



The subject of Special Education in the curriculum of the Universidade Estadual de Londrina Pedagogy course (1977-2018)¹

A disciplina de Educação Especial no currículo do Curso de Pedagogia da
Universidade Estadual de Londrina (1977-2018)

La disciplina de Educación Especial en el currículo de la carrera de Pedagogía de la
Universidade Estadual de Londrina (1977-2018)

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Abstract

This article aimed to analyze the presence and purpose of the Special Education discipline in the historical construction of the Pedagogy curriculum at the State University of Londrina (UEL) (1977-2018). The methodology used was the historiographical category of school discipline, selecting historical sources such as course pedagogical projects, teaching programs, legislation, and curricular readjustments of the UEL Pedagogy course. As a result, it was noted that Special Education, in the historical period between 1977 and 2018, was present in the teacher training curriculum with different terminologies: Introduction to the Pedagogy of the Exceptional, Introduction to Special Education, Education and Diversity, Special Education and Brazilian Sign Language (Libras). The purposes were diverse regarding the central issue that teacher training and practice should be anchored in the knowledge of psychological, medical, and human sciences in a broader sense. Therefore, the study of Special Education as a subject in teacher training is considered to contribute to understanding the field of Special Education in Brazil.

Keywords: Special Education Subject; Teacher training; University.

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Resumo

Este artigo objetivou analisar a presença e a finalidade da disciplina de *Educação Especial* na construção histórica do currículo de Pedagogia da Universidade Estadual de Londrina (UEL) (1977-2018). A metodologia utilizada foi a categoria historiográfica disciplina escolar, selecionando-se fontes históricas, como os projetos pedagógicos de curso, os programas de ensino, as legislações e as readequações curriculares do curso de Pedagogia da UEL. Como resultado, notou-se que a *Educação Especial*, no período histórico entre 1977 e 2018, esteve presente no currículo de formação de professores com diferentes terminologias: *Introdução à Pedagogia dos Excepcionais*, *Introdução à Educação Especial*, *Educação e Diversidade*, *Educação Especial e Língua Brasileira de Sinais (Libras)*. As finalidades foram diversas acerca da questão central de que a formação e a atuação docente devem se ancorar nos saberes das ciências psicológicas, médicas e humanas de modo mais amplo. Logo, considera-se que o estudo da disciplina *Educação Especial* na formação de professores contribui para compreender o campo da Educação Especial no Brasil.

Palavras-chave: Disciplina Educação Especial; Formação de professores; Universidade.

Resumen

Este artículo tuvo como objetivo analizar la presencia y el propósito de la disciplina de Educación Especial en la construcción histórica del currículo de Pedagogía en la Universidad Estatal de Londrina (UEL) (1977-2018). La metodología utilizada fue la categoría historiográfica de disciplina escolar, seleccionando fuentes históricas como proyectos pedagógicos de curso, programas de enseñanza, legislación y reajustes curriculares del curso de Pedagogía de la UEL. Como resultado, se observó que la Educación Especial, en el período histórico entre 1977 y 2018, estuvo presente en el currículo de formación docente con diferentes terminologías: *Introducción a la Pedagogía de lo Excepcional*, *Introducción a la Educación Especial*, *Educación y Diversidad*, *Educación Especial y Lengua de Señas Brasileña (Libras)*. Los propósitos fueron diversos en cuanto a la cuestión central de que la formación y la práctica docente deben anclarse en el conocimiento de las ciencias psicológicas, médicas y humanas en un sentido más amplio. Por lo tanto, se considera que el estudio de la Educación Especial como disciplina en la formación docente contribuye a la comprensión del campo de la Educación Especial en Brasil.

Palabras-clave: Disciplina de Educación Especial; Formación de profesores; Universidad.

Introduction

This text² aims to analyze the presence and purpose of the *Special Education* discipline in the historical construction of the Pedagogy curriculum at the State University of Londrina (UEL) between 1977 and 2018. The course activities began in 1971, when the newly created University incorporated the old Pedagogy course, which had been in operation since 1962, promoted by the Faculty of Philosophy, Sciences and Letters of Londrina (Abbud; Favaro, 2012). Initially, the course offered a single qualification, a degree in Pedagogy, whose curriculum included a subject entitled *Introduction to the Pedagogy of the Exceptional*. In the 1990s, the introduction of the subject called *Special Education* is identified.

The *Special Education* has received various terminologies in the curricular organization of teacher training in Pedagogy at UEL. This indicates how academic and scientific knowledge, as well as society, understood people with disabilities at certain times, in order to organize an academic, scientific, and professional field. In this sense, understanding the history of Special Education in the training of educators is fundamental, since these teachers have professional insertion in different levels and modalities of education, especially in early childhood education, in the initial years of elementary school, and in school management. Therefore, a historical analysis of the presence and purpose of the *Special Education* discipline in the training of pedagogical teachers at UEL is proposed.

The understanding of the school discipline as a historiographical category relied on theorists such as Chervel (1990), Viñao Frago (2008), and Goodson (2018). School subjects allow for the analysis of specific school knowledge introduced and present in curricula, without disregarding the complex process constituted by "conflicts, different types of mediation between subjects and institutions, in the face of the roles that, in each era and society, are attributed to the school" (Souza Júnior; Galvão, 2005, p. 405).

The school subjects are configured as a field of investigation that aims to problematize and enable historical studies, in order to understand schooling and the formation of individuals for life in society. With this, the school subject assumes a space of power and science in the collective construction of what is intended as an understanding of school culture, which is also dynamized by teacher training and performance. Thus, it is fundamental to understand the history of teacher training, particularly with regard to *Special Education*, considered as a formative and foundational discipline to intervene in schooling processes in a complex society, as it is expected to value diversity, inclusion and the confrontation of prejudices.

In the history of education, the discipline of *Special Education* is associated with the transformations and perceptions that have occurred in society in terms of social practices, public policies, institutionalization, conceptions of science, and notions of individuals. In imperial Brazil, according to Jannuzzi (2012), institutionalized services were provided with government support to assist people with visual, auditory, intellectual, and physical disabilities, especially with the creation, in 1854, of the *Imperial Instituto dos Meninos Cegos* (now the "Benjamin Constant" Institute) and, in 1857, of the *Instituto Imperial de Surdos-Mudos*.

In the first half of the 20th century, other institutions to serve people with disabilities emerged, such as the *Instituto São Rafael* (1926), the *Sociedade Pestalozzi* (1932), o *Instituto Pestalozzi* (1935), a *Fazenda do Rosário* (1940), the *Associação de Pais and Amigos dos Excepcionais* (1954). According to Mazzotta (2011), until the 1950s there were approximately 54 institutions dedicated to serving people with disabilities.

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From the 1960s onwards, the academic, scientific and political institutionalization of Special Education in Brazil was further structured, including, for example, the creation of the *Centro Nacional de Educação Especial* (Cenesp, in 1973) (Pletsch; Batista; Avila, 2023). Institutionalized experiences take place in different cities and regions of the country (Mello; Machado, 2017).

Regarding teacher training, the contribution of the psychologist and pedagogue Helena Antipoff was fundamental, who, since the late 1920s in Brazil, dedicated herself to Special Education in establishments where people with disabilities would also learn to be independent and able to earn a living through work (Rafante; Lopes, 2009; Casseiro, 2018). Therefore, teachers could take training courses to master the teachings on those considered "exceptional" regarding customer service and manual activities, as work tools.

Antipoff's ideas resonated in Lourenço Filho's proposals for education in the State of São Paulo and for the first draft of the Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education (LDB of 1948, approved in 1961), because he advocated for developing a test to assess children's maturity, in order to standardize classes and create special classes. (Monarcha, 2001). In fact, there was a movement of articulation between knowledge from the area of Psychology and that of learning. This contributed to characterizing the expected teacher training and the powerful presence of Educational Psychology in the structuring of the field of Special Education.

In the field of Special Education, organizations with/for people with disabilities were not passive, according to Jannuzzi (2004). Since the 1950s, they have been organizing themselves more and more in order to participate in discussions about their issues and demands. As evidence, there emerged the *Conselho Brasileiro para o Bem-Estar dos Cegos* (1954), the *Associações de Pais e Amigos de Excepcionais* (APAES, in 1954), the *Federação das Sociedades Pestalozzi* (in 1970), the *Federação Brasileira de Instituições de Excepcionais* (in 1974), the *Organização do Ano Internacional das Pessoas Deficientes* (AIPD/ONU, from 1980 onwards), among others. These were movements seeking to conquer public space, citizenship, and reduce inequalities in relation to people with disabilities.

This historical trajectory of institutionalization in the national territory was based on a strong federalist centralizing process reflected in the states and municipalities, which in turn were more politically concerned with local issues than with national-level adaptation (Sobrinho; Pantaleão; Jesus, 2016). In turn, the Nothing About Us Without Us movement (Charlton, 1998) has motivated, in different countries, the relevance of the dignified and respectful treatment of people with disabilities, considering them as the foundation of ideation and action, seeking inclusion in all services provided to the general population. This highlights not only social disputes, but also political and private ones (De Laplane; Caiado; Kassar, 2016; Oliveira; Sobrinho, 2020), which reverberated and still impacts the field of Special Education, particularly in teacher training and practice.

In Brazil, teacher training at the higher education level focused on Special Education, according to Michels (2017), began in 1972, with the specific qualification of the Pedagogy course governed by the opinion of the Federal Education Council No. 252 (Brazil, 1969) and, later, by Law No. 5,692 (Brazil, 1971). With higher education, greater specialization in this type of teaching was expected, considering the technical rationality, the idea of efficiency and productivity, then employed in the education of individuals during times of pedagogical technicism during the Civil-Military Dictatorship³. The expectation was to prepare two types of teachers: the multi-skilled teachers of general

³ The historiographical category Civil-Military Dictatorship was chosen, referring to the period from 1964 to 1985, because the coup d'état, led by the Armed Forces, involved the participation of various civilian sectors of Brazilian society (Fico, 2004).

basic education and the more qualified ones, in this case, specialized in Special Education. For Bueno (2002), the inclusion of the Special Education discipline in Pedagogy courses and other undergraduate degrees, since the 1970s, has not been uniform and generalized. According to the author, this still requires further research on what Pedagogy courses in Brazil have actually done.

Considering the debate regarding the inclusion of the *Special Education* discipline in teacher training in Pedagogy and the historicity of the field of Special Education in Brazil, the question is: What does the Pedagogy course at UEL make it possible to understand, through its curricula, in terms of teacher training for Special Education? As a research focus, the Pedagogy course at UEL, created at the institution in 1971 and still in effect in the city of Londrina, in the northern region of the State of Paraná, was taken as a reference.

For greater delimitation, the study opted for the presence and purpose of the Special Education discipline according to institutional provisions, mainly the *Projetos Pedagógicos do Curso* (PPC) of Pedagogy at UEL (1971-2018). Thus, it was possible to consider that the knowledge of *Special Education* was initially included in the training curriculum in a discipline with a different name. Over time, the Special Education discipline was proposed as a curricular component and gained greater space in teacher training in Pedagogy, but this did not happen without tensions.

1. Method

The historical periodization proposes the analysis of *Special Education* in the curricular organization of the Pedagogy course at UEL in the period between 1977 and 2018. The reason for choosing this year is justified by the identification, among the institutional devices, of the 1977 course program, named *Introduction to the Pedagogy of the Exceptional*. The year 2018 refers to the period of the last reformulated PPC up to the time of this research.

This study used the documentary analytical method (Le Goff, 1990; Bacellar, 2005), with historical sources in the PPCs and their related documents consulted in the collections of the *Pró-Reitoria de Graduação* (PROGRAD), *Sistema de Arquivos* (SAUEL) and *Laboratório de Ensino e Pesquisa em História da Educação* (LEPHE). The documents analyzed were not written by a single author, but they form a set of devices involving various teachers, institutional administrative staff, and the support of educational legislation at the local, regional, and national levels.

As Le Goff (1990) pointed out, a document does not emerge by mere chance, but has an intentionality and plays a role within society. Therefore, it carries, in its particularities, the historical time and place, that is, there is no neutrality and it can be transformed into a historical source after being subjected to treatments that demystify the confession of absolute truth. In this present research, the historical sources were analyzed in light of the historiographical category of school discipline (Chervel, 1990; Viñao Frago, 2008; Goodson, 2018). Therefore, it demanded an understanding of the introduction, presence, purposes, and changes of the *Special Education* discipline in the curricular organization of teacher training in Pedagogy at UEL (1977-2018).

2. Results and discussion

Initially, this study identified the presence of Special Education in teacher training in Pedagogy at UEL, through the program of the subject *Introduction to the Pedagogy of the Exceptional*, approved for the 1977 academic year, which specifies the syllabus, its objectives, the program content, the methodology, the evaluation, the workload, and the

bibliography (UEL, 1977). The syllabus included general aspects of the education of the exceptional, the types of educational services, the organization of special classes, the qualification of professionals for the work, and issues related to parents. The content addressed the history, concepts, terminology, causes, and incidence of exceptionalities, as well as the characteristics of children with visual, psychomotor, speech, and multiple disabilities. The program's objective was to train teachers informed about the identification and referral of exceptional individuals to special schools or classes, as well as possessing basic knowledge for school work with people with disabilities. The discipline engaged with the guidelines set forth in the LDB of 1961.

With the appearance of the term "exceptional," the terminology was transversal to the entire program of the discipline. According to Rafante (2011), the term "exceptional," used in teaching programs in the 1970s, focused on the permanence of the Antipoffian principles formulated in the 1930s, which indicates, in a way, the difficulty of transforming pedagogical practice in the face of the "exceptional." In other words, Helena Antipoff interpreted the concept of "exceptional" as a way of understanding children and adolescents who deviate markedly from "the norm of their group in relation to one or more mental, physical, or social characteristics, or any of these in such a way as to create an essential problem with reference to their education, development, and adjustment to the social environment" (Rafante, 2011, p. 6). Antipoff's proposal was to soften the pejorative terms used until then, such as "abnormal," "imbecile," and "retarded," by entering the educational renewal movement.

Official initiatives aimed at the education of "exceptional" individuals, with the intention of covering the entire national territory, began in the 1950s in the form of Educational Campaigns: Campaign for the Education of the Brazilian Deaf (1957); National Campaign for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Visually Impaired (1958); National Campaign for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Mentally Disabled - CADEME (1960). These campaigns contributed to raising public awareness and placing the issue of the education of "exceptional" individuals on the agenda of municipal, state, and federal authorities, but they did not represent a significant change in what had already been done in this area; they only ratified the model of action practiced, in which services were restricted, carried out by private initiative, and supported by public subsidies. In the mid-1960s, Helena Antipoff was part of the coordinating committee of CADEME, which drafted a bill proposing the National Center for Special Education. (Rafante, 2011, pp. 281-282).

The term "exceptional" was not used by chance, but existed and indicated the thinking produced in the society of the time and which has endured over time. The notion was present in popular culture, in academic-scientific literature, and in reference institutions. Consequently, it made sense in legal provisions and in the curricular organizations of teacher training at the university level.

At UEL, the *Introduction to the Pedagogy of the Exceptional* program, approved in April 1977, under code 10ED07, offered by the Department of Educational Psychology and Educational Guidance, provided for 60 theoretical hours in a single semester. The lecture was given by Professor Rosa Maria Junqueira Scicchitano, who graduated in 1970 with a degree in Pedagogy from the Auxilium Faculty of Philosophy, Sciences and Letters of Lins, in São Paulo,

and specialized in Special Education in 1973 at St. Gerardus Institut voor Spastische Kinderen (Louvain, Belgium). In 1981, she completed her master's degree in Arts in Education, focusing on intellectual disability, at Western Carolina University (WCU, United States) and defended her doctoral thesis in 1992 in the School and Human Development Psychology Program at the University of São Paulo.

At UEL, Scicchitano also worked at the Psychopedagogical Assistance Center (CAPp), led the development of the Specialization Course in Special Education-Intellectual Disability (CEEE-DM) project, approved in 1986, and channeled her teaching work into Psychopedagogy and learning difficulties. Her academic trajectory and professional insertion contributed to the training of teachers and the initial shaping of the *Special Education* discipline in the Pedagogy course at UEL, as well as other teachers throughout the historical process⁴.

The 1977 discipline was linked to the Department of Psychology, as it emphasized the education of people with mental health issues. According to Bueno (2002), even in 1998, it was common to identify, in curricular organizations, the presence of the discipline called Psychology of the Exceptional (outdated terminology for the time). Furthermore, when *Special Education* was conceived, in a university, from the Psychology department, it was common for medical knowledge regarding disability to override pedagogical knowledge. From the current point of view, this is a problem, as it is where, for example, ideas that led to the segmentation of disabilities arose. And they are also considered outdated for curricular adaptation for certain students, among other strategies that do not meet Special Education from an inclusive perspective.

In 1991, there is a record of the approval of another PPC of Pedagogy at UEL, with the presence of the discipline entitled *Introduction to Special Education* (UEL, 1991). In the 1991 PPC, the subject was part of the Didactics Knowledge axis, with a planned theoretical workload of 68 hours in an annual series system, to be taught in the third year of the Pedagogy course, under the internal code 3EDU034 of the Department of Education. The subject was included in the list of common teaching subjects for all specializations, regardless of the student's choice in their second specialization, i.e., School Supervision and Educational Guidance or Preschool Education and Initial Grades.

It should be noted that the specialization in Special Education, despite the subject being present in the course's curriculum, was never offered at UEL. There is a record of this specialization being offered at other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). In the case of the São Paulo State University (Unesp), Marília and Araraquara campuses, the professors reported on the curricular organization and pointed out the relevance of the qualification converging with regular teaching in order to avoid different training and teaching materials within the same educational system (Omote et al., 1996).

It is noteworthy that in the Pedagogy PPC at UEL, approved in 2004 and implemented in 2005, *Special Education* was not listed as a curricular subject. Its knowledge was proposed within the context of the *Education and Diversity I and II* course program. Both courses were correlated to the axis entitled Knowledge and Curriculum and were intended to be offered as common training subjects for all specializations. Education and Diversity I, with code 6EDU009 from the Department

⁴ In the documents analyzed for this research, little information was found about the professors who taught *Special Education* courses in the Pedagogy program at UEL between 1977 and 2018. However, by consulting the Department of Education, it was possible to find the names of the following professors: Rosa Maria Junqueira Scicchitano (1974-2019); Maria Amélia Almeida (1979-1994); Maria Cristina Marquezine (1987-2014); Célia Regina Vitaliano (1991-2025); Sílvia Márcia Ferreira Meletti (1998-present); Simone Moreira de Moura (2008-2023); Karen Ribeiro (2012-2022). The periods correspond to the length of service at UEL recorded by the respective professors in their Lattes Curricula, and not necessarily to their teaching of the course. The trajectory, contribution, and performance of these professors would require further study.

of Education, established a total of 68 hours – 51 theoretical hours and 17 practical hours – intended for second-year students of the Pedagogy course; a year in which all offered courses had a practical component. *Education and Diversity II*, on the other hand, had 68 theoretical hours, without practice, and was aimed at fourth-year students, with the internal code 6EDU037.

The 2004 PPC, in addition to maintaining as a common basis the teaching of pedagogical subjects in High School and teaching for the Initial Grades of Elementary School, advocated two possibilities for qualification: Early Childhood Education Teaching or Educational Guidance and School Supervision. Teacher training indicated the need for the course to be organized with "inter- and intra-grade" action, in which the contents and activities were constructed considering objectives established for each of the periods. In addition, the requirement of research was an integrating element (Abbud; Favaro, 2012, p.34).

With the approval of the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Pedagogy course (Brazil, 2006), the curricular organization of the Pedagogy course at UEL was once again reformulated. There was a suppression of qualifications, with emphasis on the presence of the subjects of *Special Education and Brazilian Sign Language* (Libras). In the curriculum implemented in 2007, *Special Education* is offered as a subject in the third year of the Pedagogy course at UEL, linked to the Knowledge, Curriculum and Management axis, with mandatory, semester-based curricular offerings, totaling 68 theoretical hours.

In 2009, the course's curricular organization underwent adjustments, including the adoption of an average class hour of 60 minutes, in accordance with National Resolution No. 03 of 2007. Thus, it was necessary to extend the course from 4 years to 4 and a half years. In this context, the Pedagogy PPC, implemented in 2010, established *Special Education* as a mandatory subject in the third year with a workload of 60 theoretical hours, linked to the Knowledge, Curriculum and Management axis, under code 6EDU100.

In the curricular organization implemented from 2019 onwards, the Pedagogy PPC (UEL, 2018) also highlighted the presence of the subject under the name of *Special Education*, with a total of 75 hours of workload, divided into 60 theoretical and 15 practical hours as a curricular component, in the third year. With a total of 4 credits, the subject is linked to the Knowledge, Curriculum and Management axis, with the internal code 6EDU100.

As a first summary, from 1977 to 2018, the knowledge of Special Education was present in the curricular organization of the Pedagogy course at UEL. In the historical course, they received different terminologies: *Introduction to the Pedagogy of the Exceptional*, *Introduction to Special Education*, *Education and Diversity I and II*, *Libras (Brazilian Sign Language)*, *Special Education*. The terms indicate curricular changes and adaptations motivated by the implementation of new legal provisions consistent with educational public policies and social demands related to teacher training.

In the case of UEL, the presence of *Special Education* did not constitute a specific qualification aimed at the training and graduation of teachers. The knowledge in the field of Special Education, in each consulted PPC, was commonly directly linked to an offered subject, which raises the question of whether such an offer would be sufficient, considering the complexity of thinking about, systematizing, and proposing pedagogical actions for the diversity of groups of people with disabilities in their different spectra and modalities of educational institutions.

In order to deepen the discussion about the historiography on school subjects (Chervel, 1990; Viñao Frago, 2008; Goodson, 2018), it is also proposed to analyze the purposes of a curricular component. Next, the focus of this text will be on the presentation

and analysis of the syllabi and objectives of the Special Education subjects, according to the UEL Pedagogy PPC and its related documents.

The 1977 curriculum for the subject *Introduction to the Pedagogy of Exceptional Children* presented the following outline:

General aspects of the education of exceptional children. Concept of exceptional children. Classification. Types of educational services. Principles for the organization of special classes. Organization of curricula and programs. The professional qualification of exceptional children. The problem of parents (UEL, 1977, n.p.).

The discipline aimed to provide knowledge about the general aspects of the education of "exceptional" individuals, seeking to understand concepts and classifications, and to assess the causes and incidence of "exceptionalities." The study of the types of support to be provided, especially in special classes, was considered fundamental, observing the curricula to be adapted and taught. In the education of "exceptional" individuals, issues related to professional qualification should not be neglected, as insertion into the workforce was expected, and attention should also be paid to family relationships, particularly between parents and "exceptional" children. The aims of the *Introduction to the Pedagogy of the Exceptional* course were described as follows:

To obtain information that enables the identification and referral of exceptional children to special schools or classes.

To obtain information that provides the Educational Counselor with basic knowledge for vocational guidance for people interested in working with exceptional individuals. (UEL, 1977, n.p.).

In teacher training programs, students should learn, in addition to the concepts and classifications of "exceptional" individuals, the principles of organizing special classes and how to identify the need – or lack thereof – to direct the student to a "regular" school. The referral, or lack thereof, of students to special classes has historically generated tension, as it is still questioned today whether socially separating people with disabilities from those considered "normal" is the best solution for building a society anchored in the principles of inclusion and respect for diversity.

In order to achieve the objectives of the *Introduction to the Pedagogy of the Exceptional* course, the following program content was proposed in 1977:

Unit I:

- General aspects of Special Education;
- History;
- Concept and terminology
- Causes and incidence.

Unit II:

- Classification of exceptional individuals.

Unit III:

Intellectual exceptional individuals:

- Gifted;
- Slow learners;
- Educable mentally handicapped individuals;

- Trainable mentally disabled individuals;
 - Dependent mentally disabled individuals.
- Physically exceptional individuals:
- Non-sensory (motor) disabilities;
 - Sensory disabilities (visual and hearing impaired);
 - Children with visual perception problems;
 - Children with psychomotor problems;
 - Children with speech problems;
 - Children with multiple disabilities.
- Behavioral exceptional individuals:
Children with emotional disorders;
Children with social maladjustments.
- Unit III
- Types of educational services for exceptional individuals.
- Unit IV
- Principles for organizing special classes.
- Unit V
- Curriculum and program organization.
- Unit VI
- Professional qualification for exceptional individuals.
- Unit VII
- The problem of parents;
 - Analysis of parental attitudes;
 - The importance of the family environment;
 - Planning meetings for parent mentors (UEL, 1977, n.p.).

The program outlined a teaching process distributed across seven didactic units, starting with fundamental knowledge about exceptional individuals and progressing to intervention and guidance for families. The content divided the understanding of "exceptional" individuals into intellectual, physical, and behavioral dimensions, presenting a fragmented perspective on understanding the individual.

In order to support the program content, the discipline proposed the following national and international bibliographic references:

- Crianças Excepcionais - Seus Problemas - Sua Educação - Lloyd M. Dunn / Livro Técnico S.A (2 vol)
- A Educação da Criança e do Jovem Excepcional - Cruickshank e Johnson (Globo)
- O Indivíduo Excepcional. Capa comum – Charles W. Telford / James M. Sawrey (Zahar)
- Ensinando Crianças Excepcionais - Maria Therezinha de Carvalho Machado (Liv. José Olympio)
- Crianças Excepcionais e Sua Educação Familiar - Samuel A. Kirk e Outros (Fundo de cultura)
- Deficiência Mental - Stanislaw Krynski (Liv. Atheneu S.A)
- A Criança Excepcional - Joseph Roucek (Ibrasa)
- Distúrbios Neurológicos da Criança - Haim Grunspun (prociensex)
- Distúrbios Psiquiátricos Da Criança - Grunspun Haim (prociensex)

O Aluno de Aprendizagem Lenta - W. B. Featherstone (Livro Técnico S.A.)
 Educação do aluno lento - George Orville Johnson (Bloch)
 A Criança Que Não Aprende - Emilio Mira y López (Mestre Jou)
 Como Educar uma Criança Deficiente Mental - Alfred Brauner (Pestalozzi)
 Aluno bem-dotado – Schefele, M. (Ao Livro Técnico)
 Fisioterapia na Paralisia Cerebral - Plínio Ribeiro Cardoso (Ed. da USP)
 Alfabetização - Disfunções Psiconeurológicas - Ana Maria Poppovic (Veter, Ed. Psicopedagógica)
 Seu Filho Fala Bem? - Pedro Bloch (Bloch, Ed. S.A.)
 Manual para o Exame Psicológico da Criança - René Zazzo (Mestre Jou)
 Aprendendo a Aprender - Dorothy M. Simpson (Cultrix)
 Psicomotricidade - Dalila Molina de Costallat (Globo)
 Éducation psycho-motrice et arriération mentale - Louis Picq & Pierre Vayer (Edition Doins)
 Le Dialogue Corporel - Pierre Vayer (Edition Doins)
 Les Deficiences Intellectuelles Chez L'enfant – Kohler, C. (Presses Universitaires de France)
 Jeunes déficients mentaux – Kohler, C. (Charles Descart, Ed.)
 L'enfant au cerveau blesse – Robaye-Geelen, F. (Charles Descart, Ed.)
 Des Adolescents dites débiles - Carmen Nobile e Henri Bissonnier (Editions Fleurs). (UEL, 1977, s/p).

In general, the 1977 discipline provided a foundation for teacher training to work in the learning process of the "exceptional," taking into account, primarily, psychological and medical knowledge. These two sciences can be considered predominant for the study of the fundamentals of disorders and their respective procedural and attitudinal possibilities to be adopted by teachers, who should not be surprised by the presence of "exceptional" students in the classroom. Therefore, teachers needed to know about the different specialties presented by children and young people, and the bibliography indicated reference works for knowledge of psychological tests and examinations.

In a way, thinking with Bueno (1993), the discipline confined itself to the peculiarities of the population it absorbed, reducing its action in such a way that the fundamental aspect would be restricted to adapting pedagogical procedures to the difficulties generated by the disability. In other words, by limiting itself, Special Education concerned not only the teaching-learning process of students considered disabled and with difficulties, but also the teacher training process. In the training of teachers for Special Education, according to Michels (2005), the medical-psychological model rooted in positivism has predominated throughout history, relegating the social model of disability to a secondary position.

Pedagogical knowledge was subordinated to medical and psychological knowledge. In the history of *Special Education* (Bueno, 1993; Jannuzzi, 2012), the impact of the health field on Special Education is noticeable, at least in the production of knowledge about physical pathologies. In turn, the field of psychology influences, at least with the production of psychometric diagnoses, with the application of tests considered objective, and with clinical experimentation. In this way, pedagogical knowledge would be at the service of regenerating the physical and mental health of those classified with some disability or difficulty integrating into society.

It is noteworthy that the historical documents researched in the UEL archives did not provide the syllabus for the *Introduction to Special Education* course, which was taught in the 1990s. The next clues refer to the *Education and Diversity I and II* courses. The first syllabus prescribed:

Conceptualization and characterization of social class, gender, culture, ethnicity, religion, and the National Education Plan. Process of discrimination, stigmatization, and segregation of socially excluded minorities. Paradigm of inclusion and its educational implications, characterization of special needs. Methodologies of and specific teaching adapted to special educational needs. Development and learning process of the National Education Plan. (UEL, 2004, p. 14. Emphasis added).

In the 2004 PPC of Pedagogy course, implemented from 2005 onwards, the syllabus for *Education and Diversity I* included knowledge of Special Education, which, in turn, ceased to be a separate subject in the teacher training curriculum at UEL and was integrated as knowledge within the aforementioned subject. A movement aiming at interdisciplinarity between *Special Education* and *Inclusive Education* is noticeable, in order to articulate debates regarding diversity, involving tensions inherent to social class, gender, culture, ethnicity, religion, and processes of discrimination, stigmatization, and segregation. This formulation of the discipline of *Education and Diversity* brought Special Education into the context of the inclusion paradigm and its educational implications, considering the broader contributions of the Human and Social Sciences to the understanding of individuals, including those with "special educational needs."

The association of Special Education with the inclusion paradigm "emerges as a reaction against the integration process, and its practical implementation has generated many controversies and discussions" (Miranda, 2008, p. 38). Therefore, implementation does not occur without tensions, even with the National Policy on Special Education from the perspective of Inclusive Education (PNEEPEI), approved in 2008, and its resulting legal documents (Kassar; Meletti, 2012).

So, in addition to welcoming, school education should recognize the existence of numerous differences among students. With this, the educational system itself would also undergo significant changes to enhance the teaching-learning process, socialization, and human development. Thus, changes were underway in school practice, in the pedagogical model, in teacher training, and in epistemological production in the field of Special Education (Pletsch, 2020). At UEL, the new discipline aimed to:

- Characterize diversity, identifying the social mechanisms that favor its exclusion;
- Identify or understand: special educational needs; the development and learning process of the National Education Plan and specific teaching methodologies adapted to special needs (Braille, Libras, Alternative Communication System and others). (UEL, 2004, n.p.).

The first objective would encompass the foundations of the Human and Social Sciences to understand the processes of exclusion of socially marginalized diversity, which in a way indicated other perspectives for understanding people with disabilities in

society. The second objective would cover the issues of special educational needs and the respective appropriate methodologies, considering the teaching and learning challenges foreseen in the National Education Plan.

Furthermore, the presence of Libras (Brazilian Sign Language) is observed in the discipline, which, since 2002, according to article 4 of Law No. 10,436, should be included in "Special Education, Speech Therapy and Teacher Training courses, at their secondary and higher levels, as an integral part of the National Curriculum Parameters – PCNs" (Brazil, 2002, n.p.). At UEL, Libras, with the status of a discipline, was integrated into the curricular organization in the Pedagogy PPC approved in 2009 and implemented from 2010 onwards.

With regard to the 2004 PPC, the articulation between the knowledge of Inclusive Education and that of Special Education made the discipline of *Education and Diversity I* excessively broad, which came to have 51 theoretical hours and 17 practical hours. On the one hand, there were gains in bringing the study of people with disabilities into the field of diversity, inclusion, and the resistance of socially constituted "minorities." On the other hand, there may have been losses in deepening studies on the characterization of "special educational needs" at different levels of education and in the possibilities of pedagogical and evaluative strategies that favor inclusion in the school reality.

It is worth highlighting that, in this context, the Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar), for example, did not succumb, maintaining the Postgraduate Program in Special Education. So, in a very hasty way, the beginning of the 2000s was a typical moment of change in the knowledge specific to Special Education, in the name of the knowledge of Diversity and Inclusion. The fact is that the removal of the discipline from undergraduate studies caused a lot of discomfort, and only later was it understood that *Special Education* was continuous and necessary for teacher training, but with another perspective: the inclusive one. The field of Special Education was once again embroiled in disputes and competitive struggles (Bezerra, 2021; Casagrande; Mainardes, 2021).

In order to ensure the unique aspects of Special Education knowledge in the 2004 PPC of UEL, the subject of Education and Diversity II was prescribed with the syllabus: "Pedagogical strategies that favor inclusion in the school context. Assessment of Special Educational Needs. Organization of teaching conditions in inclusive classrooms. Early stimulation" (UEL, 2005, p. 17). This was a more concise syllabus focused on Special Education topics, as observed in the two objectives formulated for the discipline: "- To identify and/or organize conditions that favor the inclusion of diversity in the school context; - To systematize the procedures for assessing the educational needs of students with special educational needs in order to identify the teaching conditions for their inclusion" (UEL, 2004, n.p.).

Thus, when considering the two disciplines – *Education and Diversity I and II* – the absence of nomenclature directed at *Special Education* in the 2004 PPC is noticeable. This reality did not remain for long, because in 2006, with the approval of the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Pedagogy Course (Brazil, 2006), the UEL course was again subjected to reformulation. In the PPC, approved in 2006 and implemented from 2007 onwards, the discipline Special Education appears in the new curricular organization, with the following syllabus:

Characterization of Special Educational Needs. Special Education at different levels of education. Curricular Adaptations. Pedagogical strategies favoring inclusion in the school context. Assessment of special educational needs in the educational context. (UEL, 2006, p. 17).

In 2006, *Special Education* regained its prominent place in the PPC at UEL, and the subject of *Education and Diversity* was not eliminated, but rather offered as two separate subjects. The 68 hours of *Education and Diversity II*, foreseen in the old PPC of 2004, were reallocated in the new curriculum to the subject of *Special Education*. According to Viñao Frago (2008), this movement may signal power struggles within a curriculum understood in terms of conflicts, negotiations, transactions, impositions, and interests in the practice of its production. In 2006, the subject of Special Education had three objectives:

- To enable reflection on the characterization of special educational needs;
- To analyze special education at different levels of education, understanding the processes involved;
- To discuss strategies for teacher action in both the evaluation and monitoring of students with special educational needs. (UEL, 2006, n.p.).

The objectives highlighted the characterization of "special educational needs," the analysis of different levels of education, and the discussion of the teacher's performance strategies. The practicing teacher should be considered, given that Pedagogy is a teacher training course, whose graduates would be in the classroom or in school management with real students. Therefore, the discipline would be a moment to guide the student towards teacher training, preparing them to work with differences in the school reality.

The 2009 PPC, implemented from 2010 onwards, regarding the *Special Education* discipline, maintained the 2006 syllabus, already described above. The discipline, previously with 68 hours, was offered in 60 hours. The novelty of the curriculum was the introduction of the Libras (Brazilian Sign Language) discipline, offered with 60 hours to fourth-year students of the Pedagogy course at UEL, with the syllabus:

Clinical and educational aspects of deafness. The culture of deaf people. Analysis of educational trends: segregation and inclusion of deaf students. Characterization and development of Brazilian Sign Language (Libras): logical, morphological, and grammatical aspects (syntax). Experimentation with the use of Libras: developing gestural-visual-spatial expression. Analysis of the translation and interpretation process: Libras/Portuguese, Portuguese/Libras. (UEL, 2009, p. 18)

In the 2018 PPC, implemented from 2019 onwards, with the base still in effect in 2026, with few adjustments occurring in 2023 (UEL, 2023), the syllabus for the *Special Education* discipline was expanded, as follows:

Historical process of serving people with special educational needs (segregation, integration, inclusion). Inclusive educational policies. Characterization of students with special educational needs and their support in the context of the inclusive school. (UEL, 2018, p. 18)

Among the areas of knowledge covered by the discipline is the study of the historical processes of care for people with disabilities, with a focus on the processes of segregation, integration, and inclusion. The program also included studies on inclusive

educational policies. In its syllabus, the discipline indicates that it would be fundamental for future teachers to not only master conceptual and procedural knowledge geared towards the teaching and learning of students with disabilities, but also to understand the history of the field of Special Education, as well as the possibilities and limitations imposed by public policies on inclusive education, especially after the publication of the National Policy on Special Education in 2008. In this way, the teacher could act with historical, political, pedagogical, and critical thinking.

Final Considerations

The *Special Education* discipline was understood using the pedagogical projects of the Pedagogy course (PPC) at the State University of Londrina (UEL) (1977-2018) as empirical data, and the historiography of education dedicated to the investigation of school subjects (Chervel, 1990; Viñao Frago, 2008; Goodson, 2018) as theoretical data. With this, we addressed how the presence and purposes of the *Special Education* discipline have been characterized over time in the curricular organization aimed at teacher training in the Pedagogy course at UEL.

Regarding its presence in the curricular organization, it can be concluded that knowledge from the field of Special Education has been included in the Pedagogy course at UEL since the 1970s, receiving different terminologies. The 1977 program reveals that the discipline was called *Introduction to the Pedagogy of the Exceptional*. In the 1990s, it was titled *Introduction to Special Education*. Then, in 2004, in terms of nomenclature, it was removed from the curriculum, and its knowledge was incorporated into the then newly created subject of *Education and Diversity I and II*.

The terminology, as a discipline of Special Education, was reintroduced in the curriculum organization approved in 2006, and remains in the PPC approved in 2018, with its use in effect until the present, in 2026. The purposes of *Special Education* in the training of pedagogues graduated from UEL have undergone changes over time, following legislation, academic discussions on teacher training, and changes in society.

In the first years of the course, the discipline was predominantly configured with knowledge from the area of Educational Psychology and knowledge from the medical area to conceptualize, classify, examine, and educate the "exceptional" in schools or in special classes. In addition to psychological and medical knowledge, in the 1990s and 2000s, the purposes of the discipline began to incorporate approaches from the Human and Social Sciences to then enhance the pedagogical focus on understanding people with disabilities. Therefore, it began to consider the processes of discrimination, stigmatization, and exclusion that reveal the culturally, politically, and historically engendered social modes.

Addressing Special Education in relation to the perspective of diversity and inclusion has led to socioeconomic, ethnic, religious, gender, and other issues being addressed alongside disability in order to identify and seek solutions to prejudices regarding differences. Although very powerful, this association does not allow us to understand, for example, that identity markers literally reveal problems analogous to disability, since there are different regimes of exclusion, prejudices, and inequalities that oppress the complex ways of being of people. In this sense, one possibility is to analyze the intersections between the markers, which, according to Meletti, Cabral, and Sarafim (2024), could occur through the dialectic of transversality.

Inclusive Special Education has the challenge of promoting the school educational experience based on the principles of human rights, social justice, and human emancipation. Therefore, it would be a form of education for all, guaranteeing access,

participation, permanence, socialization, and learning for students with different and complex educational realities and needs, including those who constitute the Special Education community.

With the publication of the PNEEPEI (National Policy for Inclusive Special Education) in 2008, and, in 2025, the publication of the National Policy for Inclusive Special Education and the National System for Inclusive Special Education, a decree that replaced the controversial Decree No. 10,502/2020, which would allow the reopening to the segregationist model of special education. From the point of view of legal provisions, Special Education should no longer be understood as disconnected from the perspective of educational inclusion, which, in turn, must ensure that the student, the public of special education, has "the right to be included in regular classes and schools, with the necessary support for their participation, permanence, and learning" (Brazil, 2025, n.p.).

However, considering that in the area of Special Education there is still a long way to go to guarantee the full right to education and all its constituent aspects, "it is understood that there is a gap between theory/legislation and the pedagogical practice developed in schools" (Boff; Machado, 2024, p. 14). Therefore, articulating legal provisions and school practice, for educational benefit and in the name of quality and equity, is one of the challenges to be faced, with the academic collaboration of teacher training. This can directly impact the reorganization of the PPC of Pedagogy and other undergraduate degrees offered in Brazilian higher education.

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