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THEMATIC SECTION:
SPECIAL EDUCATION, PSYCHOANALYSIS
AND DEMOCRATIC EXPERIENCE



About Education, Politics and Singularity

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ABSTRACT – About Education, Politics and Singularity. The article discusses, at first, questions related to the configuration of the Special Education policy in Brazil from the 2000s, highlighting elements that marked the process of institutionalization of the inclusion of students, the target audience of special education in the common school, as well as challenges. With these problematizations as reference, it is sought, secondly, to contextualize the works that make up this Thematic Section. Based on different theoretical and methodological approaches, these texts share an ethical concern with the development of Special Education for society and with the implementation of the constitutional principle of education as a right of all. **Keywords:** Special Education. Inclusive Education. Educational Policy. Psychoanalysis. Democratic Experience.

RESUMO – Sobre Educação, Política e Singularidade. O artigo discute, em um primeiro momento, questões relativas à configuração da política de Educação Especial no Brasil a partir dos anos 2000, destacando elementos que marcaram o processo de institucionalização da inclusão dos alunos, público alvo da educação especial na escola comum, bem como seus desafios atuais. Tendo como referência essas problematizações, busca-se, em um segundo momento, contextualizar os trabalhos que compõem esta Seção Temática. Partindo de abordagens teórico-metodológicas distintas, esses textos conservam em comum uma preocupação ética com os desdobramentos da Educação Especial para a sociedade e com a efetivação do princípio constitucional da educação como um direito de todos. **Palavras-chave:** Educação Especial. Educação Inclusiva. Política Educacional. Psicanálise. Experiência Democrática.

Special Education, Psychoanalysis and Democratic Experience

In the last decades, we have been witnessing the emergence of inclusive discourses of a broad character that aim to intervene in social sectors marked by the stigma and segregation. Segregating movements have followed the history of humanity since ancient times and are expressed in confrontations, wars, guerrillas, dissidents, *apartheid*... nouns that are provoking illustrative historical furrows that the search for otherness is something of the order of the expensive experience in the exercise of humanity.

Educational process is one of those experiences. After all, as Hanna Arendt (2005) asks us, what do we have to present the world to the new generations? Would not the school spaces be places where the narratives that mark us from Antiquity to Contemporaneity could circulate? In the chronological extension of the centuries, conflicts and segregative movements remain. Yet, it is evident to everyone – children and adults – that artifacts and deadly strategies are being renewed and discursive operations must be modified in innumerable attempts to encompass both real.

Since the end of the last century, many documents have been produced on the international circuit towards an inclusive movement. In the case of school education, institutions are taking on aspects considered more inclusive, and at the apex of contemporary discourse, the reference to inclusion becomes a guideline for the structuring of projects and practices that seek to overcome segregation. These discursive operations are named in different ways: Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948); World Declaration on Education for All (1990); The Salamanca Statement. On Principle, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education (1994); Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), among others. These documents affirm commitments made by nations to human rights, and specifically to the rights of persons with disabilities and their educational modalities.

One of the benchmarks for inclusive policy in Brazil is the document *Política Nacional de Educação Especial na Perspectiva da Educação Inclusiva* (PNEEPEI) (Brazil, 2008), which celebrated ten years of promulgation and circulation in 2018. Throughout this period, the Policy raised important debates about the education of people with disabilities in the country, although the discussion about the inclusion of this public in the common school was already taking place in society and in educational spaces since the 1990s. The policy marks a different moment in the national scenario, since it modifies the orientation regarding the offer of the specialized services, which are complementary and/or supplementary to the common education, and no longer substitute. This orientation directly affects the school course flow of students with disabilities and the way of offering specialized educational services to this group. This offer was consolidated throughout the 20th century in the country and was marked by the leading role played by the special-

ized institutions of private, charitable and philanthropic nature (Mazzotta, 2005, Jannuzzi, 2006 and Kassir, 2013). The Policy is preceded and succeeded by a series of norms which, starting in 2003, progressively outline the design of an inclusive educational system in Brazil (Kassar, 2011; Michels; Garcia, 2014), although since the publication of the *Diretrizes Nacionais da Educação Especial para a Educação Básica*, in 2001 (Brazil, 2001), it was already announced that education systems should enroll all students, and schools should organize themselves to receive students with special educational needs¹ (Garcia, 2017).

In this context, a set of legislative documents, projects and government programs, such as PNEEPEI (2008), began to direct the financing and execution of the country's educational policy, involving the expansion of enrollments, actions for accessibility, minimum income programs, among others. In 2015, the approval of the Brazilian Law of Inclusion of the Person with Disability, Law no. 13,146 (Brazil, 2015), marks, possibly, a last act of the process established from the first term of the President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, initiated in 2003, ending in 2018, following the *impeachment* of President Dilma Rousseff on August 31st, 2016, followed by the taking up of the presidency by her vice-president, Michel Temer.

Based, therefore, on a set of decrees and resolutions that are based, in turn, on international declarations and conventions, previously cited, the inclusive movement produces important rearrangements in the configuration of education in the country, although significant limitations in terms of *intra-school* life are regularly reported in educational literature. Regarding these limitations, which stress the daily school life and show the plurality of meanings of *inclusion*, as well as their contradictions, Vasques, Moschen and Gurski (2013, p. 87) call us to read significant elements in this process, besides the enrollment in the common school, stating that:

If access to schooling is significant, little does it say about the permanence. The political text establishes contours of a reality, whose quality is played in the arena of disputes, resistances and clashes. The law itself does not completely circumscribe the possibilities of what can really happen. As a letter, it implies reading. And as a reading, it implies – no matter how much one sweeps the misunderstanding of its statement – being open to the senses. Reading is never linear, univocal or consensual.

With the definition of the enrollment of the target population of special education (PAEE) in the common school, these discussions, traditionally linked to the field of Special Education, are now more directly affecting an entire educational system. Thus, as the presence of these students grows in common schools, a series of questions about the accessibility of schools, learning processes, curricular structuring and evaluations, didactics, school management and specialized supports to be available emerge.

It is interesting to note that although there is an increase in the number of PAEE students in common schools in this context, as shown by the statistical data available in PNEEPEI (2008), as well as indexes of the School Census of the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research (INEP), the indicators also show enrollments in educational spaces that substitute the common school, as well as the “[...] maintenance of the sharing of responsibilities between the State and the private initiative,” according to research by Meletti and Ribeiro (2014, p. 181). Regarding regular enrollment, the researchers highlight, among other aspects, the great concentration of students with special educational needs in the initial years of Elementary School and a low number of enrollments in Early Childhood Education (kindergarten and pre-school) and High School, in addition to the applicant’s age/series discrepancy. According to Meletti and Ribeiro (2014), studies of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), referring to the year 2010 on the Brazilian population with disability in school-age, also indicate that a large part of the children and young people with disabilities are out of school, which highlights the limitations still existing in PAEE’s access to school education in the country.

Considering the previously mentioned points and the challenges that Brazilian public education go through, the *democratic experience* marks the political ambition that guides us, since it allows to problematize the societal sharing and the challenge of *living together* in a *polis* that is not exactly structured by equality, but by the historical and daily disputes regarding equity and the struggle for rights. The *democratic experience* also affirms the invitation to the dialogue on the (mis)place of Special Education, directed to researchers located in different theoretical and methodological fields, but that hold in common an ethical concern with the unfolding of this area for society and with the realization of the constitutional principle of education as a right of all.

Starting from Psychoanalysis as a guiding theoretical axis, in interlocution with other discourses, we propose attention to the dimension of singularity in the definition of policies and institutional propositions. Psychoanalysis can be considered as a *science of the singular*, as Carvalho (2017) argues, and the constitution of this singular is crossed by what is established in the plane of culture, of collective experience, of social relations, as affirmed by Freud (1976) in beginning of the 20th century. The singular is constructed in the encounter with the other, in the institutional relations, in the daily work of renewing itself in a society that is quickly transformed, while at the same time preserving structural challenges, such as that of welcoming the other considered strange, different, foreigner. *This* – which was tried in the delimitation and historical construction of Special Education as a field of knowledge within the education, and which started from the affirmative gestures of its founders, by recognizing the educability of subjects considered *abnormal* in past centuries – today is lived in the challenge of promoting inclusive education, which is expected for all.

Taking up the classic parable of Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), in which the author compares men to porcupines, already commented on by Freud in a footnote in the text *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (1921), Gardou (2018) reflects on the constitutive impasses of inclusive propositions, for demanding a recognition of the other considered different in the position of similar, which, in general, poses fundamental challenges for human relations.

Inclusive ambition collides, we see, with the extreme complexity of human relationships and their contradictions. Arthur Schopenhauer compared men to porcupines in a celebrated parable to which Freud echoed. In winter, these rodent mammals oscillate between two torments; too distant from each other, they suffer from the cold; too close, they take advantage of the reciprocal heat, but they wound each other with their long thorns. It is either the pricks, or the cold. In the same way, men find it difficult to find a satisfactory relational distance, which preserves them from a cold solitude in which they risk to freeze, and at the same time from a closeness that threatens to suffocate them. If their gregarious tendency and their need for social life lead them toward each other, their difficulties in living together, as close and similar, separate them. Between enclosing inclusion and exiling exclusion, as funambulist, they walk on a wire (Gardou, 2018, p. 83-84).

Psychoanalysis thus helps us to bet on our yearning and struggle for a more just and egalitarian society, recognizing how challenging this dispute is for us, considering that our human condition seems to carry within itself something of a segregating dimension that directs our most intimate affections to those we consider similar, pushing away those who are not considered similar. In this sense, how not to question segregation? This would mean jeopardizing the very survival of the human species, as Freud (2014) warns when congratulating the writer Romain Rolland (1866-1944) on the occasion of his 60th birthday. Rolland was known for cultivating an *oceanic feeling* toward humanity. In the words addressed to the writer, Freud expresses his view that the search for humanitarian love entails the threat of old instinctual dispositions that would ultimately imply the destruction of the human species:

Expensive and unforgettable! What efforts and sufferings you must have surpassed to reach these heights of humanity!
Long before I met you, I had venerated you as an artist and apostle of humanitarian love. I also became a partisan of the latter, not for reasons of sentimentality or ideal exigency, but for sober, economic reasons, for, considering our instinctual dispositions and the world around us, I had to proclaim it so indispensable for the conservation of the human species as to technique (Freud, 2014, p. 367).

For Psychoanalysis, the symbolic pact that demands from each of us the renunciation of treating the other as an object, allowing the

recognition of one as similar, anchors the relations of sharing that underlie the constitution of the social bond. This formulation, which contemplates the relations of the collective and the individual, allows us to make some comments about the discussion begun in 2018, by the MEC, around PNEEPEI.

As expressed in the title of *Política Nacional de Educação Especial na Perspectiva da Educação Inclusiva*, a Special Education policy is maintained in Brazil, but in an inclusive *perspective*. On April 16th, 2018, the MEC announces on its official website the following news: *Special Education Policy should be updated*². In the same week, some information began to circulate through social media announcing a discussion about PNEEPEI's directions and the possibility that the expression *in the Inclusive Education Perspective* would be removed from the title that names and guides the document.

The word *perspective* leads us to directing the gaze, to thinking in a horizon, and makes us glimpse imaginatively that its prerogatives would lead us to a path of possible modifications and educational arrangements, where everyone could live and learn together in schools. What meanings could we draw from the fact that a government document brings the proposal of a perspective into its title, when segregation presents itself *secularly* to the target audience of Special Education policies? Is the expression *in the Perspective of Inclusive Education* a kind of *compromise solution* adopted at the time of its elaboration to deal with the different conceptions and disputes existing in relation to the education of people with disabilities in Brazil?

The proposition of an Inclusive Education involves radical challenges, which are not only linked to what occurs in school, but which are related to the stigma associated with people with disabilities, the challenges of *living together* and the very marks of inequality present in Brazilian education. In addition, the debate on Inclusive Education has led to a problematization of the *special* in education and to a view that education in democratic societies should be guided by diversity. In this sense, however much academic research indicates the urgent need to review several issues concerning the implementation of PNEEPEI, extracting from this document the terms *in the Inclusive Education Perspective* can mean the risk of returning to a *culture of separation* (Plaisance, 2015).

Therefore, to break with a culture of separation, traditionally represented in specialized institutions and services, the proposition of an Inclusive Education would indicate the possibility of a broader democratic experience. However, this promise does not end in the intentions and documentary agreements, since it demands an elaboration of the subjects and a reconfiguration of the institutions.

Garcia (2017, pp. 37-38) examines the continuity of the implementation of "[...] neoliberal policies in the economic aspect", analyzing the directions of Special Education in Brazil and the process that began in August 2016, now accompanied by a "[...] offensive to work, with the withdrawal of fundamental rights, already treated as services, and with

redistribution of funds from the public sector from social areas to the market sector.” Such movement tends to affect the democratization of access to Special Education equipment, considering that, with all the limits placed, in the period from 2003 to 2016 there was a *political climate of publicizing* these spaces, which is at risk with the changes ongoing in the country.

On January 2, 2019, Brazilian newspapers announced the intention of the newly-elected federal government to extinguish the Secretariat for Continuing Education, Literacy, Diversity and Inclusion (SECADI), replacing it with a Secretariat for Specialized Modalities, which would also be the subject of literacy³. The SECADI page on the website of the Ministry of Education (MEC) clarifies its role of guaranteeing students access to and stay in Basic Education:

For the State to offer educational public policies aimed at guaranteeing the access and permanence of each student in basic and higher education, it is necessary to incorporate the theme of the recognition of differences that supposes the confrontation with all forms of prejudice and discrimination; to ensure the adequate school trajectory in the education systems and consequent reduction of the evasion and the abandonment; to recognize equity as a premise for educational policies, a condition for its universalization and the effective exercise of the *right to education* (Brazil, w/d, online, italics from the original text).

SECADI incorporated educational modalities and themes to deal with populations traditionally marked by processes of social and school exclusion, such as people with disabilities, peasant, indigenous and quilombola peoples; and the themes of education for Ethnic-racial Relations and Education in Human Rights. In the case of the Special Education area, SECADI starts to incorporate this discussion in 2011, when the Special Education Secretariat (SEESP) is extinguished.

Given the aspects discussed above and the problematizations established, we ask: – What vicissitudes are announced for the school education of the target public of Special Education in a context of institutional tensions and threat to social rights?; – Does the perspective of Inclusive Education express, nowadays, a societal construction around the search for equality and human dignity?; – Is our ability to deal with the affirmations agreed upon at the national and international levels presents itself in the encounter with the individual who stands, singularly, before us?; – In a context strongly marked by individualism, intolerance of difference, judicialization, what space do we find for each other in the relationships inscribed in school institutions?

The questions presented announce issues that will be addressed in this Thematic Section, and allow us to put some words around the articulation Special Education, Psychoanalysis and Democratic Experience.

The Thematic Section: Special Education, Psychoanalysis and Democratic Experience

Based on the notes presented, this Thematic Section is contextualized in the current discussion of Special Education in contemporary societies, considering that the emergence of Inclusive Education has profound implications for this field of knowledge and practices. In this sense, the school education of people with disabilities is reconfigured in a scenario that has as *an ideal an education for all*, but which often lacks the insertion and egalitarian participation of the subjects themselves, as the perspective of a *democratic experience* demands. Gardou's words (2018, p. 72) remind us, in this sense, that while the statements "proclaim the universal, indivisible, interdependent and inseparable character of human rights," the image of disability disturbs everyday life and "[...] continues to produce its effects: stigmatization and restricted or impeded participation in the life of the community." This Thematic Section thus recognizes the advances of the historical and social journey that have made possible questions about the social segregation of people with disabilities, as well as the emergence of movements that defend the principles of an Inclusive Education, but at the same time, ethical and democratic dimension of these processes. Addressing these issues constitutes a differential in this context by provoking reflections on the pregnancies of segregation movements in the schooling processes of people with disabilities, even when discursive operations seem to aim to guarantee this path through legal and procedural principles.

The texts that make up this Thematic Section express their originality by recognizing, from different theoretical and methodological perspectives, the difference as a constituent element of life in society; the concerns about the construction of a democratic education that produces differentiated forms of reception and whose ethical principle is non-exclusion, even if one knows how much segregation is inexorable in human relations; the confrontation of the ethical and institutional challenges present in the formulation of an Inclusive Education.

These articles are contextualized at the moment that PNEEPEI completes ten years since its promulgation and has one of its main innovations threatened, as previously discussed. This work investigates the effects of the emergence of the inclusive discourse in the field of Special Education, as well as the challenges posed to the school inclusion. If the democratic principle presupposes equal access to the assets of a society, what would justify the need to affirm Inclusive Education? Would not the statement indicate the very evidence of the persistence of exclusion mechanisms in contemporary societies? And what would be the ethical and discursive implications of withdrawing this proposal as a policy perspective?

Taking as a starting point the discussions previously presented, this Thematic Section aims to: – Enable the circulation of critical analyzes on Special Education in contemporary times; – Promote an inter-

locution on issues related to Special Education from different theoretical and methodological fields, such as Psychoanalysis, Social Sciences, Cultural Studies and Philosophy of Difference; – Reflect on the ten years of promulgation of the National Policy on Special Education in the Perspective of Inclusive Education, its position in the Brazilian political context and in the definition of the educational path of people with disabilities in the country; – Show the challenges in the schooling of students with disabilities, as well as the achievements of this group in the last decades; – Problematize the mechanisms of segregation addressed to people with disabilities today; – Cultivate the *democratic experience* as a perspective of dialogue, participation and sharing. For the presentation of the articles, we start from the work that addresses an international reality and, then, introduce the articles elaborated with reference to the Brazilian educational scenario.

Éric Plaisance, in the text *O Especial na Educação: significados e usos*, presents an analysis of the movements that produced passages of Special Education for Inclusive Education, evidencing how much the *special* signifier expressed different positions and meanings in the constitution of this path. The author focuses on specific elements of educational policies for people with disabilities in France, Italy and Brazil, indicating how each one has traced its course around the *special*. Considering the history and tradition of Special Education in the educational work with children, young people and adults with disabilities, Plaisance affirms the need to consider that a democratic education is produced from the recognition of human diversity, which implies a bet on overcoming a culture of separation.

Liberia Rodrigues Neves, Mônica Maria Farid Rahme and Carla Mercês da Rocha Jatobá Ferreira, in the article *Política de Educação Especial e os Desafios de uma Perspectiva Inclusiva*, start from academic analyzes on Brazilian public education and the constitution of Special Education in the country to contextualize the formulation and the meanings of the National Special Education Policy from the perspective of Inclusive Education (2008) in this scenario. Secondly, the authors discuss issues related to Specialized Educational Assistance in the context of the Policy and present considerations about the offer of this assistance in the last ten years. Finally, we discuss issues about school inclusion, with reference to an interplay with Psychoanalysis, which allows us to indicate the persistence of segregating movements in the schooling of students with disabilities, even though the Policy is guided by the perspective of an Inclusive Education.

The study by Rinaldo Voltolini, *Interpelações Éticas à Educação Inclusiva*, reflects on Inclusive Education as an alternative to Special Education in the modern scenario. Considering morality and ethics as questions, the author demarcates the difference between the two fields, and exposes his thesis by inserting the essential of inclusion in the demarcation of this difference, highlighting the conversion of the look and symbolic hygiene as constituent procedures of the Inclusive Education program. Thus, it seeks to develop an ethical interpellation to

Inclusive Education encompassing the subjective dimension, generally suppressed, of the legal-administrative point of view.

Paula Ramos Pimenta, in the article *Clínica e Escolarização dos Alunos com Transtorno do Espectro Autista (TEA)*, highlights what emerges from the encounter between subjects and discusses the political and clinical peculiarities that make up their education as a target audience for specialized care, as established in the Brazilian Policy. The author proposes a dialogue with the contributions of the clinical postulates of attendance to the autistic subject, considering the changes in the way of seeing and living with these subjects in school, once they pass, for the purpose of law, students with Global Disorder Development for students with disabilities.

Marilda Moraes Garcia Bruno and Ricardo Augusto Lins do Nascimento also address the advances and meanings of Assistive Technologies aimed at subjects with Visual Impairment, regarding the functional use of resources to guarantee the quality of the school and social inclusion. In the text *Política de Acessibilidade: o que dizem as pessoas com deficiência visual*, the authors discuss the National Digital Inclusion Policy (2015) based on results of research anchored in Cultural Studies, and in the testimonies of people with low vision and blindness. Through the voices of these subjects, they highlight the way the senses of technologies are constructed according to how they are institutionalized and socialized.

The study of Wladimir Brasil Ullrich, *Política de Educação Especial: sobre ambivalência, tensão e indeterminação*, retakes the theoretical discussion that influenced the National Policy on Special Education in the perspective of Inclusive Education (2008), reflecting on its effects after a decade of its publication. The author revisits questions that constituted the debate in this area, emphasizing as central axis the analysis of its conceptual basis – the special adjectivation and the idea of inclusion – considering it under the register of modernity. The author emphasizes that the issue of inclusion and the role of education in the process of constructing a certain idea of man are modern problems, pointing out that Modernity should not address exclusion. To conclude the study, the author points out the need to try to understand aspects constituting the Special Education, considering the contemporaneity of its questions and its permanent revision.

As a final contribution of this Thematic Section, in the study *Dez anos da PNEEPEI sob a Ótica da Fratura Fundamental da Biopolítica*, Pedro Ângelo Pagni, highlights the uncertainties of the current political framework and the institutional crisis unprecedented in Brazil, analyzes the implantation and refluxes of PNEEPEI from the point of view of the fundamental fracture of biopolitics. Brazilian governmentality and the way it deals with the educational inclusion of people with disabilities are also objects of the study, based on the analyzes of Foucault and Agamben. As conclusive aspects of the study, the author examines the need to review the strategies of the fields of knowledge and techniques that legitimized the actions of the Policy, including those that

place themselves in the present aiming at the dissolution of their inclusive perspective. It also proposes a multidisciplinary perspective for the field that would allow the filters of people with disabilities to be multiplied to cover the multiplicity of their signs and the possibility of being seen without the need for differential treatment.

Taking as a reference the themes discussed in the articles that make up this Thematic Section, we hope that its reading will contribute to a deeper analysis of the issues that make up the Special Education-Inclusive Education interface and allow the emergence of new reflections, practices and productions around the education of people with disabilities.

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Notes

- 1 A terminologia Necessidades Educacionais Especiais será empregada neste artigo quando for a expressão utilizada nos documentos e textos de referência.
- 2 Disponível em: <<http://portal.mec.gov.br/ultimas-noticias/202-264937351/62961-politica-de-educacao-especial-devera-passar-por-atualizacao>>. Acesso em: 22 jun. 2018.
- 3 Disponível em: <<https://noticias.uol.com.br/politica/ultimas-noticias/2019/01/02/velez-confirma-desmonte-de-secretaria-da-diversidade-apos-tuite-bolsonaro.htm?cmpid=copiaecola>>. Acesso em: 15 jan. 2019. Nas matérias veiculadas pela mídia nesse contexto, não é retomada a discussão sobre a perspectiva inclusiva, vinculada à Política Nacional de Educação Especial, de 2008.

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