnosis and school complaints: theoretical reflections**

In order to develop the project "Curricular adaptation: actions for inclusion in educational institutions", it was necessary to study the concept of social diagnosis and its contributions to teachers' pedagogical work. From a clinical point of view, diagnosis "[and] has been attributed to the 'power' to decide on the referrals to be oriented to the students; therefore, its effects are far-reaching, leave marks and seal destinies" (ANACHE, 2019, p. 4).

When analyzing the diagnosis of people with intellectual disabilities, Anache and Almeida (2018, p. 40) point out that

[...] clinical judgment comes from the method adopted by the professional to make the diagnosis, since it is a set of procedures, instruments and techniques that is built on a theoretical framework [...]. We understand that making a diagnosis requires studies/research into unique cases, as each individual is from a different cultural background and, therefore, has particular psychological characteristics.

Regarding social diagnosis, it is considered a dynamic concept, as it makes it possible to understand the causes of problems, interpret reality, and identify vulnerabilities as well as potentialities and opportunities for intervention, with an emphasis on learning. For this reason, it “[...] requires a systematized study of the subject, with or without the use of specific instruments, and also consists of a series of inferences that need to be carefully formulated” (ANACHE, 2001, p.1).

In educational practice, specifically in the school context, it is important to consider the needs of students and the reality they experience. In this sense, we highlight the knowledge that students already have and enhance it so that they can build new knowledge, as well as remedy/minimize the difficulties they have.

Some factors certainly contribute to this context of school difficulties and inequalities: the lack of access of part of the population to the education system, social inequality, the lack of structure in many educational institutions, and a banking conception of education (FREIRE, 2005) that persists in many schools in the country, disregarding students as participants in the teaching and learning process.

Given this scenario, many students are or will be identified with learning disorders and difficulties or with other academic issues. Often, the obstacles they face stem from the socio-economic conditions in which they live, from the methodologies used by teachers, among other causes, and not because they have an organic or internal issue that prevents them from learning. This audience is or will be referred with school complaints to psycho-pedagogical care and special education services.

Understood as actions that focus on learning and behavioral problems in the schooling process of children and adolescents, complaints range from children with

cognitive deficits and disruptive behavior to allegations of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), for example.

In the article “Methodological proposals in intervention with students with school complaints”, Oliveira, Bragagnolo, and Souza (2014) report on the experience of intervention with students who had a history of school failure. The authors deal with the social relationships established by the students and the whole process of subjectivation, considering the difficulties of schooling.

According to Oliveira, Bragagnolo and Souza (2014, p. 478),

[...] the child/student who is constituted amid a school complaint often experiences humiliation that produces situations of exclusion, and these experiences are subjectivized and generate feelings in their existence. The perspective of approaching the feelings expresses the relationship between the subject, the child/student, and the social meanings of the school complaint, shared in human action.

Marked by a label of “difficulty”, “incapacity,” or “problem”, among others, many students come to be seen only in this way, as deviant and incomplete, so that their teachers, family members, and colleagues don't see them beyond this. In many situations, they end up reproducing what is expected of them, presenting situations of school difficulties materializing as obstacles in the learning process.

Assis and Corso (2017), in their research “Intervention in counting principles: Development of the program and initial application”, proposed actions in the area of mathematics with children in the first year of elementary school, since this “[...] is a complex area of study, with numerous complementary factors involved in its construction. [...] learning mathematics is difficult for many students, and its teaching faces a series of challenges” (ASSIS; CORSO, 2017, p. 3).

These authors point out that many of these difficulties are experienced in children's daily lives, as they have to organize their daily lives, such as categorizing their toys, sharing candy with friends or cousins, among others (ASSIS; CORSO, 2017). In routine tasks, they put mathematical knowledge and skills into practice with meaning and significance for their daily lives. For this reason, “teachers need



to consider their prior knowledge and the knowledge needed for them to complete tasks successfully on their own” (ASSIS; CORSO, 2013, p. 8).

The authors also talk about the difficulties the education system has in providing quality teaching. In many institutions, there is a lack of school materials and meals, classrooms are overcrowded. These institutions also face problems related to the initial training in the area in which many teachers work. The authors also highlighted other factors, such as the lack of financial resources allocated to educational institutions (ASSIS; CORSO, 2017).

In the two articles mentioned above, it is possible to analyze that society is sustained by a neoliberal bias that places school success or failure on particular characteristics of people, and this has guided policies in the school sphere. But how do school complaints occur? Are teachers and other professionals who have direct contact with children and young people grounded in praxis, in a movement of action-reflection-action? It is necessary to know the history of each child who has difficulties at school, based on their understanding of the obstacles they face, as well as their way of learning and interests, because the classification of their ability or inability is generally made by adults.

Based on these considerations, the extension project was based on the foundations of “historical-cultural psychology [which] seeks to understand it [the phenomenon] in its essence, in its totality, [...] it is not enough to say what the student doesn't learn, what they don't do, it is not enough to know the appearance of the phenomenon” (ASBAHR; LOPES, 2006, p. 70). It is necessary to investigate how behaviors were constructed, in other words, to analyze the historical process of (non-)learning.

The specificities of students, teachers, and academic institutions are diverse, but standardization is a very efficient mechanism in a society that wants more lasting and less complex responses to deal with human differences. Rossato and Leonardo (2012) state that

In this process of producing school failure, naturalizations are solidified, and categories and teaching modalities are created to fill the gaps in school failure. Thus, it becomes acceptable



and advisable for a child who is not doing well at school to attend a special class or school or even to be called disabled, hyperactive, dyslexic, etc. Based on these educational categorizations and segregations, learning expectations become very low, so that not learning becomes something natural (ROSSATO; LEONARDO, 2012, p. 16).

In this sense, situations and conditions are created for the construction and amplification of difficulties, disabilities, and disorders, and many school complaints reveal that some institutions and teachers don't know how to deal with their own training inconsistencies. We need to problematize the practices of referring children for assessments, as well as analyzing the production of diagnoses and reports, as this can lead to the intensification of exclusionary mechanisms, both outside and inside educational institutions.

Children need to be understood as beings in transformation who are subject to the historical and cultural conditioning factors of their time, but also as producers of knowledge, interacting with the social and physical environment in a constant movement.

## **II Children and their learning process from a cultural-historical perspective**

In the article “Defectology and the study of the development and education of the abnormal child”, written by Vygotsky and translated by Denise Regina Sales, Marta Kohl de Oliveira, and Priscila Nascimento Marques, the Russian psychologist analyzes the importance of the cultural aspect for the development of children with disabilities.

From this perspective, there is a social plan of development, which is not a linear evolution of the individual's organism, as advocated by the innatist perspective, but occurs in a dialectical and conflictual way, through ruptures and transformations (VIGOTSKI, 2011). This path mobilizes the acquisition of higher functions of thought such as memory, imagination, attention, volition, among others, which are not given a priori but are developed in relationships with the

socio-cultural environment in which the child is inserted, whether or not they have characteristics that hinder this process.

The acquisition of complex forms of thought takes place in contact with experienced individuals who have already acquired this ability to create strategies for answers to everyday problems or school problems, which cannot be obtained directly, where the paths do not find “natural answers” (VIGOTSKI, 2011). Thus, “[...] the basic function and the fundamental aim of the higher form of adaptation are to make it occur when adaptation by the direct route becomes difficult for the child” (VIGOTSKI, 2011, p. 866).

Based on Vygotsky's (2011) considerations, we problematize the process of teaching people with disabilities or other specific educational needs, since, according to the author, it is necessary to challenge the development paths in order to create situations in which the child has to think about how to solve them, without the answer being given beforehand. In this sense, we understand that during the author's theoretical production period, it was not, and is not, just any perspective of education that will enable children to learn and develop, especially those students with specific educational needs.

Through these theoretical reflections, Vygotsky made significant contributions to the understanding of the impact of the socio-cultural environment on the formation of higher cognitive functions, since “[...] culture itself reworks all of the child's natural behavior and retraces the entire course of development in a new way” (VIGOTSKI, 2011, p. 866). The appropriation of knowledge produced by human beings throughout history, as well as in the historical context in which they live, enables children to appropriate the signs and instruments of their species.

Thus, people with sensory, intellectual, or physical deficits have contact with the signs and instruments of their culture in a particular way, differing in their cognitive path from those who do not have these conditions, which does not mean that they cannot learn. In general, “the whole apparatus of human culture (from the external form of behaviour) is adapted to the normal psychophysiological organization of the person” (VIGOTSKI, 2011, p. 867). In this sense,

[...] when a child appears before us who deviates from the normal human type, with the aggravating factor of a deficiency in the psychophysiological organization, immediately, even in the eyes of a lay observer, the convergence gives way to a profound divergence, a discrepancy, a disparity between the natural and cultural lines of the child's development (VIGOTSKI, 2011, p. 867).

Here, we highlight the role of education in anticipating the child's development, whether or not they have any educational particularities, so that they can acquire knowledge of the society in which they are inserted, through strategies and procedures other than conventional ones. We emphasize that “[...] cultural forms of behavior are the only way to educate the abnormal child” (VIGOTSKI, 2011, p. 868) and, therefore, these should be organized in such a way as to serve children, favoring their autonomy.

By analyzing the child's development as a dialectical process composed of ruptures, continuities, and conflicts, we see the need to understand the child's non-linear cognitive path. From this perspective, we used a sequence of playful activities, taking into account the various possibilities inherent in play itself or whatever comes from it, so that the children could better deal with the evaluation process, without, however, feeling judged or classified, given what happens continuously in the school environment.

As Vygotsky (2021, p. 210) points out, “[...] play is not a form of activity, but, in a sense, it is the line that guides development in pre-school age”. Even with children in the age range beyond early childhood education, such as those assessed in this research, we understand the relevance of interventions that take playfulness into account in the assessment process.

It was not possible to delve into some aspects of children's learning, but it is necessary to consider, in a cultural-historical analysis, “[...] the child's needs and inclinations, his impulses, the motives of his activity [...]” (VIGOTSKI, 2021, p. 211).

In this way, games and play can identify and stimulate skills related to imagination and creativity, fostering cognitive, social, affective, and psychomotor development, among others. In “Imagination and Creation in Childhood”, Vygotsky (2018) distinguishes the child's creative capacity from

mere reproduction, pointing out that one of the ways in which “fantasy and reality are related” (p. 25) is through combination. This implies that, in the cognitive path taken by the child, there is an association between elements known to them, those coming from their experiences, and others related to thoughts from their imagination and fantasy.

Another configuration between “fantasy and reality” occurs through the connection between “[...] the final product of fantasy and a complex phenomenon of reality” (VIGOTSKI, 2018, p. 25). More complexly, in this combination, even though they haven't actually experienced it, having only had contact with it through the experiences and information of others, children can create scenarios and imagine what happened through their own mental associations.

In the different possibilities of combination, the child's intellectual exercise occurs through the authorial elaboration of drawing, for example, which can reveal the children's thoughts, ideas, and emotions in an intricate web between the lived, experienced, and reflected. For this reason, the creation of experiences that enable children to reflect on their knowledge and skills in reading and writing, and logical reasoning, as far as the focus of this work is concerned, reveal their mental processes.

### **III Intervention procedures**

Given the general objective of this research, to identify the children's potential as opposed to the difficulties pointed out by the school, we carried out a social diagnosis of the children (ANACHE, 2001) through a set of didactic-pedagogical activities, as shown in Table 1. These made it possible to identify some executive functions<sup>6</sup>, such as storing information (memory), the ability to make and change decisions, problem-solving, among others (COSTA et.al., 2016).

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<sup>6</sup> Executive functions “constitute a set of skills that enable attentive reflection, that is, deliberate and intentional to achieve an objective” (COSTA et.al., 2016, p. 5).

Table 1 – Identification data of the activities developed with students.

Sequence	Type of activity	Activity's description
<b>Activity 1</b>	Drawing of oneself	The aim of the activity was for the student to draw themselves, freely, so that we could analyze their perception of themselves, their notion of body schema, among other things.
<b>Activity 2</b>	Name writing	The activity aimed to see if the child could write their first name, full name, or just its letters.
<b>Activity 3</b>	Dictation	The activity aimed to ascertain the children's level of writing, identifying what they could write, both in full and in parts, but still with little precision.
<b>Activity 4</b>	Reading a book of interest from the library	The activity aimed to identify the children's reading and interpretation skills. The book they chose from the library was Pinocchio.
<b>Activity 5</b>	Illustrated story without caption	The activity aimed to examine sight-reading and sorting skills, requiring the children to use logical reasoning, the ability to associate, establish relationships, and recognize a sequence of facts.
<b>Activity 6</b>	Geometric shapes (logic blocks)	The activity aimed to explore and identify what the children knew about the geometric properties of objects and figures (shape, size, color, and position), as well as their knowledge of the names of geometric shapes (circle, square, triangle, rectangle), understanding the characteristics of each one.
<b>Activity 7</b>	Stick game	The activity, also known as the toothpick game, aimed to check the children's attention, concentration, logical reasoning, and motor coordination.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023).

Concerning the proposed actions, we used a memory game so that the children could use their logical reasoning and creativity, as well as recognize the names and characteristics of the figures depicted. We also used the stick game, which encourages children to be patient, use strategy, logical reasoning, and motor coordination.

The students were also asked to identify the logical sequence of the story “The Boy and the Seed” so that they could identify its beginning, middle, and end. The activity required logical reasoning to organize the textual sequence, associating and

recognizing facts, as well as attention and observation. Another action developed was the drawing of oneself, important for analyzing the children's perception of themselves, their self-knowledge, as well as their notions of body schema. They were also asked to identify some basic colors and geometric shapes, making it possible to observe their knowledge of the content and their ability to analyze and reason in general. We proposed dictating words to check the children's writing, their writing hypotheses, and other knowledge.

The first contact with the group of children to be assessed was on the morning of August 15, 2019. To identify each child's difficulties, the undergraduates had to be divided into pairs so that they could assess around 4 to 5 students. It took four days to collect the initial information, as some of the volunteers were unable to attend the school due to their university activities. We collected some information about the children (Table 2) and began mapping the first characteristics relating to school knowledge and general skills (memory, reasoning, and others), which composed the social diagnosis since the intervention proposals would then be drawn up.

Table 2 shows a general identification of the children assessed:

Table 2 - Children's identification.

<b>Fictitious name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>School complaint</b>	<b>School year</b>
Túlio	9 years old	Attention Deficit Disorder and Hyperactivity.	4th grade
Mariana	8 years old	She could not read or write and had difficulties with mathematics.	3rd grade
Luna	9 years old	Difficulties in reading and writing.	4th grade
Antonella	10 years old	The student didn't know how to read or do addition, subtraction, division, and multiplication calculations.	4th grade
Noah	8 years old	Difficulties in mathematics.	3rd grade

Source: Prepared by the authors (2025).

This group was chosen from a total of 12 children assessed because, during the project, some of them were not present every day. We would like to point out that we will present the main results obtained from the children's assessment in the sequence in which they took place.

#### **IV Assessed students: what did the social diagnosis reveal?**

The first child to be introduced was Tulio, who drew a hospital when we asked him to draw a picture of himself. We asked him why he had drawn it, and he said that he would like to be a doctor when he becomes an adult. We gave him another sheet of paper, and he just drew a head inside a square (Figure 1).

Figure 1 – Protection square



Source: Author's collection (2019).

When asked about it, he said that his mother told him that the squares were a form of protection. However, he didn't say what or who he was protecting himself against, or why she had discussed it with him. Túlio's report revealed his creative capacity (VIGOTSKI, 2018), which was constituted in what he had to say, and, for this reason, it was essential to listen to him since it was not through reading and writing<sup>7</sup> that he showed his capacity.

In the sorting activity, we presented a sequence of four images so that he could understand the whole story ("The boy and the seed"). The first image contained a flower planted by a boy. In the second, he put the seed in the ground;

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<sup>7</sup> The student knew how to write his name, but in the dictation, he was unable to write any words and he was also unable to read.



then he watered the seed and, finally, the boy watched it grow. After Tulio had organized the story in sequence, he told it, using his imagination as a way of solving problems and not just as a playful and fanciful factor, as pointed out by Vigotski (2018).

As for the other activities, he did very well. He had no trouble identifying geometric shapes (logic blocks) and separating colors, sizes, and thicknesses. In the last activity, the stick game, he showed good motor coordination, reasoning, and strategy, showing executive functions in development (COSTA et. al., 2016).

Reflecting on what Túlio talked about and what he did, we wondered about the real reason for referring him to the extension project since, at the time we assessed him, he didn't show any marked characteristics of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder as it was complained by the school. According to Oliveira, Bragagnolo, and Souza (2014, p. 479), “[...] students in situations of academic failure are sentenced, and learning difficulties are pathologized.” In this sense, “[...] a significant number of students continue to have difficulties that prevent them from learning, included in classrooms, but in a process of ‘exclusionary inclusion’ in which schools “[...] most of the time fail to guarantee a practice that goes beyond their entry into school, that is, they fail to ensure their permanence and access to knowledge.”

In addition to Tulio, we also assessed Mariana. When it came to drawing herself, she drew a child (Figure 2).

Figure 2 – Garden and cousin



Source: Author's collection (2019).

When asked who she had drowned, she said it was her cousin Carla. Mariana presumed Carla was 9 years old. She then drew herself with eyes, mouth, arms, body, hair, legs, and feet, forgetting her nose. Although she forgot her nose, she had a good understanding of the human body, as she showed other details.

She wrote her full name in cursive, with a comma between each word. During the reading and interpretation activity, we assessed that she read with difficulty; however, she could interpret well, which was different from her school complaint of not being able to read or write. In the logic sequence, she performed very well, and in the logic blocks activity, she showed excellent organizational skills, knowing how to identify thicknesses and colors. In the last task, the stick game, she started off having difficulties multiplying with the sticks, but she used her fingers to help. At first, she was afraid to use this type of strategy, perhaps because someone had told her it was wrong. However, we encouraged her to use it, and she did well.

In dialogue with the research carried out by Oliveira, Bragagnolo, and Souza (2014),

We committed [...] to listen to the children/students, to hear the stories they told about themselves, in other words, the meanings they gave to their schooling trajectory - children/subjects who expressed their understanding of what is experienced at school (OLIVEIRA; BRAGAGNOLO; SOUZA, 2014, p. 480).

When the authors Oliveira, Bragagnolo, and Souza (2014) refer to “listening to the children/students”, we understand, as stated by Vygotsky (2011), that we must see the child as a producer of knowledge and culture, identifying their interests and abilities. They go through experiences in their daily lives, in social relationships at school, in the groups they interact with, among others.

Mariana, like other children, is the materialization of the fact that sometimes it seems that some teachers don't encourage autonomy in childhood since she was afraid to use her fingers to count. It was necessary to encourage her to continue with the process, informing her that there was no problem in using her own body to solve the multiplication accounts.

Another student who took part in the assessed group was Luna. She complained that she couldn't look at the light very often because she felt pain, even though she had already had her eyes checked. We noticed that she held the pencil with her right hand, wrapping her fingers around it like a snail. In her writing activities, she said she didn't know her full name, and during the dictation activity, she showed difficulties in producing words in print letters. She couldn't interpret the images or read what the scholarship holder had presented.

She had no idea what she was going to draw, and when she started her self-portrait, she kept asking where she was going to put her arms and legs, showing difficulty with body schema, which is why she didn't draw anything besides her head, as can be seen in Figure 3.

Figure 3 – Luna's head



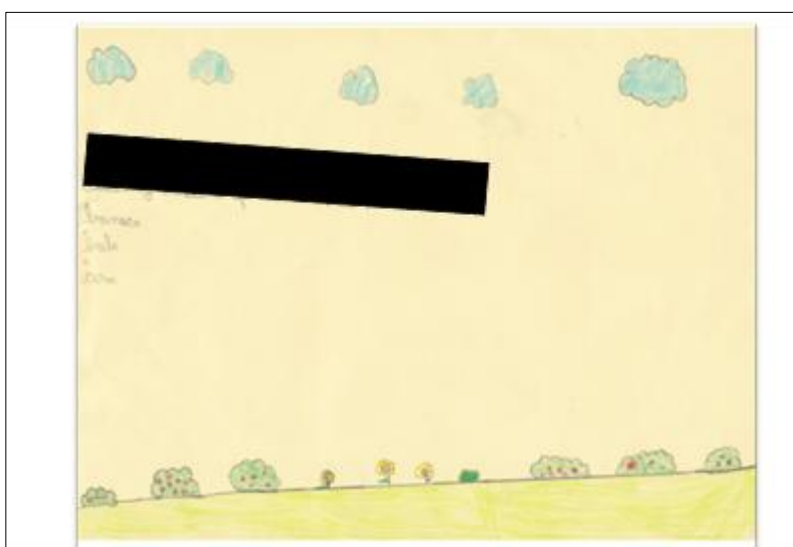
Source: Author's collection (2019).

She didn't draw herself or the sequence of the illustrated story, The Boy and the Seed. She also couldn't name the geometric figure of the rectangle, but she got the triangle and its blue color right. She counted the sticks she won in the game correctly. At first, she got some of the multiplication numbers wrong with the sticks, but after the second game, she got the multiplication, addition, and subtraction numbers right, encouraged that she could do the counting using her fingers, which she preferred, or by making straws on paper. This strategy enabled her to follow other cognitive paths (VIGOTSKI, 2011).

Concerning Antonella, we identified that she was a very shy girl and had difficulty expressing herself orally. In the proposed activities, we found that she was able to write her whole name in cursive. She did well at dictation, showed that she could read and write, and did the sequence of the story (The boy and the seed), unlike what the school had told her.

She drew a picture of herself in a landscape because, according to her, she liked nature (Figure 4).

Figure 4 – Antonella's garden



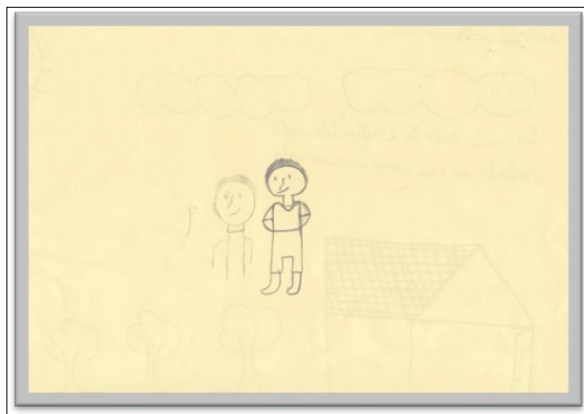
Source: Author's collection (2019).

When it came to identifying colors, shapes, and thicknesses, Antonella excelled, but she didn't want to count the geometric shapes out loud, which may have been due to various reasons, including the fact that she had to position herself in all the activities, which is difficult for a shy child. She found it easy to play the stick game and got the addition, subtraction, and multiplication right in a different way than the school had complained about.

The last child to be evaluated was Noah. He had his own way of picking up the pencil to do the activities, holding it at the end. He was scared at first because we were paying attention to how he was writing. He said the teacher tried to show him another way to hold the pencil, but he couldn't write the way she wanted.

In the activities we did, we noticed that when Noah drew himself, he showed a sense of his body and its features, such as hair, eyes, skin, etc. He drew a lot of detail but didn't want to color it. (Figure 5)

Figure 5 – How Noah sees himself



Source: Author's collection (2019).

In another activity, which involved writing his name, Noah wrote his full name in cursive. In the dictation activity, he didn't know how to write any words, and we concluded that perhaps the child wasn't interested in doing it, since in some cases he made a point of doing it, and in others he said he didn't know. He couldn't read the book *Pinocchio*, but he knew exactly what happened in the story from the pictures. He said that *Pinocchio's* nose grew every time he lied, that his father *Geppetto* made him out of a log, that on his journey he met the talking cricket and, on his adventure, he worked in a circus (he said he had never been to a circus) and that *Pinocchio* was swallowed by the whale and there he found *Geppetto*. The child's imagination (VIGOTSKI, 2018) was not limited to his ability to read and write, as he stood out for his fluency and verbal comprehension.

The student got almost everything right when asked about mathematics. We used logic blocks so that he could identify shapes, their thickness, and colors such as blue, red, and yellow. He couldn't name the shapes, but he got the colors and thicknesses right. During the stick game, we also asked him multiplication, addition, and subtraction questions, which Noah got right, such as  $3 \times 2 = 6$ ,  $45 -$

$10 = 35$ ,  $80 + 40 = 120$ , among others. The knowledge presented contradicted the complaint made by the school.

The five children assessed had some difficulties which, in some cases, did not correspond to the reason for their referral by the school. Can we understand that these difficulties hindered the work carried out by the teachers in the classroom or that they caused more concern to the educators? Regarding “[...] school complaints, they can not be understood as a problem that ends in the student, individuals who are seen as natural or social-natural being, but as a process built on relationships” (ASBAHR; LOPES, 2006, p. 70) that are established within the school, in the classroom and other spaces, as well as in the children's own life experiences. “These, in turn, can only be understood in the larger context of the social structure as a product of history” (ASBAHR; LOPES, 2006, p.70).

## **V Final considerations**

For the discussions intended in this text, we tried to consider its main objective: to reflect on the activities produced by the children evaluated in the PEIC Curriculum Integration Extension Project “Curriculum adaptation: actions for inclusion in educational institutions”. The actions developed in the project were based on the basic contents of Mathematics and Portuguese Language (reading and writing), relating them to the students' knowledge through social diagnosis (ANACHE, 2001).

The school where we carried out the extension project presented a list with the names of 43 students and their difficulties. The scholarship holder (one of the authors of this paper) and a volunteer student assessed 12 children, five of whom are presented in this paper.

Regarding two specific cases, Noah and Antonella, they were in similar years of schooling and had different difficulties. Antonella was referred by the school because she couldn't read or write. However, what we identified was just a shy child who had difficulties expressing herself orally.

In Noah's case, the complaint was that he had difficulties with math and he showed exactly the opposite, as he excelled in activities that required knowledge in this area. These two children (Noah and Antonella), in particular, showed no difficulty in solving what was proposed. We, therefore, question the reasons for the school's referral. We must consider differences and make school a welcoming place of knowledge, abandoning a perspective that sees only one type of student, a standardized model of learning and behaving.

We also highlight a worrying practice: some teachers said, in front of all the students, that certain children were not suitable for math class and should be sent for assessment, even though they were not on the list sent by the school. We would point out that behavior like this reinforces exclusion and, therefore, it is an obstacle to the learning process.

Unfortunately, we were unable to continue the project in person and carry out the necessary interventions with the group being assessed because, among the difficulties encountered (which were beyond our control), the COVID-19 pandemic was the most significant. It made it impossible to carry out interventions with the students.

Our aim was for the school to create real learning conditions for all subjects, promoting strategies that would help students see themselves as beings with possibilities. In this sense, concerning the children assessed during the project, like so many others in 2025, new school trajectories must be (re)built by questioning reports and diagnoses that only serve to stagnate processes and label students.



## Reflexiones sobre el diagnóstico social en el proyecto de extensión “Adecuaciones curriculares: acciones para la inclusión en las instituciones educativas”

### RESUMEN

Este trabajo fue elaborado a partir de las actividades realizadas en el Proyecto de Extensión “Adaptación curricular: acciones para la inclusión en las instituciones educativas”, coordinado por profesores de la carrera de Pedagogía, del Instituto de Ciencias Humanas del Pontal, de la Universidad Federal de Uberlândia. El proyecto fue desarrollado en una escuela estatal de Ituiutaba-MG con un grupo de 43 alumnos de los primeros años de la enseñanza primaria, 17 alumnos voluntarios del mismo curso y un becario en el segundo semestre de 2019, siendo interrumpido en marzo de 2020, debido a la pandemia de la covid 19. Este trabajo abordará la evaluación preliminar realizada con cinco de los 12 niños evaluados por el becario y otro alumno. Para realizar el diagnóstico social (ANACHE, 2001), analizamos los conocimientos de lectura, escritura y habilidades básicas en matemáticas de los niños. Encontramos que algunas de las quejas presentadas por el colegio no coincidían con la valoración inicial realizada por el becario y el estudiante voluntario. Los resultados revelaron que algunos niños tenían dificultades distintas a las indicadas por la escuela. Uno de los casos fue el de Antonella, a quien recomendaron para evaluación porque no sabía leer ni realizar las cuatro operaciones matemáticas. Sin embargo, el estudiante tuvo un muy buen desempeño en las actividades propuestas, siendo sólo muy tímido.

**Palabras clave:** Diagnóstico social. Idioma portugués. Matemáticas. Educación elemental.

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