

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY AT SCHOOL: THE DIALOGICAL APPROACH AS A DEMEDICALIZING STRATEGY

FONOAUDIOLOGIA NA ESCOLA: A ABORDAGEM DIALÓGICA COMO ESTRATÉGIA DESMEDICALIZANTE

FONOAUDIOLOGÍA EN LA ESCUELA: EL ENFOQUE DIALÓGICO COMO ESTRATEGIA DESMEDICALIZANTE

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ABSTRACT: This is a longitudinal case study on a speech and language therapy work carried out in a public school in the city of São Paulo, which sought to promote non-medical educational strategies that enhance the learning of children with school difficulties. As a theoretical-methodological approach, the dialogical approach of Bakhtin was used, which aims to understand the discourses produced in the school space, resulting from a crossing of voices, not always consonant. This work was carried out in three stages, for two years, had the participation of 20 teachers, in the first two stages and, in the third, 48 students from the initial years and 4 teachers from six reinforcement lessons' classes. The analysis of the data collected from the conversation circles of the first stages and the language workshops of the third revealed the existence of multiple voices in the students' learning process, expanding the understanding of the difficulties and favoring a change in the teachers' attitude towards the learner with problems. More potent teachers not only contributed to the transformation of students' difficulties, returning them to their regular classrooms but also felt safer in teaching in these spaces, as they experienced their own potency for pedagogical work.

KEYWORDS: School. Speech and language therapy. Learning difficulties. Educational speech therapy. Medicalization.

RESUMO: Trata-se de estudo de caso longitudinal sobre um trabalho fonoaudiológico realizado em escola pública da cidade de São Paulo, que buscou fomentar estratégias educacionais não medicalizantes e potencializadoras do aprendizado de crianças com dificuldades escolares. Como aporte teórico-metodológico utilizou-se a abordagem dialógica de cunho bakhtiniano, que visa a compreensão dos discursos produzidos no espaço escolar, resultantes de um cruzamento de vozes, nem sempre consonantes. Este trabalho, realizado em três etapas, durante dois anos, teve participação de 20 professores, nas duas primeiras etapas e, na terceira, de 48 estudantes dos anos iniciais e 4 professores de seis salas de

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apoio. A análise dos dados coletados das rodas de conversas das primeiras etapas e das oficinas de linguagem da terceira revelou a existência de múltiplas vozes no processo de aprendizagem dos estudantes, ampliando a compreensão das dificuldades e favorecendo uma mudança de postura dos professores frente ao aprendiz com problemas. Professores mais potentes não só contribuíram para a transformação das dificuldades dos estudantes, devolvendo-os para suas salas regulares, como sentiram-se mais seguros em dar aulas nesses espaços, pois experimentaram suas próprias potências para o trabalho pedagógico.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Escola. Fonoaudiologia. Dificuldades de aprendizagem. Fonoaudiologia educacional. Medicalização.*

RESUMEN: *Este es un estudio de caso longitudinal sobre un trabajo fonoaudiológico realizado en una escuela pública de la ciudad de São Paulo, que buscaba promover estrategias educativas no medicalizadas que mejoren el aprendizaje de niños con dificultades escolares. Como enfoque teórico-metodológico, se utilizó el enfoque dialógico de Bajtin, que tiene como objetivo comprender los discursos producidos en el espacio escolar, resultantes de un cruce de voces, no siempre consonantes. Este trabajo, realizado en tres etapas, durante dos años, contó con la participación de 20 docentes, en las dos primeras etapas y, en la tercera, 48 alumnos de los años iniciales y 4 docentes de seis clases de refuerzo. El análisis de los datos recogidos de los círculos de dialogo de las primeras etapas y los talleres de lenguaje de la tercera revelaron la existencia de múltiples voces en el proceso de aprendizaje de los estudiantes, ampliando la comprensión de las dificultades y favoreciendo un cambio en la actitud de los maestros hacia el alumno con problemas. Los maestros más empoderados no solo contribuyeron a la transformación de las dificultades de los estudiantes, devolviéndolos a sus aulas regulares, sino que también se sintieron más seguros al enseñar en estos espacios, ya que experimentaron sus propias potencialidades para el trabajo pedagógico.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Escuela. Fonoaudiología. Dificultades de aprendizaje. Fonoaudiología educativa. Medicalización.*

Introduction

It is not uncommon for the speech therapist to be summoned to school to solve learning problems from the biomedical point of view of health. This means that the speech therapist is seen as the professional capable of discovering in the student that does not learn which aspects are he failing in. This convocation, in general, already comes with suspicions: perhaps an auditory processing problem, or dyslexia, or an attention deficit. The way in which doubts are raised already shows the medicalizing look at problems that are in the orbit of education and announce the stigmatization of students with learning problems.

Medicalization of education is understood as the individual's responsibility for his/her learning process (FÓRUM, 2015). Although the schooling process clearly depends on numerous factors of a political, economic, social, environmental and intersubjective nature,

the school routine is full of actions aimed at the homogenization of students and take their singularities in the ways of learning - when they differ from the rhythm and institutional expectations - as pathological. The effect of this, many times, is that the individual's presence in the school context is anticipated by hypotheses from the clinical field that turn into stigmatizing traits that, to paraphrase Goffman (2004), prevent other attributes from being seen by teachers. Speech therapy work in education that aims to optimize this type of school action, seeking to prevent future learning problems, also, to a certain extent, acts in a medicalizing perspective on education and stigmatizing the individual.

This article presents a longitudinal case study of a speech therapy work proposal, in a public school, whose objective was to foster educational strategies that enhance the learning of children with school difficulties, based on the Bakhtinian dialogic approach, analyzing the impact that an approach of this nature has on the teaching-learning process of these students. Such an approach aims at understanding the discourses that are produced in the school space, understanding them as the result of a crossing of voices, not always consonant, taking as a principle that, for Bakhtin (1986), due to its dialogical nature, language reveals itself as a space for ideological confrontations, since it carries cultural values that express divergences and convergences in opinions, as well as contradictions of social groups. Demonstrating the existence of multiple voices in the students' learning process broadens the understanding of the difficulties they present and favors a change in looking at the child who does not learn, undoing stigmas and building possibilities to understand the difficulties of schooling without blaming the students.

Methodological path

The educational speech therapy work analyzed in this case study was carried out in a public school in the early years of Elementary Education in the West Region of the state of São Paulo; lasted two years, between 2013 and 2014, and was divided into three stages. The entry of speech therapists in this school was motivated by the need for teachers to know what to do with children who had learning problems. According to a previous survey, 90 children were in this condition and were distributed in 14 support classrooms with activities that overlapped the schedules of regular classrooms. A partnership was signed with the signing of a cooperation agreement, with consent for the use of the data collected and analyzed for academic, research and publication purposes of the analyzed results, safeguarding the anonymity of the participants and the school institution. All participants were duly informed

about the terms signed in the partnership and adherence to the steps analyzed in this case study was voluntary. The approach used was dialogic, in the first two stages, conversation circles were held with all teachers in the early years of elementary school, monthly, defined by the school management, but which proved to be quite irregular, as well as the total number of participants per meeting, as they were submitted to other demands of school management. On average, the first two stages had 20 teachers per meeting with heterogeneous characteristics, both in relation to the forms of hiring, with open, temporary, and occasional teachers, and in relation to the classrooms for which they were responsible, as there were teachers from 1st to 5th year, in addition to the teachers responsible for the support rooms. In the third stage, the work was carried out in 6 (six) support rooms already existing at the school, defined jointly with the teachers who volunteered. There were 3 (three) with 1st to 3rd year, literacy cycle, and 3 with students aged 4 and 5, production cycle. Altogether there were 48 children and 4 teachers, among which one teacher was awarded a tender and three had an eventual teacher contract. Eight fortnightly meetings were held, lasting two hours each.

First and Second Steps: Beyond the school walls

In the first two stages, the emphasis was on establishing a partnership with the teachers and managers of the educational institution, a state school in the West Zone of the city of São Paulo, to get to know the students and their stories beyond the school walls. There were several meetings, at the times stipulated for the collective pedagogical work schedule, in which cases were discussed as problems considered by the teachers.

Invariably, the cases were presented as follows:

11-year-old girl, violent, aloof and with a large family. Several teachers report bad behavior in the classroom, needing to refer her to the principal several times. With poor performance in the disciplines, she writes little, only takes copy lessons when she brings them. She has difficulty reading and has been late and missed classes a lot. She really enjoys the freest physical education activities. She has been in the support group for a while and has not shown any improvement in her performance. (our translation)

The dialogical approach, in this work perspective, seeks to raise all the speeches that support the presentation of the case; which aspects and which voices are present when it qualifies, for example, that the girl in question is violent and aloof. Here everyone participates, from the regular class teacher to the student inspector. The statement that she is violent also shared by her classmates? It makes a lot of difference for the understanding of the

case to know where it all started and how the narrative is constructed and whether (or not) it is perpetuated.

This horizontal dialogue exercise, in which all voices matter without a hierarchy in the construction of knowledge, is not easily achieved. The first movements are always of hierarchical knowledge. If nothing that was done at the school went well, the solution is to go abroad. So it is common to encounter the following simultaneous behaviors: talking to the family / sending for school reinforcement, which takes place in the support rooms / sending to the Basic Health Unit.

A study carried out in Londrina (OLIVEIRA *et al.*, 2009), with children and support room teachers, revealed that this classroom maintains the stereotype that blames the child and his family for their difficulty in learning. In general, when the school calls the family for a conversation, it is not necessarily marked by listening, but by prescription: the child should be taken to the health service, since, at school, she has already been to the support room.

The support room, in fact, is the waiting room for a diagnosis that has already been taken for granted. The student's schooling process is no longer the responsibility of the educational institution that should intervene with educational strategies. It is suspended until the medical report comes out. From then on, even though the student remains in school, the strategies become the responsibility of the health team. And, if the health team does not understand the school space as part of the collective order, the strategies are individualizing, stigmatizing and, contrary to what is sought, and perpetuate a medicalizing look. As an apprentice, the child becomes ill, a trait that imposes itself and destroys the possibility that other attributes of this child are appreciated (GOFFMAN, 2004).

The exercise of raising all the voices that intersect in the teachers' speech that seems logical - *the child must have a problem* - highlights empty spaces that need to be filled. Thus, we seek, with all actors in the educational space, answers to “how, why and for what” for each of the “child's problems”.

This was the keynote of the work in the first two stages. From the need to talk about children considered to be problematic, conversations were held with the regular and support teachers at the school. The idea was to present exemplary “problem cases”, chosen by the teachers, so that school professionals and speech therapists could talk about it, looking for solutions relevant to the space and to do educational. The initial idea of finding an answer in the child was giving way to more complex relationships, as each question was broken down into others that sought answers contextualized in specific space and time. Several outbreaks emerged, seen as factors interconnected to the schooling process: housing, family dynamics,

socioeconomic status, participation in contexts of leisure and culture, support network for the family and the student, the child's position in school, among others that make up the complexity of the learning process. The multiplicity of points of view expanded the understanding and modified the view that each “problem case” had.

The result always surprises everyone, as out of problematic apprentices, children with life and potential emerged. It was a strategy that seeks to deconstruct the stigmas attributed to students, opening space so that new representations, in the sense of Moscovici (2012), of themselves and others can be constructed and reframed.

The next step was what to do with this revealed truth. How to deal with real children, that is, singular children, with different ways and rhythms of learning, in the classroom? The homogenization movement of students was no longer here. It was necessary to start from the premise that everyone learns, each at its starting point. The fundamental point is: what does the school need to guarantee for everyone to follow in their learning processes?

Thus, the proposal of speech therapy work, at this stage, still based on the dialogical approach, aims at the joint construction of educational strategies in the classroom so that teachers take ownership of them and feel more powerful in the profession. It is important to note that there is no mention of prevention of learning problems, nor of early detection of risk signs. It is not up to the teacher to diagnose pathologies. It is not up to the speech therapist in education to transmit his clinical knowledge and reasoning. It is up to the potentialization of the teacher's own knowledge with the knowledge that the speech therapist has about language. Above all, it is worth discussing the notion of literacies and social uses of writing that are valued and not valued.

Third Stage: Construction of collaborative work in learning to write in a school environment

The continuity of the speech therapy work reported in this article, the third stage, was carried out with teachers who wanted to see how the discussions and reasoning undertaken in previous moments could be turned into strategies in the classroom. Thus, it was chosen as a “pilot project” of this new phase to work with four teachers responsible for 48 students from the first grades of Elementary School, who were already organized in 6 support rooms for presenting difficulties in learning to write, divided into literacy and textual production difficulties.

Our “mission” was to transform the support room, seen as a waiting room for diagnosis, into a classroom, in fact and in law, with new and diverse pedagogical strategies for those who differed from the others in their regular rooms of origin, for their unique ways of learning. Thus, the third stage of the project was dedicated to a commitment: bringing children closer to learning to read and write in a meaningful way.

We chose to develop language workshops with teachers whose objective was to enable them to work with writing to recognize the abilities (and not just the difficulties) of the students in order to enhance their learning processes. Altogether there were eight biweekly workshops. In the weeks when the group of speech therapists was not present, the teachers continued the work started in the previous week. The objective of interleaving our presence in the workshops was for the appropriation by the teacher of the knowledge produced there, understanding that this was his space, therefore his role as well. The speech therapist presents himself to this extent as a facilitator of the learning process.

It is worth remembering that the children who are directed to the support rooms carry the stigma of a bad apprentice and, at first contact, this seems to be an absolute truth. It was common to hear from the teachers: "He is so quiet, because he has difficulties". But when we tried to detail the difficulties, in the sense of circumscribing them within the process of acquiring writing, the answers were vague, tautological. "The child does not write because he has difficulties in learning to write". Which are? How does the kid write? When? Do we know the real kids in this room? Questions that were left unanswered at the beginning of this third stage.

It was necessary for teachers to admit to themselves that they did not really know those students and that such knowledge was possible for them with their own educational tools. As previously stated, the children in the support room are waiting for a diagnosis and the teachers who are there feel hostage to the medical report, postponing a more unique pedagogical conduct until after the report arrives. In the meantime, writing activities are similar to those in the regular classroom, only at a slower pace. In other words, more of the same in slow motion. The difficulties of the students are perpetuated as they move away, a little more each day, from the meanings that reading and writing may have in their lives, after all they do not write because they have difficulties and the tasks they are assigned only reinforce this thesis.

When we came across them, at the first meeting, the speech was the same for everyone, regardless of their age and school year: “I don't know how to write”; "I am dumb"; “I have difficulties to memorize the letters”. And, despite identifying their difficulties, with

some embarrassment at times, they did not have empathy for their colleagues. There was not a group there with the objective of overcoming difficulties, but a group of children removed from their original rooms waiting for their certificates of incapacity to become official.

How to break with this perverse dynamic? Initially, establishing dynamics that stimulated the dialogue between students and teacher and speech therapists (hereinafter referred to as workshop mediators). Several aspects could be raised in these dynamics.

From that moment on, we will make a segmentation to facilitate the observation of the steps of this work, however, the proposal presented here should not be carried out in a fragmented way, but in the continuous flow of communication between all the interlocutors, which respects the demands constituted in each context. The real unity in the dialogical approach is the statement, which means that we do not work with patch forms of language, but with the statements of the subjects in singular contexts of production. Thus, when working on specific aspects of the word, for example, it will never be isolated from a negotiation of meanings with the class. For, according to Bakhtin:

The language does not exist by itself, but only in conjunction with the individual structure of a concrete statement. It is only through enunciation that language makes contact with communication, imbues itself with its vital power and becomes a reality (BAKHTIN, 1986, p. 154, our translation).

Therefore, the proposals for activities throughout the workshops are based on real life stories brought by children, on books thought based on the experience throughout the constitution of each group, in games for the children's community, that is, the strategies and materials used are thought and organized based on what is observed and shared in the meetings. This, necessarily, requires attentive, sensitive mediators with a repertoire to use different materials.

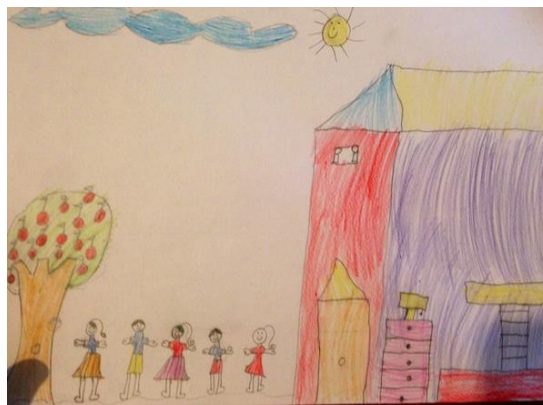
Initial Workshops: Conversations about life stories

Structured as conversation circles, these dynamics revealed, at first, a lack of knowledge of oral language practices. All of them showed an enormous need to speak and to be heard, but very little listening. Thus, we are faced with ineffective oral speeches. Reports and narratives without necessary finishing, because the need to speak prevented them from closing their lines. This generated disinterest from the other colleagues, which contributed to the dispersion. Moment when teachers invariably said: “This is not going to work. Do you want me to put order in the room?”. It took a while for teachers to understand that the order

they were talking about led to very little productive silence and that was not what should be encouraged.

The dynamics also revealed that, along with the need to speak without the specific finalization and necessary to each discursive genre in question, there was a fear of making mistakes. Make mistakes in speech, drawing and writing. Thus, when the children realized that a colleague's performance was working, they all tried to imitate him. "What is the model to copy?" was the most repeated question at that first meeting. An example of this is in the drawings produced by one of the groups. The order was to draw an object or something that made sense to him, that he liked very much, and then to be identified as his own by his colleagues. The drawing should be done without anyone seeing. This was almost impossible because everyone needed parameters of what would be acceptable to the mediators. And so, in this particular group, everyone drew a family, with the house surrounded by trees, flowers and dogs, because there was a first child who dedicated himself to drawing this and his drawing came out well done (figure 1). Would it be the case that everyone had the family as something that represented them? Evidently not. The repeated drawing (figure 2) in the whole class reflects the lack of authorship marks.

Figure 1 – Production Life Stories, First drawing



Source: Author's archive

Figure 2 – Production Life Stories



Source: Author's archive

Even though we observed the fear of exposing oneself, the inefficiency of oral speech and the lack of authorship in texts and drawings, we were able to discover life stories that until then teachers did not even imagine, and that started to make perfect sense with the way the child performs in the classroom. Like a girl, always aloof and aggressive, who drew a dog as something that meant a lot in her life and who, in telling her story, let out a hurt for her parents, since the birth of her twin brothers, she has feeling neglected in the family, leaving to her only the dog's love. Or the boy who felt important because his brother had been asked to play on a basketball team in a big city in another state. This appreciation of life was reflected in this boy's drawing. Although he refused to write, he worked on the drawing that served as the theme for the continuation of the workshop the following week.

We repeat here, with the students, what was done with the school professionals, in the first two moments of this work: the exercise of horizontal dialogue, with no hierarchy in the construction of knowledge. Here, in the conversation between the students and the mediators, even with all the difficulties of establishing the discipline desired by the teachers, of developing the oral discourse, of dissipating the fear of exposing oneself, we begin to see that the voids about why the difficulties could be filled with aspects of the child's life that he was bringing, and that a lot could be done right there, without the need for clinical knowledge.

Another important aspect already outlined in this first meeting was the need to exercise the persuasive word at the expense of the authoritarian word. We emphasize that we follow the understanding of Bakhtin (1998), for whom the authoritarian discourse is the one that seeks to impose itself in the relationship with the other discourses, not opening for dialogue and negotiation of meanings; it is a form of discourse markedly hierarchical and requires unquestioning adherence. In the author's words, the authoritarian word "requires our unconditional recognition, and absolutely not an understanding and free assimilation in our words [...] it is necessary to confirm it entirely or to reject it in its entirety" (BAKHTIN, 1998, p. 144, our translation). The internally persuasive word, on the other hand, is one that is ready to change and to build new meanings, in a horizontal and dialogical relationship between the different interlocutors in a given context. In other words, the senses are negotiated based on the statements of us and the other. For Bakhtin, the internally persuasive word, then,

is closely intertwined with "our word" [...] because "our word" is gradually and slowly elaborated from the recognized and assimilated words of others, and at the beginning its borders are almost imperceptible (BAKHTIN, 1998, p.145, our translation).

Teachers and students proved to be masters in the use of the authoritarian word. Orders, bullyings, indifference, absence of listening and consequently answers were the keynote of the first meeting. There was much to be done for an effective establishment of dialogue in which the emphasis was on the negotiation of meanings. In the establishment of dialogue in which there is negotiation of meanings, there is no end point in history, because “being means to communicate through dialogue. [...] Hence the dialogue, in essence, cannot and should not end” (BAKHTIN, 1997, p. 257, our translation).

It is important that, above all, teachers understand that language activities do not end in themselves. They are the starting point for themes to multiply. It happened from the most admired design, in another group. A boy drew a mermaid, the result of a lesson on legends that the teacher in the home room had given. We talked about the drawing, about the legend that originated it and about legends in general. We saw that, at least by the title, the children know other legends, among them some urban ones. That was the theme for the week when the teacher would be alone with the children. To bring up these legends, read to the class and talk about what each one knows and thinks about them.

Intermediate workshops phase 1: readings to expand the cultural repertoire and work with reading skills

When we returned, fifteen days later, to the second workshop, we had more lively teachers and students in the classroom, with more authoritative productions and a more hopeful look at their learning processes. Although not knowing what to do with the errors that appeared in the texts, the teachers saw changes in the children. They were more curious and interested, but also more restless. Discipline was not going well, according to the school's disciplinary parameters.

We still needed a little calm and attention to the texts produced, so that we could understand the logic of the writing of each one and know what to do with the errors that appeared. But we were still at the stage of developing self-confidence in children so that they would abandon the fear of being spontaneous. Without that, there is no learning that can be sustained. And it was necessary to work a little more to create a collaborative group. The establishment of a horizontal dialogue presupposes that children listen, respect and help each other.

We had not yet presented books to them for mediated reading. A reading in which different reading skills are worked. An activity totally possible within the school environment

and which is the function of the teacher. We chose a book that could be read in several ways. The first part was transformed into a game of questions and answers that put students in conflict situations, very close to children's daily life. Here again the exercise of dialogue, with a focus on what we had observed to be important to work on: listening and the best completion of the statement.

In this activity, then, each one chose his/her interlocutor to answer his/her question, then we would open for the whole group to comment. Respecting the other's turn to speak and really listening to what he said was essential for the game to happen. As well as speaking in a few words, but with the necessary finishing for the interlocutor to understand that the statement had come to an end. We work with language in situations where they felt able to put themselves.

The second part of the book, which is denser and with more formal content, was viewed with ease by the students who gathered around the mediators to hear the story and give their opinions from time to time. What have we learned from this activity? Reading brought up the children's cultural repertoire, another important aspect for understanding how each one places himself in his learning process. Teachers were able to understand more of the gaps that needed to be filled and understood that this filling can be accomplished with educational strategies, such as reading other books and in different discursive genres that broaden the cultural repertoire of the class. The sequence of this activity was the elaboration of a text that answered the final question of the book. The text was individual but collaborative writing, that is, in the groups formed by them, everyone helped each other in writing. An exercise in respect and empathy.

Intermediate workshops phase 2: Keeping an eye on the basic writing mechanism

The products of this second workshop revealed to us that, even for groups originally categorized as having difficulties in producing text, there were important unknowns in the basic writing mechanism that would need to be taken up again. Thus, for groups in both categories, we dedicate some of the following workshops to this basic writing work. The material? Playful games like: Word Mix, What's the Tip, Hidden Letters and the traditional Hangman. We are not talking here about speech therapy exercises dressed up in games, nor about pedagogical games. We are talking about commercial games; there are a multitude of them, in the common toy trade, and they already work with specific language issues. There is no need to make them more pedagogical or clinical. The playing itself is educational and also

therapeutic. The children liked this activity during the workshops, precisely because of the pleasure of the game, and this encouraged them to understand the rules and to want to know more about the objective proposed there, which, in this case, was the basic mechanism of writing.

Thus, being in front of a real game was highly valued by children. The apprenticeship was taken seriously because they needed to win the game. But the competition was not lonely. Groups were formed so that they could play collaboratively, the knowledge of one helping to build the knowledge of the other. There was no one who did not have something to teach the other. The idea was to make the best of each one stand out for the group. And the role of the mediators was to circulate between the groups to assist in whatever was necessary. The teaching function at that time was already shared. And teachers were able to get in touch with the logic that children did when writing. They began to have answers to the initial questions.

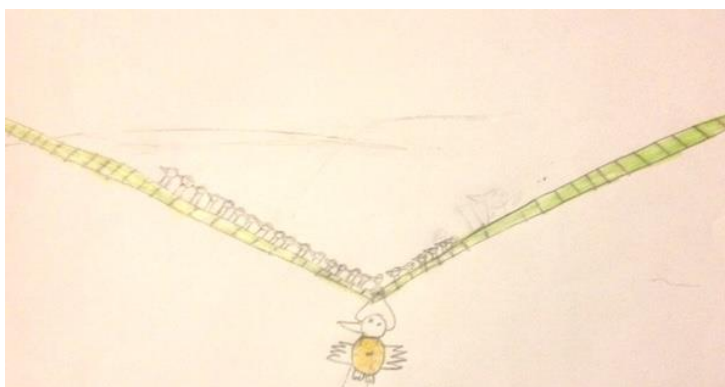
At that moment, the groups started to differentiate themselves in what the mediators launched as challenges. For those with more incipient knowledge, tasks more linked to short statements, but not without meaning. For those with more advanced knowledge, more complex tasks, always in line with the challenge loaded with meaning and capable of being carried out.

Final Workshops: Text composition work

The last three workshops were dedicated to writing texts in two different genres: narrative (from the video *The Birds*, children's short film produced by Pixar) and letter. Watching the video was a pleasant activity and we had groups formed there, with collaboration and confidence in carrying out the tasks. The elaboration of the narrative (still in a collaborative group) came after talking about the story, answering questions, checking possibilities for understanding, listening to different points of view.

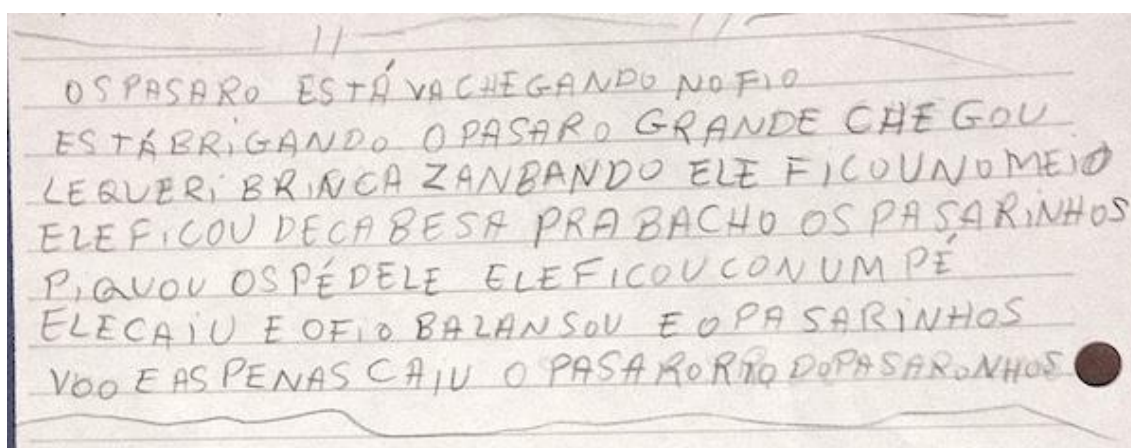
When it comes to writing, new and good surprises. As we formed collaborative groups, mixing the children, we had the idea that those who were already more empowered for writing would be the group's scribes, while others would put themselves in other functions. This is not what happened at this time. Everyone wanted to write and not just give their opinion on writing the text. There were several ways in which children from different groups presented their final texts (figures 3 and 4): some with more autonomy and use of different discourse resources, others with less, but all with unimaginable security at the beginning of this work.

Figure 3 – Narrative Production - Birds



Source: Arthurs Archive

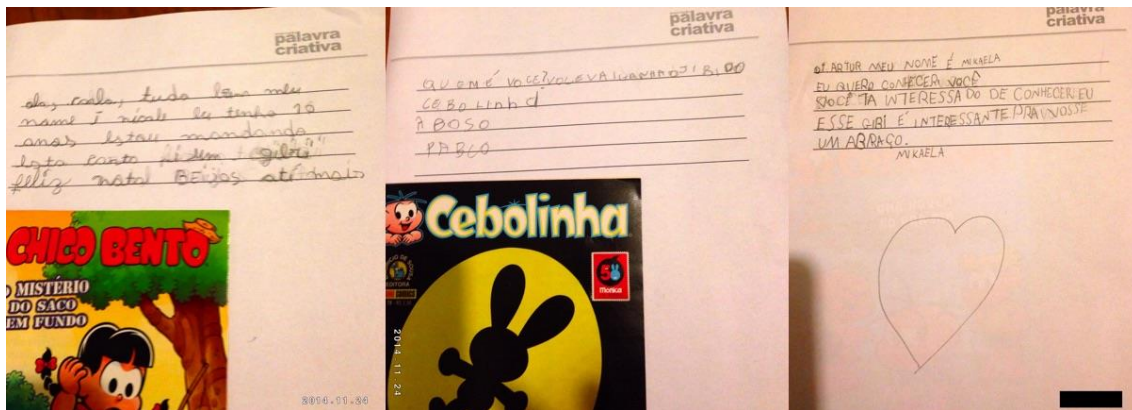
Figure 4 – Narrative Production - Birds



Source: Authors archive

Letter writing was part of the year's final work. Near Christmas, everyone chose a comic book to give to a colleague from the other group, who would receive it by mail along with a letter, in which the author would say why he chose this comic for his colleague to read. As everyone understood that they would also receive a letter and a comic book, the dedication to finishing this product was enormous, because they understood the reciprocity of the act (Figure 5). Everyone wanted to receive a well-finished letter and a nice comic. Here the writing was individual, but with free collaboration between them.

Figures 5– Letter production



Source: Authors archive

Final considerations

This work of eight meetings characterized as a pilot project revealed to everyone in the school that it is possible to work with children who have learning difficulties using educational strategies.

The horizontal dialogue proved to be a powerful tool in several aspects. It stimulated the establishment of a group with listening and collaboration in the construction of knowledge. We understand that learning is a collective and multifaceted process. Transforming it into something of individual responsibility is, especially in the support rooms, where the student is already outside his home community, ineffective and cruel. The student already stigmatized by his condition as a bad student, when he finds himself alone, does not find the strength to reverse this situation. It is essential that he can exchange experiences and knowledge with other students, in collaborative situations, experiencing different places; sometimes the most experienced partner, sometimes the least experienced. It is essential that you realize that your difficulties are not exclusive and that being able to look at them, from different points of view, helps in overcoming them.

It also favored the mastery of speeches in oral genres. In addition to promoting the expansion of the cultural repertoire, children began to give a better finish to their statements. The speaking to be heard only gave space to speak with authorship and property within a specific situation. Experiencing such situations and recognizing the characteristics of the genres in question brought more security to students and, consequently, less fear of making mistakes, which made it possible to break the stigmas linked to not learning, giving space for new representations of the self, more potent for the different ways of learning from each other.

And finally, but perhaps the starting point, it guaranteed and strengthened the feeling of belonging to a group, to a community.

All of these items are fundamental to the learning process. Working with linguistic and discursive aspects comes as a result of the construction of this dynamic, in which students can place themselves without fear of making mistakes and wanting to know what and why they made mistakes. The responsibility for finishing their learning takes place only when the student recognizes himself in the other as someone who has something worth saying. This is achieved in collaborative dynamics.

If on the students' side we saw many gains from this work, it was no different with the teachers. Everyone realized that listening to real children has a primary role in the work of “recovering” the learning process. They understood that this dynamic mobilizes them to seek their own repertoire extensions, they take them out of the comfort zone of thinking that students do not learn because they must have a problem and that, therefore, they have not much more to do than wait for diagnosis. This led them to be creative in the establishment of educational strategies, understanding that the activities that end in themselves do not lead to the effective construction of knowledge. It is necessary that the activities are linked to the interests of the children, in a continuous and always unfinished dialogue.

In practice, the result of this work brought students back to their original classrooms and, interestingly, teachers decided to take chances in regular classrooms. We found that support rooms represent a place of little value not only for students, but also for some teachers. Feeling more potent and appropriate in the pedagogical work, some of those who participated in this pilot project spoke of their desire to take up regular classes the following year. Support rooms, in this project, have become spaces for experimenting with new potencies of the teacher-student process of teaching-learning. There was no more talk of waiting for clinical diagnosis, but on possible educational paths within the diversity of ways of learning.

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