Reflections on teaching practice in the school inclusion of a student with intellectual disability[1]

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ABSTRACT

The general aim of this article is to describe and reflect on teaching practice in order to contribute to the school inclusion of a child with intellectual disabilities. School inclusion ensures quality access and permanency to education for all, including those with disabilities, so it is necessary to think about teaching practice that encourages learning. The information was obtained by means of a field diary and video recordings of the teachers' own practice, making it possible to discuss aspects that contribute to inclusive education, such as current legislation, specialized educational services, curriculum adaptation and collaborative teaching. In reviewing her own practice, the teacher-researcher reflected on ways to teach all the students in the class and attend to the specific learning needs of a student with intellectual disabilities included in a regular classroom, which required questioning her choices, conduct, behavior and re-evaluating her own action in order to turn the class into an inclusive one.

KEYWORDS: School Inclusion; Intellectual disability; Teaching practice.

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Reflexões sobre a própria prática docente na inclusão escolar de uma estudante com deficiência intelectual

RESUMO

Este artigo tem como objetivo geral descrever e refletir a própria prática docente para contribuir com a inclusão escolar de uma criança com deficiência intelectual. A inclusão escolar assegura o acesso e permanência qualitativa à educação para todos, incluindo aquelas com deficiência, logo é necessário pensar na prática docente que favorece a aprendizagem. Os dados foram obtidos por meio de diário de campo e gravação de vídeos da própria prática docente, possibilitando discutir aspectos que contribuem com a educação inclusiva, como legislação vigente, atendimento educacional especializado, adaptação curricular e ensino colaborativo. Ao rever a própria prática, a professora pesquisadora reflete sobre como ensinar todos os estudantes da turma e atender as especificidades de aprendizagem de uma estudante com deficiência intelectual incluída em uma sala de aula comum, o que exigiu questionamento de suas escolhas, conduta, comportamento e reavaliação da própria atuação de maneira a tornar a aula inclusiva.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Inclusão Escolar; Deficiência Intelectual; Prática docente.

Reflexiones sobre la propia práctica docente en la inclusión escolar de una estudiante con discapacidad intelectual

RESUMEN

Este artículo tiene el objetivo general de describir y reflexionar sobre la propia práctica docente para contribuir a la inclusión escolar de niños con discapacidad intelectual. La inclusión escolar asegura el acceso cualitativo y la permanencia en la educación para todos, incluidos aquellos con discapacidad, por lo que es necesario pensar en prácticas docentes que promuevan el aprendizaje. Los datos se obtuvieron a través de diarios de campo y videograbaciones de prácticas docentes, lo que permitió discutir aspectos que contribuyen a la educación inclusiva, como la legislación vigente, los servicios educativos especializados, la adecuación curricular y la enseñanza colaborativa. Al revisar su propia práctica, la docente

investigadora reflexiona sobre cómo enseñar a todos los estudiantes de la clase y atender las especificidades de aprendizaje de una estudiante con discapacidad intelectual incluida en un salón de clases común, lo que requirió cuestionar sus elecciones, conducta, comportamiento y re-evaluación del propio desempeño para que la clase fuera inclusiva.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Inclusión Escolar; Discapacidad Intelectual; Práctica docente.

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Introduction

This article presents an excerpt from a Master's dissertation conducted within the Post-Graduation Program in Teaching for Basic Education. The research focused on reflections concerning the teaching practice of including a child with intellectual disability in mainstream education, culminating in the production of a documentary video on the topic.

When discussing the education of people with disabilities in Brazil, Mantoan (2001) divides its history into three major periods: from 1854 to 1956, marked by private initiatives; from 1957 to 1993, characterized by national-level official actions; and from 1994 to the present, shaped by social movements advocating for inclusion.

Inclusion is a global movement aimed at guaranteeing rights. School inclusion, from a Human Rights perspective, "should be understood as a process that permeates the entire educational system and addresses and responds to the diversity of all students" (Rodrigues, 2021, p. 15).

For school inclusion to become a reality, it is necessary for history to continue being built and improved, which requires overcoming architectural, communicational, methodological, and attitudinal barriers.

From the perspective of inclusive education, it is essential to ensure that all students the conditions for access, participation and success at

school, as established by current Brazilian legislation such as the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (1996), the National Policy on Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusive Education (2008), and the Brazilian Law of Inclusion (2015). These legal frameworks aim to provide quality education for diverse student populations, regardless of social, ethnic, or religious background or learning difficulties, whether in public or private institutions. Brazilian legislation guarantees the fair and full exercise of rights for all, including students currently referred to as the Target Audience of Special Education (SPED) those with disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, or high abilities/giftedness (Brazil, 2008) who, for many years, were excluded from society and confined to specialized institutions.

A quality education for all implies, among other factors, the attribution of new dimensions to schooling, which involve not only the acceptance but also the appreciation of differences, reaffirming cultural values and respect for the learning process. School inclusion ensures equitable access to and meaningful participation in education for all individuals, including those with disabilities, based on the understanding that learning difficulties primarily emerge from a universal perspective of societal organization.

Among students identified as the Target Audience of Special Education, intellectual disability stands out. According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition (DSM-5), intellectual disability is a developmental disorder that includes functional deficits both intellectual and adaptive in conceptual, social, and practical domains (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

Intellectual disability affects an individual's cognitive functions, resulting in difficulties with language, information acquisition, perception, memory, reasoning, and thinking. These challenges, in turn, impair the ability to perform tasks such as reading, writing, calculations, conceptualization, and sequencing movements. Therefore, individuals with intellectual disabilities require support to develop skills commonly

demanded in formal schooling. Without the assistance of teachers and Specialized Educational Services (SES), they may struggle to progress in the learning process.

Thus, it is considered relevant to investigate the continued presence of students with disabilities in mainstream schools that is, to examine teaching practices that support the school inclusion of students with disabilities, in this case, intellectual disability.

It is understood that by highlighting themes and obstacles that affect school inclusion and its processes portraying the inclusion of a student with intellectual disability through the lens of the classroom teacher in a regular education setting it became possible to enhance the professional development of the participating teacher and provide a point of reference for other educators working with students with intellectual disabilities.

Therefore, the general aim of this article is to describe and reflect on teaching practice in order to contribute to the school inclusion of a child with intellectual disability.

Method

This article is the result of a case study which, according to Yin (2005, p. 32), "is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context." The study was conducted through an examination of the teaching practice of the author both teacher and researcher who had in her class a student with intellectual disability enrolled in and attending the resource room of a municipal public school. The goal was to understand the challenges of school inclusion. The research is grounded in an understanding of the processes and dynamics occurring within the general education classroom in relation to inclusive education.

The study was carried out in one of the public elementary schools in a mid-sized city in the interior of the state of São Paulo, Brazil. The name of the school will not be disclosed, but it was founded in 2002 and has been in

operation since then. The school building is not in good physical condition, presenting problems such as a damaged roof and the absence of flooring in the schoolyard and hallways. However, according to the school's Pedagogical Political Project, improvement requests have already been submitted, including a proposal for renovations aimed at improving accessibility in the building and classrooms.

The school is located in a neighborhood marked by a population living in conditions of social vulnerability, characterized by poverty, deprivation, and/or weakened affective and social bonds, with the majority of families being recipients of income transfer programs.

The school enrolls students classified as the Target Audience of Special Education (SPED), with the highest incidence being among students with intellectual disabilities. At the time of the research, the teacher-researcher was responsible for a class of 31 students in the 4th grade of elementary school, during the morning shift. Among these students, three received support in the resource room: one student with low vision and two students with intellectual disabilities; all of these students had official medical reports.

This study focuses on the inclusion of one student with intellectual disability and the teaching practice of the teacher-researcher, both of whom participated directly in the study. However, the other students in the class, totaling 31, were indirectly involved. The criterion for selecting these participants was primarily the school where the teacher-researcher was actively teaching.

Data collection began with the distribution of the Informed Consent Form (ICF) and the parental/guardian consent form for the participants and the parents of participants. Following a meeting to present the research and its objectives, consent and authorization were obtained from all participants for the use and publication of video recordings of the students and others involved. The project was submitted to and approved by the Ethics Committee under protocol number 1.353.621.

The study employed several data collection instruments: observation, field notes, a semi-structured interview, analysis and reflection on the teacher-researcher's teaching practices, which were documented through video recordings.

During the course of the observations, video data were collected, as recording on video becomes necessary "whenever a set of human actions is complex and difficult to be comprehensively described by a single observer while they unfold" (Loizos, 2008, p. 149, apud Garcez, Duarte; Eisenberg, 2011). Filming allows for the reproduction of the flow of the researched process, enabling the examination of aspects of what was taught and learned, as well as the observation of details that often go unnoticed. Video also permits the expansion and transformation of the qualities, characteristics, and particularities of the observed phenomenon.

The teacher-researcher, who was also a participant in the study, watched all the recorded videos and selected certain "episodes" considered relevant for the analysis and reflection on her teaching practice. The data analysis was conducted following the theoretical framework of Marin (2012, p. 2), who highlights that the "study, reflection, and investigation of teaching in its various areas and contexts, characterized as plural and multifaceted, must necessarily be made the object of analysis."

Thus, the data were analyzed and organized accordingly.

Teaching Practice from the Perspective of Inclusive Education

Currently, the challenge faced by educational institutions is to provide quality education for all students, fostering their development with the aim of forming participatory, critical citizens who are aware of their roles in society. Working from an inclusive perspective, which takes into account the diversity of students in the classroom, has been identified as a significant challenge for teachers in developing effective teaching practices for all students, whether with or without disabilities.

In discussing teaching practice from the perspective of inclusive education, it becomes evident that:

> […] the teacher's practice should not be limited to mere transmission, with the teacher as the transmitter on one side and the student as the receiver on the other. Instead, it should promote the "learning to learn" process, that is, it should foster the development of an active participant in work— productive rather than reproductive, who is conscious of their actions (Capellini; Mendes, 2007, p. 116).

In other words, it is necessary to invest in the formation of critical citizens who recognize individual differences while guaranteeing everyone the right to learn. Within the paradigm of school inclusion, teaching practice constitutes a highly important action for improving attitudes and the social and educational development of all students.

To carry out teaching practices that respond to the educational needs of each student, it is essential to adapt the various curricular elements in order to address the singularities of each individual and of all students collectively. Teaching must be flexible, adopting differentiated strategies and tailoring educational actions to student's specific learning needs, recognizing that the teaching-learning process requires addressing the diverse needs of students in school (Brazil, 1999).

Regarding this issue, Abenhaim (2005) points out that the current school system excludes even those it claims to include, which can be associated with teacher's lack of preparedness, as they often fail to identify student's specific learning needs and/or to develop adaptations that promote effective teaching. Thus, the discourse that teachers are unqualified for inclusion is perpetuated—a frequent argument used to justify segregating students in classrooms into those considered capable, perfect, or "normal," and those labeled as "disabled-abnormal" who are perceived as unable to learn.

Currently, many students classified as the Target Audience of Special Education (SPED) are completing basic education and progressing to higher education and the labor market. According to the 2024 School Census data, there are 3,474,886 students with disabilities enrolled in schools within the Brazilian educational system (Basic Education and Professional Education) (INEP, 2024). This figure highlights the advances achieved through school inclusion, considering that for a long time such students were denied enrollment in mainstream schools and that these students have experienced success in the teaching and learning process throughout their schooling. Among the enrolled Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) students, the majority, 53.7%, have intellectual disabilities (INEP, 2024).

Therefore, it is understood that investment in teacher training is essential, as presupposed by the perspective of inclusive education, since an inclusive school implies a primary commitment to transforming the traditional model of teacher education. There must be coherence between what educators learn and what we expect them to teach, in order to address classroom diversity and the perspective of school inclusion, as discussed by Libâneo (2015) and Carneiro (2012).

Regarding teaching practice from the perspective of inclusive education, Rodrigues (2021, p. 22) argues:

> […] for learning to be for everyone, it is not possible to regard homogeneity as a positive value (a notion pursued by traditional schooling since the formation of classes through to teaching and assessment). Learning thus presupposes the implementation of a pedagogical organization that consistently stimulates students so that the learning proposal can be effectively addressed, something that is common sense at the level of knowledge. This implies a considerable multiplicity of learning frameworks, a wide diversity of strategies, and so forth.

However, the predominant pedagogical practice in Basic Education tends toward a homogeneous, uniform teaching approach, delivered in the same manner to all students, disregarding their different levels and learning paces. Hence, the importance of reflecting on teaching practice within diversity and didactics, which can be defined as the "systematization of knowledge and practices related to the foundations, conditions, and modes of carrying out the teaching and learning of content, skills, and values, aiming at the development of mental capacities and the formation of student's personalities" (Libâneo, 2012, p. 41).

To be specific, teaching practice consists of assisting the student, through content, in acquiring capacities for new mental operations or modifying existing ones. In the words of Oliveira, Machado, and Capellini (2014), didactics can be understood as the possibility of transforming content into knowledge for the student.

In inclusive education, one possibility lies in teacher preparation, which can occur in-service through the modification of pedagogical practices to effectively reach all students indiscriminately. For this, it is important that teachers are aware of their practice, capable of evaluating different teaching situations, working with problem situations, employing a varied repertoire of solutions, making decisions, and being accountable for them (Carneiro, 2012). To be a reflective teacher.

The proposal of inclusive education is characterized as an opportunity to reorganize the constitutive elements of the school daily life, since, to become inclusive and meet the diverse needs of students, a new pedagogical project must be conceived: flexible, open, and dynamic, consistent with the diversity of students in the classroom.

Adaptations to curriculum elements, whether minor or substantial, become fundamental strategies for addressing diversity and should be integrated into the school" political-pedagogical project (Capellini, 2004). That is, schools must understand that, in order to provide quality education

for all, modifications are necessary, as in inclusive education it is the schools that adapt to the students, not the other way around.

To implement adaptations in the teaching-learning process, the teacher must consider school activities from a concrete perspective, utilizing everyday resources, natural situations, practical experiences, and making adjustments to ensure access to the objectives outlined in the teaching plan. Regarding the assessment process, students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) should be evaluated based on what they have been able to accomplish and learn under the actual conditions (teaching strategies and practices) provided, always taking into account the repertoires and content for which they have not yet demonstrated convincing evidence of learning this should guide teaching practice (Fonseca, 2011).

Considering this brief discussion on teaching practice from the perspective of inclusive education, the description begins of the teaching practice of the researcher-teacher aimed at the school inclusion of a student with intellectual disability.

Reflection on Teaching Practices for the School Inclusion of a Student with Intellectual Disability

The information regarding the student with an intellectual disability who participated in this study was provided by her paternal grandmother. The student was enrolled in the 4th year of elementary school. To protect her identity, we will use the fictitious name Laura. At the time of data collection, Laura was 9 years and 9 months old. Her parents do not live together; she is raised by her father and paternal grandmother. A medical report indicates diagnoses of ICD-10 F70.1 (Mild Intellectual Disability with Significant Impairment in Behavior) and F90.0 (Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder). Thus, Laura has been diagnosed with an intellectual disability

accompanied by behavioral and attention difficulties, factors that must be taken into account in instructional planning and pedagogical practice.

After reviewing classroom recordings, the teacher-researcher reflected that the quality of her own pedagogical practice appeared "precarious." It is noteworthy that, upon entering the school and receiving the students, the teacher-researcher follows a daily routine in which students are lined up in separate rows according to gender a normative practice at the school where both the research and her professional practice took place.

In the video recordings, the teacher greets all students, and a certain degree of rapport between her and the students is observable. However, a rigid stance on discipline is also evident, along with the mechanical reproduction of classroom practices she experienced as a student and now replicates as a teacher. One example is her daily directive: "To begin today's activity, let's take out our notebooks and write the heading, which everyone already knows." (Field notes of the teacher-researcher).

It is important to emphasize that, despite technological advancements, the notebook remains a fundamental tool for study and is still the most widely used resource in the teaching-learning process. When used appropriately, the notes and activities recorded therein can reflect the pedagogical work developed over the course of a school term. However, it should not be considered the sole educational resource, as some students may face difficulties in recording activities in their notebooks. These students may demonstrate their learning through alternative means verbally, using augmentative and alternative communication boards, printed materials, among others and such alternatives must be taken into account to ensure inclusive education.

Nevertheless, teachers often find themselves "trapped" within this "archaic" model of teaching and learning, as schools and the broader educational system continue to demand written records of student's work. External assessments whether federal, state, or municipal still rely exclusively on standardized tests that rarely accommodate diverse learning

needs. Only students with official diagnoses are entitled to the assistance of a test facilitator, whose role is generally limited to reading the test aloud. However, the test content remains the same for all students, regardless of their individual learning profiles.

As long as the Brazilian education system continues to base its evaluations on these exclusionary, quantitatively driven models, meaningful transformation of teaching practices will remain a significant challenge.

Furthermore, it becomes evident that, despite the teacher-researcher's knowledge of inclusive pedagogical practices, she still reproduces classroom routines that overlook student diversity and individual learning characteristics. This is aligned with what Libâneo (2015) terms "homogeneous teaching" where all students are expected to line up and copy the heading in their notebooks without questioning the pedagogical purpose behind the task, as if all learners acquired knowledge in the same way and at the same pace.

The teacher-researcher guides Laura in using her notebook and in writing the heading, making occasional inferences during the copying process while simultaneously observing the classroom. It is common during this activity for the teacher-researcher to walk around the student's desks to check whether they are beginning the heading in the correct place on the page, as some still require guidance on proper notebook use. In some cases, she requests improved penmanship or makes corrections in student's notebooks. However, she notices that even though Laura sits in the front desk of the third row, she writes one letter at a time, revealing insecurity in her writing. She frequently erases, looks at the board multiple times, and resumes the task; it is evident that, despite being a routine activity, she struggles to complete it.

Considering Laura's difficulties and the principles of curricular adaptation as proposed by Fonseca (2011) and Capellini (2004), it might be more effective if the teacher provided the heading in printed form or pre-written in the notebook, allowing Laura to fill in specific temporal details such

as the day of the week and the date which is one of the intended objectives of the heading activity. This would support her understanding of classroom routines and the passage of time.

A question that lingers in the teacher-researcher's mind is: What is the purpose of this activity for this particular student? (Teacher-researcher's field notes). Questions like this must be asked by educators in order to understand not only what is being taught, but also why the activity is being used, and how it contributes to the teaching and learning process, both for the individual student and for the class as a whole, as advocated by Carneiro (2012).

Brito (2006) argues that teacher education should be grounded in the notion of a reflective practitioner one who continuously reexamines their pedagogical practice. In this regard, it is suggested that a dynamic process be established to overcome the theory-practice dichotomy, integrating the educational process with social realities. Such reflection enables the teacher-researcher to critically assess her actions in order to plan and implement the necessary pedagogical interventions.

From the teacher-researcher's field notes, it is evident that Laura's interaction with others in the classroom is reserved and limited to a few peers. Upon entering the room, she quietly takes her seat, just like her classmates. Beside her sits a student who did not share the same class with Laura the previous year but is already literate and frequently assists the teacher when needed.

Most classroom activities are carried out in pairs or small groups, with pairs being the most consistent arrangement. Observing student's performance in these collaborative tasks, the teacher-researcher rotates pairings periodically, forming productive groupings with the intention of enabling peer support.

In the classroom, Laura interacts frequently with certain classmates, particularly those seated near her. During recess, she eats her snack and then plays always with the same peers (Teacher-researcher's field notes). Upon reviewing her field notes, the teacher-researcher realizes

that she has neglected to rotate Laura's groupings, largely due to Laura's strong affinity with certain classmates. This results in reinforcing a kind of "exclusivity," limiting opportunities for interaction with other students, whether during reading activities or recreational moments outside the classroom. Such peer exchanges are particularly important for Laura and other children with intellectual disabilities, as many experience challenges with communication and socialization.

The practice of group and pair rotation during learning activities is a valuable instructional strategy, as it promotes idea-sharing and mutual assistance among students. However, consistently pairing Laura with the same classmates even when based on affinity can unintentionally highlight her differences and reinforce the notion that she requires constant, specific support. This may further hinder her development of adaptive behavior, a common challenge among individuals with intellectual disabilities but one that must be addressed pedagogically. Opportunities such as group rotation could support not only Laura's learning but also her socialization, expansion of her repertoire of social and communicative skills, and overall classroom inclusion.

It is noteworthy that during the week, Laura leaves the regular classroom three times, for approximately one and a half hours each time, to attend the Multifunctional Resource Room with the specialized teacher for Specialized Educational Assistance (SEA). This service was created to provide support conditions that enable students with disabilities (IEPs) to access the curriculum. According to Resolution No. 4, dated October 2, 2009, the purpose of the SEA is to: "Art. 2 […] complement or supplement the student's education by providing services, accessibility resources, and strategies that eliminate barriers to their full participation in society and the development of their learning" (Brazil, 2009).

It is important that Laura receives SEA support, as she needs to develop skills that will contribute to her teaching and learning process such as perception, memory, concentration, among others. However, removing her

from the regular classroom to attend these sessions prevents her from participating in the activities being carried out with her peers at that time. This not only contradicts legal guidelines which recommend that SEA take place outside regular class hours, but also constitutes a violation of her right to learn the curricular content.

Furthermore, it is worth highlighting that collaborative teaching is not effectively implemented in practice. That is, the researcher-teacher and the Special Education teacher are unable to work in a coordinated manner, exchange information about Laura's learning process, or jointly plan and execute activities and resources tailored to her specific learning needs. This lack of collaboration is largely due to the organization of services within the school and the necessity of conducting SEA during class time, as Laura's grandmother is unable to bring her during the off-school hours. These circumstances hinder effective collaboration.

It is also important to note the high number of students in the classroom, and that at no point does the researcher-teacher receive support from a teaching assistant or itinerant teacher. In other words, the work is carried out in isolation, which poses an additional challenge to inclusive education. This solitary teaching practice, lacking support and resources, prevents the teacher from delivering high-quality instruction. Such a situation is common in many schools, as discussed by Rodrigues (2021) and Capellini & Mendes (2007), and contributes to the ongoing challenge of making inclusive education a reality.

For school inclusion to be effectively implemented, it is essential to establish effective public policies that support teaching and learning practices, so that inclusion does not remain merely theoretical (Baptista, 2011) or occur under precarious conditions.

The school where this research was conducted has a Multifunctional Resource Room and a Special Education teacher. However, IEPs students receive support during class hours due to their absence in the off-school hours. For several years, the school adhered to what is prescribed by legislation;

however, growing demands for qualitative results led the school to reorganize its structure, allowing students to attend both the regular classroom and the Multifunctional Resource Room during the same school shift.

What this means is, although the teachers are familiar with the concept of collaborative teaching, it is not effectively implemented in practice. This is a common reality in many schools, which still need to invest in fostering productive partnerships between the regular classroom teacher and the Special Education teacher (Fonseca, 2011; Capellini, 2004), with the aim of promoting student's academic success. Achieving this goal requires not only the organization of the school's structure and functioning but also coordination with families, who must understand the importance of Special Education for the advancement of inclusive education.

Given the above, it becomes clear that both the regular classroom teacher and the Special Education teacher are undergoing a process of re-signifying their professional training and practice in order to meet new professional demands. This perspective aligns with the views of Jesus, Baptista, and Caiado (2013), Baptista (2011), and Burkle (2010), who argue that the Multifunctional Resource Room can act as an agent of transformation, both of the school itself and of traditional pedagogical practices towards an inclusive model, provided that collaborative work between teachers is established.

The articulation between the regular classroom and the SEA is essential to ensure effective educational practices capable of supporting the academic development of students with disabilities. It is therefore crucial not to lose sight of the broader perspective: that IEPs students belong to the school as a whole. Consequently, the responsibility for their assessment and support lies with all educators—not solely with the Special Education teacher (Rodrigues, 2021; Carneiro, 2012).

The concept of an inclusive school is grounded in the recognition of human differences and in an approach to learning that focuses on student's potential, rather than on the imposition of predetermined pedagogical rituals

that ultimately reinforce social inequalities and deny diversity, as explained by Rodrigues (2021) and others. From this standpoint, schools must respond to student's specific learning needs, considering the complexity and heterogeneity of learning styles and paces. As Libâneo (2015) emphasizes, it is not feasible to implement homogeneous practices within a diverse student body. What is required is a new organizational structure one that includes flexible curricula, effective theoretical-methodological strategies, adequate resources, and strong partnerships with the community.

It is therefore argued that a school open to diversity is, by extension, a school open to inclusion.

The researcher-teacher emphasizes that evaluating one's own teaching practice is a challenging task. However, while watching videos of her classroom lessons, she felt as though she were looking in a mirror, an experience that enabled deep reflection on both the successes and mistakes made during the lessons. This is one of the key contributions of research of this nature: it enables teachers to engage in self-reflection while also inspiring other professionals to articulate the logic of knowledge to be taught, the logic of learning processes, and the logic of the relationship between sociocultural practices and teaching, as advocated by Libâneo (2015).

For the organization of this text, two activities were selected: one from Mathematics and one from Portuguese Language classes. Both were conducted, recorded, analyzed, and described by the researcher-teacher.

In the Mathematics lesson, which focused on geometry, the teacher had planned to use instructional resources that would help Laura understand geometric shapes and their practical applications. However, upon reviewing the lesson recordings, several issues and errors were noted, particularly the excessive number of resources used during the class. The lesson incorporated cutting, gluing, visual aids, and solid geometric blocks. Upon reflection, the teacher observed that there was a greater focus on the variety of materials than on adapting the written task that Laura was expected to complete.

This highlights the importance of consistently adapting both instructional activities and teaching practices. Activities must be thoughtfully planned, implemented, and evaluated, as this is the only way teachers can assess whether an adaptation was effective or not. Such assessment then informs the development of new strategies and resources that better support student's learning processes (Fonseca, 2011).

In the same Mathematics lesson, the teacher also realized that when grouping students, she consistently formed groups with the same members. As a result, Laura was always placed with the same peers. While this arrangement supported her sense of familiarity and connection, it also limited her opportunities to interact with other classmates. Social interaction and the development of interpersonal skills are particularly important for students with intellectual disabilities. Therefore, group activities could serve not only as a means of teaching content, but also as opportunities to foster social skills contributing to the student's overall development and supporting her continued engagement with school. This aligns with current legislation, particularly the Brazilian Inclusion Law of 2015, which establishes the need for: "improving educational systems in order to ensure conditions of access, permanence, participation, and learning, through the provision of accessibility services and resources that eliminate barriers and promote full inclusion" (Brazil, 2015, n.p.).

Still within the Mathematics lesson, when asking the students to cut out a Tangram, the teacher notes that she gave the same instruction to the entire class. The student with intellectual disability initially followed the instructions correctly, but as the activity progressed, she stopped cutting along the marked lines on the paper. At this point, the researcher-teacher began to intervene sitting beside her, providing verbal guidance, physically guiding her hand at times, and assisting her in completing the task.

It is worth highlighting how critical it is to maintain a vigilant and attentive approach toward IEPs students throughout the lesson. Upon noticing the student's difficulty, the researcher-teacher immediately

adjusted her practice: she offered a model, provided one-on-one support, and scaffolded the activity so the student could finish the task successfully. This serves as a concrete example of how instructional practices can and should be adapted to the individual needs of students in order to support their learning processes. In the case of students with intellectual disabilities, attentional and perceptual challenges are common; thus, without close observation, consistent monitoring, and timely intervention, the student may not have completed the task or might have done so incorrectly reinforcing stigmatizing assumptions that such students are incapable of learning or performing academic tasks.

The researcher-teacher notes that, in some moments, she tended to anticipate situations and act preemptively but only became aware of this tendency upon reviewing her recorded teaching practice. This reflection on her own actions and the overall flow of the lesson proved to be fundamental for her professional development. Oliveira, Machado, and Capellini (2014) emphasize the importance of teachers critically reflecting on what they teach and how they teach.

To illustrate the value of reviewing one's own teaching, the researcher points out that because the student with intellectual disability was the focus of the study, her attention was often disproportionately directed toward this student. As a result, and without realizing it, she unintentionally excluded the rest of the class. This is a critical observation, as it reinforces the need for teachers to develop practices that address the specific needs of individual students while also maintaining an inclusive approach that engages the entire classroom, but also of the whole class and this is one of the challenges of teaching from an inclusive perspective, also highlighted by Marin (2012) and Mantoan (2001) when discussing the subject.

In the Portuguese Language lesson, the opposite situation occurred: unlike the Mathematics lesson, where multiple resources were used, this class involved very few. During the lesson, the researcher-teacher read the fable "The Ant and the Grasshopper aloud". However, this content could have

been explored using additional modalities, such as audio or video. When asking students to follow the text with their fingers during the reading activity, it became evident that Laura was not engaging with the task meaningfully, she appeared disconnected and distracted. This required the teacher to intervene, holding Laura's hand and guiding her to read in a slower, more deliberate manner, placing her finger on each word. By the third reading, the teacher noticed that Laura was able to follow along using the previously modeled behavior. This moment clearly demonstrated the significance and impact of teacher mediation in supporting student engagement and learning.

Upon reviewing the video, it also becomes evident how the teacher's own anxiety regarding the student's development in reading and writing led to a premature anticipation of errors. When asking Laura to write the word cigarra (cicada) using a moveable alphabet, she initially wrote SIGARA. In response, the researcher-teacher intervened quickly, asking whether the word was correct and suggesting it might be spelled with a "C" in effect, handing her the letter without giving the student the time or opportunity to think about the spelling on her own.

This situation illustrates that, although the teaching practice was inclusive, demonstrating that it is indeed possible to provide learning opportunities without neglecting curricular content, as supported by Marin (2012), Fonseca (2011), and Capellini (2004) it also reveals the challenges in maintaining a balance between support and autonomy. The objective of the lesson was text production, and the student with intellectual disability did, in fact, engage in this task by writing words, short sentences, and texts with the aid of images. She met the lesson's objectives, albeit with adapted tools, such as the moveable alphabet and teacher guidance. These are examples of feasible activity adaptations that can and should be incorporated into everyday classroom practice.

Although the activity positively contributed to the student's literacy development, reflection on the recorded practice reveals that

anticipating errors rather than allowing the student to make and reflect on them may hinder the development of cognitive reasoning and independent thinking. In other words, it does not align with a pedagogical approach aimed at forming critical and participatory learners (Capellini; Mendes, 2007). Furthermore, the researcher-teacher realized that while she was working individually with Laura, she had her back turned to the rest of the class, who were also engaged in the same activity. This reveals a critical paradox: in the process of including the student with intellectual disability, the other students were momentarily excluded, as the teacher's full attention was focused solely on Laura.

These are aspects that might have gone unnoticed if not for the reflective process prompted by the research. Yet, they are crucial for ensuring both the meaningful inclusion and continued academic engagement of students with intellectual disabilities, and for safeguarding the right of all students to learn together, as guaranteed by inclusive education policies. Moreover, such reflection is central to the development of a critically aware and responsive teaching practice.

Final Considerations

When discussing school inclusion, it is essential to understand it from a Human Rights perspective, recognizing the diversity of students without conditioning their rights on their differences. Therefore, it is crucial to implement public policies that organize and support education as a right for all people. As mentioned throughout this text, there is legislation in place that establishes guidelines for making schools inclusive, encouraging schools to reorganize themselves in order to meet the specific needs of students, whether they have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or not. The goal is not merely to ensure access through enrollment, but to guarantee that students remain in school, progress through grade levels, and effectively learn an ongoing challenge in today's educational landscape.

To address this challenge, it is urgent that public policies be effectively implemented in schools and fully understood by teachers, who must reflect upon and adapt their teaching practices in light of the diversity present in their classrooms.

Teacher education is understood as one of the key elements for adapting school practices toward an inclusive approach. However, it is also considered essential that teachers: be open to reexamining their teaching practices, acknowledging education as a right for all, including students with SEND; reflect on the implementation of inclusion within the specific context of their school; master the required curriculum content, while also being willing to adapt their teaching methods; understand that students learn at different paces and in different ways; recognize their own errors and adjust their practices accordingly; identify student's varying learning rhythms and allocate time to devise strategies that address both individual and group needs; evaluate the effectiveness of planned adaptations and reorganize their teaching in response to student's learning processes; and provide stimuli that foster the development of skills, while being careful not to act on student's behalf or anticipate their needs allowing them, despite difficulties, to progress, learn, and experience the educational process.

Throughout this text, it has been demonstrated how the ability to reflect on one's own teaching practice particularly in response to the learning needs of a student with intellectual disability included in a mainstream classroom can lead teachers to a deeper awareness of their professional role. This reflection prompts them to question their pedagogical choices, attitudes, and behaviors, and to consider how to make their teaching more responsive not only to the needs of the student with intellectual disability but also to those of the entire class. In this sense, reflection on teaching practice is considered an effective strategy for advancing school inclusion. It is therefore recommended that further studies and research on this topic be conducted and published, in order to promote teacher reflection as a viable path toward realizing education as a right for all.

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