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THEMATIC SECTION: VIGOTSKI TODAY:  
EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS



## Contributions of Vigotski's Thought to Transforming Education

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**ABSTRACT – Contributions of Vigotski's Thought to Transforming Education.** In this article, we intend to reveal some of Vigotski's contributions to a reflection on transformative education. We begin with a presentation on education, a critique of conventional education, as well as reflecting on the act of transforming, going through the bases of movements for the renewal of Brazilian education, always intermingling with Vigotski's thought, so that, finally, we present, more specifically, its direct contributions to so-called transformative education and some of its consequences.

**Keywords: Vigotski. Education. Transformation. Transformative Education.**

**RESUMO – Contribuições do Pensamento de Vigotski para uma Educação Transformadora.** Neste artigo, evidenciamos algumas contribuições de Vigotski para uma reflexão sobre educação transformadora. Iniciamos com uma apresentação sobre educação, uma crítica à educação convencional, bem como refletimos sobre o ato de transformar, perpassando pelas bases de movimentos de renovação da educação brasileira, sempre entremeando com o pensamento de Vigotski, para que, por fim, apresentemos mais especificamente suas contribuições diretas para a dita educação transformadora e algumas de suas consequências.

**Palavras-chave: Vigotski. Educação. Transformação. Educação Transformadora.**

## Introduction

In this article, we present some contributions of Vigotski to a reflexion about transforming education. To justify this intention, it is sure to affirm that much has been studied and talked about Vigotski in the West since 1980, but it is igualmente to say that his epistemological basis and thought are somewhat unknown yet, when not mutilated in out-of-context appraisals.

Lev Semionovitch Vigotski was born in 1896 and died in 1934. From jewish origin, he had a marxist worldview, spinozist-monist (Gonçalves, 2017, p. 192). He produced huge works on pedagogy, psychology, art – specially in literature – and defectology, in addition to having a comprehensive scholarly character that he knew deeply what studied, in his epoch, and synthesized the informations creating a gigantic theoretical framework for understanding different aspects of human experience.

He published the book that named, when he joined as an employee of the Moscow University in 1924, *A brief manual of pedagogical psychology* (Vigotski, 2001, p. 15, our translation) and which is constituted, in truth, in a masterful work addressing and synthesizing several psychological and pedagogical problems. In this work we find many of the concepts that we will deal with in our approach.

This article presents a critique of conventional education, a contextualization of the movement for the renewal of education in Brazil and concludes by addressing the idea of transformation and some contributions by this author to transforming education.

## Critique to Conventional Education

Education is a word that is defined in the plural, with the varied ways to influence, suggest, induce or inspire of the development of others in some area. Pedagogy is a science that deals with education and as such “[...] needs to establish with precision and clarity how this influence should be organized, what forms it can take, what procedures you use and what your guidance should be” (Vigotski, 2001, p. 37, our translation).

The education, as we will see in this article, for Vigotski, is in life, in the relationship with human culture. The author also pointed out that the use of pedagogical psychology “[...] can indicate how to educate to form a slave or a free man, an upstart or a revolutionary” (Vigotski, 2001, p. 43, our translation). So, when it comes to education, in this sense, it is vital to ask ourselves: what new links do we intend to form? What education are we talking about? That is, for what, for what values and for what human type does a given education intend to form? In short, the objectives of education must be evident for the pedagogical system to be adequate.

Vigotski understands that education occurs in children and adolescents when there is “[...] the moment of non-consolidation, fluidity of growth and original changes in the individual” (Vigotski, 2001, p. 82, our translation). Furthermore, “[...] we are facing the formation of several new bonds within a previously formed system of behavior” (Vigotski, 2001, p.82, our translation), when adult education is characterized, which he called as re-education. Even so, for the author, on educational processes, in the final analysis, there is always the creation of new bonds, that is, it is a re-education from some previous bond.

Conventional education, carried out in large part in schools, since it itself serves for the maintenance and expansion of the capitalist system, so as to “[...] not only provide the necessary knowledge and personnel with the expanding productive machine of the capital system, but also generate and transmit a framework of values that legitimizes the dominant interests” (Mészáros, 2008, p. 35, our translation) and from which people are seen as adaptable, adjustable beings and not as creators.

In order to carry out this form of education, the conventional school inculcates the interests of the dominant classes by forming passive, non-critical and not very creative people. Much of the knowledge acquired in the school is limited to answer tests and not to visualize and relate to the world in a more dynamic and profound way.

Barrera’s (2016) study demonstrates that schools are organized based on four defining elements: time, space, knowledge and power. The organization of time in conventional schools tends to work with 50-minute classes, ranking according to the biological age of the students, rigid schedules and calendars. In relation to space, conventional schools have classrooms with individual chairs lined up and facing the blackboard. The knowledge is usually treated from the pré-defined curriculum, ranging from the simplest to the most complex, with appropriation by students from classes, tests and works that are evaluated with grades. In conventional schools, power is organized in a hierarchical and bureaucratic way, with mechanisms of punishment and award (Barrera, 2016, p. 136, our translation).

John Dewey was a critic of the conventional school, pointing to hierarchical imposition, distance from topics of interest to students, distancing from reality, standardized activities and few practical activities:

[...] the traditional scheme is, in essence, an imposition from top to bottom and from outside to inside. It imposes standards, study materials and methods developed for adults on those who slowly move towards maturity [...]. Learning here means acquiring what is already incorporated into the books and the head of previous generations. More than that, what is taught is considered to be essentially static. It is taught as a finished product, with no further attention to the ways in which it was originally built or the changes that will certainly occur in the future (Dewey, 2011, p. 21, our translation).

When it comes to schooling, schooling mentality, we are basing ourselves on the studies developed by Tunes (2011) and Illich (1985), stating that learning has been socially controlled, regulated by a series of standardized ranging from the curriculum to the organization of class times and are directly linked to the development of capitalist society, establishing conformity in face of the inequalities of the class system. For these authors, schooled thinking limits education to a certain space, to certain knowledges and ways of teaching and learning, generating exclusions inside and outside the school space. The schooling thinking confuses “[...] teaching with learning, obtaining degrees with education, diploma with competence [...]” (Illich, 1985, p. 16, our translation), generating lack of self-confidence and trust in the community, as capable of managing its processes, transferring all competences to institutions – health, education, work, safety – and emptying the creative and emancipating capacity of the population.

The current school, institutionalized by a society that commercializes even those of human beings, also treats knowledge as a commodity. It determines what should be consumed in terms of knowledge based on its previous selection and organization. In this context, the important thing is not the process, but the product. The possibility of making choices about what one really wants to learn is limited. Certificates arising from a long and endless compartmentalized and fragmented schooling are created as objects of desire and whose main argument is the possibilities that, presumably, they will create in the future, learning there is a function of the promise of an eternal tomorrow (Pederiva, p. 119, p. 2009, our translation).

The educators, in this context, are not encouraged to be creative people, they are, in most cases, just a *content explainer* (Paro, 2014, p. 22, our translation). The schooling education “[...] has been losing sight of the sense of collective, personal responsibility and, consequently, social responsibility, which has generated numerous issues for social life and human relations” (Almeida; Pederiva, 2019, p. 29, our translation), removing children and young people from their own reality, making it impossible for them to create solutions to create a better life for themselves.

Disregarding individuality is one of the biggest mistakes of schools, as stated by Vigotski: “The fundamental premise inexorably demands individualization, that is, the conscious and precise determination of the individual objectives of education for each student in particular” (Vigotski, 2001, p. 285, our translation).

However, many schools and institutions around the world have been looking for other ways to conceive new relationships in the school and also between the school and the community and society. Schools that not only reproduce what has already been established, but that create new relationships among people and with learning. They are called, in this work, transforming schools.

## To transform

To transform is to put oneself in motion, in and through the difficulties that are routinely overcome through dialogue and the willingness to self-transform and also transform relationships. Social transformation involves overcoming alienation – one of the fundamental concepts of Marx's philosophy. Industrial society and its extremely exploratory and individualistic labor relations have led man to a state of alienation - "action by which (or the state in which) an individual, a group, an institution or a society becomes (or remains) alien" (Bottomore, 1988, p. 6, our translation) in (relation to nature, to the results of his work, in relation to himself as a member of humanity and also in relation to other human beings (Mészáros, 2017).

Transforming imposes facing the contradictions between permanence and change, in questioning what is already good and no longer, in having the courage to face mistakes – not in the place of pain – but in the constant overcoming, in not denying the past, but honors it to effectively create conditions to transform it dialectically. This process does not happen in a *smooth*, linear and homogeneous way and it is the contradictions, when faced from the front, discussed and constantly overcome, that engender the possibilities of school transformation.

The transformation begins with the purpose of change, the tension that exists between what was done and what one wishes to do and the movements to be guided by other perspectives is already the process of transformation. We perceive that opening up to dialogue is one of the first steps of this journey, the willingness to hear who the student is, where he and she come from, what they know, what their dreams and fears are; and, thus, when relating to understand their cultural and historical context, establishing relationships between academic knowledge and everyday life in a critical way.

Transforming also requires openness to frequent doubt, to the anguish of uncertainty, "[...] only the institution that is oppressive is harmonious. Na educational institution will always be a place of conflict, of debate, of criticism, of discomfort. Those who seek life, who live, will always be dissatisfied" (Gadotti, 2012, p. 125, our translation).

To deal with transformation is to believe in the potential of overcoming the current reality for the conception of another reality, without the illusion that the school alone will change the world, but aware that is a space that can be organized for the development of critical thinking and transformer.

Freire (2001) considered education as a possibility of raising awareness, expanding criticality and social action, in a dialectical perspective of human history.

This intelligence of history, which rules out a pretermind future, does not deny, however, the role of the *conditioning* factors to which we are subjected women and men. By refusing History as a game of certain destinies, something

immutable, in opposing the future as something inexorable, History as a possibility recognizes the importance of decision as an act that implies rupture, the importance of conscience and subjectivity, of the critical intervention of human beings in the reconstruction of the world. Recognizes the role of consciousness building in praxis; of intelligence being invented and reinvented in the process and not as something immobile in me, almost separated, from my body. It recognizes my body as a conscious body that can move critically in the world as it can 'lose' its historical address. It recognizes my individuality and that is not diluted, amorphous, in the social nor does it grow and succeed outside of it. Finally recognizes the role of education and its limits (Freire, 2001, p. 47, our translation).

Throughout the history of Brazilian education, several educators, at different times, have dared to propose profound changes in practices and in the educational system and it is about their proposals and intentions for renewal that we will discuss below.

### **Education and the Foundations for the Brazilian Education Renewal Movements**

According to Barrera (2016), there is a renewal Brazilian education today that breaks with patterns that conceive the conventional. This educational renewal pointed out by the author has similarities with other historical movements from the thirties and sixties, that marked the history of Brazilian education as movements which groups of educators tried to change the reality of schools. Every movement of change brings with it the tension between the old and the new and the contradictions inherent in the process.

The 20s and 30s were very important for the formation of the identity of the Brazilian people with "[...] the mass arrival of new immigrants, the abolition of slavery, the dynamism of life in cities, internal migrations, contact with the ideas of European avant-garde" (Lovato; Barrera, 2017, p. 63, our translation). From different referentials tried to conceive Brazilian identity in several art and education fields.

John Dewey is considered one of more influential educators of 20th century and his pedagogy can be characterized by its foundation in experience, enabling different ways of building knowledge from situations that are part of everyday life and/or that are among the topics of interest to students. He considered the student as a person rich in experience and knowledges – at any age – that should be considered and valued by educators.

Influenced by Dewey – critics of the education of their time and committed to writing and consolidating democratic proposals for education – Fernando de Azevedo and Anísio Teixeira, in 1932, published *Manifest of the Pioneers of New Education*, with 24 influential signatories in Brazilian society, that intended "an educational reconstruction program" (Lovato and Barrera, 2017 p. 66, our translation).

The document begins with the affirmation that education is the most important national problem and there was not in Brazil a school system that meets the country's development needs. The educational reconstruction would take place from a movement like the one started in other countries in Latin America, in which education is for everyone, regardless of any economic, social or cultural division, based on the principles of essentially public function, single school (school accessible in all grades and for all), secularism, gratuity, mandatory (up to the age of 18) and coeducation (without distinction of sex), each of these items being justified and articulated to the philosophical and social bases (Saviani, 2013, p. 241-245).

It is a broad document, which explains philosophical bases, administrative organization, pedagogical planning, training of educators (his and her) and democratization. The New Education intended to overcome some of traditional school bases, linking the school with the community, caring for the individualities and stimulating the creation.

According to Saviani (2013, p. 253), *New Education Pioneers Manifest*, it is a defense of public school, which ranges from early childhood education to the university, which for the author is a Brazilian differential in relation to the new education movement in Europe, in which most of the initiatives were restricted to private schools. The manifest was severely criticized by intellectuals of the Catholic Church for considering it anti-Christian and anti-national in denying the Catholic religious tradition of Brazil. In 1959, was written II Manifest *Once Again Summoned*, also signed by Fernando Azevedo as a reaffirmation of the first, in repudiation of deputy Carlos Lacerda who advocated for private education in basic education – the majority of the Catholic Church – supported with public funds.

Between the late 1940s and 1960s, there was the development of literacy programs for young people and adults, explained, at least in part, by the need for literacy to have the right to vote and by increasing urbanization. In 1961, the Basic Education Movement (BEM) was conceived by the National Conference of Bishops of Brazil (NCBB), which brought a political awareness to adult literacy adults. Until then, it was simply focused on basic instruction.

The bases of this view on education are linked to several social and historical processes, not only in Brazil, but also in Latin America, influenced by the thinking of Karl Marx and linked to Liberation Theology. Paulo Freire is the main exponent of popular education in Brazil that developed adult literacy work recognized in much of the world and he conceived a education based on the assumption that "[...] nobody educates anyone and nobody educates himself alone: men educate themselves in communion, mediated by the world" (Freire, 1987, p. 39, our translation).

Paulo Freire, in several of his works, points to humanizing education as one that is based on dialogue, world awareness, self-knowledge, autonomy and social responsibility. The author states that humaniza-



tion and dehumanization happen in the social structures conceived and to which men are conditioned.

Basically, one of the radical differences between education as a dominating, dehumanizing task and education as a humanizing, liberating task is that the former is a pure act of transferring knowledge, while the latter is an act of knowing. These radically opposed tasks, which demand procedures in the same way opposite, both affect, as it could not fail to be, on the consciousness-world relationship (Freire, 1981, p. 80).

Humanizing education requires the quality of the reflective educator, who overcomes the alienating condition of transferring and memorizing knowledge. For Freire (1996, p. 145-146), it is not possible to understand "[...] education as a cold, soulless experience, in which feelings and emotions, desires, dreams must be repressed by a kind of rationalist dictatorship". Precisely for doing this, conventional school practices reveal strong aspects of what Paulo Freire put as banking and anti-dialogical education in which the absence of space for dialogue serves domination and oppression.

The popular education was constituted from popular struggles, seeking to raise awareness about the impacts of minorities' social and historical inequalities. Defending an education for freedom, for a critical understanding of the world, which rejects and resists oppression, values popular knowledge and articulates it with scientific knowledges.

The idea of freedom only acquires full meaning when it shares the concrete struggle of men to free themselves. This means that the millions of oppressed people in Brazil – similar, in many ways, to all the dominated in the Third World – will be able to find in this educational concept a substantial help or perhaps even a starting point (Freire, 2011, p. 15).

Popular education, when dealing with social and historical awareness collaborates so that the popular classes perceive themselves as subjects of history, with capacities and possibilities for transforming reality. Today, there are too many theories and practices that dialogue with popular education, "[...] they have in common, in different parts of the world, the commitment to the poorest, therefore, with human emancipation [...] the search for an integrative, radical, cognitive and affective social and educational science" (Gadotti, 2015, p. 25, our translation).

In current times in Brazil, popular education represents a movement of great resistance amid the strengthening of neoliberal policies to weaken social movements and forgetfulness of the popular classes. However, popular education remains alive in the schools of the landless rural workers' movement, in rural schools across the country, in undergraduate courses in rural education, in social movements and in all educators who follow the steps of Paulo Freire for an education geared towards social transformation.

In 2013, during the National Conference on Alternatives for New Education (NACONE), was launched the III Manifest for Education – *Change schools, improving education: transforming a country* (Paschoalick, 2013), collectively written in a virtual and face-to-face meetings by educators from various parts of the country and composed of 19 signs, many of which take up points from *National Education Guidelines and Foundations Law* (NEGFL) (Brasil, 1996), like democratic management of schools; guarantee of enrollment at all levels of education; support the quality of life of educators (his and her); formative, continuous and systematic evaluation; among others.

In this document, also, there are references to educators of different times, some are signatories of I and II Manifest. Nowadays Brazilian educational movement, as transformer process, is influenced by various authors mentioned above as Johan Pestalozzi (1746-1827), Maria Montessori (1870-1952), Eurípedes Barsanulfo (1880- 1918), Anton Makarenko (1888-1939), Célestin Freinet (1896-1966), Lev Vigotski (1896-1934), among others. It is not something effectively new, but, yes, a permanent review of pedagogical practice, understanding education as empowering better human beings, who feel capable of transforming, of being part of change.

Barrera (2016, p. 190, our translation) conceives educational movement as “[...] a set of educational practices and proposals, with common features, which differ from the current model and [...] can be articulated in order to legitimize and expand the practices that support”. The author states that the current movement is heterogeneous, it presents change perspectives in various aspects and englobes the “[...] social and cultural movements [...] the deschooling movement, the movement of integral education and the movement of education in the field” (Barrera, 2016, p. 193, our translation).

Some initiatives allow us, in particular, to visualize the potential of this current movement. We highlight and explain below the proposals of Ashoka, CONANE, and the Map of Innovation and Creativity.

Ashoka – international organization that identifies and supports social entrepreneurs and recognizes innovations that mobilize communities in various parts of the world – organizes the Transformers Schools program, which sees school as a privileged space for training people with a great sense of social responsibility. It is formed by a network of 270 schools, 21 of them in Brazil, the recognized schools seek to contribute to a profound transformation in the educational scenario through various actions such as conversation circles, publications, events and expansion of the network of people who believe in transformation of education.

The Transformer Schools program listed four transformative skills: empathy, creativity, team work and social leadership. They are not the only ones necessary for the promotion of the transformer school, but we find that they are really important in this process.

The National Conference on Alternatives for New Education was born in 2013 with the intention of connecting people who dream of a new education. The meeting takes place every two years and also features regional editions. The organizers believe in a education committed to the principles of a libertarian pedagogy and tath recognizes the child and youth protagonism.

In 2015, The Ministry of Education and Culture launched the Map of Innovation and Creativity to disseminate and articulate transformer education experience in Brazil. A public call was opened in which 682 entities signed up, of these 178 were selected, most of them in public schools.

These initiatives demonstrate that is possible to organize the school as a space to enhance learning, where relationships are at the center and the solutions to everyday problems are built collectively, so that each one can perceive themselves as transforming reality.

Such changes are profound in the culture of all those involved with the school and, mainly, in the personal and professional culture of educators, requiring changes in “[...] attitudinal patterns, which are complex and of gradual modification” (Pacheco, 2014, p. 42).

The school will be, therefore, “a node of a collaborative learning network” (Pacheco, 2014, p. 9, our translation), a space in which dialogue and the relationship with life are privileged, understanding that “[...] only life educates and, the more widely life penetrates the school, the stronger and dynamic wil be educational process” (Vigotski, 2001, p. 300, our translation).

According to Vigotski (2009, p. 16), creation has a very important role in human development, being a “necessary condition of existence”, everything that surrounds us and it also was conceived by the human being is the result of creation. We create something new when we imagine, combine and modify. Creation is not only present in great works, but in what is most common, from a new object of daily use to a new thought.

[...] even if this new one looks like a little grain, compared to the creations of geniuses. If we take into account the presence of collective imagination, which unites all these little grains, often insignificant of the individual creation, we will see that a large part of everything that was created bu humankind belongs exactly to the anonymous and collective creative work of unknown inventors (Vigotski, 2009, p. 16, our translation).

The human being has a creative essence, which allows him to be in the world, because “[...] if human beings were limited only to reproduce, they would not be able to adapt or overcome the challenges imposed by the instable environment in which they live” (Gonçalves, 2017, p. 194, our translation). This creation is not limited to new material objects, but to what Vigotski calls creative activity:

We call the creative activity of man that which creates something new. It does not matter if what is created is an object of the external world or a construction of the mind or feeling, known only to the person in which this construction inhabits and manifests (Vigotski, 2009, p. 11, our translation).

However, society and its institutions – perhaps the school being one of the main ones – hinders the creative exercise by limiting learning to copies of contents that are distant from reality and by silencing the voices, conceiving environments in which only a few who are in places of power have speech right.

Transforming education proposals unschool the school itself, as stated by Pederiva (2018), because education does not take place in specific spaces and times, but in life itself, the school is only one of the learning spaces, which can provide potentializing meetings, as says Pacheco (2014, p. 11), “The learning space is the whole space, both physical and the virtual universe, it is the fraternal neighborhood and when do you learn? [...] The time to learn is the time to live, 24 hours a day, in 365 days (or 366) of each year”.

The curricular contents are inserted in life in a broad, inter and transdisciplinary way, there is no separation or hierarchy between learning mathematics and learning to work in a team, for example. The expansion of the cultural repertoire is also valued in these schools. The daily practice of values is as important as academic knowledge and this should serve to transform the lives of students (his and her) and their communities in such a way that “[...] the goal of education is not to adapt to the existing environment, which can be carried out by life itself, but the creation of a human being who looks beyond his environment” (Vigotski, 2001, p. 77, our translation).

Transformative educational proposals involve the redistribution of cultural power to local communities, parents, teachers (he and she), students (he and she). By assuming greater responsibility for education, citizens participate more vigorously in shaping the intellectual and moral climate of two communities. The relationships between educators (he and she) who overcome isolationism through knowledge sharing, the relationships of families with the school that are present not only at bulletin board meetings, but collaborating in various instances, expanding the forms of engagement in the routine school, conceiving new relationships between people, more intense and affectionate relationships (Lovato; Franzim, 2017, p. 32).

The closest relationship with the community is due to the recognition of its values, its spiritual wealth, potential and, also, for the willingness to seek solutions to the challenges. The school being conceived as another community house and a point of strengthening community ties.

## Vigotski and the Transformer Education

Vigotski experienced and collaborated, to a large extent, with a period of profound renovations in the educational system of post-revolutionary Russia, in the early 1920s, before Stalin encircled the entire process underway. His contributions to education and what today is called transformer education, however, go beyond the context experienced by him and are therefore extremely contemporary, since most of today's schools are based on anachronistic conventional education structures.

Educational premises, therefore, that seem new and that fit in what is called transformer education, as we have seen, it has been engendered, over time, by many, and our intention is to highlight some of Vigotski's contributions, from now on.

The educator (he and she) ceases to be the one who speaks in a solitary way and becomes the one who learns together with the students (he and she), starting to understand that their role is to collaborate so that they seek knowledge, feel the enthusiasm inherent in learning. For Vigotski (2001, p. 296, our translation) "[...] the student self-educates" and

On must encourage the child to walk and fall, to suffer the pain of the injuries and to choose the direction. And what is true with regard to walking – which can only be learned from one's own legs and from one's own falls – can also be applied to all aspects of education (Vigotski, 2001, p. 298, our translation).

Education is seen by the author as a living, dynamic and creative process, of "[...] permanent tension and overcoming, of constant combination and creation of new forms of behavior. Thus, [...] each of our movements and experiences constitute the aspiration to create a new reality, the momentum forward, towards something new" (Vigotski, 2001, p. 303, our translation).

The school can enhance the experiences and the creation by being willing to notice what touches the imagination, the feelings, interests and needs of the students and also of the educators (his and her), stimulating the beauty of the authenticity of the creation. So,

[...] education understood correctly and scientifically, it does not mean to artificially infuse ideals, feelings and spirits totally foreign to children from outside. The correct education consists of awakening in the child what is in him, helping him to develop and directing that development somewhere (Vigotski, 2009, p. 72, our translation).

This change in perspective requires courage to see the contradictions that exist in each process, in a unique way, and a spirit of struggle in overcoming their own difficulties, understanding with the challenges of the collective and perseverance. The vast majority of educators (he and she) were trained in conventional teaching systems and also had

their creative potential curtailed, which amplifies the challenges of a transformation process, because, first of all, it is necessary to take care of this educator, empower him in his (and her) role as such, seeing it as an essential part of the educational proposal, expanding its training possibilities, enhancing its knowledge and supporting them in their daily challenges. The continuity of the school's transformation process requires the educator (he and she) to be willing to transform, to constantly review what needs to improve in himself. One of the premises for a good work, development is the design of environments in which educators (he and she) feel safe, supported in their actions and, consequently, can share security and welcome with students (he and she).

There is, in general, a question about the role of educators (he and she), if they would be underestimated in these educational proposals. However, just the opposite happens, the role of educators (he and she) expands and becomes more complex due to the fact that they take their place as "organizer of the educational social environment" (Vigotski, 2001, p. 76, our translation). In other words, Vigotski (2001) defends that educators should educate through the modification of the social environment lever.

The more the educators look at their activity, the better they will be able to act to benefit the development of students (he and she), understanding that the educational process "[...] is a very complex struggle, in which thousands of the most complicated and heterogeneous forces are involved, that it constitutes a dynamic, active and dialectical process [...] of incessant fighting between human beings and the world" (Vigotski, 2001, p. 79, our translation).

As a space that potentiates creation, educators (he and she) must organize the environment in a way that encourages new combinations, new responses to demands, when it makes think. Vigotski (2001), in this sense, points out that "[...] the teacher has a new and important role. He has to become the organizer of the social space, which is the only educational factor" (Vigotski, 2001, p. 296, our translation).

The social environment and all child behavior must be organized in such a way that each day it provokes new combinations, unforeseen cases of behavior, for which there are no habits and responses prepared in the deposit of the child's experience, but which require at every opportunity new combinations of thoughts. Thinking, as you can see, does not mean anything other than the participation of all our previous experience in the solution of the peculiarity of this form of behavior lies in providing the creative element, forming all possible combinations of the elements existing in the previous experience. In essence, this constitutes [what we call] 'thinking'. This fact [thinking] multiplies the limitless possibility of those combinations that can be made from human reactions and makes human behavior diverse, and even inexhaustible, and complex until it reaches the exceptional (Vigotski, 2001, p. 173, our translation).

The author emphasizes the importance of educating considering the singular way in which the individual relates to the world, at that moment, in a non-limiting and non-coercive manner. When dealing with imagination, Vigotski (2009) makes explicit the importance of expanding the child's experiences so that he has elements for the creation.

The more the child saw, heard and experienced, the more he knows and assimilates; the greater the number of elements of reality that she has in her experience – the other circumstances being the same –, the more meaningful and productive the activity of her imagination will be (Vigotski, 2009, p. 23, our translation).

For being a path against the system that is imposed, the challenges are multiple, as well as the possibilities of overcoming. It is necessary to deal all the time, in this journey in search of transforming, with those who do not believe that is possible to conceive of an egalitarian school in the midst of a society marked by so many inequalities.

Pederiva (2009) says that it is in the quality of human relationships and in the conquest of historical and cultural tools that the conditions for the development of individuals and collectives are made possible.

Children, so often mistakenly seen as a blank sheet of paper, have different experiences; the complexity of human behavior involves hereditary reactions, personal, social, historical and consensual experience (Vigotski, 2001). The cerebral cortex and the human receptor apparatus are all intricate and of an infinite wealth of possibilities, "[...] human conduct does not always end in certain stereotyped forms, but it presents a totally unpredictable amount of possibilities, which cannot be calculated beforehand" (Vigotski, 2001, p. 68, our translation). Errors, which are extremely valid experiences in terms of seeking to overcome contradictions, need to be seen as part of the movement for the reconception of school structures, since it is impossible to transform without facing them.

It is not possible to genuinely transform the school outside its context, the path takes place with the community involved, constituting tools created and organized by the people who experience its processes, in dialogue with historically constituted transformative actions. The school cannot be understood as a static space, distanced from the dynamism of life, "[...] the human material has an infinite plasticity" (Vigotski, 2001, p. 200, our translation), emphasizing that the social environment has incalculable possibilities of relationships.

The social environment contains an immense amount of very diverse aspects and elements, which are always in flagrant contradiction and struggle with each other. We must not conceive of the environment as a static, elementary and stable whole, but as a dynamic process that develops dialectically (Vigotski, 2001, p. 197, our translation).



Vigotski affirms that the way in which psychology studied the human being until that moment – between 1920 and 1930 – was limited to a superficial look, of the most elementary relations of the human being with the environment, without investigating “[...] *well complex and very varied interactions which human behavior cannot be deciphered in its important laws*” (Vigotski, 1999, p. 5, our translation).

Understanding the human being as a being with immense potential for development in culture, in relation to other human beings, gives educators (he and she) the role of cultivator of life, of which instigates creative processes, which collaborates so that each one is his best, not only for himself, but to the collectivity that he belongs.

## Conclusion

Educating is an act aimed at the perception that we are part of a social, political and historical context and that we are also biological beings, that we must be respected and valued in our entirety. According to Vigotski (2001), educating will always be changing a previous conduct to new forms of reaction, so psychology and physiology collaborate in educational processes by taking a scientific look at human development and behavior.

Although it was not strictly detailed in this article, the understanding of the stages of human development in the biological and cultural aspects is present in Vigotski’s work; the ways in which the human being reacts to different types of stimulus; how instincts work; emotional behavior; how we develop attention and distraction; how memory and imagination operate; how we develop habits and the ability to overcome them; how intellectual deficiencies occur; the formation of temperament, of character and personality, among other themes that collaborate immensely for the teaching work to take place in a more effective way, contributing to the development of human capacities, which are, specifically cultural possibilities.

The expansion of creative processes is also the basis for transformation in education, both in the aspect of the educator (he and she), who creates new ways of organizing the educational space, and of the student (he and she), who has more space to express his potential. For Vigotski, creating is an intrinsic activity of the human being the culture the product of human imagination and creation, including the simplest and most common ones, in the form of crystalized imagination (Vigotski, 2009).

Conventional schooled education has contributed to the support of capitalist society, so that people are not recognized in their creative capacity, but as passive, alienated and non-critical beings (Mészáros, 2008). Schools have been regulated by a set of standardized norms that promote inequalities both inside and outside school spaces, limiting education to certain knowledge, ways of learning and teaching; devaluing all knowledge and ways of being in the world that are beyond curricula, times, hierarchies and school spaces (Illich, 1985; Tunes, 2011).



Most of the knowledge assimilated in conventional schools is presented in a decontextualized and static way, and students are limited to memorizing content to answer tests, not allowing them to relate knowledge in a critical way and devise solutions to the challenges experienced in their localities.

Transformer education questions the conventional education perspectives, and it is one capable of organizing the educational space amid creative processes, full of meaning, between more humanized social relations. It comprehends that the school must collaborate so that everyone involved in the educational process (educator, student, community) observes and acts on what he needs to transform in himself for his own good and for the good of community. It is in this transforming sense that Vigotski asserts the human creation as something that turns to itself to change the present, directed to the future (Vigotski, 2009).

Care must be taken that the transformer schools that we have as inspiration do not distance us from our context and that idealizations do not generate suffering and frustration, with parameters that are very far from what we have been able to achieve and the consequent devaluation of creation and daily celebration. The school transformation process takes place daily, by all members of the school community, in the conception of new perspectives on education and on the human being. For Vigotski, the educator (he and she) must be an inseparable part of the school collective and, in psychological terms, the education must be narrowly in touch with life (Vigotski, 2001), as a continuum process combining new elements.

In the process of transforming education, without ready-made formulas, understanding what transformer education is for each one, for the design of pedagogical practices that make sense for everyone, in a specific context.

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