

Emotions and teaching practices in inclusive education: experiences in Brazilian public schools

Emoções e práticas na docência inclusiva: vivências em escolas públicas
brasileiras

Emociones y prácticas en la enseñanza inclusiva: experiencias en escuelas
públicas brasileñas

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Abstract

This article is an integrative synthesis of two studies conducted with teachers of inclusive classes in Brazil and discusses the reality of inclusive teaching in contemporary Brazilian schools. The goal is to foster reflection about emotions and teaching practices in inclusive contexts based on Vygotsky's Cultural-Historical Psychology. The results reveal that the practices express the teacher's meanings and emotions to the inclusive process, affecting the teaching-learning processes. We conclude that the implementation of inclusive systems implies understanding the singularities of each real subject that is part of the school. Therefore, it is essential to recognize emotions and rethink practices, building new paths that promote and ensure real inclusion.

Keywords: Inclusive Education; Teaching Practices; Cultural-Historical Psychology; Vygotsky.

Resumo

Este artigo é uma síntese integrativa de dois estudos realizados com professores de classes inclusivas no Brasil e discute a realidade do ensino inclusivo nas escolas brasileiras contemporâneas. O objetivo é fomentar a reflexão sobre emoções e práticas de ensino em contextos inclusivos com base na Psicologia Histórico-Cultural de Vygotsky. Os resultados revelam que as práticas expressam os significados e emoções do professor para o processo inclusivo, afetando os processos de ensino-aprendizagem. Concluímos que a implementação de sistemas inclusivos implica compreender as singularidades de cada sujeito real que faz parte da escola. Portanto, é fundamental reconhecer as emoções e repensar as práticas, construindo novos caminhos que promovam e assegurem a real inclusão.

Palavras-chave: inclusão escolar; professores; práticas; Psicologia Histórico-Cultural; Vygotski.

Resumen

Este artículo es una síntesis integradora de dos estudios realizados con profesores de clases inclusivas en Brasil y discute la realidad de la enseñanza inclusiva en las escuelas brasileñas contemporáneas. El objetivo es fomentar la reflexión sobre las emociones y las prácticas docentes en contextos inclusivos a partir de la Psicología Histórico-Cultural de Vygotsky. Los resultados revelan que las prácticas expresan significados y emociones del Docente al proceso inclusivo, incidiendo en los procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje. Concluimos que la implementación de sistemas inclusivos implica comprender las singularidades de cada sujeto real que forma parte de la escuela. Por eso, es fundamental reconocer las

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emociones y repensar las prácticas, construyendo nuevos caminos que promuevan y aseguren una inclusión real.

Palabras clave: inclusión escolar; maestros; prácticas; Psicología Histórico-Cultural; Vygotsky.

Introduction

The consolidation of inclusive school systems is a challenge imposed on contemporary education, especially in the Brazilian scenario. The territorial dimension of Brazil added to the country's extreme economic inequality poses additional challenges. Equality ensured by law is not enough to transform realities because equity, as a central principle of social, digital, and school inclusion, is still perceived as a measure of FAVOURING certain groups, not as a practical device of historical reparation of rights (VALLE; CONNOR, 2019). Such distorted perception hinders the creation and implementation of inclusive strategies (MENDES; SANTIAGO; ANTUNES, 2018). Thus, although legal provisions already ensure the right of students with special educational needs⁴, the reality of most Brazilian schools still does not guarantee, beyond access, the permanence and success of learning for these - and all - students.

Management policies curtail changes, impose measures, maintain the separation between regular education and Special Education and restrict the service to support intended exclusively for the target audience of Special Education, terminology adopted by the Brazilian legislation and that covers students with disabilities, developmental disorders, and high abilities (BRAZIL, 2011). Such practices, especially the student centered and grounded in specialised educational care conducted outside the regular classroom, keep implicit the conception that the special educational need is exclusively the student's and ignore the critical issue that it is the school that must change to promote conditions of access and learning for all students (AINSCOW; DYSON; WEINER, 2013; MENDES, 2019; VALLE; CONNOR, 2019). From this perspective, building inclusive school systems demands a transformation of the overall vision of the whole school, including the curriculum, assessment, methodology, teacher-student relationships, and the moments of recreation and leisure within the school. Inclusion implies, therefore, a value system that contemplates difference in its multiple socio-cultural dimensions, which include, in addition to disability, factors such as gender, ethnicity, nationality, language issues, socioeconomic level, and level of education (MITTLER, 2012).

Additionally, teacher training (both initial and in-service training) for working in inclusive contexts is still incipient; for novice teachers, especially, inclusive education has configured demands that result in overload and wear and tear on these professionals (MCKAY, 2016). Although teacher training is a primary factor for school inclusion, it is generally associated with academic and continuing education, directed towards knowledge of the particularities of students' specific educational needs, as well as the development of

⁴ The Brazilian legislation adopts the term "special educational needs" to refer to "educational needs that require, from the school, a series of resources and support of a more specialised nature, which provide the student with the means to access the curriculum" (BRAZIL, 2001, p. 33).

methodological strategies for teaching and assessment in the inclusive context (FORLIN, 2010). Thus, teacher training processes often focus on cognitive training, privileging the development of didactic-methodological content, but ignoring the emotional aspects involved in the inclusion process, essential to learning and any human relationship (FARIA; CAMARGO, 2018; FORLIN, 2010; HARGREAVES, 2000).

Faced with this alarming reality, we aim to foster reflection about emotions and teaching practices in inclusive contexts. To this end, the report of two research studies (FARIA, 2018; VENÂNCIO, 2017) conducted in the early years of the public elementary school in a capital city in southern Brazil is presented. The first study reports on a PhD research⁵ whose focus is on teaching practices in attending to diversity. The second study reports on a master's research⁶ that investigated teachers' emotions toward school inclusion. Both studies are based on the assumptions of Lev Vygotsky's Cultural-Historical Psychology and were conducted in the Postgraduate Program in Education (PPGE) of the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR), in the Brazilian city of Curitiba (PR), between 2014 and 2018.

According to the assumptions of Cultural-Historical Psychology, the research investigated practical and emotional support for the teachers that would allow a process of reflection in action, understanding human activity as a unit that expresses dialectically interrelated elements: the psychological functioning and the cultural and historical context (WERTSCH, 1995). Thus, the studies emphasize the importance of integrating emotions and practices in inclusive schools, understanding the teaching work as an emotional practice, situated in a given cultural and historical context, to enable qualitative teaching transformations that contribute to school inclusion effectiveness.

Materials and Methods

The doctoral thesis entitled *Support Groups Among Teachers and Inclusion: a reflection on the reinvention of teaching practices from the emphasis on collaborative teaching* (VENÂNCIO, 2017) had as its primary objective to investigate the action of a Teacher Support Team (TST) as a support strategy for the adequacy of teaching practice in meeting diversity. Six female teachers from the early years of a Brazilian public school participated in the research. The TST is a local formative model that provides practical and emotional support to teachers, reinforcing their bonds of belonging with other school professionals and all school community members. In the context of inclusive education, TST was proposed as a device to support teachers in school inclusion, contributing to reflection and joint construction of effectively inclusive practices.

The study used the methodology proposed by Nicolini (2013) for the analysis of teaching practices, privileging the analysis of movement on three levels: the internal zoom (which results in a thorough and in-depth description of practices), the external zoom (aiming at apprehending relationships and interconnections), and the interactive zoom (aiming at a

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situated and historical analysis of practices) (NICOLINI, 2013). The analysis contemplated the Group's learning, the mediations between the practitioners, the influence of people from outside the Group, and interrelated practices that influenced teaching. Zooming in privileged the relational dimension of teaching practices and focused on analysing the relationships between school staff, examining possible internal participation levels. Zooming out investigated the practices in their institutional dimension, analysing the impact of policies and institutionalised aspects for teaching. Finally, in interactive zooming, we analysed the data collected with the support of Cultural-Historical Psychology.

The Portuguese language version of the Index for inclusion: developing learning and participation in schools (BOOTH; AINSCOW, 2002) was used as a promoter of reflections about the effectiveness of inclusion by the teachers participating in the research. The choice of this document to support the actions of the Group in the movement of redefinition and reformulation of practices considered its theoretical-practical approach in school inclusion, aiming at strengthening the teaching team in the context of the school community.

A descriptive analysis of cases and the strategies used for curricular flexibilization was carried out and interpreted using Content Analysis (BARDIN, 2011). The investigative instruments were the questionnaire, interview, field diary, and participant observation. In the TST meetings, a working script was used to promote reflection and create practical strategies for inclusion.

The master's dissertation entitled Teacher's emotions towards school inclusion (FARIA, 2018) aimed to understand the teacher's emotions towards the inclusive education process and the student's inclusion process. The qualitative, exploratory, and interpretive study involved three teachers of early grades classes in a Brazilian public school who work with inclusion.

The research used structured and semi-structured interviews, as well as self-photography, in order to access subjective aspects through the interpretation of the records made by the participants themselves. Each teacher was invited to photograph their emotions about school inclusion. Auto-photography was used as a subject-centred research process that mediates emotions and revealed particular ways participants expressed the meanings they attributed to inclusion. Data interpretation consisted of Content Analysis (BARDIN, 2011).

Both pieces of research are aligned with the theoretical-epistemological understanding of Cultural-Historical Psychology. Moreover, following the assumptions established by Russian psychologist Lev Semenovich Vygotsky (1992; 1993; 1998), the studies advocate affective-cognitive inseparability; in other words, they propose that emotions are as important as cognitive elements in educational relationships. Thus, both studies start from the premise that the teaching work always involves, besides cognition and technique, the teacher's emotions, affecting the relationships that are established inside the school and the teaching-learning process as a whole - especially in the context of inclusive education, in which the new demands to the teaching work often constitute a physical and emotional overload to these professionals.

Results and Discussion

The doctoral research investigated the importance of a Support Group among teachers as a space for reflection on action that can both reframe the representation of differences and support, in a structured way, teaching and its emotional dimension, highlighted as an essential dimension for both teaching and learning.

We elected double-checking criteria for ascertaining the research assumptions. The first was based on the participants' stories/life histories. The second evaluated the school planning, verifying if the curricular flexibility occurred. Finally, curricular, methodological, and evaluative appropriateness was used as a practical indicator of the personalization of teaching.

By promoting the re-signification of differences and revealing that we are all unique beings with our ways of being, feeling, and doing, the discussion developed in TST approached technical aspects of teaching, especially concerning training. Such essential aspects to the experience of inclusive principles and values, more than offering access to school, are necessary to ensure conditions for permanence and learning. Although the teachers value their initial training, as well as the specializations they have attended in the search for excellence in teaching and present a positive representation of the courses offered in service, they recognize that it is in the classroom, in the realization of the practice, that they transform their ways of thinking and conducting the teaching process.

Difficulties and facilities of the inclusive process were mapped, difficulties were problematised, and the Group jointly established practical strategies. TST stressed the importance of teachers' experiences and knowledge as constant discussion and re-elaboration, unifying diverse and different ways of promoting teaching and learning.

The teachers, fictitiously identified, reported work overload since the responsibility for inclusion has generally fallen on them, the students, and their families. In this sense, for the participants, the other members of the school community - principals, educators, representatives of the education secretariat - place themselves in the background and play the role of demanding results, even if teaching conditions are often precarious. Some factors pointed out by TST participants that hinder the implementation of inclusion were: crowded classes; lack of space in small classrooms that hinder group work or different formations (circle, for example); more than one student with special educational needs per class; support professional with no defined role and no specific training in special education; fragility in the relationship between family and school; support directed exclusively to students and structured in environments outside the school, hindering access and adherence of families.

Initially, the teachers said they did not know how to work with inclusion because

[...] training in Pedagogy or other education courses does not prepare teachers to teach children with disabilities. (Mara)

The teachers defined inclusion as

[...] as political propaganda. (Beatriz)

[...] [an] impossibility in the Brazilian reality. (Rosana)

They also demonstrated anguish and concern about not learning and recurrently expressed that

[...] the failure of the student is also the failure of the teacher. (Gabriela)

In this sense, they revealed the understanding that to include was to exclusively meet the demands of children with disabilities, thus assuming, even if implicitly, the ideals of integration.

The participants' testimonies revealed uneasiness about the diagnosis of the students:

I don't need definitions regarding disability, but I need to know how to create and make clever strategies to make inclusion possible. (Elisa)

[...] a medical report does not tell us what we need to know. We would like the doctor or psychologist to explain what the medical condition implies for the child's learning. (Rebeca)

An essential issue in the teachers' testimonies concerns the need for structured support to all school community members, including teachers, families, managers, pedagogues, and other staff members, so that the values and principles of inclusion are incorporated and experienced by everyone. According to the TST participants, such inclusive values and principles should be established in consensus by the Group, collectively assumed in a co-responsible way, making it possible to share tasks and avoid overloads.

Despite the discussion about the problems of the Brazilian public school, the Group's main intention was to think about practical strategies to deal with diversity under the guidelines of the Index for inclusion (BOOTH; AINSCOW, 2002). In this sense, the TST promoted the exchange between the regular and assistant teachers and teachers with specific training in the area of Special Education. Despite the relative autonomy of the school vis-à-vis the teaching departments, we noticed that the school team has the power to transform its practices internally without hurting its unity as a network. The apparent dependence of teachers on professionals working in the field of Special Education was also problematised in the Group; the participants concluded that each teacher has different and equally important knowledge; in this process, collaboration is the key to expand repertoires and promote new responses to diversity/differences.

During the reflections promoted by the TST, the participants pointed out that the term special educational needs (SENs) has ideological modelling because it is tied to the condition of disability, when economic, cultural, and ethnic issues, among many others, represent severe disadvantages in education and demand the creation of equitable measures. Moreover, persistent learning disabilities were understood by the teachers as SENs since they demand differentiated strategies and personalised pedagogical support

plans in order for quality learning to occur and for the right to education to be effectively respected. Thus, the concept of SENs was reviewed and expanded by the Group.

The medicalization of education, which associates poor teaching and learning conditions to medical or psychological issues, was also questioned. Although TST did not disregard the importance of a health diagnosis, it problematised the growing process of diagnosing and medicating children and young people who often lack adequate stimulation in the face of school demands. This situation is worsened by the maintenance of a traditional teaching approach, even in the face of socio-cultural changes that offer new possibilities for accessing and processing information. Despite the caveat regarding the medicalization of education, the teachers defended that the support networks should have a multi-professional character and articulate actions in the educational and health fields and, ideally, in the field of social assistance - an area whose support can strengthen needy families and enable them to act on the children's schooling path. They also valued the contribution of Psychology and concluded that it is not productive or appropriate to base the pedagogical action on what the student has not yet achieved; it should, on the contrary, stimulate potentials and interests, supporting the student to develop autonomy and independence, exercising leadership in a creative, curious, and protagonist way.

In the movement of self-analysis and configuration of an inclusive professional identity promoted by TST's reflections, the teachers gave new meaning to school inclusion:

Inclusion cannot be seen only as an architectural issue, nor as a punctual action of just one person or school, because inclusion is not adaptation. Inclusion is a collective construction that involves the whole society; it starts from a human conception where everyone should be contemplated. (Rebeca)

Inclusion is a global action; everyone must be included, including teachers, managers, and family members, because if we do not know yet how and what to do, together we can think of attitudinal and practical changes and strengthen this process. (Beatriz)

The Group emphasised curricular flexibility as a promoter of practical transformations in teaching, understanding it as a fundamental dimension to the personalization of teaching that inclusion implies. Three elements were taken as practical indicators to promote flexibility and analyze inclusive teaching at the TST: the curriculum, methodologies, and assessment. By understanding the school as an ethical and political space of human formation essential to human development, the teachers revealed that they could promote changes regarding content organization since the school used to follow a quarterly curriculum, which is internally pre-defined by the teachers and organised in learning cycles. Thus, although previously selected, the content can be further selected and adapted to the profile of the students in a planning customization movement.

As for the methodologies, the TST participants affirmed that they opted for the use of active methodologies, considering the students' interests and protagonism. According to the students' profiles, they also mentioned the methodological diversification, using visual support aids, direct instructions, and peer learning, among other incentive and motivation actions to conform a positive link with the school group and learning. As for evaluation,

however, the teachers did not mention any significant changes. According to the teachers, their actions are restricted because, despite the discussions in the Group and the effort to adapt the standardised evaluations for each grade/class, they could not implement the changes discussed in TST under the allegation that it would not be fair "to all the students." However, starting with TST, non-standardised assessments were redesigned, and the portfolio was adopted as the instrument that best characterised each student's unique learning and development.

The dimension of affectivity/emotion appeared as an emerging criterion in the Group's experiences. This criterion was marked in one of the students' speeches, shared in TST by the teacher and sensitised the other participants:

[...] in the other class, nobody noticed that I didn't know the same as the others, it seemed like they didn't see me there. But you paid attention to me and made me learn, you saw me. (Gabriela)

One of the teachers was openly against inclusion; however, during the meetings, she realised that she was using diversified resources and promoting an inclusive practice even without noticing. The teacher revealed an understanding of the learning process connected to order and discipline, a representation she brought with her from her student days. Discipline was reframed in the Group as ethics of relationships that do not occur by imposition, but in a negotiated way, and that relates to the positive bond with the Group, the teacher, and the learning process. Therefore, it does not mean sitting and being silent, but being willing to exchange and support each other and collaborate, actions that do not occur statically.

Despite revealing emotions such as insecurity, anger, loneliness, and fear in their daily experiences, the participants in the Group were dedicated to seeking new paths in the face of the challenges of inclusion in the classroom. In the process, they reported developing greater self-understanding and empathy, notably with the special needs students and their families, establishing partnerships that had the power to give new meaning to relationships. Inclusion had its concept reviewed and was meant by the Group as the right to participation and collaborative action among people to support each other and learn from each other. In this way, the teachers' reflections promoted by TST revealed that they had developed a more flexible practice and a subjective configuration that is more sensitive to differences.

By highlighting emotion as an eliciting factor in the practices of teachers and students, mobilising or limiting their actions, the Group highlighted the need to overcome the cognitivist view of education and to consider that the emotional climate in the classroom, directly and indirectly, influences not only school inclusion, but the teaching process as a whole. Furthermore, the emotional dimension revealed the importance of mediation in established relationships and the meaning of individual and group experiences. Finally, it highlighted the need to value teachers' experiences and knowledge in order to promote protagonism and innovation, which are primordial to the reform that inclusion implies, through the teachers' motivation to reinvent themselves and seek new ways to learn and teach.

The evidence of the Group's success is explicit in the construction of Individualised Educational Plans (IEP), which is the better articulation of teachers in planning, the diversification of methods and resources for learning, and the qualification of mediation aimed at specific needs. Such results were also expressed in the partnerships between teachers and external assistance professionals (health and education) and between family members and teachers; in this sense, the re-signification of school inclusion contributed to the negotiation of inclusive values and principles as a basis for practical transformations.

The master's research on teachers' emotions towards inclusion revealed that the emotions reported by the participants express particular and contextualised ways of experiencing the concrete reality of teaching, indicating the meanings they attribute to inclusive teaching, based on their personal, family, and professional experiences.

In order to understand teachers' emotions, it is necessary to consider the context in which they express themselves, the experiences of each teacher, the experiences that led them to attribute particular meanings - and not others - to inclusive teaching and the school inclusion process, in general. In this sense, the study identified elements that affected the initial choice of teaching by the research participants, related to the desire of becoming a teacher and family support for the teaching career.

The three teachers who participated in the research, fictitiously identified as Rose, Daisy, and Violet, expressed the influence of their families, positively or negatively, on their professional choices. In addition, the participants' testimonies indicated the influence of family cultural aspects on the choice of teaching, specifically those related to gender: being a woman, for the participants, implies in assuming attributions traditionally regarded as feminine, such as being a mother, caring, and educating, as well as being a teacher.

It started since I was a little girl when we 'played school'. [...] Early on, I started teaching catechism... in fact, this has already been feeding this idea of being a teacher. (Rose)

Since I was a child, I always liked to "play school" [...] And in my second grade... I told my teacher that I also wanted to become a teacher. (Violet)

My father always said, "girls are meant to be teachers". It's that same old story, right? (Daisy)

The three participants reported positive experiences concerning the school context in their trajectories as students:

Only good things, like that, happy things. [...] Yes, it was a good experience. (Rose)

So, when I entered the first grade, it was [...] that energy, like that, everything. [...] I felt more confident to continue, not to give up. (Violet)

I felt good at school. [...] For me, it was excellent. (Daisy)

Still, within the scope of the beliefs and social expectations surrounding the choice of being a teacher, the issue of the devaluation of the teaching profession emerged:

[My father said]: "What do you mean, "teacher"? You are so dedicated, so smart... Why a teacher?" / [He said:] "You will be poor for the rest of your life". (Violet)

In this regard, we must consider the contemporary Brazilian scenario of discrediting teaching (DUARTE, 2013). Violet's account reveals the discredit and social devaluation of the teaching profession, materialised in the low salaries and precarious working conditions of the great majority of Brazilian teachers.

Another repeatedly pointed out factor in the teachers' speech portrays the (lack of) training to work in inclusive school contexts. In this context, despite the length of time the research participants have been teaching (their average is 13.3 years), the issue of training was highlighted by them:

There is no such training. (Daisy)

Because I am not trained, and I don't have any graduate or specialization courses, nothing on the issue of inclusion that can help me. [...] Maybe it should come from me, maybe I should complete a training course? I don't know, but should all teachers then be trained in Special Education to teach the children? [laughter]. (Rose)

The literature has pointed out the lack of teacher preparation for inclusive education as one of the main barriers to inclusion in school. In this sense, the formation goes beyond mere training or capacity building, indicating a continuous accompaniment to the teacher as a person and professional in the professional's daily routine.

The participants were instructed to convey, in five photographs, their emotions regarding the process of school inclusion and their student(s) targeted for Special Education. The auto-photography was a mediating element of the teachers' emotions. The choices revealed in each image and the speeches generated from them revealed the meanings attributed by the teacher to the inclusion process, expressing subjective aspects hard to be explained by verbal language. Therefore, the research focused on the content of the photographic records and on the authors, participants in their context of production, and the testimonies that emerged from these photographs.

The participants submitted 18 photographs (2 by Violet, 3 by Rose, and 13 by Daisy). It is noteworthy that, in all the photographs selected by the three research participants, the focus of the image referred to the performance of pedagogical activities by students with special educational needs, who were the protagonists of the image in five of Rose's six photographs, in Violet's two images, and 12 of Daisy's 13 photographic productions.

From the semi-structured interviews and the photo analysis, each participant commented on the context of production of each of the photographs and how the images represented their emotions towards the student with special educational needs and the inclusive process.

While Violet expressed pleasant emotions about choosing a teaching career and reported security and satisfaction about inclusive work, Daisy emphasised unpleasant emotions about school inclusion. Between these two lies Rose's testimony, which mentions her mistrust of the school's inclusion.

The choice for Special Education was mine [...]. What I chose as my life's training, to work with Special Education. [...] Not everyone is equal, and not everyone learns in the same way and at the same time, so why not believe in inclusion? [...] Show that it is possible, yes, it can be done with inclusion. (Violet)

[I think the student will be] dependent throughout their entire life. As long as they have someone to help them, he will be, [...] Will they have a breakthrough? Yes, they will, but a minimal advance. Very small. [...] They will be dependent people for the rest of their life. [...] But that's not what I want for them. [...] But at the same time, you have to understand that this is... it's theirs, and there's no point. (Daisy)

Actually, I haven't had any very serious cases of inclusion, so I don't have much concern or frustration about it. [...] my class, the ones I had, which were not so many, with inclusion, it wasn't anything very worrying. (Rose)

Regarding interaction with students in inclusive classes, the teachers reported cooperation and solidarity among students. However, they also reported conflicting situations generated by the jealousy of the other students towards the attention received and the differentiated treatment of students with special educational needs, in which teacher mediation is necessary.

The cool thing is that the children in the class also help her. [...] There is no prejudice, no discrimination on the part of the children, there is no such thing in the classroom, you know? On the contrary, they are always supportive / So they have this affection and care for her. (Rose)

We started to have a lot of difficulty at this point. Because, it's... because it's different, they end up looking at her. Sometimes even kids that come... a lot of them, they end up getting jealous. [...] So they come all the time. (Violet)

They just look like that, they know [the special needs student's difficulty], they understand [...] So he is the baby in the room. The others treat him that way. They understand, for example, if he has a difficulty, they don't make fun of him, you know? [...] They have this notion, you know? That he is different. [...] For them, it is expected, very easy to do that. (Daisy)

The research evidenced the participants' difficulty expressing their emotions in the face of inclusion - and often even naming them. Another interesting aspect identified recurrently with the three participating teachers was reporting emotions attributed to the students in the inclusion process rather than their own emotions. The emotions attributed to these students by the participants were: difficulty expressing emotions, happiness; frustration; equality; annoyance; belonging, and shame.

See that he rarely expresses any [emotion]... his little face. [...] He does have a smiley expression, he does, right? But sometimes he doesn't [express any emotion].... (Daisy)

Look at her happiness here, it's a joy to see. [...] She doesn't feel different at this moment, she feels like a participant like the others. (Rose)

The class is quite hectic, and he is embarrassed to death. We see that the students end up looking at him, and he gets bothered by that. [...] So we have to, whoever is close to him, I'm already orienting him, "do your own activity," because he gets bothered. (Violet)

Despite the emphasis placed on emotions throughout the research process, the participants' testimonies emphasised cognitive factors necessary for school inclusion (such as the need for specific training and adaptation of student activities), to the detriment of emotional aspects that affect the teacher-student relationship and the development of teaching and learning activities.

Ah, it is hard to explain [pause]. But I think I talk more about him [the student] than about my [emotions], I can't show [my emotions], it's like I told you, I don't even know how to explain what I feel... about him... I don't know if I was able to pass this on to you... (Daisy)

We chose to present the emotions alphabetically, without establishing a dichotomy between "positive" and "negative." We considered that each emotion is intrinsically not "good" or "bad," but its value is attributed to each contextual situation. We also opted to keep the terms used by each participant privileging the meanings given by the teachers, without judging on whether such expressions effectively configure emotions in the dictionary meaning of this term. The primary emotions reported by the research participants in their experiences of school inclusion were: joy; distress; well-being; bothered; difficulty in expressing emotions; frustration; indecision; insecurity; pity; worry; concern; pressure; sense of achievement; surprise; and sadness.

Surprise? No, there's something beyond that, like this... **distress, affliction**? You know, what am I going to do to well address their demands, in the way they need and need? So give it like this, **insecurity**. (Rose)

You leave the class feeling **frustrated**. It's a frustration and a... a feeling, so, of **powerlessness**. [...] But it is a **frustration**... at the same time, it is a **frustration** for you. (Daisy)

I won't say it's **pity**; I won't say that, because **I don't think it's a good feeling** to have towards a person, you know? But I get, at the same time, **worried**. (Daisy)

It is a tremendous **emotion**. [...] But it is your look, your encouragement there with her, that changes this. Oh, that's it **rewarding**. (Violet)

Today, when I see him, all this development that we are seeking with him, **I feel great, fulfilled**; it is excellent. (Violet)

The different emotions reported by teachers working in the same school reveal different ways of experiencing the reality of the profession in the same context; therefore, the meanings attributed by each teacher to inclusion reveal individually social ways of feeling and understanding reality. The testimonies expressed, finally, the teachers' difficulty in identifying, expressing, and reflecting on their own emotions, reverberating the traditional Cartesian educational pattern that insists on opposing and dichotomising intellect and affect, privileging cognition and neglecting emotion at school.

From the exposure of the findings of the two research studies, considering their common theme and the fact that both share the same theoretical and epistemological foundation, it is possible to establish some points for reflection and analysis that integrate and synthesize the results of both studies.

One aspect addressed by the participants of both research concerns teacher training to work under school inclusion. Although theoretical and practical elements that contribute to inclusive teaching are necessary, exclusively theoretical training is incomplete. In this sense, besides the knowledge of special educational needs and didactic-pedagogical strategies, it is also necessary to consider the emotional factor that permeates the relationships in inclusive classrooms.

The studies indicated the methodological diversification in teaching practices aimed at inclusive education; the content focus and the standardised evaluation were critical points denounced by the teachers. However, both dimensions are still structured rigidly and hinder the curricular flexibility towards inclusion. Moreover, although research has indicated resistance and unpleasant emotions towards inclusion, such as frustration and insecurity, it also reveals the search for specific and contextual strategies to deal with diversity in school institutions. Such results indicate the concern with the promotion of diverse and different practices in favour of school inclusion.

The research results indicate that the meanings attributed by female teachers to inclusion affect their practices and that it is also possible to identify that difference is sometimes seen as a deviation, despite the speeches in favour of inclusion. In their reports of their daily lives in inclusion, teachers' emotions were present, either explicitly or veiledly. The research allowed for reflection about emotions and teaching practices and raised the questioning of crystallised postures, representations based on the norm, and the creation of new understandings about school inclusion. Thus, through the instruments used in both studies - the Teacher Support Group, in the doctoral dissertation, and the reflection mediated by auto-photography, in the master's thesis - the participants had the opportunity to rethink emotions and actions, which can gradually promote changes in inclusive teaching practice.

It is possible to notice that the findings of both pieces of research show a common aspect: teaching practices reveal meanings and emotions that the teacher attributes to inclusion and the relationships established with the whole school community, affecting the teaching-learning processes in inclusive contexts in a concrete and relevant way. In this sense, aligned with Cultural-Historical Psychology, we consider that all human experience is inescapably affective; interpersonal relationships are established in the world through exchanges that constantly go through emotion, which gives an affective colouring to reality; "emotions lend quality and meaning to our existence" (MIRZA, 2016, p. 635).

Concluding remarks

The references of Cultural-Historical Psychology allow a comprehensive and integrated understanding of the teaching-learning process, which looks at the students and the teacher, considering the complex and deep interactions between both in inclusive school contexts. They highlight the importance of the relationships established in and by the school community, reiterating the essentiality of the experiences and their meanings and senses. They also reveal that the human being lives in a group and affects/is affected by the social

aspect but is also a unique being that gives unique meanings to his experiences in his social subjectivity.

For Vygotsky (1992; 1993; 1998), school action is fundamental to human learning and development. In the Vygotskian view, the teacher is a qualified mediator, a researcher of their own practice, an articulator of diversified strategies for teaching, a stimulator, and a problematizer of diverse realities which can translate them into tasks that make sense to the learners. The teacher is, above all, someone who cares and is moved by their attributions, who can reinvent themselves and seek different ways to meet the challenge of human diversity. Such a challenge gives complexity to teaching and places it as a dynamic and fruitful field of discoveries, re-elaborations, and transformations.

Regarding the issue of inclusion, Vygotsky (1992; 1993; 1998) argued that disability or any other negatively signified axes of inequality in the social sphere do not in themselves impose obstacles to learning. However, their representations are obstacles to teaching due to the historically structured practice of seeking standard ideas and not basing teaching on the actual subjects that make up the classrooms in their diversity. His social vision of learning implied a creative and transformative reordering of all education, whose central point of change involves the articulation between school education and life itself, starting from the needs and desires of the learner (VYGOTSKY, 1992; 1993). By emphasizing that society determines the possibilities for development and arguing that exclusion should be overcome by promoting creative teaching with an eminently social basis, Vygotsky (1998) indicated the need for a creatively positive and transformative pedagogy. Such a pedagogy aims at an ethically and aesthetically based education with a social bias that would break with crystallised social representations that treat the "different" unequally - as, unfortunately, still occurs in contemporary schools.

Under the Vygotskian conception that affect and cognition are inseparable components of the higher psychological functions, the research presented here reveals that teachers' emotions constitute representations about difference and diversity and affect inclusive practices. In this sense, a dynamic understanding of the reality of inclusive education is fundamental to understanding the affective and cognitive interaction relationships that permeate learning within the school (VENÂNCIO; FARIA; CAMARGO, 2020).

It is essential to recognize the growing openness for teacher training and performance research from an inclusive perspective. Frequently, such studies address aspects related to the effects of inclusion on students with and without special educational needs (RUIJS; PEETSMA, 2009; SZUMSKI; SMOGORZEWSKA; KARWOWSKI, 2017). As for inclusive teachers, research focuses on perceptions (MINTZ *et al.*, 2020; WOODCOCK; WOOLFSON, 2019), attitudes toward inclusion (AVRAMIDIS; BAYLISS; BURDEN, 2000; HASTINGS; OAKFORD, 2010; STEEN; WILSON, 2020), beliefs and behaviours (TIWARI; DAS; SHARMA, 2015; WOODCOCK; HARDY, 2017), and teaching practices (SINGAL, 2008), but do not address the topic of emotions. In this sense, this article aimed to promote reflection on the emotions and teaching practices established in the face of school inclusion. Under the understanding that emotions influence, directly and indirectly, teaching practices

and that there is resistance in assuming, in the context of the society in general, subjectivity as a dimension that configures the identity of teachers and students, this article presented a synthesis of two research studies that reveal that emotion affects teaching - especially in inclusive settings.

The studies indicated the importance of mutual practical and emotional support among teachers, with internal and interdepartmental support, for creating inclusive strategies collectively and collaboratively because inclusion is community action. Moreover, the effectiveness of school inclusion involves, besides access to educational environments, the guarantee of conditions for the permanence and learning of all students. In this sense and to this end, it is essential to reflect and rethink emotions and practices, seeking new paths that promote and ensure effective and authentic inclusion.

The participants configured ambivalent emotional experiences facing the process of school inclusion; despite the desire to include, the structural precariousness brings challenges to the practice that should not and cannot be ignored. The reflection about the - always emotional - teaching practices - reveals the need to search, collaboratively and collectively, for more empathetic strategies to welcome differences, drawing guidelines to compose a more equitable and influential work committed to overcoming exclusion of all kinds. It must consider not only children and young people with disabilities as a historically excluded public, but all students who face any disadvantage that entails equitable reparation actions in their academic career.

Emphasizing the inseparability between reason and emotion, we point out that the implementation of inclusive school systems cannot happen without understanding the singularities of each real subject that is part of the school. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to encourage reflections that find concreteness from practical actions aiming to contemplate the specific needs of each school community. In this sense, based on the reflections made here, we intend to promote cooperation, engagement, and co-responsibility among all school agents and encourage the construction of new meanings and new realities of feeling and doing, revealing innovative ways to practice diversity and to make inclusion effective.

The school needs to consider the inseparability between emotion and cognition, understanding that emotion is not a lesser agent than thought (VYGOTSKY, 1992). Therefore, it is necessary to abandon the traditional generic training of an exclusively cognitive nature, in which the teacher is "prepared" for general conditions that, although they can be foreseen, never correspond to the totality of reality, constituted by the social singularities of each student in the concrete context of school practice. Therefore, besides academic or technical training, it is essential to promote strategies for support, sharing, and emotional development for teachers, providing spaces to give new meaning to school inclusion with their peers.

The Teacher Support Group found an alternative, which can promote teachers' self-knowledge and active agency, leading them to new ways of thinking, acting, and feeling about inclusion. The creation of mutual aid systems strengthens Group belonging, allows for exchange and emotional support among peers, and helps generate better teaching and

learning conditions. However, for it to succeed, it is essential to remember that the Group needs to be accepted and legitimised by professionals who remain engaged in the common purpose of sustaining the relationship of mutuality and help in the various situations that the unpredictability of daily life - as well as the well-known concrete difficulty of implementing inclusive education in the Brazilian reality - weaves into the classrooms.

Additionally, children with special needs are the target audience for inclusion. But so are other socially disadvantaged groups or those with linguistic, ethnic, religious, cultural, or other issues that require specific support. Therefore, inclusion refers to all those who have disadvantages that directly and/or indirectly influence their learning. Under this logic, the exercise of equity is not a practice of individual or group favouritism but an action of equality so that the formal equality of the law can be experienced in the concreteness of daily life.

Inclusion is a collective project that entails coordinated actions and demands the active participation of all segments of civil society and not only of the school institution. This is a complex and challenging task, but not impossible. Recognising the emotional implications and working together through Inter-Teacher Support Groups can contribute to this end. If adequately supported - cognitively and emotionally - by their colleagues and managers in the dynamics of everyday school life, teachers can rediscover themselves and start to value their knowledge and experiences. Thus, they can abandon the blame for issues not within their competence, but without taking responsibility for what they can do - that is, they assume their role in the inclusion process in a committed way. They can thus overcome challenges and promote learning for all students, despite Brazil's precarious and unequal education system, where the production of education occurs in an unstable way, with insufficient subsidies. In this reinvention of daily school life, teachers can give new meaning to differences, promoting improvements not only for the "included" but also for all students.

Our research presented the school as a privileged space for teacher and student training, a space to consolidate personalised action plans that promote real inclusion - that is, to guarantee access and, above all, the learning of every student. However, it is necessary to go beyond students and teachers and promote an effective structural, attitudinal, and practical transformation of the school system into an inclusive environment, sharing tasks and goals involving managers, teachers, students, families, and the entire school community.

The Brazilian public school consisted of the studies' context, considering the specificities and particularities of this specific reality. Given the need to expand the investigation of the theme of emotion in inclusive teaching and to problematize this discussion in different environments, it is essential to expand research on the international scenario, also investigating in other countries how teachers' emotions affect and are dialectically affected by the process of school inclusion during teaching practice. Such studies can even be directed at other types and levels of education, such as higher education and education for young people and adults. In addition, it is also vital to expand the understanding of how the issue of inclusion has been addressed in the different moments of teacher training (initial and continuing in-service training) and the differences concerning

the time of teaching practice (beginning and experienced teachers), analysing how these aspects affect the teaching practices emotionally in inclusive school contexts.

Inclusion implies social, digital, and school participation. This participation only occurs when it is legitimised in the school community by all its members. Inclusion is a collective act of rescuing rights historically circumvented, an equitable action to promote human dignity. Specifically in Brazil, such practices should have more straightforward general guidelines, registered, described, and guaranteed by educational policies, which would inspire the creation of inclusive cultures that would consider regional singularities and stimulate concrete practices of overcoming prejudice and minimising and overcoming barriers and prejudices. Inclusion, which in many Brazilian institutions began as a legal imposition, has gradually been given new meaning and new visions and possibilities.

Nevertheless, difficulties in this process continue to be problematised and, slowly but steadily, are being remodelled. School is the stage for this process of reinventing the identity of teachers and students; it is the space for teacher training par excellence and the environment for discovering new paths, for consolidating affective-volitional tendencies that are more sensitive to difference, therefore, more empathetic and inclusive. Inclusive education needs to guarantee the right to an education that involves, beyond merely providing access to the educational environments, the guarantee of conditions for the effective permanence and meaningful learning of all students - being able, therefore, to fulfil the goal of leaving no one out and provide what is necessary to every student so that learning and real school inclusion can take place.

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