# TRAJETÓRIAS ESCOLARES DE PESSOAS COM DEFICIÊNCIAS NA EDUCAÇÃO BÁSICA: QUAL LUGAR DA EDUCAÇÃO ESPECIAL?

TRAYECTORIAS ESCOLARES DE PERSONAS CON DISCAPACIDADES EN LA EDUCACIÓN BÁSICA: ¿CUÁL ES EL LUGAR DE LA ENSEÑANZA ESPECIAL?

SCHOOL TRAJECTORIES OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN BASIC EDUCATION: WHERE'S THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PLACE?

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**RESUMO**: O presente trabalha analisa as trajetórias escolares de pessoas com deficiência na educação básica, com foco no processo de escolarização. Trata-se de uma pesquisa realizada com a metodologia da história oral aplicada a quatro pessoas com deficiência (cegueira, surdez e deficiência física), por meio de entrevistas semiestruturadas e uso da análise de conteúdo. O estudo sustenta-se na perspectiva da Teoria Histórico-Cultural. Os resultados sinalizam que a escola é fundamental para garantir a escolarização do sujeito com deficiência, inclusive, a supercompensação social é um dos elementos que contribuem na conclusão da educação básica e, posteriormente, do acesso ao ensino superior. Portanto, a trajetória escolar de pessoas com deficiência evidencia que o direito à educação, mediante um ensino baseado na mediação e desenvolvimento das funções psicológicas superiores, é imprescindível na garantia da sua formação educacional.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE**: Educação especial. Escolarização. Pessoas com deficiência. Teoria histórico-cultural.

RESUMEN: Este trabajo analiza las trayectorias escolares de personas con discapacidad en la educación básica, con enfoque en el proceso de escolarización. Se trata de una investigación realizada con la metodología de la historia oral aplicada a cuatro personas con discapacidad (ceguera, sordera y deficiencia física), por medio de entrevistas semiestructuradas y uso del análisis de contenido. El estudio se basa en la perspectiva de la Teoría Histórico-Cultural. Los resultados señalan que la escuela es fundamental para garantizar la escolarización del sujeto con discapacidad, inclusive, la supercompensación social es uno de los elementos que contribuyen con la conclusión de la educación básica y, posteriormente, del acceso a la enseñanza superior. Por lo tanto, la trayectoria escolar de personas con discapacidad evidencia que el derecho a la educación, mediante una enseñanza basada en la mediación y desarrollo de las funciones psicológicas superiores, es imprescindible en la garantía de su formación educacional.

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**PALABRAS CLAVE**: Educación especial. Escolarización. Personas con discapacidad. Teoría histórico-cultural.

ABSTRACT: The present work analyzes the school trajectories of people with disabilities in basic education, focusing on the schooling process. This is a research conducted with the methodology of oral history applied to four people with disabilities (blindness, deafness and physical disability), through semi-structured interviews and use of content analysis. The study is based on the perspective of Historical-Cultural Theory. The results indicate that the school is fundamental to ensure the schooling of the subject with disabilities, even social overcompensation is one of the elements that contribute to the completion of basic education and, later, access to higher education. Therefore, the school trajectory of people with disabilities shows that the right to education, through teaching based on mediation and development of higher psychological functions, is essential in ensuring their educational training.

**KEYWORDS**: Special education. Schooling. People with disabilities. Historical-cultural theory.

#### Introduction

This article is part of a collective research project, which integrates several Brazilian universities, on the school trajectories of people with disabilities who are attending and / or have attended higher education (2016). The studies carried out by the collective of researchers state that the school trajectory of people with disabilities does not "[...] mention assistance actions or even the desire for assistance; on the contrary, subjects of rights are affirmed and reaffirmed" (CAIADO; BERRIBILLE; AMARAL SARAIVA, 2013, p. 31). Researches produced by Rossetto (2009), Mendes (2015), Garcia (2016), Gonçalves (2016) and Morgado (2017) reinforce that the right to education for people with disabilities is irrevocable and unavoidable either because it is regulated in the legislation (BRASIL, 1988; 1996; 2008), whether for the formative and pedagogical reasons that the school is responsible for. In fact, only the study by Rossetto (2009) and Gonçalves (2016) addresses the theme of school trajectory in the basic education of people with disabilities who attended higher education, but as a secondary theme or a consequence of access to university.

One cannot fail to take into account that the students of special education, despite being enrolled in school, are on the sidelines of the learning process in the classroom environment, a process that could be called marginal inclusion, functional inclusion or subordinated inclusion (IVANILDE, 2006; KASSAR; ARRUDA; BENATTI, 2011). Freitas (2013) points out that, for many professionals at school, this "foreign body" would be better if I was not there, thus, it is

there, but it cannot hinder the pace of the class and the school organization. Historically, the concept of disability is synonymous with inability and vulnerability. Social practices were guided by charity and philanthropy, practices that made up and are part of public policy programs that involve the publication of special education (MELO; SILVA, 2016; MELO; SILVA; CAIADO, 2017; SILVA; MELO, 2018).

Bearing these considerations in mind, the article analyzes the school trajectories of students with disabilities who have completed higher education, focusing on life experiences that promoted their school performance in basic education.

It is hoped that this article will contribute to affirm the right to teaching and learning of special education students, based on the criticisms made to substitute special education services, towards a special education proposal that contemplates general education, or better, systematized education. For this, we use the historical-cultural theory of Vygotski (1997), collaborators and scholars of the theme, as well as the methodological proposal of oral history and content analysis as a technique of data analysis to reflect on the social fabric, the everyday fabric, which made it possible to overcome disability as a condition of incapacity and school failure.

In this direction, the article is organized, in addition to the introduction and conclusion, in four parts. The first is based on presenting oral history as the work methodology. Then, the important concepts of Vygotsky's historical-cultural theory are exposed. The third part deals with the reports of the four interviewees selected for this article, dialoguing with the theoretical framework and presenting a possible proposal based on the reports brought.

## Methodology

The methodology used has oral history as its starting point, with thematic interviews, between 2016 and 2017, with a semi-structured script, which consists of bringing the reports of four students with disabilities who have completed higher education. Study participants were:

Paulo: 30 years old, married, psychologist, lives in Itaguaçu, in the state of Espírito Santo (ES). He identifies himself as black. He was born with low vision and was blinded by glaucoma. He attended elementary school (1994-2002) and high school (2003-2007) in public schools. He did Psychology at the Federal University of Espírito Santo (UFES), between 2009 and 2015.

Lucas: 45 years old, single, administrative assistant at a public higher education institute, lives in Ribeirão Preto, in the state of São Paulo (SP). He did not declare color and

ethnicity. He was born with blindness. He also attended elementary school (1979-1988) and high school (1989-1991) in public schools. He received a bachelor's and master's degree in Social Sciences (1996-2000; 2002-2005) at the Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar).

Larissa: 25 years old, single, white, psychologist and teacher in higher education, also lives in Ribeirão Preto, SP. Has congenital deafness. She attended pre-school, elementary and high school in private schools (1994-1998, 1999-2006, 2007-2009). She studied Psychology at the University of Ribeirão Preto (2011-2015). At the time of the interview, I was taking a master's degree in Special Education at UFSCar, now completed and with a doctorate in education in progress.

João: 28 years old, single, white, social scientist, resident in São Carlos, SP. Has physical disability since birth. He attended pre-school (1992-1996), elementary school (1997-2003) and high school (2004-2006) in public institutions. He graduated in Social Sciences at UFSCar (2010-2014) and was pursuing a master's degree in Sociology at the same institution. He is currently finishing his doctorate in Sociology at UFSCar.

The interviews were transcribed in full, whose themes were classified after the analysis of the transcriptions made. During the interviews, their memories are recalled. Memories bring the individual's ability to keep the events of the past, whether they occurred in the individual or in the collective, bearing in mind the teachings of Alberti (2015).

From the interviews, it was observed that the subjects had several themes that interrelated in common and with that they were selected and became the thematic axes. These students with disabilities who arrived at higher education went through school(s), and have an experience that serves as an important subsidy for analysis of pedagogical practices, among other aspects.

With regard to conducting research interviews, Gaskell (2002) highlights the importance of this data production technique, given that the interview is to understand the social process and marked by an "[...] interaction, an exchange of ideas and meanings, in which various realities and perceptions are explored and developed" (GASKELL, 2002, p. 73).<sup>3</sup>

Thus, the interview is a technique used to discover that there are other points of view on the facts that go beyond those already elaborated by the interviewing researcher. The interviews with the four adults with disabilities aimed at extracting the meanings present in the interviewees' experiences in order to help in understanding the research problem.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "[...] interação, uma troca de ideias e de significados, em que várias realidades e percepções são exploradas e desenvolvidas".

As a data analysis technique, content analysis was worked on, bearing in mind that "the starting point of Content Analysis is the message, whether verbal (oral or written), gestural, silent, figurative, documentary or directly provoked. Necessarily, it expresses a meaning and a sense" (FRANCO, 2005, p. 13).

For Bardin (2004), the content analysis excels precisely in the treatment of the information contained in the messages, and in this study, the educational experiences of the subjects during basic education were treated.

The research is based on the Historical-Cultural Theory, especially on the texts of Vygotsky (1997) and studies on his writings. The concepts of man, culture, mediation, overcompensation, higher psychological functions and levels of development are used (zone of imminent and real development). Such concepts make it possible to analyze the educational conditions of adults who have completed higher education, since the Russian psychologist dedicated himself to the study of defectology.

# Historical-Cultural Theory: fundamentals to study the schooling of people with disabilities

In order to overcome the perspective of biological/sensory compensation, the Historical-Cultural Theory, based on historical and dialectical materialism, has its bases on the idea of teaching what the child does not know, as there is no reference to what is considered necessary she learns, but challenges the child to learn. In this sense, what is at stake is an educational process that breaks with the idea that in disability there is only weakness and limits.

For Victor (2010), defectology, understood at the time of Vygotsky as the study of deficiencies, must investigate the processes involved in development and behavior, "[...] because what matters is not the disability itself, but its consequences observed in the individual" (VICTOR, 2010, p. 61).<sup>5</sup>

In this vein, for Vygotsky (1997), both the blind child and the deaf child can achieve the same development as the child without disabilities, but in different ways, with other means. This means, in offering support resources, methods and instruments and in new practices that enable new and other forms of learning.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> "o ponto de partida da Análise de Conteúdo é a mensagem, seja ela verbal (oral ou escrita), gestual, silenciosa, figurativa, documental ou diretamente provocada. Necessariamente, ela expressa um significado e um sentido". <sup>5</sup> "[...] pois o que interessa não é a deficiência em si, mas as suas consequências observadas no indivíduo".

In the case, for example, of blindness, Vygotsky (1997, p. 73) understood that it creates forces, "[...] changes the normal directions of the functions" and, therefore, it cannot be seen only as a defect, but also as a source of capabilities, new possibilities. As the author asserts: "[...] a force (however strange and paradoxical it may be!)" (VYGOTSKY, 1997, p. 73).

Following this line, all educational work that seeks overcompensation must be structured in the challenge, that is, "[...] not to alleviate the difficulties that arise from the defect, but to intend all the forces for its compensation" (VYGOTSKY, 1997, p. 9). Therefore, we must not limit what the student with disabilities can learn by what the teacher believes to be the student's limit, falling into the practice of "pedagogy of no", of "pedagogy of just", of "pedagogy of the basic".

Social overcompensation does not refer to the elimination of the deficit, nor is it of a sensory or motor order, although on this plane the subject may develop certain peculiar forms of refined functioning. When focusing on the blind, Vygotsky (1997) considers that the Braille alphabet, when giving access to reading and writing, has its importance much greater than the subtlety of touch and ear. Blindness is not overcome by sensory compensation itself, but by language, by words, by the world of concepts. Thus, overcompensation contributes to the possibility of creating a social condition capable of altering the organic structure itself.

Overcompensation for Vygotsky consists mainly of

a reaction of the subject to the disability, in the sense of overcoming the limitations based on artificial instruments, such as symbolic mediation. For this reason, its conception instigates education to create opportunities for social compensation to be effectively carried out in a planned and objective way, promoting the process of cultural appropriation by the student with disabilities (NUERBERNG, 2008, p. 309).

Education has the function, through mediation, of making people with disabilities achieve social overcompensation through the development of higher psychic functions, which involves the integration of biological and social aspects in the individual: memory, attention and voluntary remembrance, active memorization, imagination, ability to plan, establish relationships, intentional action, will development, conceptual elaboration, use of language, symbolic representation of purposeful actions, deductive reasoning, abstract thinking. It is

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<sup>6 &</sup>quot;[...] altera as direções normais das funções"

<sup>7 &</sup>quot;[...] uma força (por estranho e paradoxal que seja!)".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> numa reação do sujeito diante da deficiência, no sentido de superar as limitações com base em instrumentos artificiais, como a mediação simbólica. Por isso, sua concepção instiga a educação a criar oportunidades para que a compensação social efetivamente se realize de modo planejado e objetivo, promovendo o processo de apropriação cultural por parte do educando com deficiência.

precisely in the development of these higher psychic functions that are the greatest possibilities for the child's development, according to Vygotsky (1997).

Therefore, the role of the educator is essential in the process of human development. But not only, classmates also play an important role as mediators, sometimes explaining a subject better than the teacher. Through the mediation of the other, the human being gives meaning to what is around him. In this way, man develops his superior psychological functions internally, assigning an intrapsychic meaning, based on the meanings constructed in interpsychic social relations (VYGOTSKY, 1989; 1994). Thus, for historical-cultural theory, the driving force of overcompensation is the use of language as a mediating instrument with social experience.

According to Facci (2007), the teacher's role is a mediator between scientific knowledge and students, aiming to move higher psychological functions, "[...] leading them to make correlations with the knowledge already acquired and also promoting the need permanent appropriation of knowledge increasingly developed and rich" (FACCI, 2007, p. 210). For Vygotsky (1997), the teacher who works with students with disabilities needs to know what social consequences the disability can bring to their student, what factors in the child's development respond to this peculiarity and what demands to make.

Mediation presupposes interaction, therefore, it is external to the subject. Interaction with others, with nature and with objects. Mediation enables the process of learning and human development. In this way, it can be affirmed "[...] that the mediation processes (either by the use of instruments or by the use of signs) represent paths for the development and reorganization of the global psychological functioning" (SENA, 2011, p. 36)<sup>9</sup>. Thus, through this "gear" of processes, man is transformed and transforms his relationships. Sena (2011) highlights that visual resources are not the only means of mediation, it is possible to use other signs, such as tactile, auditory, olfactory perception.

For the Russian theorist, as apprehended by Caiado (2003, p. 39), "[...] human learning takes place based on social coexistence, on the appropriation of activities historically engendered by men, through the internalization of social meanings"<sup>10</sup>. Thus, the appropriation of concepts is effected by language, by communication with the other. In view of this, human senses are considered beyond the purely biological basis, understood as "social senses"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> "[...] que os processos de mediação (seja pelo uso de instrumentos, seja pelo uso de signos) representam caminhos para o desenvolvimento e reorganização do funcionamento psicológico global".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> "[...] a aprendizagem humana se dá com base na convivência social, na apropriação das atividades historicamente engendradas pelos homens, pela internalização dos significados sociais"

(CAIADO, 2003). In this way, the "[...] a man sees, hears and feels what the other man points out to him to see, hear, feel, among the possibilities of his time and social place" (CAIADO, 2003, p. 39). Knowledge is not just a product of sensory organs, but results from a process of appropriation through social relations (NUERNBERG, 2008).

In this sense, Vygotsky (1997) teaches us that the appropriation of concepts is effected by language, by the mediation of signs and by communication with the other, with a view to the development of higher psychological functions. At this point, the concept of imminent development zone in the work of Vygotsky (1997) stands out. There is a difference and a change between real development and potential development. This is the Imminent Development Zone. It is in this development zone that the "[...] the teacher has the task of intervening, providing qualitatively significant experiences that enable the child, through his own activity, to overcome lower levels of development" (SCALCON, 2002, p. 117). It is in this zone of development that the teacher must work with the student, through his channels of reception, and not from the channels previously defined and legitimized as true, in order to provide meaningful learning.

In fact, Vygotsky (1997) argued since the 1920s and 1930s of the last century that education segregated via specialized institutions should end. These do not bring the challenge of the relation with the other different from me. Thus, he has always believed that "[...] the education of the blind child must be organized as the education of the child able for normal development" (VYGOTSKY, 1997, p. 86). Education should at some point eliminate the adjective "special", sometimes disqualifying, stigmatizing, as society, too, should eliminate the word and the concept of "disabled", also, sometimes, disqualifying in its application, once that everyone has a full social value.

#### **Results and discussion**

The stigma of inferiority in the relationship with non-disabled people accompanies and constitutes the social imaginary and institutionalizes social practices that segregate and marginalize. With these representations, the person with disabilities must permanently prove their potential. Certainly, the long journey between the beginning of basic education and the conclusion of graduation has marks of much struggle and overcoming. How was this trajectory?

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> "[...] homem enxerga, ouve e sente aquilo que o outro homem lhe apontar para ver, ouvir, sentir, dentre as possibilidades de seu tempo e lugar social"

<sup>12 &</sup>quot;[...] professor tem a tarefa de intervir, proporcionando experiências qualitativamente significativas e que possibilitem à criança, através da sua própria atividade, a superação de níveis menos elevados de desenvolvimento" [...] a educação da criança cega deve ser organizada como a educação da criança apta para o desenvolvimento normal"

How and what do you think of the special education offered or the lack of it? What were the consequences for each interviewee's school and life? These are some questions that will be present in the dialogues, in the questions and answers that will now be exposed.

Paulo (blind, born with low vision) points out how his parents see him as a person with disabilities since childhood.

They never repressed me in any way because of my disability, on the contrary, I was always put in a position of responsibility, since I was five years old they sent me to the street to buy things, pay bills, look for something. I was never limited by the fact that I was visually impaired, just because I couldn't see well, I always had many responsibilities, and even today I am still a little reference of the family (Paulo). 14

The way the family saw him was important for an active adult life, with autonomy and independence, that is, he had high expectations about his son. Self-perception is essential for human development.

I think it helped me by working on my security. My security to understand that I have a role, a responsibility, that I am not just someone with a disability, that I am a person before the person with a disability. It helped me in the matter of not waiting too long for others, of empowering myself, my family has always empowered me (Paulo).<sup>15</sup>

The charitable gaze limits the person's development. It is necessary to look at the condition of a person, of a human being, of a subject who participates in society like the others. Therefore, the process of self-acceptance is fundamental, which does not happen automatically/spontaneously, but which nevertheless goes through a history of being, individual and collective, as described by Paulo:

[...] when I had low vision I thought I would see like an ordinary person, but when I lost my vision, I went into a depression. When two years passed, then acceptance is a step that I manage to overcome every single day [...]. The prejudice for those who accept themselves is enormous, for those who do not accept it is gargantuan [...], but when you accept yourself you realize, you can overcome it.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Nunca me reprimiram de forma alguma pelo fato da minha deficiência, pelo contrário, eu sempre fui colocado numa posição de responsabilidade, desde os cinco anos me mandavam pra rua para comprar coisas, pagar contas, buscar alguma coisa. Nunca me limitaram pelo fato de eu ser deficiente visual, só porque não enxergava bem, sempre tive muitas responsabilidades, e até hoje eu ainda sou um pouco referência da família (Paulo).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Eu acho que me ajudou pelo fato de trabalhar a minha segurança. A minha segurança de entender que eu tenho um papel, uma responsabilidade, que eu não sou apenas alguém com deficiência, que eu sou uma pessoa antes da pessoa com deficiência. Me ajudou na questão de não ficar esperando demais pelos outros, de me empoderar, minha família sempre me empoderou (Paulo).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> [...] quando eu tinha baixa visão eu pensei que iria enxergar como uma pessoa comum, só que, quando eu perdi a visão, eu entrei em um momento depressão. Quando se passou dois anos, depois a aceitação é um passo que eu consigo vencer todo o santo dia [...]. O preconceito para aquele que se aceita é enorme, para quem não se aceita é gigantesco [...], mas quando você se aceita você dá conta, você consegue superar isso.

In fact, it can be considered that the process of self-acceptance, autonomy and independence, drives the educational trajectory, as Paulo reports:

When I had a special education, it helped me a lot because I had some very good support. I managed to do math, chemistry [...], but today there is that question, many times, we find ourselves in two models of special education, the special education that the teacher is there with you all the time with you, accompanying you and external support. In my case it was external support, I never had anyone on my side supporting me, even because I would not like it, so inside the classroom I was there with the other students, like everyone else and at the school where I had this special external support. Was it a deficit? It was in some ways, but it was very good in most of them (Paulo).<sup>17</sup>

Paul does not deny special education, but questions what kind of special education should be offered. Between a special education that he supervises, with the teacher accompanying the student all the time inside the classroom, or special education as external support, Paulo had and prefers the second, as they are all together without the interference of an adult, which contributes to social interaction between students, as is evident in the following report:

[...] I confess that I am against the idea of the monitor in the classroom, it removes the question of the person's social potency, because he is attached to another person who is not part of that environment, so it increases the possibility of social exclusion (Paulo).<sup>18</sup>

When he still had low vision, he did not receive any support from special education in a rural school, as described in the reports below:

[...] because there was no aspect of special education, the teacher did not prepare anything special for me, no special material, so he passed the material on the board. If I could read and copy, ok, if I couldn't I would have to deal with that, I would have to deal with that content in some way, borrowing material from colleagues or simply reading in the library (Paulo).<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Quando eu tive educação especial, ajudou-me bastante pelo fato de que tive alguns apoios bem referenciais. Consegui dar conta de matemática, química [...], mas hoje dia tem aquela questão, muitas vezes, a gente se pega em dois modelos da educação especial, a educação especial que fica ali o professor dentro com você o tempo todo com você, acompanhando-te e o apoio externo. No meu caso foi apoio externo, nunca tive ninguém do meu lado me apoiando, até mesmo porque eu não gostaria, então dentro de sala de aula estava lá junto com os outros alunos, como qualquer outro e na escola onde tive este apoio especial tive externo. Foi deficitário? Foi em alguns aspectos, mas foi muito bom na maioria deles (Paulo).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup>[...] eu confesso que eu sou contra a ideia do monitor em sala de aula dentro, tira a questão da potência social da pessoa, porque ela fica agregada a uma outra pessoa que não faz parte daquele ambiente, então aumenta a possibilidade de exclusão social dela (Paulo).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> [...] porque não tinha aspecto de educação especial o professor não preparava nada de especial para mim, nenhum material especial, então ele passava a matéria no quadro. Se eu conseguisse ler e copiar tranquilo, se não conseguisse eu teria de dar conta daquilo, eu teria de dar conta daquele conteúdo de alguma forma, pegando algum material emprestado com colegas ou simplesmente lendo na biblioteca (Paulo).

[...] There are two divisions, low vision, I didn't have any kind of adaptation, I used the common material [...]. When I was already blind, it was through Braille and information technology, so the support staff from high school asked this question (Paulo).<sup>20</sup>

If, on the one hand, education can offer a differentiated pedagogical proposal, with specific instruments, techniques and methods, on the other, it can bring accommodation for both the teacher and the student. Even without the support of the special education teacher, Paulo says he would have to cope, developing characteristics such as resistance, effort and will, conditions that could lead to autonomy and independence, making him stronger.

Another interviewee, Lucas (blind), reports that in his time as an elementary school student, during the 1980s, "[...] the teacher was not prepared, and today they are still not to receive people with disabilities"<sup>21</sup>, in addition to only the test being adapted. When neither the teacher was "prepared", nor the resources were offered, Lucas was removed from the content taught. He says:

Copied, but mainly with books, each subject had a book [...], doing the exercises in the book. My handwriting was horrible, and I ended up losing note on that, on the test and such, at that time, I don't know today, they even demanded A's leg, closing N with one leg, two legs, the M [...]. The teacher Ruth of the special class preferred not to teach me to read in Braille, I don't know anything about Braille, so I was totally literate in timbre [...] (Lucas).<sup>22</sup>

In high school, years later, the lack of support continued and even the test was not adapted. According to Lucas, friends generally dictated the content and helped with the tasks. Friends are important in the schooling process for people with disabilities, because it is also advantageous for people without disabilities, who have the opportunity to practice solidarity, work in groups and learn when teaching. Therefore, people without disabilities are also key elements in the permanence of students with disabilities in the classroom. According to Campos and Duarte (2013), social interaction, friendship, can assist in the appropriation of social rules and in access and permanence in studies. Including providing access to higher education, a fact that happened to all study participants.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> [...] Aí tem duas divisão, a baixa visão eu não tinha nenhum tipo de adaptação mesmo, eu usava o material comum [...]. Quando eu já era cego, era por meio do Braille e da informática, então o pessoal de apoio lá do ensino médio fazia essa questão (Paulo).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> "[...] a professora não estava preparada, e hoje não estão ainda para receber pessoas com deficiência"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Copiado, mas principalmente com os livros, cada matéria tinha um livro [...], fazendo os exercícios do livro. A minha letra ficava horrível, e acabava perdendo nota nisso, na prova e tal, naquele tempo, não sei hoje, eles cobravam até a perninha do A, fechar o, o N com uma perna, duas pernas, o M [...]. A professora Ruth da classe especial preferiu não me alfabetizar em braile, não sei nada de braile, então, eu fui alfabetizado totalmente em timbre [...] (Lucas).

Lucas also brings us another fundamental point in his life trajectory that deserves to be highlighted. He believes in everyone's collaboration in supporting the education of people with disabilities, but he does not renounce individual action, breaking one of the main barriers for people with disabilities, the overprotection of the family, as well as of teachers.

In Larissa's reports (deaf), there is a need for support, in this case an interpreter. However, she passed almost all basic education without this assistance - only having it in the 3rd year of high school -, which did not fail to create alternatives, to succeed in her school career. Throughout this trajectory she hesitated to have an interpreter or not, but, at the end of her studies, she realized how important it could be to pass the entrance exam. Thus, Larissa reports:

The funny thing was that I thought it was like that, it was that way and when the interpreter came, I said "how much I lost". I had no idea, if I had not had an interpreter, I would think it was common, "oh, whatever!". And so, thinking about the rights that I would have, to learn from others, I wanted to, I would have, I didn't have this notion, this intention, and now this is a fact, which is important for you to have (Larissa).<sup>23</sup>

So in the 2nd high school I started to think: "an interpreter? I don't think I will need it, it won't be necessary". The disciplines were increasing, chemistry, physics, the pressure of the entrance exam, of passing the entrance exam was also increasing. In the 3rd year I said: "screw it last year, I'll enjoy it and let's go". So, I got the interpreter (Larissa).<sup>24</sup>

In the first report, Larissa raises the question of the right, but not only of the right to access to education, but of the right of permanence that is consecrates in the right to learn (and why not, to conclude successfully?). According to Lemons (2015), the right to education is found in the right to learning, although it is often not understood as a right of the student. The author notes that the legal guarantee of the right to education has not completely guaranteed the right to learning. In the case of special education students, this right has been limited by public policies and teaching practices developed by the education systems and the school.

But how to think about this right when, many times, the person with disabilities is put to attend private assistentialism institutions that are authorized to function as special schools by the state education councils? There is still a lot of common sense - as exposed in the second

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> O engraçado era que eu pensava que era assim mesmo, era dessa forma e quando veio o intérprete, eu falei "quanto eu perdi". Eu não fazia ideia, se eu não tivesse tido intérprete, eu ia achar que era comum, "ah fazer o que!". E assim, pensar nos direitos que eu teria, que aprender com os outros, eu queria, eu teria, eu não tinha essa noção, essa intenção, e agora isso é um fato, que é importante você ter (Larissa).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Então no 2º colegial eu comecei a pensar: "um intérprete? Acho que não vou precisar, não vai ser necessário". As disciplinas foram aumentando, química, física, a pressão do vestibular, de passar no vestibular também foi aumentando. No 3º ano eu falei: "dane-se último ano, eu vou aproveitar e vamos lá". Então, eu peguei o intérprete (Larissa).

chapter - the view on which the target audience of Special Education are much better (or could only be) served in specialized institutions, endorsed by the term "preferentially", embedded in Brazilian educational legislation (MELO; SILVA, 2016; MELO; SILVA; CAIADO, 2017). Larissa's school trajectory rejects such a thesis, when she brings the position of the speech therapist who attended and guided her parents. Larissa recalls her experience at the special school she attended between 1992 and 1993:

Only in the beginning, when I was a child, I stayed there for about 2 years and I don't remember everything clearly. What I know is what they told me, but at the beginning I was around 1 ½ years old until I was 3 years old. When I attended this school, the speech therapist identified that there was no need for me to study at that school and that could compromise my development, so my parents put me in a regular school, so I spent a short time in the institution (Larissa).<sup>25</sup>

In the last report highlighted for this article, the interviewee João (person with physical disabilities), when asked if he had any specialized educational assistance<sup>26</sup>, replied that he only received clinical care because,

What happened was that at the same time that I tried the medical monitoring, more specialized that I had already undergone in a screening at the hospital in Ribeirão, where an aunt worked at the time, it was where I was referred to the AACD - Assistance Association to Children with Disabilities. An idea too... was to do physical therapy. It was to do some kind of motor treatment. The Association of Parents and Friends of Disabled People - APAE offered this treatment at the time. But I think they also had to have an educational link. I don't know what exactly was the point there at the time (João).<sup>27</sup>

In the absence of some kind of pedagogical assistance, João is asked if he missed this assistance and he is emphatic in his response when he says:

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Só no começo, quando eu era criança eu fiquei lá em torno de 2 anos e eu não me lembro claramente de tudo. O que eu sei foi o que me contaram, mas no começo eu tinha em torno de 1 ano e meio até meus 3 anos de idade. Quando eu frequentei essa escola, a fonoaudióloga identificou que não havia necessidade para eu estudar naquela escola e isso poderia comprometer meu desenvolvimento, então meus pais me colocaram em uma escola regular, então, fiquei pouco tempo na instituição (Larissa).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> It is worth remembering that the specialized educational service, said here, refers to the special education service in general.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> O que aconteceu foi que ao mesmo tempo que eu tentava o acompanhamento médico, mais especializado que eu já tinha passado numa triagem no hospital em Ribeirão, no qual, uma tia trabalhava na época, foi onde eu fui encaminhado para a AACD – Associação de Assistência à Criança com Deficiência. Uma ideia também... era fazer fisioterapia. Era fazer algum tipo de tratamento motor. A Associação de Pais e Amigos de Excepcionais - APAE oferecia, na época, este tratamento. Mas acho que tinham que também ter um vínculo educacional. Não sei qual que foi exatamente o ponto ali na época (João).

No. No, because I think other relationships have taken care of that, especially in primary school. It is, mainly in the primary, in the infantile and later with the fundamental... in the infantile, this is what I remember (João).<sup>28</sup>

With this report, João points out that alternatives, other arrangements, other relationships are possible, even without the accompaniment of teacher's specialists in special education. He did not miss it, and even so he succeeded in his school career.

The reports presented here - and other studies such as Rossetto (2009), Caiado (2013), Gonçalves (2016) and Morgado (2017) - confirm that people with disabilities who did not have or had little support from special education, mainly in the substitute model, went through the process of social overcompensation. It is evident that they also suffered losses due to the lack of support, but as Paulo assesses: "Was it a deficit? It was in some ways, but it was very good in most of them"<sup>29</sup> or as João asserts: "No, because I think I think other relationships have taken care of that [...]"<sup>30</sup>.

The lack of support becomes a challenge, as respondents thought of disability as a force. In their trajectories everyone was challenged by the absence. This social absence impelled them, because, in a crooked way, they did not alleviate their difficulties, but they strained their forces to reach overcompensation (VYGOTSKY, 1997).

In this sense, as pointed out by Nuerberng (2008), the role of the school and the teacher, during the educational process, is to create the conditions for putting this overcompensation into effect. It is good to remember that not all people with disabilities manage to be successful in this process, seeking, unfortunately, the path of "poor thing", begging for assistance. For this reason, many people with disabilities "prefer" the tutelage of private welfare institutions or family members, or even fail to leave this reality, just as many parents, teachers and institutions keep their children or students under guardianship.

In his time, Vygotsky (1997) defended the end of separate education in private welfare institutions. These do not bring the challenge, do not provide for the realization of overcompensation, because among equals everything is prepared for the realization of your immediate specific needs. Everything is offered to them and people with disabilities do not need to make efforts to achieve what they want. Even in regular schools it is very common to see students with disabilities randomly doodling and painting, doing activities outside the context

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 $<sup>^{28}</sup>$  Não. Não, porque eu acho que outras relações deram conta disso, principalmente no primário. É, principalmente no primário, no infantil e depois com o fundamental... no infantil, é isso que eu lembro (João).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> "Foi deficitário? Foi em alguns aspectos, mas foi muito bom na maioria deles"

<sup>30 &</sup>quot;Não, porque eu acho que eu acho que outras relações deram conta disso [...]"

of the class in which they are enrolled, being removed from the classroom so as not to disturb them or to perform activities "according to their mental age".

This is how many teachers who do not understand their role as mediators acy, by offering challenges to their students with disabilities. Mediation that is fundamental to the process of learning and human development through the acquisition of scientific knowledge, in order to move your higher psychological functions. As Caiado (2003) points out, learning takes place through social interaction.

The situations that researchers observe in ordinary and special schools do not challenge anyone, they do not bring the new, the different. When referring to the zone of imminent development, Vygotsky (1997) highlights the change between real development and potential development, that is, between what is known for what is not known. This is where the teacher should mediate, intervene with challenging activities.

As the interviewee Paulo says, he never liked having a teacher at his side all the time, being better what he called "external support", because he preferred to be there "[...] inside the classroom, I was there with the other students, like everyone else and at school [...]"<sup>31</sup>. At this point, Paulo and another interviewee offer some clues as to what a special education could be like as a challenge.

Such a proposal does not refer to denying the need for special education. It is a matter of considering that people with disabilities do not automatically need special education (MAZZOTTA, 2011), or that it is enough to have special education that the student's access and permanence in school are guaranteed. It is necessary to question what is the special education that was and is being offered. Unlike special education that protects, overprotects, this study postulates, based on the interviewees' reports, another special education, a special education as a challenge, a special education that takes care of other relationships, that creates alternatives. A pedagogical proposal that takes into account Vygotsky's studies.

# **Final considerations**

Diderot (1979), in the 18th century, observing a blind person, says that the person in this condition can build a world in his own way, without any feeling of guilt, and that the "problem" of blindness and the will to cure is from those who see, not the blind.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> "[...] dentro de sala de aula, estava lá junto com os outros alunos, como qualquer outro e na escola [...]"

Based on reports of the life trajectory of four people who have completed higher education, a special education that meets the expectations of people with disabilities is imperative, one that do not protect, but that challenge them. Just remember how we were challenged when we were learning to ride a bike, roller or skate or when we were in the process of literacy. Remember the child in us seeking to be challenged. The adult, when he goes to a driving school to learn to drive, resumes the learning process by the challenge, just like when he was a child. People to learn need to be challenged, including people with disabilities.

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