

## **NEBULAUS ANCHOR OF THE INITIAL TRAINING OF TEACHERS FOR CHILDHOOD: HOW WILL WE FACE IT?**

### ***ÂNCORA NEBULOSA DA FORMAÇÃO INICIAL DE PROFESSORES PARA A INFÂNCIA: COMO ENFRENTAREMOS?***

### ***ÂNGASE NEBULOSA DE LA FORMACIÓN INICIAL DE PROFESORES PARA LA INFANCIA: ¿CÓMO ENFRENTAREMOS?***

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**ABSTRACT:** The main objective of the text is to analyze the initial formation of teachers of children's education in the current context, with a specific look at the training process in the Pedagogy Course of two Public State Universities of the State of Paraná. It is also intended to reflect on the quality training of the teachers of the childhood to face the challenges that present themselves in the current social and educational context. The methodology is a bibliographic study in the form of documentary analysis, based on the historical method and analysis of the specific disciplines focused on the initial education for children 's education of the Pedagogy Course of the State Universities of Londrina and Maringá, Paraná State. The results point to the emancipatory possibility of initial teacher training, with theoretical and methodological fundamentals critical and humanizing teachers.

**KEYWORDS:** Teacher training. Child education. Public universities.

**RESUMO:** *O intuito deste texto é analisar a formação inicial de professores para a educação infantil no contexto brasileiro atual, estudando especificamente o processo formativo no Curso de Pedagogia de duas universidades estaduais públicas do estado do Paraná. Essa análise é primordial nos contextos social e educacional vigentes, caracterizados por vários retrocessos e por baixos investimentos governamentais. A metodologia é um estudo bibliográfico na modalidade de análise documental, tomando por base o método histórico e a análise de disciplinas específicas voltadas à formação inicial para o trabalho na educação infantil do Curso de Pedagogia das Universidades Estaduais de Londrina e de Maringá, ambas localizadas no Paraná. Os resultados direcionam para a possibilidade emancipatória da formação inicial docente, com fundamentos teórico-metodológicos críticos e humanizadores do ensino.*

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**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Formação de professores. Educação infantil. Universidades públicas.*

**RESUMEN:** *El objetivo principal del texto es analizar la formación inicial de profesores de la educación infantil en el contexto actual, con una mirada específica al proceso formativo en el Curso de Pedagogía de dos Universidades Estatales Públicas del Estado de Paraná. Se pretende, además, reflexionar sobre la formación de calidad de los profesores de la infancia para el enfrentamiento de los desafíos que se presentan en el contexto social y educativo vigente. La metodología es un estudio bibliográfico en la modalidad de análisis documental, tomando como base el método histórico y, análisis de las disciplinas específicas dirigidas a la formación inicial para la educación infantil del Curso de Pedagogía de las Universidades Estadales de Londrina y de Maringá, del Estado de Paraná. Los resultados dirigen hacia la posibilidad emancipatoria de la formación inicial docente, con fundamentos teórico-metodológicos críticos y humanizadores de la enseñanza.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *Formación de profesores. Educación infantil. Universidades públicas.*

### **First words**

From a historical and legal point of view, initial teacher education initiatives have undergone significant changes, mainly from the 1980s to the present day. Until the mid-1980s, Brazilian legislation was silent on the education of young children, presenting a government policy that disqualified the area and, consequently, its professionals.

We verified that in the 1980s there was a movement of reformulation and advances in relation to education in the country. Saviani (2009, p. 148, our translation) emphasizes that, based on these movements, “most institutions tended to consider the formation of teachers for early childhood education and for the initial grades of elementary school as an attribution of the Pedagogy courses”; as a result, in 1996, the LDB, law n. 9,394, which determines, in its article 62, that the formation of teachers for basic education would take place at a higher level, “admitted, as a minimum formation for the exercise of teaching in Early Childhood Education and in the first five years of Elementary School, the one offered at High level, in the Normal mode” (BRASIL, 1996, our translation).

Since then, early childhood education and teacher formation for childhood have historically been more researched, discussed and claimed, starting a critical movement in favor of changes in education for children aged 0 to 6 years and, consequently, expressing new formative demands for professionals who work with this age group. This made it possible to rethink the pedagogical work aimed at young children with a view to the process of emancipation regarding their care and education. In this sense, public policies related to work in early childhood education have expanded their actions and discussions in relation to

children, their childhood and educational assistance, aiming at higher quality education. There is, however, much to advance regarding initial formation and the performance of professionals involved in this educational stage (NASCIMENTO; LIRA, 2017; SCHEIBE, 2007).

Therefore, this text aims to analyze the initial formation of teachers for early childhood education in the current context, with a specific look at the formative process in the Pedagogy Course of two public state universities in the state of Paraná. Even though there is a vast contribution with scientific texts and works on this subject, we believe that the unconscious and nebulous anchor of childhood teacher education is still present today, thus requiring a new confrontation of the gaze (conceptions) and action (teaching practice) towards the emancipatory formation of teaching.

Therefore, understanding the history of the teacher formative process allows for reflection on teacher formation in the current context, as well as the understanding of the rancidity and advances in working with childhood. Therefore, it is important to think about the initial formation of childhood teachers, considering the legal and historical milestones as provocative, since the 1980s, of new looks and new educational directions for early childhood, thinking about the necessary confrontations in the formative and pedagogical fields (NASCIMENTO; LIRA, 2017). The Constitutional Charter of 1988 is one of those milestones; from it, the child came to be seen as a subject of rights who needs to be respected in their individuality and specificity, as a historical and cultural being who builds and reconstructs social history through the human relationships that they establish around them (BRASIL, 1998). According to Drumond (2008), concomitant to the new way of looking at the child in terms of legislation, the discussion about the identity of the child education professional was emphasized, as well as new pedagogical horizons that should permeate the initial and continued training of this professional.

As a work methodology, we opted for bibliographical research in the form of document analysis, based on the historical method and the analysis of the disciplines of the Pedagogy Course at the State Universities of Londrina and Maringá, both in Paraná, focused on initial formation for child education. For the study, the critical foundations of education are used, to enhance a demystifying look in relation to this teacher formation process, in search of its professional specificity in the position of teacher responsible for the first stage of basic education.

Didactically, the text is organized as follows: at first, we make a historical overview of the initial formation of teachers for early childhood education, based on Brazilian legislation,

from 1988. Then, we analyze the Pedagogy Course, taking as a basis the 2009 National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education for working with children aged 0 to 6 years, aiming to observe and score the contributions and contents of the subjects intended for initial formation for early childhood education contained in the curriculum of the Course of Pedagogy at the State University of Londrina (UEL) and at the State University of Maringá (UEM). Finally, we raise some necessary notes to think about quality initial teacher formation in light of the contributions of public universities, to demystify the care-educating relationship, attributing broader meanings, characterizing the learning processes of the areas developed and presented daily to children.

Today, in Brazil, the great challenge of courses of teacher formation is to graduate a qualified professional. Considering this challenge, the reflections presented here may incite debates, in academic and educational spheres, in order to broaden the pedagogical horizons of teachers with a view to educational intentions, the responsible role of teaching in children's learning and the commitment to the humanizing formation of children subjects.

We argue that the early childhood education teacher needs to have the theoretical-methodological foundations so that they can enable children's learning through the process of systematized intervention, that is, enable, through teaching and mediation of content, the child's learning, in the sense to expand their readings of the world, their actions, their experiences and their cultural manifestations, in broad aspects of human life (PASCHOAL *et al.*, 2016; SAITO; OLIVEIRA, 2018; SARMENTO; FOSSATTI, 2012; SILVA; BITTENCOURT; OLIVEIRA, 2019; YAEGASHI, BIANCHINI; PIRES, 2018).

### **Teacher education for early childhood education: trajectory and expectations**

When history is devalued because it deals with what has already happened, the risk is in the illusion of *inventing the wheel again* (KUHLMANN JÚNIOR, 2004, p. 6, authors' highlights, our translation).

The theme of teacher education in early childhood education is currently the target of great discussions in the Brazilian scenario and of great impasses as well. From a historical and legal point of view, there is a significant struggle to give new meaning to teaching work through qualified initial formation. According to Saviani (2009), the discussion around teacher education had already been advocated by Comenius, in the 18th century, but only in the 19th century this question required an institutional response. As a result, Normal Schools were created as institutions in charge of preparing teachers for teaching practice.

In the case of Brazil, the need for teacher formation emerges, explicitly, after the country's independence, with the organization of popular instruction, as it was called at the time. From this context onwards, the historical trajectory of teacher education in Brazil took on a significant connotation, strengthening the discussions, especially over the last two centuries: XX and XXI (SAVIANI, 2009).

Regarding teacher education for early childhood education, the historical path followed is no different, as it is the result of discussions, historical changes in childcare, the rights and educational objectives of this level of education, as well as the need to seek qualified teaching work for children from an early age.

With regard to the right to education, both in the Federal Constitution of 1988 and in the Laws of Guidelines and Bases of Education (LDB), n. 4,024/1961 and n. 5,692/1971, we verified that it is mandatory only for children from 7 years of age and, occasionally, for children under this age group, tiny initiatives were pointed out, such as encouraging companies to organize educational institutions and affirming the need to receive appropriate education. Because of this, the care of children aged 0 to 6 years old from the popular classes was, in large part, the responsibility of public social assistance agencies that, with the purpose of "care", aimed to enable mothers to access the labor market. In this social context, day care centers, as welfare institutions, assisted children aged 0 to 2 years or more. Educational assistance to children took place from the age of 3, with the so-called pre-school classes established in primary, 1st grade or elementary schools, and was always subject to the number of vacancies offered, in general, much lower than the demand (PAULINO; CÔCO, 2016).

Thus, early childhood education and, in particular, day care, was historically conceived as a care service, prioritizing childcare, with no need for a formed and/or trained professional. This conception of care lasted for many years and, consequently, discredited the children's teacher, who was sometimes associated with a romanticized feeling in relation to their pedagogical work in the day care center, that is, the role of the childhood professional was associated with the feeling of "love" for children (ARCE, 2001).

Arce reinforces that this is because, historically, "the image of the professional in this area was defined as that of a naturally passive, patient, loving woman educator, who knows how to act with common sense, is guided by the heart, to the detriment of professional formation" (ARCE, 2001, p. 167, our translation). There are also other factors, such as salary devaluation, inferiority in relation to other teachers working at other levels and in other teaching modalities, and the association of teaching work with domestic work and motherhood.

From LDB n. 9,394/1996, known as the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDBEN), the guarantee of “free care in day care centers and pre-schools for children from zero to six years of age” was demarcated. However, the most meaningful change for early childhood education is inscribed in Chapter I, "The composition of School Levels", more specifically in article 21, item I, which establishes that "School education is composed of: basic education, formed by early childhood education, elementary school and high school” (BRASIL, 1996, our translation).

In line with this legal guidance, we had the publication of Resolution CNE/CP n. 1, of 2006, instituting the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Undergraduate Course in Pedagogy, and, subsequently, the guidelines provided in the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (DCNEI) of 2010, emphasizing the axes of interactions and games as well as ethical, political and aesthetic principles as foundations in the organization of pedagogical practice. From all this compilation of legislation and guidelines, we were able to verify the emergence of some changes in the way of understanding and proposing work with children, also focusing on the way of structuring the formation of teachers for this age group, thus interfering in the process of construction of the identity of teaching professionals who work with early childhood (0 to 6 years)<sup>4</sup>.

In addition, the quantitative expansion of day care centers and preschools since the 1970s in Brazil has led to the need to monitor qualitative educational work and the expansion of studies related to the pedagogical work of teachers in the daily life of early childhood education. That said, the formation of teachers for early childhood education has become one of the goals to be achieved to ensure this "new look" for the process of educational assistance to children, especially regarding the redefinition and review of pedagogical services (KUHLMANN JÚNIOR, 2004).

Kramer (2005) states that, before the 1970s, educational policies proposed to compensate for cultural and affective-social deficiencies, linguistic deficiencies or affective gaps. Even in the face of misunderstandings regarding the compensatory proposal, its role in the 1970s cannot be ignored, as it stimulated the debate on the pedagogical functions and actions in working with young children.

Gradually, the need emerged to perceive the child as a subject of rights, who deserves a dignified, coherent and consistent education with their real needs and learning potential. Paschoal and Brandão (2015) state that the forms of educational assistance to children have

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<sup>4</sup> At this time, early childhood was still considered to be from 0 to 6 years. This scenario will only be changed in 2006 with Law n. 11,274/06, known as the Nine Years Law.

significantly advanced in relation to legislation and public policies aimed at early childhood education in Brazil.

However, the “packages” of decrees and laws are not enough to carry out quality work with young children. If, in the past, love, affection and care with health and hygiene were enough to guarantee the education of children, nowadays we defend that there is a need for theoretical and practical professional formation so that the mediation of knowledge becomes possible for the learning and integral development of young children.

Cerisara (2002) draws our attention to the fact that changes related to pedagogical work in early childhood education are not natural, but historically constructed, as they occurred from various movements in which the child and the need for quality formation of educational professionals responsible for this age group were defended. These changes suffered great interference, considering the macro-social and those observed in the family institution, for example, with the insertion of women in the world of work.

With regard to educational assistance, Silva, Paschoal and Oliveira (2013) recognize, in this process, the massive presence of women in the teaching profession due to the fact that society considers that the female figure would be the most appropriate to work with young children, in other words, “women would be more affectionate to these virtues and, therefore, they would have the role of multi-purpose teachers” (BRASIL, 1999, p. 30, our translation). A representation of teaching work for children was permeated, whose requirements are much more sensitivity, patience and the maternal aspect than professional teaching formation and preparation. Tracing the profile of professionals in early childhood education means, therefore, considering, among other factors, the initial formation of teachers to ensure an emancipated performance of this professional that is focused on the pedagogical work of teaching, learning and developing children.

Still, it is worth emphasizing that, through the transformations in this scenario, we can see that, currently, the male role in this stage of teaching has taken place in a broad way. Thus, in addition to female purposes, professional perceptions in early childhood are also defined as masculine, with the current concept of “gender”, which implies a reference to the social origins of the subjective identities of men and women (AMÂNCIO, 2003). This gender identity is a progressive construction of images of masculinity or femininity linked to the social roles to be played in each society. Thus, in this historical process of changes in pedagogical work in early childhood education, there is no way to deny the presence and insertion of males in the professional category of childhood educators, even if, traditionally,

this space "belongs" to the female world (GONÇALVES; OLIVEIRA, 2018; JAEGER; JACQUES, 2017; MONTEIRO; ALTMANN, 2014).

In this way, teacher education is constituted by individual and collective pursuits that reach the personal, institutional, workers union, cultural dimensions and that relate to the dynamics of scientific knowledge and knowledge built throughout professional practice. Thus, teaching knowledge is not formed by a single aspect, but by a complex process of initiatives in favor of higher quality formation. The requirement, nowadays, is to prioritize the integration between care and education and the construction of knowledge and learning for young children, which is the great challenge for early childhood education.

In the current emerging context, what is expected from childhood professionals is a pedagogical work that includes care and education in an inseparable way, and they should develop this relationship to promote knowledge and learning in children. According to Saito and Tacahashi (2019, p. 303, our translation), "the truth is that caring and educating are intimately intertwined, that is, when a child is cared for, he/she is also educated. This occurs in the most common situations, such as: brushing teeth, feeding, bathing, diaper changing [...]". Rancidity, however, is visible in the daily work with children, as, in some cases, we clearly see the fragmentation of work, represented, on the one hand, by the teacher who educates and, on the other hand, by the attendants and assistants who care. It is necessary, therefore, to reflect on this situation, to analyze the weaknesses that this form of organization has provided to the education process, with a view to quality educational service, considering, also, that the different functions and hierarchy, with workload and wage disparity, generate discomfort and conflicts.

The more the pedagogical work is aimed at young children, the less prestige the education professional has. Such understanding is found within educational spaces and, mainly, in the ideology of society itself, also extending to initial and continuing teacher education courses.

For this reason, it is important to turn our gaze to teacher formation courses to understand how the organization of these courses influences the development of pedagogical practices. Thus, to have a parameter for the configuration of initial formation for early childhood education teachers, especially in the state of Paraná, we then bring the curricular structure of two Pedagogy Courses from two state universities in Paraná to analyze the subjects specifically aimed at early childhood education, as well as the knowledge provided by such formative compositions.



## **Curriculum of the Pedagogy Course of two public universities in Paraná: possible contributions to face the initial teacher education**

According to the current LDB, in its article 61, professional teacher formation must "meet the objectives of the different levels and modalities of teaching and the characteristics of each stage of the student's development", based on "the association between theories and practices, including through in-service formation", linked to the "use of formation and previous experiences" (BRASIL, 1996, our translation), which are acquired in educational formative institutions (universities) and in activities other than teaching.

In this sense, the initial formation of teachers for early childhood education should include, in its curriculum, specific knowledge related to this educational stage, established from the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Pedagogy course, to contemplate the need for articulation between the care and education in different pedagogical practices, avoiding fragmented, mechanical and decontextualized actions. Therefore, there is a need for a curricular proposal for initial teacher formation that guarantees such specificities in working with children.

We understand here that it is necessary to emphasize that in order to think about initial teacher education, it is necessary to reflect on the political-social and pedagogical posture of the educators of teachers of the Pedagogy Course in order to develop an open space for discussions and analysis around specific aspects of teacher professionalization, since, according to Formosinho (2002, p. 41, our translation), "their professional development necessarily reflects their type of professionalism".

To analyze what kind of professional development is being provided in Pedagogy courses and, in particular, in the two public universities in Paraná, we will present the curricular structure of the Pedagogy course at UEL and UEM, aiming to reflect on the teacher formation process, weaving a critical look for the strengths and weaknesses in the field of formation of professionals who will work in early childhood education. We can say that the two courses are structured in such a way as to offer the subjects of general and specific formation without qualification, thus meeting the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Undergraduate Course in Pedagogy.

The objective of the Teaching Degree Course in Pedagogy at UEL is to form teachers to exercise teaching functions in early childhood education and in the early years of elementary school, in the teaching of pedagogical subjects in high school, pedagogical management and in areas in which pedagogical knowledge is foreseen. Thus, the course is intended for both initial teacher formation and the formation of educational managers,

including the participation of these professionals in the organization and management of educational systems and institutions with the following didactic-pedagogical actions: planning, execution, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of tasks specific to the education sector, as well as planning, execution, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of projects and non-school educational experiences.

The Pedagogical Project of the UEL Pedagogy Course was implemented in 2010 and has been in force until then. It was based on three main areas: teaching, pedagogical management and research. The organization of the curriculum is disciplinary and serial, to guarantee a range of knowledge needed for the three major areas mentioned. As subjects focused on teaching practices, we have the mandatory Curricular Internship, which is allocated to the 3rd, 4th and 5th grades of the course. In the 3rd grade we have the supervised internship in early childhood education; in the 4th grade, supervised internship in the early grades and in school management; in the 5th grade, the supervised internship in non-school spaces (UNIVERSIDADE ESTADUAL DE LONDRINA, 2010).

In the case of subjects specifically aimed at child pedagogical work, the 2nd grade of the course offers two subjects: "Child Education" (72 hours) and "Organization of Pedagogical Work" (72 hours). In the 3rd grade of the course, we have the subjects "Knowledge and Doing in Early Childhood Education" (72 hours) and "Educational Practices in the Nursery" (72 hours). In addition to these, we have the subjects "Supervised Internship in Early Childhood Education", with 100 hours/class, and "Course Completion Work" (TCC, Portuguese initials) in which students can opt for research related to the area of early childhood education and which is allocated in the 3rd, 4th and 5th grades, with the activities of TCC 1, TCC 2 and TCC 3. In addition, the undergraduate has the opportunity to participate in complementary academic activities through the following actions: a) participation in projects of teaching, research and extension and integrated; b) non-mandatory curricular internship; c) participation in congresses, seminars, symposia, colloquiums, round tables; d) dissertation or thesis defense hearings; e) scientific initiation works; f) monitoring; g) presentation of papers at scientific events; h) student representation; i) extension and complementary formation programs in undergraduate education; j) special subjects; k) extension courses; l) elective courses offered by UEL; m) participation in scientific, cultural and/or artistic events, upon proof; n) subjects related to the area, taken at other HEIs, not included in the UEL transcript (UNIVERSIDADE ESTADUAL DE LONDRINA, 2010).

Thus, regarding the content offered in different areas, academics have contact with a set of general knowledge in the 1st and 2nd grades of the course. From the 2nd grade

onwards, they already receive content related to initial formation for early childhood education, which extends into the following years of the course, through the practice of supervised internship in early childhood education and course completion work.

If we observe the subjects offered for the formation of children's teachers in line with the course's curriculum and their workload, at first, we see how this area, timidly recognized in the UEL Pedagogy Course, is fragile and fragmented when it comes to initial formation to early childhood education. Therefore, if there is no dialogue between the subjects, in addition to the formation being reduced, there is a risk of committing pedagogical mistakes with repetition of content and/or fragmentation of teaching.

In addition, even with all the efforts of the faculty in this area, there is a visible perception that the discussions around the subjects do not guarantee the quality formation of academics, mainly due to the reduction in the workload for the four specific subjects and the whole content that must be worked on in the classroom.

Another problem is the lack of a set of knowledge, such as: childhood and culture, playfulness, children's languages and fields of experience, diversity and inclusion in early childhood education, art and education in broad aspects; they end up being offered in a superficial way, considering that there is a specific syllabus of subjects and the shortened teaching time in the course. On this issue, it is important to consider that this knowledge must be worked on in the course considering the critical theoretical-methodological assumptions of knowledge, completely distancing itself from a model of didactic or pedagogical prescription.

In addition, if we observe the curriculum of the UEL Pedagogy Course with the idea we currently have about the concept of curriculum as a journey, trajectory, direction and process of production of certain knowledge, the situation causes concern, as we consider that rancidity is visible in the initial formation course itself, when it deals with early childhood education and the professional of this stage with a view of discredit to teaching.

The Undergraduate Teaching Degree Course in Pedagogy at UEM, in turn, has three emphases: the construction of professional identity, teaching and the formation of manager of educational processes, being taught in classroom and semi-attendance modes. It aims to formation a professional who can know and analyze the world in which they live, to link educational issues and broader social issues, aiming at the effectiveness of pedagogical actions. For this, the curricular organization is based on two formative cycles: the integrated initial formation cycle, which is composed of integrative axes, around which the entire basis for the formation of educators is articulated, and the continuing education cycles for professional qualification through extension, updating and specialization courses. It is worth

noting that, even though it is in line with the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Undergraduate Course in Pedagogy of 2006, the Pedagogy Course at UEM was in the process of being reformulated during the period of preparation of this article, in view of the new national requirements for teaching degrees (UNIVERSIDADE ESTADUAL DE MARINGÁ, 2005), starting to work with the new curriculum in 2020.

Considering the structure that was in effect, we present, below, the organization related to the subjects aimed at early childhood education. In the 2nd year of the course, there are six subjects divided as follows: in the first semester, “Philosophical Fundamentals of Early Childhood Education” (34h), “Teacher Formation and Action: Teaching Practice in Early Childhood Education I” (34h) and “Supervised Curricular Internship in Child Education I” (68h); in the second semester, “Childhood History in Brazil” (34h), “Teacher Formation and Action: Teaching Practice in Early Childhood Education II” (34h) and “Supervised Internship in Early Childhood Education II” (34h). In the 3rd year, two subjects are offered in the first semester: “Teacher Formation and Action: Teaching Practice in Early Childhood Education III” (34h) and “Supervised Internship in Early Childhood Education III” (68h). Thus, we have a total of 340 hours in a universe of 3,840 hours of course, that is, less than 10% of the workload allocated to subjects related to early childhood education.

In quantitative terms, we consider an exceptionally low workload to develop with the students the necessary understandings for the educational practice with children of this age group, to contemplate all the specificities of child development and pedagogical work in daycare and preschool. In addition, in the Pedagogy Course at UEM, as well as at UEL, the action regarding initial formation for early childhood education is still fragile and fragmented.

Kishimoto (2002), when discussing the curriculum of teacher education courses in Brazil, comments that the way they are structured does not contribute to future teachers. This fact is justified because there are still gaps in the understanding of graduates of these courses in relation to what is necessary to teach to young children and how they learn and develop, especially considering that the curriculum of the courses is fragmented and presents content through disciplines compartmentalized, which do not dialogue with each other.

Professional formation within universities has reproduced practices in which professors organize themselves in disciplinary fields, create traditions, feuds and prioritize certain fields of knowledge over others: in some, historical and philosophical, sociological and anthropological or organizational knowledge between others (KISHIMOTO, 2002, p. 108, our translation).

Therefore, it is necessary to create a culture of the collective and not the individual, so that teachers of different disciplines can dialogue and form a graduate in Pedagogy who can work with mastery in teaching and in teaching in early childhood education. If we dare to fight for quality education in formative spaces for early childhood education, then there is a need to start this process of valuing and providing quality formation experience from the initial teacher formation. In this sense, we defend the need for a curriculum that allows the formation of professionals beyond the feeling of love and passion for children; they need to have dignified and knowledge-based conditions in order to guarantee an emancipatory education for our young children.

In search of new formative directions, we understand that looking at the specificity of the curriculum of the UEL and UEM Pedagogy Course allows us to think about the curriculum of the Pedagogy Course in general, as well as broadening our reflection on what it is necessary for an emancipatory and quality teaching performance. We insist that we must fight for an expansion of the hours devoted to teaching in early childhood education within the initial teacher formation course, as well as for an articulation between the different curricular subjects.

We also defend that there are other possibilities besides the mandatory curriculum, which may be viable solutions. Thus, the teaching, research, extension projects and the study groups that are developed in both universities around the formation of teachers for early childhood education can be drivers of views for specific work with childhood, through proposals updated and expanded on the fundamentals and discussions related to public policies for formative work in early childhood education. Such activities are characterized by formative and study spaces that direct the gaze, in a more specific way, to the theme, allowing for theoretical analysis and deepening. In turn, the projects and extension courses significantly contribute to the process of expanding teaching work in early childhood education, when formation is provided for students in the Pedagogy Course and for the external community working in educational institutions. Thus, both initial and continuing education, when well-structured and conducted, can contribute to quality educational work with young children. Thus, the curriculum of the Pedagogy Course needs to think about formation not in a technical sense, nor instrumented by a partial and reductionist perspective, but considering who the subject is and how to lead him to reflect on his possibilities of appropriating knowledge.

## **Final words**

The discussion about the initial formation of teachers for early childhood education brings out the need to consider the educational dimension in these institutions for young children, considering a necessary set of knowledge and learning for the teacher formative process. In this perspective, the initial formative work in public universities, our object of study, assumes an epistemic and dialectical movement, interspersed with conflicts, in favor of guaranteeing a function that is educational and of care, which ends up being a great paradox in teacher formation.

The challenge, in this sense, is to move towards a proposal that meets the specificities of working with children aged 0 to 6 years, in tune with the current emerging changes aimed at this stage of basic education. Therefore, the set of school knowledge provided by the disciplines in the curriculum of the Pedagogy Course at universities needs to guarantee this dialogue between theory and practice, with epistemic elaborations based on theoretical-methodological educational assumptions for this age group in education.

Kramer (2005) points to new perspectives in relation to this initial teacher formation process, in order to contribute to the discussion about pedagogical work with children, considering the urgency of having “[...] new paradigms, reinventing the work in day care centers and preschools, recreating routines, giving lightness to the daily lives of children and adults who share these institutions [...] giving visibility to the child based on their ways of expressing and meaning the world” (KRAMER, 2005, p. 215, our translation).

This process is infinite when we commit to critically reflect on the pedagogical practice of teaching and consider the need to reframe the initial teacher education curriculum. It is necessary to guarantee to the professional of early childhood education a set of knowledge that allows them to act, aiming at the quality of education, through pedagogical interventions consistent with the needs and specificities of children. In this process, we consider it necessary and relevant for the professor to develop the facets of researcher, investigator and transformer of reality.

Thus, the formation offered by universities must be supported by the critical educational foundations of teaching, so that the devaluation of tradition at the expense of the exacerbated prestige of the new, that is, of “curricular innovations” on teacher formation, to bury the “old” – historically constructed knowledge – as disused formative knowledge. The challenge lies in reinventing or redefining the curriculum for initial teacher formation to

guarantee a range of knowledge that allows them to assume the position of pedagogical authority in teaching in formative spaces for early childhood education.

Therefore, we defend that the university has an important and irreplaceable role in the initial teacher formation process, as it enables the constitution of autonomous and investigative thinking involved in the conception and contextualization of teaching, since "only the university has a constitutive investment in production of knowledge and critical analysis of reality and society" (FORMOSINHO, 2002, p. 170, our translation).

Still, if the initial formation curriculum is redefined, one can think of guaranteeing the professional teaching work with a view to critical learning of varied contents. From this perspective, there is the need for a more comprehensive initial formation that values the knowledge already accumulated in professional practice throughout the history of early childhood education.

We reiterate that discussing initial teacher formation for early childhood education requires understanding how challenging and complex this process is, as it involves national directions and guidelines, curricular structures, power relations and a historical legacy of assistance that needs to be re-signified. Therefore, the university, especially the public one, is an important space for this reflection to take place in order to ensure initial teacher formation that contemplates the specifics of a pedagogical work aimed at children aged 0 to 5 years. In this sense, we recognize the active role of the Pedagogy Course of the two universities under discussion, but we defend that there is much to be changed so that the curriculum of both allows a deepening of specific knowledge related to this age group and, consequently, a more conscious and elaborate.

For this, we can think of an emancipatory initial formation for the student of the Pedagogy Course, so that, through the process of teaching, research and extension, he can take ownership of discussions related to work with children in early childhood education, in addition to experiencing enriching situations of daily formation with the experiences arising from the curricular and non-curricular supervised internship that make up the Pedagogy Course. In short, our defense is that, from initial formation, we can guarantee a coherent teaching performance that is consistent with the needs of children in the field of knowledge and learning.

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