

**THE CHALLENGES OF TEACHING IN HIGHER EDUCATION WITH THE  
INCLUSION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN UNIVERSITIES**

**OS DESAFIOS DA DOCÊNCIA NO ENSINO SUPERIOR FRENTE A INCLUSÃO DE  
PESSOAS COM DEFICIÊNCIA NAS UNIVERSIDADES**

**LOS DESAFÍOS DE LA EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR EN EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR CON  
LA INCLUSIÓN DE PERSONAS CON DISCAPACIDAD EN LAS UNIVERSIDADES**

Katiuscia C. Vargas ANTUNES<sup>1</sup>  
Cassiano Caon AMORIM<sup>2</sup>

**ABSTRACT:** Talk about the educational inclusion of people with disabilities (PWD) is not exactly a new theme in the Brazilian scenario. Taking the 1988 Federal Constitution as a legal and historical landmark, it can be said that for at least 30 years the issue of educational inclusion has been gaining prominence in the field of educational policies, research in education and teaching practices. On the other hand, when we deal with inclusion in Higher Education, we face a contrary situation. Both public policies and knowledge production are very recent, which configures the inclusion of PWD in Higher Education still an open field, with many research fronts, in different areas of knowledge. One of the most important research themes is teaching in higher education and the challenges teachers face when dealing with the inclusion of PWD in universities. Considering the theme above, the article aims to reflect on how much the access of students with disabilities in Higher Education, especially from the policy of reserving vacancies (Law 13,409/2016), has impacted the daily life of the classrooms, particularly in teaching practices. We will conduct a systematic literature review, based on a search in the Scielo database (Scientific Electronic Library Online), between 2008 and 2018, searching for articles on higher education, teaching and inclusion of PWD. The texts will be quantified and qualitatively analyzed, seeking to identify the challenges found in the context of teaching in Higher Education facing inclusion.

**KEYWORDS:** Higher education. Educational inclusion. Teaching.

**RESUMO:** Tratar da inclusão educacional de pessoas com deficiência (PCD) não é propriamente um tema novo no cenário brasileiro. Tomando a Constituição Federal de 1988 como marco legal e histórico, é possível afirmar que, há pelo menos 30 anos, a temática da inclusão educacional vem ganhando relevo no campo das políticas educacionais, da investigação em educação e das práticas docentes. Por outro lado, quando tratamos da inclusão no ensino superior nos deparamos com uma situação contrária. Tanto as políticas

<sup>1</sup> Federal University of Juiz de Fora (UFJF), Juiz de Fora – MG – Brazil. Adjunct Professor at the Department of Education. Professor of the Postgraduate Program in Public Policy and Evaluation of Public Education (PPGP/CAED/UFJF). ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2861-551X>. E-mail: [katiuscia.vargas@educacao.ufjf.br](mailto:katiuscia.vargas@educacao.ufjf.br)

<sup>2</sup> Federal University of Juiz de Fora (UFJF), Juiz de Fora – MG – Brazil. Associate Professor in the Department of Education. Professor of the Postgraduate Program in Public Policy and Evaluation of Public Education (PPGP/CAED/UFJF) and of the Postgraduate Program in Education (PPGE/FACED/UFJF). ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3326-8524>. E-mail: [cassianoamorim@hotmail.com](mailto:cassianoamorim@hotmail.com)

*públicas quanto a produção de conhecimento são muito recentes, o que configura a inclusão de PCD no ensino superior ainda um campo aberto, com muitas frentes de pesquisa, nas diferentes áreas do conhecimento. Um dos temas de investigação que se impõem é a docência no ensino superior e os desafios que os professores enfrentam frente à inclusão de PCD nas universidades. Considerando o tema exposto, o artigo tem como objetivo fazer uma reflexão sobre o quanto o acesso de estudantes com deficiência no ensino superior, em especial a partir da política de reserva de vagas (Lei 13.409/2016), tem impactado no cotidiano das salas de aula, em particular nas práticas docentes. Realizamos uma revisão de literatura, a partir de uma pesquisa na base de dados do Scielo (Scientific Electronic Library Online), entre 2008 e 2018, buscando por artigos sobre a docência no ensino superior e a inclusão de PCD. Os textos foram quantificados e analisados qualitativamente, buscando identificar os desafios encontrados no contexto da docência no ensino superior frente à inclusão. A complexidade envolvida no processo de inclusão de PCD no ensino superior é grande, em especial no que toca à atuação do docente. Os artigos nos sinalizam diferentes desafios à prática docente que vão desde a sua postura diante de estudantes com deficiência até a sua capacidade de ressignificar e modificar a sua prática tendo a inclusão como um princípio pedagógico.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Ensino superior. Inclusão educacional. Docência.*

**RESUMEN:** *Abordar la inclusión educativa de las personas con discapacidad (PCD) no es exactamente un tema nuevo en el escenario brasileño. Tomando la Constitución Federal de 1988 como un hito legal e histórico, se puede decir que durante al menos 30 años el tema de la inclusión educativa ha ido ganando importancia en el campo de las políticas educativas, la investigación en educación ensino las prácticas de enseñanza. Por otro lado, cuando tratamos con la inclusión en la educación superior, nos enfrentamos a una situación contraria. Tanto las políticas públicas como la producción de conocimiento son muy recientes, lo que configura la inclusión de PCD en la educación superior, que sigue siendo un campo abierto, con muchos frentes de investigación, en diferentes áreas de conocimiento. Uno de los temas de investigación más importantes es la enseñanza en educación superior ensino los desafíos que enfrentan los docentes frente a la inclusión de PCD en las universidades. Teniendo en cuenta el tema anterior, el artículo pretende reflexionar sobre el impacto que ha tenido en la vida diaria de los estudiantes con discapacidades en la educación superior, especialmente a partir de la política de reservar lugares (Ley 13.409 / 2016). Particularmente en las prácticas de enseñanza. Llevaremos a cabo una revisión bibliográfica sistemática, basada en una búsqueda en la base de datos Scielo (Scientific Electronic Library Online), entre 2008 ensino 2018, en busca de artículos sobre enseñanza de educación superior ensino la inclusión de PCD. Los textos se cuantificarán ensino se analizarán cualitativamente, buscando identificar los desafíos encontrados en el contexto de la enseñanza en la Educación Superior que enfrenta la inclusión.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *Enseñanza superior. Inclusión educativa. Enseñanza.*

## Introduction

The exercise of teaching is never static and permanent; it is always a process, it is change, it is movement, it is art; they are new faces, new

experiences, new context, new time, new place, new information, new feelings, new interactions (CUNHA, 2004, p. 530).<sup>3</sup>

Considering the recent discussion on inclusion and people with disabilities (PCD) in higher education and the many research possibilities that are posed in this text, the objective is to reflect on the access of students with disabilities in higher education, especially the based on the vacancy reservation policy (Law 13.409 / 2016) and how it has impacted the daily lives of classrooms, particularly in teaching practices. In a literature review, from the Scielo database (Scientific Electronic Library Online), articles were selected on teaching in higher education and the inclusion of PWD, between the years 2008 and 2018, electing as a time frame for the researches the promulgation of the National Special Education Policy from the perspective of Inclusive Education in 2008. The articles found helped us to understand the scenario about the inclusion of PWD in higher education, with a focus on teaching in this segment of education<sup>4</sup>.

We will seek to explain, throughout this article, aspects related to the educational inclusion of students with disabilities in higher education, having as a cut the teaching and the impacts that the presence of these students bring to the teaching work. In the first section, we will present the concept of inclusion that supports the discussion of the theme, pointing out educational inclusion not only as a policy, but above all as a pedagogical principle. Then, we will make a discussion about teaching in higher education in view of the democratization of access to PWD, especially from Law 13,409/2016. In the third and fourth sections we will present the methodology and data found during the research process, seeking to know and understand what scholars from different areas of knowledge have been pointing out about teaching in higher education in relation to the educational inclusion of students with disabilities in the university. Finally, we will make some considerations about the possibilities and challenges for teaching and promoting inclusion with quality for people with disabilities in higher education.

### **Educational inclusion as a pedagogical principle: breaking with standards of excellence in teaching based on homogeneity criteria**

To point out inclusion as a pedagogical principle implies returning to some aspects that characterize the university as a space for the production and exchange of knowledge, in addition

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<sup>3</sup> O exercício da docência nunca é estático e permanente; é sempre processo, é mudança, é movimento, é arte; são novas caras, novas experiências, novo contexto, novo tempo, novo lugar, novas informações, novos sentimentos, novas interações (CUNHA, 2004, p. 530).

<sup>4</sup> The data for the selected articles will be presented in section three of this article.

to being a space that enables social interaction. The university's social function is the production of knowledge in order to promote the development of culture, science, technology and, therefore, the human being itself (DEMO, 1997). Spaces like those at the university need to provide opportunities and encourage democratic education, based on the recognition of differences.

In this context, a major challenge for these institutions is to implement policies and practices that promote the inclusion of people with disabilities, breaking with a selective and exclusive culture that, in some way, marks higher education. For people with disabilities, higher education was unattainable, considering the selection criteria that historically marked access to university. In addition, the university culture was, and to some extent still is, marked by standards of excellence that assume that only the “most capable”, or rather, those who adapt to that culture, achieve success in their studies.

If we consider the diversity that inhabits university spaces, both with regard to cultural, racial, ethnic, religious, gender and conditions related to disability, we have to put these standards in check, promoting a review of the criteria of excellence and quality that the university excels in and that have always been guided by values of exclusion, homogeneity and individualism. In an inclusive proposal, in the face of an increasingly intercultural and heterogeneous society, the excellence of the university may be guided by principles such as cooperation, negotiation, inclusion and collectivity (RODRIGUES, 2012).

The position taken from the inclusive culture is that any form and exclusion in the university context should be rejected.

The concept of Inclusion in the specific scope of Education implies, first of all, **rejecting, in principle, the exclusion (presential or academic) of any student in the school community**. For that, the school that intends to follow an Inclusive Education (IE) policy **develops policies, cultures and practices** that value the active contribution of each student to the construction of a knowledge built and shared and thus achieve academic and socio-cultural quality without discrimination (RODRIGUES, 2006, p. 2, our highlights).<sup>5</sup>

For Rodrigues (2012), the inclusion process is determined by the interaction between individual and context variables. No subject is included (or excluded) solely because of his individual abilities, nor only because of the characteristics of the social or educational context.

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<sup>5</sup> O conceito de Inclusão no âmbito específico da Educação, implica, antes de mais, **rejeitar, por princípio, a exclusão (presencial ou acadêmica) de qualquer aluno da comunidade escolar**. Para isso, a escola que pretende seguir uma política de Educação Inclusiva (EI) **desenvolve políticas, culturas e práticas** que valorizam o contributo activo de cada aluno para a construção de um conhecimento construído e partilhado e desta forma atingir a qualidade académica e sócio cultural sem discriminação (RODRIGUES, 2006, p. 2, grifo nosso).

The inclusion process is interactive, dynamic and results from the mutual influence of different factors. The dynamic characteristic of this process implies imbalances, new balances, the institution of other values and attitudes due to the transformations caused by inclusion. The relation of students with disabilities with the university is interactive and must consider the specific characteristics of these students, their needs on the one hand and, on the other, the resources and possibilities of the university. The recognition of the right to education for these subjects needs to be ensured, as well as the right to equal opportunities and social participation.

Thus, the access of the PWD to higher education is the initial step in the inclusion process. According to Cabral and Melo (2017), the 1975 Declaration of the Rights of People with Disabilities can be considered as a historical landmark of this process. In the wake of this Declaration, mainly from the 1980s and 1990s, other national and international documents were being elaborated, in order to guarantee the rights of the PWD, more precisely with regard to the educational inclusion of these subjects at different levels of education. Among the international movements in favor of inclusion, the most relevant are: i) the World Conference on Education for All (1990); ii) the Salamanca Conference, which resulted in the Salamanca Declaration: on principles, policies and practices in the area of special educational needs (1994) and iii) the World Declaration on Higher Education in the 21st Century: vision and action (1998).

In Brazil, the reflexes of the worldwide movements in favor of Inclusive Education directly affected two of the most important documents on this matter: the National Policy for Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusive Education – PNEEPEI, Portuguese initials (2008) – and the Convention on the Rights of People with Disability - Brazilian Inclusion Law (Law 13,146/15). Both documents bring in their text aspects that are directly related to the guarantee of access by the PWD to different levels of education.

PNEEPEI (2008), among other guidelines, ensures that access, participation and learning for people with disabilities, global developmental disorders, high skills/giftedness must occur in all segments of education, with Special Education being transversal, since early childhood education to higher education. It also ensures the continuity of schooling for the PWD at the highest levels of education. The legal and social recognition of differences in the scope of affirmative action policies aimed at promoting the access of PWD to higher education in Brazil is an emerging theme across the national territory. Such discussion arises from movements fighting for the rights of the PWD and other historically marginalized groups.

In Brazil, some higher education institutions, even before Law 12,711/12, adopted affirmative action policies for admission to public school candidates, blacks and browns, indigenous and or PWD. The State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), in 2002, was the first

institution to guarantee the system of vacancy in its entrance exam (CABRAL, 2018). It was on December 28, 2016, with the enactment of Law 13,409/2016, that the reservation of places for this public in higher education institutions and in high school technical courses was made effective.

With the expansion of higher education in our country, the flexibility of selection processes and affirmative policies (quotas and reserve of vacancies), both in public and private universities, the public of higher education is increasingly diverse. Such initiatives have meant, in some cases, the entry of students who without such actions would certainly not reach universities.

Among one of the public policies instituted in favor of inclusion in higher education, we can mention the *Incluir* Program. This program started in 2005 and aimed at promoting actions aimed at the full access of people with disabilities at the university. One of the main actions of the *Incluir* Program was the promotion of the creation of accessibility centers within the federal higher education institutions. Such nuclei are constituted in different ways. There is no common direction in the elaboration of inclusion actions, resulting in the fact that each university has built its work process.

The construction of strategies to enable students with disabilities to remain at the university is among the works carried out by the accessibility centers. Among the public served by the centers are the PWD and other students who, for psychological reasons, relationship difficulties, schizophrenia, depression and other disorders demand specialized care.

Despite this public policy, much needs to be done in terms of enabling students with disabilities to remain. In a study by Anache *et al.* (2014), some actions are indicated that can contribute to the construction of inclusive cultures and practices at the university. The authors call attention to the awareness of the university community; research on the conceptions that the academic community has about inclusion; development of teaching, research and extension activities that include the PWD; creation of supervised internships; creation of instruments capable of identifying and evaluating students who need academic assistance and monitoring close to specialized educational assistance practices; guidance from faculty and staff from different sectors of the institution; making a diagnosis of the institution's accessibility conditions. These are some aspects that favor the permanence of students with disabilities in the university.

It is important to emphasize that because it is an interactive process between the PWD and the university contexts, each institution must assess its reality and, based on it, build possibilities to make its daily life more inclusive and accessible to all.



From the above, it is clear how complex the discussion about the inclusion of PWD in higher education is. Faced with so many challenges facing universities, teaching work is certainly one of the most fundamental. We will discuss this issue in the section that follows.

### **Teaching in higher education: the relation between formation, performance and educational inclusion**

The reflections that follow start from the understanding that being a teacher in higher education is not just a matter of mastery of content, expertise in a certain field of knowledge or academic degree. Teaching in higher education requires pedagogical practices in tune with the set of activities specific to the teacher's work in a higher education institution: teaching, researching, promoting academic extension, innovation and culture.

Higher education in Brazil is expressed in articles 43 to 57 of the Guidelines and Bases Law (LDB, Brazil, 1996). According to LDB, the institutions that offer higher education have the purpose of professional formation in different areas of knowledge, promoting the dissemination of cultural, scientific and technical knowledge, communicating them through teaching. Higher education is also responsible for: stimulating cultural creation and developing the scientific spirit and reflective thinking, promoting research work and scientific research and promoting extension; the wider dissemination to the population about cultural creation and scientific and technological research generated in institutions that offer higher education and produce knowledge.

The formation of teachers for higher education and the constitution of a university pedagogy comprise a field of studies and investigations by different Brazilian researchers. According to Pimenta and Anastasiou (2008), although university teachers have significant experiences in the field, or have a great theoretical basis, in general, unpreparedness and even a lack of scientific knowledge of what is a teaching and learning process are preponderant. The reasons for these findings are diverse. According to the reflections of Masetto (1998, p. 36), until the 1970s, “practically was demanded from the candidate for higher education teacher to have a bachelor's degree and the competent exercise of his profession”, based on the principle of “who knows, know how to teach”<sup>6</sup>. It was believed that for the exercise of teaching in higher education, the domain of specific knowledge - research or professional practice in the field was sufficient. Soares and Cunha (2010) reinforce this reflection when they call attention to the lack

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<sup>6</sup> “praticamente exigia-se do candidato a professor de ensino superior o bacharelado e o exercício competente de sua profissão”, com base no princípio de “quem sabe, sabe ensinar”

of demand in public policies for an expanded formation for higher education teachers that includes the specific knowledge of teaching practice, in addition to the aforementioned scientific knowledge specific to the areas of to know. Referring to several studies, the authors state that the teacher of higher education builds his teaching identity from family experiences, models of former teachers and his own self-taught experience, in addition to exchanges with professional colleagues and the return of students.

In the current historical moment, the new technical objects bring with them new signs. We witness the multinationalization of companies, the internationalization of production and products, the globalization of the economy, the new roles of the State and the information revolution that, with the progress of information technology, starts to instantly connect people and places (AMORIM, 2010 , p. 68). Today's world is marked by this ever new "technical-scientific-informational medium", whose major explanatory elements are called knowledge, culture and technique. "Today, thanks to technical progress and the globalization of the economy, the existence, although incomplete, of a universal human community, allows us to recognize, in every event, a spark of the world"<sup>7</sup> (SANTOS, 2005, p. 162). The production of knowledge and formation in higher education occupy a prominent place in the debate on the new formative demands arising from these contexts, bringing as a fundamental element the exercise of teaching in the face of the challenges of teaching and learning in the contemporary world.

Libaneo (2012) teaches us that between the teachers' work and the students' learning activity, the context factors that act in the pedagogical-didactic conditions of the teaching work intervene. For the author,

[...] teaching work consists of a mediating activity between the individual and the social, between the student and the social and historically accumulated culture [...] but, it is a student as a concrete and historical being, synthesis of multiple determinations, product of social and cultural conditions (LIBANEO, 2012, p. 341).<sup>8</sup>

In times of very significant changes in the scope of techniques and their variations in use and production, accumulation and accelerated transmission of knowledge and information, it is imperative to think about changes in teaching practices in higher education. A number of

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<sup>7</sup> "Hoje, graças aos progressos técnicos e à mundialização da economia, a existência, ainda que incompleta de uma comunidade humana universal, permite reconhecer, em cada acontecer, uma fagulha do mundo"

<sup>8</sup> [...] o trabalho docente consiste numa atividade mediadora entre o individual e o social, entre o aluno e a cultura social e historicamente acumulada [...] mas, trata-se de um aluno enquanto ser concreto e histórico, síntese de múltiplas determinações, produto de condições sociais e culturais (LIBANEO, 2012, p. 341).



new technologies are accessed by the population, mainly by the youth who access higher education courses. The mastery of a set of new ways of producing and displaying writing, image and sounds also brings with it new ways to teach and learn. Challenges for higher education institutions and their teaching staff, which must go through continuous formation to meet these formative demands.

Not displaced by this accelerated process of change, there are advances in the scope of the policy of including people with disabilities (PWD) in the world of work and in school environments. As already mentioned, Law 13,409/2016, when regulating the reservation of vacancies for PWD in federal higher education institutions, brings with it other challenges to the university environment, whether in processes and dynamics of academic management, or in the specific scope of teaching practices in higher education courses.

While in primary school for two decades the promotion of teacher formation for an inclusive pedagogical work has been observed, in HEIs little was discussed about the presence of PWD in their higher education courses. Thus, the development of a culture of inclusion in the university environment is fundamental to bring the debate on teaching in higher education from inclusive practices. The topic of inclusion in the HEIs needs to be placed on the agenda and the demands of the PWD and their specificities of accessibility and learning must permeate the academic discussions that make up the pedagogical projects of the courses.

The inclusion of PWD in higher education also comes up against barriers in the attitudinal field. Teachers, students, staff of the technical staff, among other subjects who circulate in the university environment, ignore, do not know or know very little, in general, of the limitations and learning capacities of students with disabilities. Ignorance is a carrier of prejudice that permeates discourses that contribute to the exclusion, discouragement, retention and abandonment of courses (OMOTE, 2004, 2005).

Currently, what is observed is a race in the HEIs to organize staff who are able to promote, at least, inclusive processes from the selection of candidates, in more equitable admission programs, to the didactic organization of the subjects in the courses. In this context, it is crucial to promote teacher and technical formation programs for working with PWD. The formation of teachers for higher education in Brazil takes place in graduate courses and does not include, at least, the methodologies and didactics for work in higher education. Such formation passes away from the discussion about who are the subjects of learning; in which socio-educational contexts the teaching practices will be carried out; what learning curricula should promote, among others.

Our research in the Scielo database reported a very small number of articles published in Portuguese that reflect on teaching work and inclusion in higher education, as we will present in the next section. This absence demonstrates the lack of research in the area of teacher formation and teaching practices in higher education in the face of the process of including PWD in Brazilian federal public HEIs. Such an inclusive process takes place in a troubled context of scarce funding for public higher education in Brazil and the policy of inclusion of PWD in these institutions has not guaranteed its own budget, in addition to the aforementioned “*Incluir Program*”, which does not meet all demands arising from the entry of PWD in HEIs through the policy of reserving vacancies.

One of the great challenges posed by the policy of reserving places for PWD is to guarantee the entry and permanence of students in the chosen course. The first movements of the HEIs need to converge to the understanding that the inclusion process in higher education must reach all individuals and create social and pedagogical teaching conditions for all students. For this, it is necessary to understand it as a complex social process, the product of actions established by different agents involved directly or indirectly with the teaching-learning process, from those present in the academic space, as well as those present in their surroundings, such as teachers, course coordinators, unit directors, administrative technicians, parents, university management members, among others.

The presence of research and study groups that already deal with the theme of inclusion creates possibilities to broaden the debate in HEIs and foster inclusive culture through seminars, conversation circles, continuing education courses, among others. Furthermore, the existence of a research and innovation environment in the institutions can favor the development of a series of solutions in the face of the challenges for promoting inclusion found by teachers, administrative technicians, managers and the students themselves. Different interactions between teaching practices in teaching, research and extension can be fostered and collaborate with the inclusive process in higher education.

A discussion also included in the list of demands to be taken care of by the HEIs and which impacts teaching practices is related to the set of regulations that govern the entire academic ambience of the institutions. The increase in the number of PWDs in undergraduate courses at federal institutions of higher education has mobilized discussions about the times, permanence, assessment, undergraduate formation curricula for this audience, to name some issues already identified within universities .

In addition to mobilizing teachers in their practices, bringing new demands in the field of teaching and learning, the presence of PWDs in federal HEIs has instigated the field of

academic management to seek strategies for the continuing education of teachers and civil servants. New challenges for the offer of a quality degree are posed, given the formative specificities of the PWD in different courses. Adequate infrastructures for physical and pedagogical accessibility are urgent in this movement. The novelty of this reality and the scarcity of reflection observed indicates the existence of a vast and open field for action in the HEIs and their professors, research groups, postgraduate courses and management.

## **Methodology**

Considering the proposed objective, namely: to reflect on how the access of students with disabilities in higher education, especially from the policy of reserving vacancies (Law 13,409/2016), has impacted the daily life of classrooms, in particular in teaching practices, this research was carried out from a literature review, supported by the narrative bibliographic research methodology (BOTELHO, 2011). Such methodology allows us to trace an analysis of the knowledge already produced on the subject, which, in the case of this study, refers to teaching in higher education in view of the inclusion of PWD.

We conducted the research using publicly accessible virtual environments, more specifically the Scielo database (Scientific Electronic Library Online), between 2008 and 2018. To search for articles, we used the following descriptors: teaching in higher education, university teaching, inclusion of people with disabilities, higher education institutions.

As inclusion criteria we established: complete articles, available in Portuguese; published between 2008 and 2018, inclusive; to have focus on the relation between teaching in higher education and the inclusion of PWD. The exclusion criteria were: articles unavailable or with display problems; published in other languages; that do not deal with the central theme of the research. In total, in a 10-year period, only 07 (seven) articles that directly related the issue of teaching in higher education with the inclusion of PCD were found.

## **Results and discussion: after all, what do the research reveal to us?**

After reading all the material, it was possible to categorize the articles from the following subthemes: 1) teacher formation; 2) didactic-methodological challenges; 3) social attitudes towards disability; 4) accessibility. As we understand that the subthemes are interrelated and are, together, in the process of including PWD in Universities, we chose to organize the data in a discursive way, so that the interrelation between them is clear.

The 07 (seven) articles found made it possible for us to correlate different elements that go through teaching in higher education. Despite the lack of studies that focus on university teaching and the inclusion of students with disabilities, the articles we had access to show that the arrival of PWD in universities has promoted a movement of “imbalance”, regarding university culture and teaching practices. A first indication that research points out is the finding that the formation of university teachers lacks a pedagogical approach, in particular, the knowledge necessary to work with students who have disabilities or other special educational needs.

This is what the article by Messerschmidt and Castro (2016) tells us. When conducting a study with professors from a federal university in Rio Grande do Sul, they outlined a profile of teachers regarding the teaching of students with disabilities. The questionnaire applied to teachers indicated that their initial and continuing formation did not allow teachers to have access to knowledge that would instrumentalize them to work with PWD.

In another article, still with regard to formation, Malusá, Santos and Portes (2010), when conducting a study with professors at the Federal University of Uberlândia, heard from the participants that academic formation is important for the teacher to acquire the necessary knowledge to practice with PWD, however, the importance of experience was placed in a prominent position by teachers. That is, having a student with a disability in the classroom, living with that student and living this experience has a strong impact on teaching practice.

Santos and Duarte (2017), when addressing the theme of professional development of university professors in an inclusive perspective, draw attention to the fact that universities and higher education institutions make greater investment in teacher formation. They argue that these institutions have professional development programs and that such programs can address issues that concern the inclusion of PWD in higher education.

Regarding the continuing education of university teachers, the different studies pointed to the fact that the initiatives or formation programs are isolated and very punctual, with the need for universities to develop support actions and services that bring together existing formation and research initiatives. Teachers' demands regarding formation include: lectures, courses, training, guidance, curriculum flexibility and support for students (PROVIN; FABRIS, 2015; SILVA, CYNNOT; D'ANTINO, 2012).

In the interface with the formation are the didactic-methodological issues. This is a central theme when we think about the permanence of students with disabilities in universities. In the study by Messerschmidt and Castro (2016), the weakness in pedagogical mediation was a relevant fact. Of the teachers who participated in the study, a part declared that they did not

change their teaching methodology due to the fact that they have students with disabilities in the classroom. The main methodological strategies reported by the teachers were: group work, lecture and visual resources. A minority of teachers reported promoting changes to adapt their classes to the specific needs of students with disabilities.

It is important to highlight, as demonstrated by Malusá, Santos and Portes (2010), that the diffuse conceptions that teachers have about disability significantly influences the way they position themselves in front of these students in the daily life of the university. Such conceptions go through assistentialist views, of less value, disability, even views that consider that disability is not synonymous with incapacity and that, despite the difficulties, the PWD are able to learn and exercise a profession. The teachers do not disregard that the difficulties are very great, depending on the limitations that the disability entails, but they do not believe that such limitations completely prevent these subjects from being at the university.

Returning to the methodological didactic aspect, Pieczkowski and Naujorks (2015), in their study, seek to tension the process of including PWD in higher education and to understand its effects on university teaching. The authors interviewed professors from two universities in Santa Catarina, in the southern region of the country. From the teachers' narratives it was possible to notice that some reported having modified and improved their practice due to having students with disabilities in their courses. They started to pay more attention to aspects such as body expression, lip reading, visual stimuli, diversification of activity proposals and evaluation. Against this stance, some professors demonstrated that they did not make any changes in their practice, being strongly opposed to the inclusion process. In one of the interviews, it is possible to notice that there is a process of holding the student accountable for his success or failure, as if only he had to make an effort and overcome the difficulties to follow the classes.

Candido, Nascimento and Martins (2016), in their article, highlight the centrality of the teacher in the inclusion process. Without disregarding that such a process does not require actions that go beyond the teaching work, they inform us that the teacher-student relationship is a determining issue. For the authors, the teacher needs to act as a learning mediator and have an ethical commitment to his role.

The theme of architectural accessibility and different materials was present in all articles found. In more detail, Silva, Cynnot and D'antino (2012), established, from the research with university professors, what they consider, in an order of priority, essential to enable the permanence of students with disabilities in the university. At the top of the priorities, teachers point to physical accessibility, followed by accessibility in furniture. Accessibility and adaptation of materials and resources appears in third place. This data leads us to reflect that it

is not enough for teachers to establish another working methodology if the institution as a whole does not mobilize to promote changes, beyond the classroom, that promote the inclusion of PWD.

Accessibility to the curriculum also appears in different studies. Curricular diversification and flexibility, diversified forms of assessment, adaptations in environments such as teaching laboratories and support for students through monitoring were issues considered fundamental by university professors. In the article by Pieczkowski and Naujorks (2015), the concern of some teachers in relation to providing pedagogical accessibility to students with disabilities is evident. One of the issues that teachers are concerned with is the fact that they do not lower their level of demand in activities and evaluations because the students have some kind of limitation. For teachers it is important to diversify the methodologies and maintain the level of requirement that is established for the class.

From the above, we realize that the complexity involved in the process of including PWD in higher education is great, especially with regard to the role of the teacher. The articles point us to different challenges to teaching practice, ranging from their attitude towards students with disabilities to their ability to reframe and modify their practice with inclusion as a pedagogical principle. The scenario is set, and it is up to everyone who works in higher education, whether as teachers or managers, to build a university culture consistent with the principles of educational inclusion and diversity.

### **Final considerations**

This article sought to reflect on how the access of students with disabilities in higher education, especially from the policy of reserving places (Law 13,409/2016), has impacted the daily lives of classrooms, particularly in teaching practices. Motivated by the urgency of the treatment of the theme in an academic environment, the law that reserves places in higher education for PWD imposes a necessary reflection on inclusion in higher education for teachers, technical staff, managers, students and the whole society.

Some universities already have a repertoire of experiences in this field, but what is observed and verified by the articles accessed is that most institutions and their staff are unprepared for quality pedagogical work with the public of students with disabilities.

In general, what the reading of the articles listed points to is a necessary change in the initial formation of teachers for the exercise of teaching in undergraduate courses. This proposal is a policy that is regulated by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education



Personnel (CAPES) and which has brought little demand to the debate in graduate school. This finding is complemented by the note made in the texts of absence or scarcity of an institutional policy for continuing teacher education, with special attention to the challenges and possibilities of inclusion in higher education.

The current socio-political and economic scenario in which the inclusion of PWD in higher education takes the stage and presents itself with an important discussion on the guarantee of rights has been marked by resource constraints in the educational field, which aggravates the already committed budget destined for policies inclusive in HEIs. This fact further expands the challenges that we have to face, from now on, to consolidate the right to education of the PWD and to build an increasingly diverse, inclusive university that responds to the academic and pedagogical needs of its students.

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