

INCLUSION OF SCHOLARS WITH DISABILITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A BIBLIOGRAPHIC REVIEW FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF HISTORICAL-CULTURAL THEORY

INCLUSÃO DE ACADÊMICOS COM DEFICIÊNCIA NA EDUCAÇÃO SUPERIOR: UMA REVISÃO BIBLIOGRÁFICA NA PERSPECTIVA DA TEORIA HISTÓRICO-CULTURAL

INCLUSIÓN DE ACADÉMICOS CON DISCAPACIDAD EN LA EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR: UNA REVISIÓN BIBLIOGRÁFICA DESDE LA PERSPECTIVA DE LA TEORÍA HISTÓRICO-CULTURAL

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ABSTRACT: This writing refers to a clipping referring to the State of the Question developed between September 2020 and March 2021, which makes up the ongoing doctoral research in education, investigates the meanings of inclusion produced by academics with autism in higher education. The purpose of this article is to map the research on inclusion of academics with disabilities in higher education carried out in Brazil between 2012 and 2020, in the light of cultural-historical theory. Because we emphasize *stricto sensu* postgraduate research (masters and doctorate), the main database consulted was the Theses and Dissertations Library of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel. The result of the survey identified a small number of researches that had as epistemological basis the Historical-Cultural Psychology of Vigotski, which reverberates in the understanding of inclusion as a historical, social and culturally constructed dialectical phenomenon and, therefore, in inclusive ways of thinking and doing.

KEYWORDS: Inclusion. University education. Literature review. Deficiency.

RESUMO: *Este escrito se refere a um recorte referente ao Estado da Questão desenvolvido entre setembro de 2020 a março de 2021, que compõe a pesquisa de doutoramento em educação, ainda em andamento, a qual investiga sobre os sentidos de inclusão produzidos por acadêmicos com autismo na educação superior. O objetivo deste artigo é mapear as pesquisas sobre inclusão de acadêmicos com deficiência na educação superior desenvolvidas no Brasil entre 2012 e 2020, à luz da teoria histórico-cultural. Por darmos ênfase às pesquisas de pós-graduação stricto sensu (mestrado e doutorado), a principal base de dados consultada foi a Biblioteca de Teses e Dissertações da Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (CAPES). O resultado do levantamento identificou um número reduzido de pesquisas que tiveram como base epistemológica a Psicologia Histórico-Cultural*

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de Vigotski, o que reverbera na compreensão da inclusão enquanto fenômeno dialético histórico, social e culturalmente construído e, portanto, nos modos de pensar e fazer inclusivos.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Inclusão. Educação superior. Revisão bibliográfica. Deficiência.*

RESUMEN: *Este escrito se refiere a un recorte referente al Estado de la Cuestión desarrollado entre septiembre de 2020 a marzo de 2021, que compone la investigación de doctorado en educación, aún en curso, la cual, investiga sobre los sentidos de inclusión producidos por académicos con autismo en la educación superior. El objetivo de este artículo es mapear las investigaciones sobre inclusión de académicos con discapacidad en la educación superior desarrolladas en Brasil entre 2012 a 2020, a la luz de la teoría histórico-cultural. Por dar énfasis a las investigaciones de posgrado stricto sensu (maestría y doctorado), la principal base de datos consultada fue la Biblioteca de Tesis y Disertaciones de la Coordinación para el Perfeccionamiento del Personal de Educación Superior (CAPES). El resultado del levantamiento identificó un número reducido de investigaciones que tuvieron como base epistemológica la Psicología Histórico-Cultural de Vigotski, lo que reverbera en la comprensión de la inclusión como fenómeno dialéctico histórico, social y culturalmente construido y, por lo tanto, en los modos de pensar y hacer inclusivos.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Inclusión. Educación superior. Revisión bibliográfica. Discapacidad.*

Introduction

The history of special education in Brazil is marked by a slow process of systematization, and significant achievements and milestones for the recognition of equity date back to the 1990s, a process of political effervescence for national democracy that contributed much in the field of education as a right for all. Although it is possible to say that it is a recent history, the literature shows us dense scientific production that contributes to inclusive education and pedagogical practices, as well as laws that guarantee and recognize the right to inclusion and accessibility (BRUNO; NOZU, 2019; EVÊNCIO, 2019; SANTOS; FALCÃO, 2020).

What about the inclusion of scholars in higher education? The university occupies a space of conflict, as it is the locus of knowledge production and professional training closely related to the development of societies; however, since the forms of entry into this space are exclusionary, this contributes to reinforcing a culture of inequality and exclusion. This character, which goes through the history of inclusion of people with disabilities and the history of universities itself, contributes to our search for an understanding of why the inclusive actions that, in fact, give rise to a feeling of belonging to the special education

public are still so incipient. Moreover, we found during our studies that the incentive to democratize access to higher education, such as, for example, the INCLUIR program (BRAZIL, 2015); the National Policy for Special Education from the Inclusive Perspective (BRAZIL, 2008) and the Brazilian Inclusion Law - Law No. 13. 146/2015 (BRAZIL, 2015), are not maintained for the permanence of the academic in the same proportion, which denotes a barrier as to pedagogical, attitudinal and methodological accessibility, revealing that inclusion in higher education requires quantitative advances, but, above all, qualitative.

Investigating aspects of the inclusion of people with disabilities mobilizes us to understand it as a dialectical phenomenon of inclusion-exclusion and historically constructed. Sawaia (2014) highlights the exclusion process as a product of the functioning of the system, while Wanderley (2014) discusses aspects of the naturalization of exclusionary mechanisms that will affect people at different levels, contributing to the feeling of acceptance or rejection.

In this process, the naturalization of the phenomena that characterize the process of social exclusion contributes to a passive attitude in the face of inequalities, as if nothing could be done to face and overcome a given problem, which contributes to the reproduction of exclusionary behaviors arising from a segregating cultural process of differences, where people internalize patterns and strengthen them, even if not at the level of consciousness. In the field of education, this conception is made explicit through educational theories that start from the understanding of the subject as a purely biological being, which advocate the development from universal laws, which standardizes and structures the development in successive stages to be traveled and overcome as a natural and spontaneous path (PASQUALINI, 2009), in which it is expected that the child can reach certain levels of development to offer him external stimuli to consolidate stages of learning. But what about when the child has difficulties arising from disability?

In the daily routine of classes, this understanding materializes in discrimination and blaming the student himself about the difficulties faced arising from the disability condition. Facts that we prove and are also explained by Nunes and Lustosa (2020) when teachers and other professionals defend themselves and expose a horizon of difficulties: "I have tried everything and nothing worked out, he (she) does not learn"; "I am not prepared to teach"; "we have no training to teach students with this type of disability", etc. But, after all, what is implicit behind each statement that highlights the training itself as a challenge?

In contrast to the aforementioned approach, Vigotski (1997) proposes a social and inclusive education, understanding the development of compensatory systems, stimulated also through intentional and planned actions in the collective, in the interactions and socializations.

Vigotski (1997) based his studies on a new understanding about the specificity of the development affected by disability and about the subject that has it, especially based on the existing potentialities and those possible to be developed by the planned and intentional mediation of teachers, in addition to highlighting the seriousness not of the disability condition itself, but for the way culture deals with the difference.

To conceive the right of people with disabilities is an important achievement, but this is not enough to make the inclusion of people with disabilities effective in practice. This fact is easily proven when we observe the data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics - IBGE (2010), which states that the Brazilian population is one hundred and ninety million, seven hundred and thirty-two thousand, six hundred and ninety-four people (190,732.694), and there are about forty-five million, six hundred twenty-three thousand, nine hundred ten people with some kind of disability (45,623,910) and, according to Brazil (2019), about 48,520 enrollments of scholars with disabilities, corresponding to 6% of the projected estimate by age group of university entrance. This phenomenon makes us wonder where are these young people and why are they not in universities? From this perspective, this study is guided by the following question: how is research being developed on the inclusion of scholars with disabilities in higher education, especially in master's and doctoral programs in Brazil?

That said, in order to know how research and conceptions about inclusion have been developed and how they contribute to teaching practices, we defined as objective of this writing: map the research on the inclusion of scholars with disabilities in higher education developed in Brazil between 2012 and 2020, in the light of the cultural-historical theory. To achieve the proposed goal, the methodological path is configured by the qualitative approach of the bibliographical type with a descriptive objective. Because we emphasize *stricto sensu* post-graduation research (master's and doctorate), the main database consulted was the CAPES Theses and Dissertations Library.

Below, we describe our methodological path, explaining our search movements, dialogues with the selected works and how this review contributed to our new investigation, besides favoring professionals in the field of Education and other researchers who focus on the inclusion of scholars with disabilities in higher education.

Methodology

The production of scientific knowledge imposes systematic actions that mobilize the researcher in a process of decision making as to the investigative paths that he will take. This process goes far beyond the definition of methods and techniques for data collection or production and analysis. It involves, therefore, knowing the panorama of knowledge already produced and updated on the theme the researcher intends to investigate.

It is an exhaustive exercise of searching, reading, selecting and analyzing studies that are close to the theme or area of interest, which will help the researcher identify investigative needs, gaps and how his new research contributes to the scenario of knowledge already produced (NÓBREGA-TERRIEN; TERRIEN, 2004). We can infer that it refers to a systematic, but non-linear process, since this critical exercise of literature review can confront and lead the researcher to rethink his object of study, as well as defend what contribution to the field of knowledge he can provide.

We conducted a literature review, which is a "preliminary step in developing a proposal [...] identifies specific strategies that will be useful in finding and reviewing the resources available to plan a study" (CRESWELL, 2007, p. 45) in order to understand the knowledge already produced on the topic of interest: inclusion of scholars in higher education. Our process of weaving the literature review made it possible to reaffirm our object of study by dialoguing with the knowledge already available, so that these dialogues can lead us to possible new contributions resulting from this investigation. It is appropriate to clarify to our reader that the present survey was developed in two major moments specified during the course of this study, as follows:

1º) we investigated what we have of knowledge produced on the general theme of inclusion of the person with disabilities in higher education;

2º) we refined our search for works developed in the light of the Historical-Cultural Psychology (HCP).

Both searches were based on Vigotski's Cultural-Historical Psychology as a fundamental theory and as the main inclusion criterion of the findings. We used as databases the CAPES Theses and Dissertations Catalog and the Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations - BDTD in the Portuguese acronym. However, as the works found in the latter platform were repeated works, i.e., already found and selected in the CAPES Theses and Dissertations Catalog, we chose to describe only from this platform.

- Our initial search descriptors were "inclusion in higher education"; "inclusion in university" and "scholars with disabilities". We defined as criteria for selection/inclusion of papers the findings that met the following characteristics:
 - Epistemological foundation: Cultural - Historical Psychology (Vigotski);
 - Temporal cut of the last eight years (2012-2020) taking into account the increase in social inclusion debates in higher education strengthened with the Quotas Law, which favored other perceptions about access to universities, although only in 2015 the referred Quotas Law was reformulated, starting to integrate the public of special education;
 - Approximation of the object of study regarding the doctoral research of the author of this writing: inclusion of scholars with disabilities in higher education;
 - Research developed in the Humanities; graduate programs in education, special education, psychology.

Results and discussion

In this first search, in all the databases consulted, we used the following exclusion criteria: studies whose object of study dealt with a specific disability or condition; inclusion of other perspectives of inclusion such as: digital, gender, racial and ethnic; an epistemological basis diverging from Cultural-Historical Psychology; investigation of the inclusion of academics in specific situations in the course³.

We will present the selected research from our survey in this first search as follows: section 1.1 Presentation of findings according to the database. It contributed to visualize and describe the quantitative aspects of the selected researches (for being close to our theme), of the objectives and results, aiming to advance in the understanding and investigation of our research in this field of Inclusion in Higher Education. In this way, with the selected researches, we draw dialogues on how the proposal of our new research could contribute to the knowledge scenario already produced (NÓBREGA-TERRIEN; TERRIEN, 2004).

Therefore, the dialogues involve understandings about qualitative approach methodology, having as epistemological theory Vigotski's Cultural - Historical Psychology and discussion of the results, without the pretension of evaluating the knowledge produced, but to seek ways to strengthen our studies.

³ For example, a production that investigated inclusion in higher education within the supervised internship.

CAPES Theses and Dissertations Catalog: Presentation of findings

On November 02, 03 and 11, 2020 we started the bibliographical survey using as search descriptors: "inclusion in higher education"; "inclusion in university" and "scholars with disabilities". The result added up to 131 papers, from which, by applying the above mentioned criteria of research inclusion, it was possible to separate them according to the focus given in the research⁴, as in Table 01.

Table 01 – Research focus

Accessibility	Scholar with a disability	University (policies and management)	Teaching
06	05	03	03
Total 17			

Total Epistemological Basis Cultural-Historical Psychology/Historical-Dialectical Materialism

Source: Prepared by the authors

The epistemological criterion also brings repercussions in the conception of inclusion, person with disabilities and society, for, as every theory of knowledge is based on distinct conceptions about the relationship between the investigated phenomenon and the subject, it brings in its constitution social, historical, political, ideological values. Therefore, to deny this nature of knowledge is to limit or falsify the possibility of knowledge. For this reason, four studies were selected from this search that are related to our object of study and epistemological perspective, the Cultural-Historical theory of L. S Vigotski, based on the principles of Historical-Dialectical Materialism, as shown in Chart 1.

Chart 1 – Findings in the CAPES Theses and Dissertations Catalog⁵

AUTHOR	TITLE	OBJECTIVE	TYPE
Silva (2017)	A escola sacudida em suas bases: significações produzidas pelo professor do ensino superior acerca da inclusão de alunos com NEEs	Analyze the meanings produced by the Higher Education teacher about the school inclusion of students with SENs that mediate the constitution of inclusive teaching practice. Results: revealed that the zones of meaning produced by the teacher show that her ways of being a teacher in objective and subjective conditions of the reality of inclusion in the university transformed her as she expanded the potential to develop inclusive teaching practice	Dissertation

⁴ Use of the table to illustrate the quantity of findings.

⁵ Translator's note: We have decided to keep the original title of the works in the Brazilian Portuguese language

Passos (2016)	Eu e tu, nós os diferentes: a percepção dos estudantes com deficiência sobre a inclusão no ensino superior	To analyze inclusion in public higher education from the perception of students with disabilities. Results: pointed out a number of limits and challenges to inclusion in higher education, among which: the invisibility experienced at interpersonal and institutional levels; the interference of social inequalities in access, permanence and development; the distance between Brazilian legislation and its materialization; the lack, inadequacy or insufficiency of physical and pedagogical accessibility, with the pressing need for training and information to teachers and students, in addition to the implementation of a more structured and effective internal policy.	Dissertation
Tavares (2014)	Educação especial no ensino superior: reflexões acerca da acessibilidade no processo de inclusão escolar a partir de relatos de acadêmicos com deficiência	To seek information about inclusion in higher education, regarding accessibility as a condition for appropriation of scientific content at the university, from 2000 to 2010, from disabled students who graduated from the State University of Maringá. Results: It revealed difficulties of implementation and development regarding accessibility as a condition for the appropriation of scientific content at the university.	Dissertation
Govêa (2019)	A inclusão de estudantes com especificidades no ensino superior: sujeitos e significações	To analyze the meanings of inclusion in higher education from the perspective of students with disabilities and with psychic suffering. Results: It revealed the role of the university as a mediator in the re-signification of themselves and the social context in which they participate.	Dissertation

Source: Prepared by the authors

When analyzing the table, we asked about the restricted amount of productions oriented to the inclusion of students with disabilities in higher education, especially research developed according to Vigotski's historical-cultural theory, and of the 131 filtered, we were left with 4 findings from this database. This fact called our attention in view of Vigotski's defectology studies, which teaches us the value of inclusive education for people with disabilities. Among his teachings, we highlight the role of education as essential for the development of compensatory systems that will favor learning and development of the subject. In this understanding, it worries us to realize that a theory that can (trans)form pedagogical practices has been left aside from knowledge and, consequently, reverberating in teaching practices from the inclusive perspective.

In addition to the specificity regarding the inclusion of people with disabilities, it is worth emphasizing that the Cultural - Historical Psychology is grounded in the Historical-Dialectical Materialism, in this sense, Silva (2017) emphasizes the importance of this theory when relating the fundamental laws such as the struggle of opposites and the negation of the negation. Such laws are necessary to understand the unveiling of the dialectical contradiction between exclusion and inclusion, as a social phenomenon historically constituted, as well as the man as a social and historical being.

Thus, we can understand that inclusion-oriented research requires the researcher to understand that overcoming exclusion is not a natural consequence, but a historical construction: the mechanisms of the exclusion phenomenon need to be studied, the dynamics of the concepts of segregation, integration and inclusion in education, especially as a movement constituted dialectically and historically, because, according to Silva (2017, p. 77). 77), "the phenomena can be understood in a complex way, addressing their totality and contrarities and not neglecting them, thus committing ourselves to the social and historical dimension that constitutes the inclusion movement."

In addition to the relevance for understanding man and society, Govêa (2019, p. 65) defends the contribution of Vigotski's Cultural-Historical Psychology to the educational field, highlighting the social as a source of development of the subject, its primary function of "propitiating the development of higher psychological functions in the learning activity of students," a new look at how the subject is constituted as it relates to the environment, with people, builds consciousness mediated by language, culture and history, "a new paradigm of understanding the subject" (GOVÊA, 2019, p. 67).

Concerningly, we observe in Tavares (2014, p. 52) the defense that the understanding of education goes through the knowledge of "human development, the learning process, as well as the relationships of these processes fundamental to school education," in a movement of dynamics of cultural and social appropriation. Regarding Passos (2016), we can state that the grounding in the Vigotski's theory of Cultural-Historical Psychology allows us to investigate the dialectical phenomenon of inclusion in order to understand the negations, contradictions, the historicity of exclusion from the perspective of the excluding construction of society. We defend this epistemological approach because we agree that, besides favoring a deeper understanding of the dialectical construction of exclusion/inclusion, it allows us to reflect on the evolution of education and the social role that higher education plays in this process.

For the dialogical analysis of the selected research, we resorted to the categories of CHP, because we argue that this approach favors the deepening of knowledge beyond the visible, the material reality, seeking the historically constructed reasons for the existence of the investigated phenomenon.

In view of this, we understand that higher education brings in its historical roots the reproduction of society that, organized under the capitalism viewpoint, presents itself in its excluding and divided bases. We cannot neglect this relationship between society and higher education, because, understanding the human subject as a being that is singularly constituted from the social, the collective, and the cultural, the behaviors, ways of feeling, seeing, and acting are products of this construction, without losing sight of the fact that while forming, transforms its surroundings. Thus, the university assumes a beneficial role to the capital organization, reinforcing, then, the segregating and excluding character. Having explained the works, we will proceed with the dialogical analysis of these.

Dialogues and relations among the researches: Analysis of the objectives of the selected researches

According to Chart 1: Findings in the CAPES Catalogue of Theses and Dissertations, from the general objective of the four selected researches we observed that two of them focused on the analysis of meanings and perceptions, respectively, about inclusion produced by academics with disabilities, namely: Govêa (2019) and Passos (2016); while Silva (2017) focused on the meanings about inclusion produced by university professors. Tavares (2014) investigated accessibility, emphasizing access to curricular knowledge, from the perspective of academics and graduates with disabilities. Although both studies focus on academics with disabilities, we observe the centrality of the teacher in debates about inclusion, which encourages us to reflect on how their actions can favor or not the inclusion process.

Therefore, the analysis of the research selected for this activity was developed according to the following predominant categories: Significations⁶ and teacher mediation.

We verified that the researches had as object of investigation either university professors or scholars with disabilities, and we did not identify researches that had as object of study both publics and in a related way, in order to identify needs, wishes and possibilities with a view to inclusive praxis. However, we verified that, in a more intense way or in notes,

⁶ We kept as Vigotski's CHP category because we understand that the author (SILVA, 2017) used this term referring to senses and meanings, however, we reiterate that the term meanings is more present in Gonzalez Rey's studies

all researches identified issues about the needs and weaknesses of inclusive education and practice of teachers.

In view of the above, we found that there are several researches about the educational inclusion of people with disabilities, most of them dedicated to the childhood phase and basic school education. In a smaller proportion, we found research that had inclusion in higher education as a study object. However, the problem around the theoretical and methodological basis that supports and guides the studies, especially at this level of education, stands out. This fact provokes us to consider what is the situation of inclusion (or not) at this level of education. Thus, it is important to think about the number of people with disabilities in relation to the number of enrollments of these people, not reducing them to statistical data, but trying to find out where they are, why they are not in the universities, mainly, what triggers the evasion of this public in these institutions.

Final remarks

Given the many possibilities for investigating inclusion and the analysis we conducted, it was possible for us to define as the object of study the production of meanings of inclusion of scholars with disabilities, considering that the meanings produced have repercussions on the ways of thinking and doing inclusion. Our theoretical and methodological orientation consists in Vigotski's Cultural-Historical Psychology and, therefore, we started from the conception that the meanings express one of the dimensions of the word: the psychological phenomenon, which is coated with emotions arising from lived experience (VIGOTSKI, 2009). The word has a meaning, which is social, context-independent, stable, however, each word holds a meaning for the subject, which assumes its dynamic, complex, flexible and dependent on how the subject experienced a given experience, giving it new meaning.

Therefore, we can infer that teachers' experiences of inclusion express much more the singularity of the experience lived by teachers in this context than the recognition of the right to inclusion, that is, the social meaning of inclusion. Therefore, to epistemologically ground the research based on theories that assume the historical, social and cultural dimension is crucial to understand the dialectical phenomenon of inclusion in its entirety, such as Cultural-Historical Psychology. Therefore, this critical review made it possible, in addition to mapping the research on the inclusion of scholars with disabilities in higher education developed in Brazil between 2012 and 2020, in light of the cultural-historical theory, also to identify needs

for further investigations in the field of subjectivities to better understand and develop inclusive pedagogical practices in the context of higher education.

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