

106 - CONCERNS IN CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: A JOURNEY FROM THE VALUATION OF CULTURES OF CHILDHOOD.

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Agência Financiadora: Programa Núcleo de Ensino da UNESP

Apoio Financeiro: FUNDUNESP - Fundação para o Desenvolvimento da UNESP

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1. INTRODUCTION

Researchers and professionals who work in Childhood Education live a process of caring and are in search of new paradigms that can correspond to the requirements of current historical context. Conceptions of children as “tabula rasa” and “miniature adult” and propaedeutics education, anticipatory or welfare no longer meet the expectations of children, families and society, in general. Thus, the scientific production has been seeking, among other things, answer questions related to the concepts of childhood and education; to the aims of education, curriculum organization, methods, relationships, spaces and pedagogical materials, integration between family and school that can guide the educational practices in this educational modality. Such responses incorporated into practice can help in the promotion of a “quality childhood education” and a pedagogical job that respects children in their uniqueness. However, in Brazil's reality, it is common to find professionals and institutions of Childhood Education carrying out practices without a necessary theoretical basis and thus not providing adequate conditions for human development of children.

In this perspective, this work portrays the research and intervention Project titled: “The construction of a proposal of Childhood Education: based on respect for the cultures of childhood”, funded by the Center Program for teaching of UNESP and it is effective in partnership with a Municipal Education Secretariat in the Region of Presidente Prudente, Sao Paulo State. This project takes as its object of investigation and intervention the cultures of childhood as a pedagogical privileged axis in the context of Childhood Education. The theoretical framework is based mainly in pursuit of dialogue between the Historical and Cultural Theory and the Sociology of Childhood, which despite their differences, they consider the child as the protagonist in the teaching-learning procedure and culture producer. Still, both theories value interpersonal relationships, imagination and playful activities as essential to the psychological and personality formation. The inclusion of children in socio-cultural context and the opportunities to experience and exercise of various human capabilities favor the development of thought, memory, attention, concentration, imagination, motor skills, the will dominion, and sociability, and the ethical dimension of personality development.

2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

It is noticed that the contributions of the Sociology of Childhood have outlined a better understanding about the situations of children in the historical process, contributing in particular, in unveiling the spaces they occupy and the treatment they receive in different social contexts. Despite advances in scientific production and propagated overcoming of archaic conceptions of education, the pedagogical practices in formal educational institutions, still, in general, supported by the negativity, that is what is lacking for child, considering the child as a promise, a becoming. In this context, it is attributed for child a peripheral role as a consumer and reproducer of culture and the guiding expectation is that she achieves the status of adult.

Regarding the education system, Angotti (2002, p. 170) states that he seems to be completely turned to the adaptation of children at various levels of education, preparing them and teaching them to survive, to behave, socialize and to take place within ideal standards dictated by the institution and society. Paraphrasing, Sarmiento (2004), we would say that the current educational context emphasizes the weight of society on the shoulders of the child and underplay the “lightness of renewal” and the new directions that she may give to the world and thus reveal new possibilities and meanings.

The socialization of children is not a question of adaptation or internalization, but a process of appropriation, of innovation and reproduction. Being interested by the point of view of children, by the issues they face, by the meanings they attribute, individually and collectively, to the world that surrounds them, one discovers how it contributes to the production and transformation of pairs culture groups, as well as the adult culture (MONTANDON apud CORSARO; MILLER, 1992).

To overcome the traditional views and to value the child in their specific needs is not an easy task, because these assumptions require from educators, who work in Childhood Education, an updated scientific background and a greater degree of accountability, human and political commitment by the process of forming children. In this perspective, the “look” of the educator may reflect, among other things, the imagination, the pairs cultures, the playfulness and the socio-cultural context of child.

The game, for example, is one way in which the child falls within her socio-cultural context, coping and seeking meaning in material and symbolic production in her different spheres. When educators recognize this activity as a way of valuing childhood, emerges from the possibility of seeking answers to their concerns and solutions to their problems as they relate to the theme. The sensitivity, thus, of making the reading of her own practice, from the scientific literature and understanding the importance of her social role, can lead the evaluation of concepts and behaviors, making way for the offer of a higher quality of education and coherent with children possibilities.

According to Moss (apud MACHADO 2002, p. 242), children must be seen as citizens with rights “and as co-constructors of knowledge, identity and culture”. For this purpose, it requires overcoming the conception of the incapable child, dependent, and the prevalence of a view of strong child, competent, intelligent and a “powerful pedagogue, capable of producing interesting and challenging theories”. In this perspective, children are conceived as social actors within a group with a differentiated identity from adults cultures. Children have autonomous ways of relating and, therefore, they find meaning and satisfaction in playfulness, in the imaginary world, in relations with pairs and in their own way of dealing with time. This assertion, however, does not ignore the importance of the socio-cultural context and adult education as essential for child's human formation, but it also places the child as the protagonist and builder of culture. In the process, they “add new elements and their different attitudes and cultures” (SARMENTO, 2004, p. 29).

The Childhood Education institutions, according to the author, may include experiences based on respect for children and their cultures, based on the structured lines of the culture of childhood that are interactivity, playfulness, fantasy of real and repetition. About playfulness, the author, stresses that the play is not exclusivity of children, adults also play, however, for children

play is serious business, one of the most significant social activities. Thus, both the games and toys, give the child freedom of situations, cultural production and creativity that are necessary for their development (SARMENTO, 2004, p. 23-25).

Vygotsky (1991, p.107), in turn, highlights "that with the toy the child creates an imaginary situation" that aids in the ability to give meaning to the natural and social world. In this direction, a broomstick turns into a horse, a stick into a magic wand that helps the child to save the princess who is trapped in the tower.

All these transposition situations, also, are included and depict other operated axis by Sarmento (2004, p. 26), the fantasy of real. Supported on that axis, according to the author, the child transfers situations, people, objects or events from real life to the imaginary world. It is through the fantasy world, of pretend, that the child assigns meaning to things and build their worldview. It is, therefore, a way of understanding and resilience when confronted with unwanted, painful, experienced in everyday life.

Interactivity, another axis of cultures of childhood, according to Sarmento (2004, p. 23-24), emphasizes the social dimension in the teaching-learning process. The formation of child's personality is from the influence of different social levels, especially for the family, school, community and group of friends. In this context, the interactions that children have with their peers, called pairs culture, are viewed as a special appropriation, reproduction and reinvention of the world.

The fourth axis is called reiteration, and refers to the non-linearity of child's time, because it is not supported in the adult logic. The child's time may be reproduced, duplicated, and it is full of rituals. According to Sarmento (2004, p. 28) the child's time is "continuously reinvested in new possibilities, a time without measure, which can always be restarted and repeated".

According, therefore, to the Sociology of Childhood, the child must be respected in their uniqueness, so Childhood Education institutions need, among other things, offer and extend the playful culture, respect the child's imaginative process, value their time and interactions, to achieve a quality and meaningful education. Accordingly, the National Curriculum Guide for Childhood Education (BRAZIL, 2009b, p. 07) emphasize that the relations between partners influence the development of the child, thus the motricity, language, thought, affection and sociability are integrated aspects and develop from the interactions that, from birth, the child establishes with different partners.

From this perspective, to think in a integral development of children, we must also consider the diversity of activities. According to the Historical Cultural Theory some activities, in particular, protrude and are referred to as "main activity". Leontiev (apud VYGOTSKY, 1988, p.122) points out that at each stage of child development, in view of the historical and social determinations, appears in the child some major activities in connection with which the most important changes occur in the psychological development and the child's personality and within which develop processes that pave the way for a child's transition to a new and higher level of development. The joke, according to Lima (2008), is considered as main activity, from 3 to 6 years old, and considering their impact on the development of human faculties of thought, memory, imagination, concentration, attention, language, will dominion and motor skills, must compose the curriculum of Childhood Education.

From the structural axis of the child's cultures and play as major activity in preschool, it is necessary to consider mediations. How have they been designed in everyday Kindergarten? Do educators understand and assume a key role in guiding children?

This way, this research also seeks to clarify these issues through interventions, using child's cultures as pedagogical resources in Kindergarten, along with teachers from these classes of partner institutions, which monitor and participate in activities carried out by participants.

The project is outlined also in documents that refer to Childhood Education in the brazilian education, especially the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education, 1996 (LDB), The National Curriculum Reference for Childhood Education of 1998 and the Curricular National Directives for the Childhood Education of 2009.

3. OBJECTIVES

The Center Program for Teaching of UNESP, with 23 years of existence, provides, among other purposes: to encourage the teaching and research in disciplinary or interdisciplinary units in Kindergartens, Elementary and Secondary Public School System of the State of Sao Paulo and in this perspective, this research Project and intervention, linked to the Program assumes the following objectives:

- Contribute in building quality educational proposals that value and respect children and their specific needs and cultures;
- Awareness teachers and school staff members of the importance of social interactions, fantasy of real and playful activities to promote the integral development of child;
- To produce educational materials to guide and assist in educational practice, extending the perspective of mediation, not restricted only to the teacher;
- Contribute in the training of students, the project participants, enabling a close relationship between the scientific literature on the topic and the challenges of educational reality;
- To cooperate in the continuing education of teachers of Childhood Education.

4. METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for the development of this research is action research, which consists, according to Barbier (2004), on the close relationship between theory and practice, and also the collective performance of those involved. Not only are researchers who have the theoretical framework, establish the objectives and methodologies, but all participants in the process seek possible solutions to the problems, evaluating data, promoting the transformation of reality and achieving the collective production knowledge. This approach requires the participation of the majority, in all dimensions: the definition of the problems and needs, the questions and study activities, the methodology and effective participation in interventions.

The project has a multidisciplinary team comprising two doctors teachers, students of Pedagogy Courses, Architecture and Urbanism and Physical Education and work in partnership with professionals from a municipal education secretariat in the Region of Presidente Prudente, SP. This network conducts integral and partial treatment, today, for approximately 1000 children. Weekly activities are held in schools with children, with increased participation of teachers from partner institutions and university students. For this, the university team does meetings for study, planning and evaluation once a week and participates and biweekly participate of the Body Culture Research Group: Knowledge and Practices, aiming at the theoretical-methodological strengthening. Also, take place monthly seminars that are attended by the university staff members and teachers of the Municipal Education and Culture Secretariat of Alvares Machado. In these meetings, are realized the evaluation of the project, the expansion of the theoretical support and are discussed adjustments and actions for achieving the goals, including the evaluations and reflections from the data collected in the investigation.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Facing what was done, we emphasize that the investigation is in its second year, and considering the methodology used, results are achieved in the longer term. However, we are aware, despite of the complexity of the project, the path chosen is quite promising to collaborate in advancing the quality of education offered to children and to seek a close relationship between the scientific literature on the subject and educational practice. Besides the promise of changing the reality studied, the project aims to collaborate in the production of knowledge about the subject.

In the first half of 2010, the project served two institutions from Kindergarten of the partner city, which are considered in this paper as institution A and institution B. Therefore, it was possible to analyze institution A in a significant expansion of children's playful culture, whereas the teachers said they came to play during breaks, playful activities experienced in the situations of the project intervention. Autonomously, they organize themselves and share experiences without the need for intervention and supervision of adults. Autonomy is an important achievement in the process of educating children, it allows a critical reflection on their attitudes and assist in solving problems, especially those institutions that generate are more complex situations and often different from their everyday family.

In the educational institution B, the first interventions were not counted with the participation of all children because some refused to participate in the proposed activities and can be seen the rejection for the new, the constant crying and the fear expressed by them. Subsequently, these reactions were overcome, interactions were improved and participation became general. The teachers played a key role in children's attitudes, it was noted that the greater the involvement, companionship and encouragement of the teacher, the best was the group's performance. Children were calmer, less anxious and participatory. These factors helped to raise awareness of the teachers, about the importance of their mediation for the development of autonomy, and playful habit for the expansion of the child's culture, particularly in preschool age. The study revealed that playful activity is the result of social learning and even with its aesthetic dimension, the educator is in charge of understand its functionality within the educational context.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this perspective, this project has taken on the challenges of educational practice and through hard work, patient and committed to the enhancement of childhood and the quality of Childhood Education, has problematized historical and crystallized conceptions of education and childhood that guide the educational practice of teachers and institutions of Childhood Education in the Brazilian reality. Despite the setbacks and the gradual progress can not fail in insisting and finding ways to gains this educational modality, considering the impact of the results in the formation of children process in other forms of Basic Education. The promulgation of the national curriculum guidelines for Childhood Education (BRAZIL, 2009b), in line with the scientific literature on the subject, creating prospects for overcoming the discourses and practices, helped by the spontaneism, traditionalism and technicality that resist extensive to the use of new scientific guidelines. Finally, in the current historical context predominate values by competition and production that are reproduced within educational institutions, therefore, think the playfulness, imagination, pairs culture and the relativization of time, becomes a challenging proposition and difficult to convince because the results and their effects are less visible and long term.

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CONCERNS IN CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: A JOURNEY FROM THE VALUATION OF CULTURES OF CHILDHOOD.

ABSTRACT

Childhood Education Professionals live a context of caring and have made efforts to analyze and collaborate on improving the quality of Childhood Education in the Brazilian reality. This research project, funded by the Center Program for Teaching of UNESP, also assumes the goal of advancing the quality of Childhood Education and it is the result of a partnership between the FCT/UNESP of Presidente Prudente and a City Department of Education of President Prudente Region, SP. It is supported by the Historical and Cultural Theory and Sociology of Childhood, which despite their differences, consider child as protagonist in the teaching-learning procedure and culture producer. Still, both value interpersonal relationships, imagination and playful activities as essential to the psychological makeup and personality of the child. However, it turns out that the reality is that educational practices do not consider these assumptions and the child ends up suffering the consequences of this discrepancy between theory and practice. Due to this complex task of reality transformation, the methodology that guides the research is action-research. In this perspective, we seek to involve teachers of Childhood Education, in all dimensions: the definition of the problem, the theoretical expertise, in data collection and results evaluation. Periodically, the participants from both the university and partner institutions, carry out joint interventions with the children and participate in seminars, seeking to achieve the objectives of the investigation. The results show the difficulty in advancing in educational reality, considering the prevalence of

spontaneist, traditional and technicism conceptions of education. However, when there is membership of the teacher and he assumes the role of mediator, children gradually overcome their fears and begin to compose another formation context supported in their cultures and this change reflects positively on the autonomy and on the process of formation and child development.

KEYWORDS: Childhood, Education and Formation.

PRÉOCCUPATIONS EN MATIÈRE D'ÉDUCATION DES PETITS ENFANTS: UN PARCOURS A PARTIR DE LA VALORISATION DES CULTURES DE L'ENFANCE.

RÉSUMÉ

Professionnels de l'éducation de la petite enfance vivent un contexte de PRÉOCCUPATIONS et ont fait des efforts pour analyser et de collaborer à l'amélioration de la qualité de l'éducation de la petite enfance dans la réalité brésilienne. Ce projet de recherche, financé par le Centre d'enseignement, UNESP, suppose également l'objectif de faire progresser la qualité de l'éducation de la petite enfance et est le résultat d'un partenariat entre le FCT / UNESP, Presidente Prudente et d'un service municipal de l'éducation de la Région Président Prudente, SP. Il est soutenu par la théorie historique-culturelle et la sociologie de l'enfance, qui, malgré leurs différences, considèrent l'enfant comme le protagoniste d'enseignement-apprentissage et producteur de la culture. Aussi, elles considèrent à la fois la valeur des relations interpersonnelles, l'imagination et des activités ludiques comme indispensables à la formation de santé mentale et la personnalité de l'enfant. Cependant, il s'avère que dans la réalité, c'est que les pratiques éducatives ne considèrent pas ces hypothèses et l'enfant finit par subir les conséquences de cet écart entre la théorie et la pratique. En raison de cette tâche complexe de transformation de la réalité, la méthodologie qui guide la recherche est la recherche-action. Dans cette perspective, nous cherchons à impliquer les enseignants de l'éducation de la petite enfance, dans toutes ses dimensions: la définition du problème, l'expertise théorique dans la collecte de données et l'évaluation des résultats. Périodiquement, les participants à la fois les institutions universitaires et de partenaires, mènent des opérations conjointes avec les enfants et participent à des séminaires, en cherchant à atteindre les objectifs de l'enquête. Les résultats montrent la difficulté à faire progresser la réalité éducative, compte tenu de la prévalence des conceptions et des techniques traditionnelles d'enseignement. Cependant, quand il y a l'adésion du professeur et il assume le rôle de médiateur, les enfants progressivement surmontent leurs peurs et commencent à composer un autre contexte de formation pris en charge dans leurs cultures et ce changement se reflète positivement sur l'autonomie et le processus de formation et de développement de l'enfant.

MOTS-CLÉS: enfance, éducation et formation.

PREOCCUPACIÓN EN LA EDUCACIÓN DE LA PRIMERA INFANCIA: UN PERCURSO DE LA VALORACIÓN DE LAS CULTURAS DE LA INFANCIA.

RESUMEN

Primera Infancia Profesionales de la educación de la Primera Infancia viv en un contexto de PREOCCUPACIÓN y han hecho esfuerzos para analizar y colaborar en la mejora de la calidad de la educación infantil en la realidad brasileña. Este proyecto de investigación, financiado por el Centro de Enseñanza, UNESP, también asume el objetivo de avanzar en la calidad de la educación infantil y es el resultado de una asociación entre la FCT / UNESP, Presidente Prudente y un Departamento de Educación de la Ciudad de la Región de Presidente Prudente, SP. Con el apoyo de la Teoría Histórica-Cultural y de la Sociología la Infancia, que a pesar de sus diferencias, consideran al niño como protagonista de enseñanza-aprendizaje y productor de la cultura: las dos valoran las relaciones interpersonales, las actividades de la imaginación y el juego como algo esencial a la estructura psicológica y la personalidad del niño. Sin embargo, resulta que en realidad es que las prácticas educativas no tienen en cuenta estas premisas y el niño termina sufriendo las consecuencias de esta discrepancia entre la teoría y la práctica. Debido a esta compleja tarea de transformar la realidad, la metodología que guía la investigación es la investigación-acción. En esta perspectiva, se busca involucrar a los profesores de educación infantil, en todas sus dimensiones: la definición del problema, los conocimientos teóricos en la recopilación y evaluación de los resultados. Periódicamente, los participantes tanto de las instituciones universitarias y socias, llevan a cabo operaciones conjuntas con los niños y participan en seminarios, para alcanzar los objetivos de la investigación. Los resultados muestran la dificultad en el avance de la realidad educativa, teniendo en cuenta la prevalencia de las concepciones y las técnicas tradicionales de enseñanza. Sin embargo, cuando hay adhesión de las profesoras y ellas asumen el papel de mediador, los niños poco a poco superan sus miedos y empiezan a componer otro contexto, apoyados en la capacitación de sus culturas y este cambio se refleja positivamente en la autonomía y el proceso de formación y desarrollo del niño.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Infancia, educación y formación.

INQUIETAÇÕES NA EDUCAÇÃO INFANTIL: UM PERCURSO A PARTIR DA VALORIZAÇÃO DAS CULTURAS DA INFÂNCIA.

RESUMO

Profissionais da Educação Infantil vivem um contexto de inquietação e têm despendido esforços para analisar e colaborar na melhoria da qualidade da Educação Infantil na realidade brasileira. Este projeto de pesquisa, financiado pelo Programa do Núcleo de Ensino da UNESP, assume também essa meta de avanço na qualidade da Educação Infantil e é resultante de uma parceria entre a FCT/UNESP de Presidente Prudente e uma Secretaria Municipal de Educação da Região de Presidente Prudente, SP. Tem como suporte a Teoria Histórico Cultural e a Sociologia da Infância, que apesar de suas divergências, consideram a criança como protagonista no processo de ensino-aprendizagem e produtora de cultura. Ainda, ambas valorizam as relações interpessoais, a imaginação e as atividades lúdicas como indispensáveis para a formação psíquica e da personalidade da criança. Todavia, o que se constata na realidade é que práticas educativas não consideram esses pressupostos e a criança acaba sofrendo as consequências dessa discrepância entre teoria e prática. Em função dessa complexa tarefa de transformação da realidade, a metodologia que orienta a investigação é a pesquisa-ação. Nesta perspectiva, busca-se envolver professores da Educação Infantil, em todas as dimensões: na definição da problemática, no aprofundamento teórico, na coleta dos dados e na avaliação dos resultados. Periodicamente os participantes, tanto da universidade como das instituições parceiras, realizam intervenções conjuntas junto às crianças e participam de seminários, buscando concretizar os objetivos da investigação. Os resultados revelam a dificuldade de se promover avanços na realidade educacional, considerando a prevalência de concepções espontaneístas, tradicionais e tecnicistas de educação. Todavia, quando ocorre a adesão do professor e este assume o papel de mediador, as crianças, aos poucos, superam seus receios e passam a compor outro contexto de formação amparado nas suas culturas e esta mudança repercute positivamente na autonomia e no processo de formação e desenvolvimento infantil.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Infância, Educação, Formação.