

# Official documents, academic research and pedagogical practices for building the transition between Early Childhood Education and Elementary School<sup>1 2</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to analyze the children's transition process from the Early Childhood Education to the Elementary Education in Brazil, based on official documents that provide the educational system with guidelines to their pedagogical work and scientific investigation about the subject. In order to do so, a documental research (analyzing 8 documents produced in the federal sphere and used as reference by the educational system) and bibliographic research (analyzing 23 scientific papers, encompassing articles, dissertations, and thesis) were carried out. As results, we highlight that in the field of the legal and academic-scientific discourses, the procedures are considered important so the transition can provide favorable conditions to the children's development; in the field of the pedagogical practices, it is not well concretized. We conjecture as possible root cause of such heterogeneity the way the discourses are built, as they are marked by the scarce interlocution between the different fields. We observe a crystallization of the issues because the analysis of the contributions in both discourses show little

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<sup>1</sup> This article was inspired by na excerpt from the doctoral thesis “Entre cartas, fóruns e brincadeiras: vivências de crianças na travessia da Educação Infantil para o Ensino Fundamental” funded by the “Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior” (CAPES), defended in the Post-Graduate Program *Scripto Sensu* in Education at PUC-Campinas.

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transformation as to what is said and what is done. Based on the cultural-historical theory, we see the relevance of the efforts to transform the described landscape, both in terms of the official discourse and of future research, thus highlighting that the concrete conditions to organize and articulate both educational segments can be more or less impactful and fruitful to the children's development.

**Keywords:** Childhood. Early Childhood Education. Elementary School. Transition.

*Documentos oficiais, pesquisas acadêmicas e práticas pedagógicas na construção da transição entre Educação Infantil e Ensino Fundamental*

**RESUMO**

O objetivo deste artigo é analisar o processo de transição de crianças da Educação Infantil (EI) para o Ensino Fundamental (EF), a partir de documentos oficiais que provêm os sistemas de ensino com diretrizes ao trabalho pedagógico e de investigações científicas sobre o tema. Para tal, realizamos pesquisa documental (analisando 8 documentos produzidos na esfera federal como referenciais para as redes educacionais) e pesquisa bibliográfica (analisando 23 trabalhos científicos, entre artigos, dissertações e teses). Como resultados destacamos que no campo do discurso (legal e acadêmico-científico) reconhece-se a importância de procedimentos para que a transição promova condições favoráveis ao desenvolvimento infantil; entretanto, no campo das práticas pedagógicas pouco é concretizado. Conjecturamos como possível fonte desta heterogeneidade o modo de construção dos discursos, marcados por pouca interlocução entre os distintos campos. Destacamos a cristalização dos problemas, já que as análises dos aportes dos dois discursos evidenciam poucas transformações quanto ao que se diz e ao que se faz. Fundamentando-nos na Teoria Histórico-cultural apontamos a relevância de esforços para transformações no panorama descrito, tanto em termos do discurso oficial quanto em termos de futuras pesquisas, realçando que as condições concretas de organização e articulação dos dois segmentos educacionais podem ser mais ou menos mobilizadoras e férteis para o desenvolvimento infantil.

**PALAVRAS CHAVE:** Infância. Educação Infantil. Ensino Fundamental. Transição.

*Documentos oficiales, investigación académica y prácticas  
Pedagógicas para la construcción de la transición entre Educación  
Infantil y Enseñanza Primaria*

**RESUMEN**

El objetivo de este artículo es analizar el proceso de transición de niños de la Educación Preescolar a la Educación Primaria, a partir de documentos oficiales que provienen a los sistemas de enseñanza las directrices al trabajo pedagógico y de investigaciones científicas sobre el tema. Para tal, realizamos investigación documental (analizando 8 documentos producidos en la esfera federal como referenciales para las redes educacionales) e investigación bibliográfica (analizando 23 trabajos científicos, entre artículos, monografías y tesis). Como resultado, destacamos que en el campo del discurso (legal y académico científico) se reconoce la importancia de procedimientos para que la transición promueva condiciones favorables al desarrollo infantil; sin embargo, en el campo de las prácticas pedagógicas poco se concretiza. Conjeturamos como posible fuente de esta heterogeneidad el modo de construcción de los discursos, marcados por poca interlocución entre los distintos campos. Observamos la cristalización de los problemas, una vez que los análisis de las contribuciones de los dos discursos evidencian pocas transformaciones acerca de lo que se dice y lo que se hace. Basándonos en la Teoría Histórico Cultural, apuntamos la relevancia de esfuerzos para transformaciones en el panorama descrito, en términos del discurso oficial, así como en las investigaciones futuras, realzando que las condiciones concretas de organización y articulación de los dos segmentos educacionales pueden ser más o menos movilizadoras y fértiles para el desarrollo infantil.

**Palabras Clave:** Niñez. Educación Infantil. Enseñanza Primaria. Transición.

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## Introduction

How do studies and academic research deal with the matter of transitioning from Early Childhood Education to the Elementary Education? Have the results found by scientific studies been incorporated into the public agencies' guidelines (such as the city/state offices and the Ministry of Education) when it comes to this process? What type of care or practices are valued and emphasized when the research about this transition happens? Are those types of care and practices becoming a reference to good pedagogical work in this process? Are they acknowledged as deserving of such an emphasis in those documents? Are they being incorporated into them?

These questions were the starting point for the investigative work presented here. It is a documental research (analyzing 8 documents produced in the federal sphere and used as references by the educational system) and bibliographic research (analyzing 23 scientific papers, encompassing articles, dissertations, and thesis) were carried out.

In order to do so, first, we seek to analyze transition process from Early Childhood Education to the Elementary Education, based on official documents that were previously published in order to guide us when it comes to the quality standard of the educational service; we aimed to find all the guidelines that helped the pedagogical work with the transition in two different segments. When we discuss Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education, it's important to focus on teaching and mediating the path that every child should take, because it's important to show them the entry to a new academic world and it's also related to favorable conditions that help students adapt and succeed during their first years in the first Cycle Elementary Education. These actions turn into an even bigger theme when it comes to the quality of education for children in Brazil and in other fields, regarding rights that have already been historically achieved, as we will see in this study.

## **Documental Research: what is said in official documents about the children's transition process from the Early Childhood Education to the Elementary Education**

In the 1990s, the State's duty was to guarantee to all children the right to study, which is part of the Brazilian Constitution (1988), and is reaffirmed by the Statute of Children and Teenagers (1990). At the same time, because of both documents, mechanisms of social control and help to formulate and implement policies for childhood were established, which are necessary when it comes to building citizenship.

Due to those two legal rights and the arguments that were being made regarding the elaboration of a National Policy For Childhood Education, the General Coordination of Childhood Education (COEDI, in Portuguese), launched a set of four books, published by the Ministry of Education, in which considerations regarding Childhood Education were formulated, correlated to others which are also related to Elementary School. Those books were the first publications made by the Federal Government that were destined to things related to Childhood Education. Although they do talk about the importance of matters such as the child as a "citizen, a person who is in a process of development, and is an active subject when it comes to the construction of their knowledge" (BRAZIL, 1993, p.11), they do not mention the transition between Early Childhood Education and Elementary School.

Towards the end of the 1990s, MEC, helped by the Law of Guidelines for the Basis of Brazilian Education – LDB/96 (an important cornerstone when it comes to childhood education) elaborated and distributed to schools throughout the country a document called the National Curriculum Referencial for Childhood Education (RCNEI), which was composed of three volumes (BRAZIL, 1998). They present the guidelines to build a Childhood Education curriculum. They also served as a reference to cities and states when it comes to authorizing and guiding the units of Childhood Education in their states and cities/towns. The RCNEI indicates parameters that must

be followed to realize the daily pedagogical work when it comes to Childhood Education, although it is not a regulation. Amongst the parameters it is emphasized the need of the process of socialization when it comes to childhood development, which is a possibility within educational contexts:

The entry in the institution of childhood education can broaden the initial universe of children, seeing as they now have the possibility to socialize with children and adults of different origins and backgrounds, to learn new games to play and to acquire knowledge of different realities (BRAZIL, 1998, v.2, p.13).

In this document, Childhood Education is now seen in a different angle, which values the children themselves, by referring to them as the protagonists of their life. The child is talked about as a social and historical subject, who is part of society and has rights. According to the same document, children have a singular nature, which characterizes them as beings, who feel the world and think about it in a very particular way (BRAZIL, 1998, v.01, p. 21).

RCNEI also talks about the necessity that schools who teach children have when it comes to incorporate the functions of educating and caring for them at the same time, as follows:

To educate means to care, to create games and teach children at the same time, in this way contributing to the development of their childhood capacities of interpersonal relationships, of being around others in a simple situation of acceptance, respect and trust, and the access to the knowledge of the social and cultural reality of the country (BRAZIL, 1998, v.1, p.23-24).

According to the RCNEI, playing is a necessity when it comes to a child's life and school life; they should be allowed to express their feelings and emotions and to experience the world, which will contribute to the formation of their identity. In this study, the focus is also on the action that promotes a partnership with the families. "The professionals have to develop the ability to listen, observe and learn with help from the families" (BRAZIL, 1998, v.1, p.77). The enrollment/school admission interview can be a good way for the

teachers to learn about the child's habits and talk to the family for the first time. The meetings have to be understood and valued as a right that the family has to obtain information about the main objectives of Childhood Education and to be aware of the work that is being done with/for their children.

It's in the family-school context that the subject of children getting accustomed to educational institutions first arises, focusing on their enrollment in Childhood Education institutions. In the literature, it is said that this moment "can create anxiety not only for the children, but also for the parents, as well as for the teachers. The types of reaction can vary a lot, both in relation to the emotional manifestations and to the time needed for the process to be completed" (BRAZIL, 1998, v.1, p.79-80).

Because of that, it is recommended that

On the first day of a child in the institution, the teacher's attention must be focused on the child in a special manner. This particular day must be carefully planned so that the child will feel welcomed. It is recommended that the school should only welcome a small amount of children a day, so that they can have an individual kind of treatment. When it comes to small babies, the main issue is to set up the environment, the crib, identify it with the baby's name, make sure the baby is fed correctly and calm down the parents. Some transition items can help along in the process, such as the pacifier, items that have a familiar smell and even the bottle. The parents can even be invited a few days in advance to help prepare their baby's crib (BRAZIL, 1998, v. 1, p. 80).

Regarding the guidelines about the first days of the year or the semester, the plan to help organize the children's adaptation and routine should be emphasized.

It's important to ask, not only during the first days, but until it's necessary, that the parents or a person who the child trusts is present so that the child can face the unknown environment with the presence of someone with whom they feel safe. When an emotional bond is established with the teacher and other children, it will be easier for the child to deal with the process of separation, being able to say goodbye to the person they trust, feeling safe and free (BRAZIL, 1998, v. 1, p.82).

The importance of the rite of passage from Early Childhood Education to Elementary Education is acknowledged in this study; however, everything that mentions this in the RCNEI is transcribed below:

When children leave, the families face big changes. The transition from Childhood Education to Elementary Education represents an important step for the child and can cause anxiety and create insecurities. The Childhood Education teacher must take it into consideration starting from the beginning of the year, should always be available and pay attention to attitudes that the child can manifest. Such worries can be used to create projects that involve visiting Elementary School settings; interviews with teachers and students; spending a day with a first grade class. It is interesting to come up with a goodbye ritual, which will then help the children see the moment as a very important rite of passage. Such actions help develop a positive disposition when it comes to future changes, showing that, in spite of the losses, there is also growth. (BRAZIL, 1998, v. 1, p. 84).

The next document published in the public federal field is called “National Policy of Childhood Education: for the right of children between 0 and 6 years of age to education” (BRAZIL, 2005). In this document, the guidelines that were being emphasized since the COEDI issues (1993) are reaffirmed: “Early Childhood Education should focus on how it’s impossible to separate care from education” when it comes to all children (BRAZIL, 2005, p.17). It is also emphasized that, amongst the main aims of this policy, the one of “Assuring the quality of treatment in institutions of Childhood Education (day care centers, similar entities and pre-schools)” (BRAZIL, 2005, p.19).

In the document previously mentioned, it is pointed out how important it is to “articulate Early Childhood Education with Elementary Education, in a way that avoids a huge impact when transitioning from one to the other, respecting the culture of childhood and guaranteeing a policy of childhood temporality” (BRAZIL, 2005, p. 26). As previously seen, the relevance of our subject of study is acknowledged – the transition – but very succinctly.

In 2006, the National Parameters for the Quality of Childhood Education were published, composed of two volumes, and being based on LDB/96. In these



documents, is proposed a curriculum criteria for the work happening in day-care facilities and pre-schools. It also aims to uniformize and universalize the quality of the treatment of small children in the Brazilian territory.

The aforementioned parameters indicate the abilities of physical, cognitive, ethical, affective, interpersonal relationships and social insertion that have to be developed by the children and indicate where pedagogical work is needed.

Such needs are specified in the following way: self-knowledge and the knowledge of others; playing; the act of moving around, oral and written speech, mathematics, visual arts, music and knowledge of the world itself, focusing on the importance of citizenship. It is also mentioned that children need to be supported and encouraged in their will to:

- play;
- play around in big spaces and outside;
- express feelings and thoughts;
- develop their imagination, curiosity and ability to express themselves;
- permanently broaden their knowledge about the world, nature and culture, with the help of adequate pedagogical techniques;
- diversify activities, choices, and playmates in day-care, pre-school and Childhood Education centers (BRAZIL, 2006, v. 1, p.19).

Amongst the many proposals for Early Childhood Education Institutions, which are presented in the second volume of the aforementioned parameters, it is signaled that, in conformity with the national legislation, “measures to guarantee an adequate transition for children from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School” (BRAZIL, 2006, v. 2, p. 20).

As well as in the RCNEI, the emphasis for the welcoming of children is linked to the welcoming of their families, proposing actions that will integrate the family with the school:

**3.1** Before the child starts going to school, there should be enough time for mothers, fathers, parents, relatives, legal guardians, teachers and principals to get to know each other mutually.

**3.2** The period of initial welcoming (“adaptation”), demands special attention from the teachers and principals to the families or legal guardians of the children, which allows for the presence of one of those people in the premises of the institution (BRAZIL, 2006, v.2, p. 32).

It is up to the management to provide the mothers, fathers, parents, relatives or legal guardians with information during the period of enrollment, as well as set up meeting between them and professionals that work at the Childhood Education institution. The integration between the families and the school depends, vastly, on principals/managers that

**10.11** Allow for mothers, fathers, relatives or legal guardians to have an opportunity to visit the premises of the institution and to meet the professionals that work there before enrolling the child.

**10.12** Give special attention to the families or legal guardians during the initial phase – welcoming phase (“adaptation”), allowing for, in some situations, the presence of one of them in the premises of the institution (BRAZIL, 2006, v. 2, p. 37-38).

The next document that was published was the Resolution CEB/CNE, No. 5, from 12/17/2009, which created the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education. Just as other documents that deal with the same subject, it is very summarized, containing only 5 pages. In those five pages, transition is mentioned twice. In the III item of Article 10, it is emphasized the importance of

[...] the continuity of the processes of learning by the way of creating adequate strategies for the different moments of transition that the child is going through (transition between their home to the institution, transitions inside the institution itself, transition from day care to pre-school and from pre-school to elementary-school) (BRAZIL, 2009, p. 5).

Still, in this document, in Article 11, there are more considerations regarding the transition between Early Childhood Education to Elementary School.

In the transition to Elementary School, the pedagogical proposal must predict ways to guarantee the continuity of the learning process and development of the children, respecting the age requirements, without anticipating subjects that will be studied in Elementary School. (BRAZIL, 2009, p.5).

The National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education, which resulted from the CEB/CNE Resolution, No. 5, was approved by the Board of National Education in 2010 and published by the Secretary of Education in the same year. Linked to the Basic Education Curriculum Guidelines, this document reaffirms the strengthening of the conception of Early Childhood Education as the first step when it comes to Basic Education and how important is the presence of the child in its conception. As long as the transition is regarded, the aforementioned document emphasizes the theme in its thirteenth item, which is named “The Articulation with Elementary School”, in which is reproduced the text transcribed above, presented by The CEB/CNE Resolution, no. 5. (BRAZIL, 2020).

With a dynamic that is different from other documents, the DCNEI text is accompanied by complementary articles, written by well-known militant authors in the Childhood Education area. According to what is stated in the guidelines, the Secretary of Basic Education elaborated “curriculum guidelines in the process of a democratic debate and with specialized technical consultants about the following themes [...] (BRAZIL, 2010, p. 31). They present a list of 11 themes. Each one of them was developed in their own text, and all are available online. They were published in during the First National Seminar: The Current State of The Curriculum – current perspectives.”, which took place in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, in November 2020. Among all the topics, it interests us to talk about the one titled “Assessment and transitions in Early Childhood Education” (MICARELLO, 2010). In this topic, the author reaffirms the importance of some of the guidelines that have always been present, ever since we analyzed the first documents. One of them is the importance that the entry of children in institutions is carefully planned and that it includes the

possibility of welcoming the children and their families in the institution, until “the children create a bond with the adults [...] and feel safe and confident” (MICARELLO, 2010, p. 6). The other guideline is regarding the importance of children visiting pre-school whilst still in day-care and visiting elementary school settings when they are still in pre-school, so that they will become used to the environment and the people who work there.

However, we also found in the text an original proposition: to link the assessment records to what the children are producing and their potential, so that the teachers who will teach them next will always have information about their new students and are able to, in a sensitive way, build their work line based on what they already know about the child, via the reports and portfolios that were created by the teachers that preceded them. This strategy would contribute in a way that the transitions (from day care to pre-school, changing classes and teachers, which normally happens every year, and, at last, from pre-school to elementary-school) could be made in a way that takes into consideration what the children already know, their main interests, and peculiarities about their development. In a different original proposition, the author states:

The professionals that work in the different steps of the transition, should meet and discuss the documents, a way of organizing them and how they can maintain a continuity, even if such professionals work for different institutions (MICARELLO, 2010, p. 10).

To reach our goals in terms of encompassing all the publications that were published in a Federal sphere destined to the work of Childhood Education, we analyze the document of the Common National Curriculum Basis of Childhood Education (BNCC), published at the end of 2017. This text brings important structures that have to be secured, as well as six rights of learning and development: live together, play, participate, explore, express and self-knowledge. The BNCC refers to the transition from pre-school to elementary-school in the following way:

The transition between the two phases of Basic Education requires a lot of attention, so that there is a balance between the changes that are introduced, guaranteeing **integration and the continuity of the process of learning for children**, respecting their singularities and the different relationships that they establish with the knowledge acquired, as well as the nature of the mediations of each step. It becomes necessary to establish strategies of welcoming the children, as well as their adaptation, not only for the children, but also for the teachers, in a way that the new phase is built on what the child knows and what they are capable of, with a perspective of continuity in their learning path. (BRAZIL, 2017, p. 51, emphasis on the original).

The BNCC text also mentions the necessity of assessing the pedagogical practices when it comes to Childhood Education, especially the ones regarding learning and the development of small children, which happened during day care, pre-school and Elementary school, hoping that there is a proper continuity in this new phase of their life in school. We mention again what we found in Micarello (2010):

The information from reports, portfolios and other types of register that put emphasis on the processes that the children went through during their journey in their Childhood Education can contribute to the understanding of the history of every child's learning process in Elementary School. Conversations and visits and the sharing of materials between teachers from the Early Childhood Education Institutions and Elementary School – The Early Years, are also important to make the transition to this new phase in the child's academic life easier. (BRAZIL, 2017, p. 53).

To comprehend what we think about childhood in the current scenario, and the finalization of the pedagogical work on Childhood Education and how the transition to Elementary School occurs is not a derisory aim. On the contrary, we base ourselves on the Historical and Cultural Psychological perspective, and we emphasize that the concrete conditions of life have important consequences when it comes to how a child lives their childhood, and to make it easier for them to take different paths for their psychological development. According to Vygotski, these conditions are:

the first step for all the dynamic changes that happen in the development during the period of every different age, determines, plainly and entirely, the ways and the trajectory that allow for the child to acquire new types of personality, seeing as the social reality is the real source of development, and the possibility that what is social will become individual. (VYGOTSKI, 1996, p. 264).

That way, we aim to analyze the reach of the proposed objectives, according to the guidelines written in the documents published by MEC and/or the necessity of improving and of new ways that the authorities could talk about the subject in case it is evidenced that what has already been mentioned is not enough. In other words, are their guidelines applied? What is seen as necessary is actually done? This is what we will explore next, based on the bibliographic research carried out.

### **Bibliographic Research: what is done on a daily basis in the educational field to help the transition of children from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School.**

To go deeper into this subject, we conducted a bibliographic review, searching for scientific studies related to the aforementioned transition. The procedure adopted was a systematic search in the Brazilian Digital Library of Thesis and Dissertations (BDTD) and complemented by academic articles selected from searches on Scielo (Scientific Eletronic Library Online).

On the BDTD, by searching “Elementary School – 9 years of age” and “Elementary School nine years” we were able to find 118 studies. In their references, we found other 15 studies written about the theme. The choice of which study to pick was due to which one was more recent and important when it comes to the alterations that happened in the relationship between Childhood Education and Elementary School, and its repercussion in intensified musings and whether or not they were recently updated. By reading the titles, we identified that 13 studies were doubled and those were excluded. Out of the 120

remaining ones, just by reading their abstracts, we chose 13 studies (5 thesis and 8 dissertations). Those studies focused on the theme we were researching. When it comes to the articles, the basic information about the studies that we selected and are shown in tables 01, 02 and 03.

**Table 1 – Bibliographic information about the chosen thesis**

TITLE	AUTHOR(S)	YEAR
Continuities and discontinuities in the transition from Preschool to nine-year-long Primary School context	Marcondes	2012
The school routine and childhood: interface between Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education in the voices of its protagonists	Mascioli	2012
The articulation of Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education I: the voice of children, teachers and Family in relation to admission to the 1st school year	Rabinovich	2012
Children's interpretations of self, others and the world in the transition from kindergarden to elementary school	Ramos	2013
The identity of preschool: between the transition to to Elementary School and new legal system of compulsory attendance	Fernandes	2014

**Source:** Table elaborated by the authors.

**Table 2 – Bibliographic information about the chosen dissertations**

TITLE	AUTHOR(S)	YEAR
A portrait of the first year of elementary school: what children, parents and teachers reveal	Raniero	2009
Contemporary tensions in the process of transition from preschool to elementary school: a case study	Neves	2010
The 6-year-old child to the 9-year elementary school from the quality perspective of a child's education	Campos	2011
School seen by children: an analysis of the social representations of school in the voice (voices) of children	Souza	2011
“Cidadescola Project” in the 1st year class of elementary school in Presidente Prudente: between playfulness and the classroom	Azevedo	2012
Welcome to school: the entry of the child in the first year of primary school under gaze's teachers and the prospect of playing	Oliveira	2013
Child Education and Elementary school for nine year in the voices of children and in the organization of the pedagogical work of two institutions in Curitiba-PR	Chulek	2013
Stress symptoms and school stress perceptions in the beginning of elementary school	Crepaldi	2016

**Source:** Table elaborated by the authors.

**Table 3** – Bibliographic information about the chosen scientific articles.

TITLE	AUTHOR(S)	YEAR
The passage from early childhood education to fundamental education: contemporary tensions	Neves Gouvêa Castanheira	2011
From children to pupils: social transformations in the passage from early childhood education to fundamental education	Motta	2011
The transition from pre-kindergarten to elementary school as seen by children, parents and educators: a phenomenological view	Szymanski Grando Freire Villas Boas Souza Jr	2011
The integration of children of six years in elementary school example of infringement to childhood	Zibetti	2012
Contributions of childhood pedagogy for articulation between childhood education and the early years of fundamental education	Nogueira Vieira	2013
Children stories about primary schools: sceneries and (auto)biographic research challenges	Passeggi Furlanetto Conti Chaves Gomes Gabriel Rocha	2014
“Pretend you’ve grown up”: the transition process from Childhood Education to Elementary School	Martinati Rocha	2015
Under the gaze of children: the school transition from early childhood education to elementary school in the contemporaneity	Dias Campos	2015
Children’s perspective about day to day life in pre-school: playtime in focus	Cruz Santos	2016
Living in a pre-school and the expectations about elementary education under the children's view	Correa Bucci	2018

**Source:** Table elaborated by the authors.

The *corpus* for the analysis was composed of 23 texts (10 articles, 8 dissertations and 5 thesis) that investigate the transition from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School. Although they were created in different ways when it comes to procedures, participants, objectives, networks or the institutions that were researched, all studies were consensual regarding the importance of reflections about the transitions. Also, in an consistent and unanimous way, they point out to the following findings about the process we are focusing on.

- Ruptures between the daily practices of Early Childhood Education and Elementary School, with no effort to bring them together



- Each segment continues to develop their pedagogical work the way they have always traditionally done it.

- Emphasis on the necessity to adapt the physical spaces in Elementary School, including the furniture, which is sometimes inadequate for children aged 6, who have just transitioned to this segment.

Studies and researches that included field work have proved that when a small child transitions to Elementary School and faces, in general, an environment extremely different from the one they were accustomed to in Early Childhood Education: the classroom is no longer about playing, the desks are individual and organized in rows, they spend most of the time focusing on writing, tiresome activities such as copying handwriting, letters, numbers and reduced playtime outside (when there is such structure in the building), and more frequently regarding sport courts and open spaces. (CORRÊA; BUCCI, 2018; CRUZ; SANTOS, 2016; PASSEGGI et al., 2014; NOGUEIRA; VIEIRA, 2013; NEVES; GOUVÊA; CASTANHEIRA, 2011; MOTTA, 2011; ROCHA; MARTINATI, 2015; amongst other authors).

Motta (2011, p. 166) says that:

The first day of class is a drastic rupture from the work previously done. The children didn't know what they could do. The desks set up in rows, facing the board, the teacher's desk up front, the presence of children who didn't pass the previous grade, the absence of the playmates and classmates they were used to, the alphabet and numbers on the wall, everything indicated a different year. They weren't allowed to run, to go to the restroom, to play hide-and-seek, to tap on something or look outside the window. There was a discrepancy between the children who came from the Early Childhood Education and the others. To keep your head down and wait doesn't really have anything to do with the previous year.

Regarding the way the children notice the two different type of institutions, they emphasize that there is a very different approach to playing time and learning as an important fact of their transition in the academic world. In some cases, children claim that they don't like certain

activities that they find difficult or are not interested in whatsoever, as is explored by Cruz e Santos (2016, p. 173)

Most of the time, such activities (best known as “little tasks”), are related to the teaching of reading and writing. In Souza’s research (2006), for example, they said they don’t like to “make a lot of numbers” or write, because “it’s difficult to learn how to write”, “it’s difficult to write the names without seeing them”, and a boy concluded: “I don’t like the tasks that involve letters, because I still haven’t learned the letters”.

Academic research points out that there is still a lot to do to make the transition to the first year of Elementary school easier, taking into consideration the needs of the children and their development process. In a more precise way, they point out that almost nothing is being done, even though there is an apparent consensus about the importance of this process and how recurrent the subject has been in public documents. A recent scientific study corroborates our research results:

In spite of the set of rules and the guidelines created by the Ministry of Education about the care that children transitioning to Elementary school have to rely on, there is still a great distance between what is written down and what, in fact, happens in the spaces/institutions. (FURLANETTO et al., 2020, p. 1245).

Although most researchers agreed that there is a lack of action regarding the transition process in both institutions, there were few new proposals/actions suggested by the researchers. The ones that we found are as follows:

- to adapt the physical spaces in both institutions;
- to integrate playing time and learning time in the pedagogical practices of both Early Childhood Education and Elementary School;
- to understand the role that make-believe games play in both Early Childhood Education and Elementary Schools coming from what children say and draw;

- to discuss the importance of the teacher's role in the process of adaptation of the child when it comes to the experiences they go through at the beginning of Elementary School;

- to acknowledge the importance of a teacher's mediation, be it in Early Childhood Education or Elementary School, in the sense that they use instruments that allow for children to express their feeling in the different spaces.

We see, then, that there are points that are similar when it comes to what is written in the documents and to what the researchers suggest as a positive way to deal with the transition. The main question is: why, then, there are not any kinds of developments and reformulations in the way the transition is dealt with? We are going to write down some things regarding that in our next topic.

### **The lack of dialogue regarding the documents, the research and what actually happens daily: how to integrate what they say and what they do?**

According to what we have said previously, in the field of speeches (legal and academic-scientific), the procedures are considered important so the transition can provide favorable conditions to the children's development; in the field of the pedagogical practices, it is not well concretized. We assume that the possible source of this problem is the way such speeches are built, marked by a lack of an interlocutor for the legal speech and the academic-scientific speech. Given the limits of the present article, we will focus on two issues in which the lack of an interlocutor can be noticed: questions about the theoretical fundamentals and the incorporations of research results will be in focus.

It's important to notice that in all the documents that were analyzed we didn't find any mention of results of scientific researches about the transition theme. They are all silent regarding the persistent rupture between Early Childhood Education and Elementary School, which is vastly recorded in field

work. What they say about the importance of the curriculum continuity seems to be a mere illusion that just mentioning it is enough for it to become a reality.

From our perspective, it would be very important for the very own documents to alert clearly (bringing results of investigative works to the table), that, in spite of the insistence on the theme, nothing, or barely anything was done, effectively, to create better conditions to the transition process that could be carefully built; they could speak to education professionals so that the transformations and good examples of care when it comes to the transition process can be produced and spoken about.

A different way in the effort to face this stagnation would be to substitute the generic affirmations about the continuity of experiences in the school setting with a theoretical and empirical robust sustentation. Going back to the documents, we are going to take to extracts as examples about this particular point, coming from the National Policy of Childhood Education, for the rights of children from the ages of 0 to 6 to education (BRAZIL, 2005) and the Common National Curriculum Basis (BRAZIL, 2017). In the first one, we see that schools should

[...] articulate Early Childhood Education and Elementary School, in a way that you avoid the impact of transitioning from a period to another, respecting the culture of childhood and guaranteeing a policy of childhood temporality.

In the second document, we found an emphasis on the importance to:

[...] guarantee **integration and continuity in the processes of learning for children**, respecting their singularities and the different relationships they establish with their own knowledge, as well as the nature of mediation of each step (BRAZIL, 2017, emphasis on the original).

Both documents were published with a 12-year gap, but they are very similar regarding the content and the use of generic expressions, such as, “respect to the culture of childhood”, “policy of childhood

temporality”, “respecting their singularities” and “the different relationships they establish with their own knowledge”.

So, we ask ourselves: if nothing has changed in 12 years (and all the research proves that), wouldn't it be the duty of those who formulate the documents to think about different ways of saying what could have a different effect regarding the practices and the daily life of educational institutions? It is important, beyond that, to talk about how ambiguous those expressions are and maybe that's why they don't contribute to stimulate/guide the teachers, managers, networks and principals to focus on transition programs.

At last, apart from the ambiguity of the terms, we think it is not unlikely that one of the meanings has something to do with the ludic activity, which is usually identified as one of the main parts of “childhood culture” and the privileged way of getting to know the world through a child's eye. If that is the case, it is important to remember that this issue is very much discussed in the literature and there are a lot of studies that point us to the concrete contributions of playing for childhood development. To use it as a dialogue with the readers of such documents, can be a good way to convince people about the importance of the link between both Early Childhood Education and Elementary School.

## **Conclusion**

The entry of small children in the first year of school must be carefully planned by the educational institution. However, it is important to mention that the responsibility in this process is not only of the schools and their pedagogical teams. From our point of view, it is necessary that the educational institutions and the government and public school system representatives, especially the local secretaries, give us their position more clearly, creating a way for the dialogue to happen between people and for the curriculums to be linked.

To understand small children, to listen to them about their experiences in school and take into consideration how specific their

development and learning experience can be is something that is often done by researchers and it is essential for the elaboration of the educational practice done by the teacher through dialogue, which is necessary for the organization of the pedagogical work and the transition that was aforementioned, looking to overcome problems that can arise between both teaching segments. However, this procedure hasn't been sufficient to establish innovative and consistent pedagogical practices, that should be done with care, proper preparation to make the child feel welcome.

However, we need to find ways to know how to use sensitive listening to direct/transform the pedagogical work in a consistent manner throughout this process, with the aim to aid the children when they face possible difficulties because of the transition to a different environment. We suggest that the sensitive actions regarding the process of a child's development are privileged. Actions that listen to the children, according to strategies that make them talk, but that also wants to go beyond and transform the possibilities regarding their experiences in school.

Based on the analysis of academic studies and official documents, we evidence the necessity of welcoming a child properly during their transition from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School, which means to offer new opportunities to their development, as well as their families and community.

We finish this article by suggesting the necessity of new researches that will investigate the theme in an innovative way, as a way of contributing to transform problems, instead of just realizing they exist.

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Received in May 2020.

Approved in February 2021.