IDENTIFICATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS: POSSIBILITIES BASED ON HISTORIC-CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY

IDENTIFICAÇÃO DAS NECESSIDADES EDUCACIONAIS ESPECIAIS: POSSIBILIDADES A PARTIR DA PSICOLOGIA HISTÓRICO-CULTURAL

IDENTIFICACIÓN DE LAS NECESIDADES EDUCACIONALES ESPECIALES: POSIBILIDADES A PARTIR DE LA PSICOLOGÍA HISTÓRICO CULTURAL

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ABSTRACT: The identification of the special educational needs of students who constitute the target audience of special education and who are referred to Specialized Educational Assistance (AEE) is a challenge for teachers. In this sense, this qualitative research aimed to describe the process of identifying the special educational needs of students referred to AEE, as well as the pedagogical practices used. Eleven teachers who work in a Multifunctional Resource Room (SRM) in the state of Rondônia-RO participated in the study. The results indicate that both the identification process and the process of meeting special educational needs present many controversies due to the lack of models or instruments and the absence of theoretical discussions that support the pedagogical practices used in the evaluation for this purpose. In this context, Historical-Cultural Psychology seems to offer possibilities for the construction of theoretical and practical paths to support the assessment, with the purpose of identifying and meeting the special educational needs required by students referred to the AEE.

KEYWORDS: Identification of needs. Inclusive education. Socio-Historical-Cultural Theory.

RESUMO: *A identificação das necessidades educacionais especiais de estudantes que constituem o público-alvo da educação especial e que são encaminhados ao Atendimento Educacional Especializado (AEE) se configura como um desafio aos professores. Nesse sentido, a presente pesquisa, de cunho qualitativo, teve como objetivo descrever esse processo, bem como as práticas pedagógicas utilizadas. Participaram do estudo onze professoras que atuam em Sala de Recursos Multifuncionais (SRM) no estado de Rondônia-RO. Os resultados indicam que tanto o processo de identificação quanto o de atendimento às necessidades educacionais especiais apresentam muitas controvérsias em virtude da falta de modelos ou instrumentais e da ausência de discussões teóricas que subsidiem as práticas pedagógicas empregadas na avaliação para esse fim. Nesse contexto, a Psicologia Histórico-Cultural parece oferecer possibilidades para a construção de caminhos teóricos e práticos para subsidiar a identificação e o atendimento às necessidades educacionais especiais requeridas pelos estudantes encaminhados ao AEE.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Identificação de necessidades. Educação inclusiva. Teoria Sócio-Histórico-Cultural.*

RESUMEN: *La identificación de las necesidades educativas especiales de los estudiantes que constituyen el público objetivo de la educación especial y que son derivados al Atendimiento Educacional Especializado (AEE) se configura como a un desafío para los profesores. En ese sentido, la presente investigación, de carácter cualitativo, tuvo por objetivo describir el proceso de identificación de las necesidades educacionales especiales de los estudiantes especiales encaminados al AEE, así como las prácticas pedagógicas utilizadas. Participaron de ese estudio once profesoras que trabajan en Salas de Recursos Multifunciones (SRM) en el estado de Rondônia-RO. Los resultados enseñan que tanto el proceso de identificación como el de atendimiento a las necesidades educacionales especiales presentan muchas controversias en virtud de la falta de modelos o instrumentos y de ausencia de discusiones teóricas que subsidien las prácticas pedagógicas empleadas en la evaluación para ese fin. En ese contexto, la Psicología Histórico Cultural parece ofrecer posibilidades para la construcción de caminos teóricos y prácticos para subsidiar la identificación y atendimiento a las necesidades educacionales especiales requeridas por los estudiantes encaminados al AEE.*

PALABRAS-CLAVE: *Identificación de necesidades. Educación inclusiva. Teoría Socio Histórico-Cultural.*

Introduction

The National Special Education Policy, from the perspective of Inclusive Education, guides education systems to promote responses to special educational needs, guaranteeing, among other aspects, Specialized Educational Assistance (AEE) to students with disabilities, global developmental disorders and high skills/giftedness (BRASIL, 2008).

The AEE must provide activities that involve curriculum enrichment programs, teaching languages and specific communication and signage codes and assistive technology, being accompanied by instruments that enable monitoring and evaluation of the offer made in public schools and service centers specialized public or partner educational institutions (BRASIL, 2008).

Resolution no. 4, of October 2, 2009, establishes the operational guidelines for specialized educational assistance and prescribes that it must be carried out, as a priority, in the multifunctional resource room of the school itself or in another regular school. The document also establishes a list of responsibilities for the teacher who works in the AEE, including the identification of special educational needs and the preparation and execution of the Specialized Educational Assistance Plan (PAEE) (BRASIL, 2009).

The identification of special educational needs then becomes one of the challenges imposed on teachers who work in Multifunctional Resource Rooms (SRM) to prepare an individualized service plan and, consequently, to remove possible barriers in the learning of students referred specialized educational assistance, as there is no guidance for carrying out these actions (JOHNSON; YAEGASHI; FONSECA, 2022).

The Ministry of Education (MEC) produced some materials to support teacher training and presents two issues that deal with the identification of special educational needs. The first, published in 2006, is part of the collection "Knowledge and practices of inclusion" and is titled "Assessment for the identification of special educational needs" (BRASIL, 2006, our translation). The second is issue 2 of the collection "Special Education from the perspective of School Inclusion" and specifically addresses intellectual disability, but presents guidelines for identifying special educational needs and preparing the PAEE (GOMES; POULIN; FIGUEIREDO, 2010). Both materials do not present consistent theoretical and methodological foundations that can provide the teacher with tools that support both the identification process and the elaboration and execution of the PAEE. They also do not enable understanding the nature and dimension of the educational needs required by the student referred to the AEE (JOHNSON, 2020).

In this context, this qualitative study aims to describe the process of identifying the special educational needs of students referred to AEE, as well as the pedagogical practices used by eleven teachers who work at SRM.

As a theoretical-methodological reference, we used Historical-Cultural Psychology in order to build paths that would enable the understanding of how teachers identify the educational needs of students, in addition to what pedagogical practices are carried out with SRM students.

Methodology

In order to achieve the proposed objective, we resorted to qualitative research, considering that it gives primary importance to the statements of the social actors involved, the speeches and meanings transmitted by them (VIEIRA; ZOUAIN, 2005). As data collection instruments, we used a sociodemographic questionnaire, a semi-structured interview and the focus group technique.

The research participants were 11 teachers who work in SRM at state schools in two municipalities in the state of Rondônia-RO. To preserve identity, we use fictitious names: 1) Jade, 2) Pérola, 3) Esmeralda, 4) Rubi, 5) Almandine, 6) Safira, 7) Turmalina, 8) Âmbar, 9) Alexandrita, 10) Ametista, and 11) Topázio.

Using the sociodemographic questionnaire, it was possible to build the profile of the research participants. All teachers have degrees in Pedagogy and studied at the same institution between 1994 and 2010. As for continued training, Almandine, Safira and Alexandrita have specializations in Language and Education; Esmeralda, Ametista and Topázio specialized in School Management, Supervision and Guidance; Pérola and Topázio in Psychopedagogy; Jade in Libras; Rubi in Hearing Impairment; Finally, Âmbar was completing her specialization in Inclusive Education. Regarding the time spent working at SRM, it varies from 1 to 15 years, but the majority is between 3 and 5 years.

To carry out the semi-structured interview, a script was prepared with questions that involved topics related to the assessment process to identify special educational needs and the pedagogical practices used to assist students. Dialogues in the focus group also focused on these issues.

The research was approved by the Permanent Ethics Committee for Research involving Human Beings (COPEP) of the State University of Maringá (UEM), opinion no. 2,927,002, CAAE: 93712318.9.0000.0104.

Results and discussions

The results were analyzed and organized into four categories: a) referral to the SRM; b) identification of special educational needs; c) theoretical-methodological subsidies that guide pedagogical practice; d) activities developed at SRM.

Referral to SRM

To analyze how the teachers identified the students' needs, it was necessary to understand, first, how the referral to the multifunctional resource room happened. The participants reported that, most of the time, the initial referral is carried out by regular classroom teachers who, upon realizing that a certain student has learning difficulties, refer them to the SRM. This procedure is intermediated by filling out an observation and report form.

Topázio clarified that, when approached by the teacher to refer the student, she requests the completion of two instruments prepared by her and other SRM teachers, which aim to highlight the difficulties that the person responsible for the referral observed in the student and, furthermore, know the interventions carried out in the regular classroom, that is, when filling out the instrument, the teacher is faced with questions that lead her to think about intervention actions, as well as applying them. Topázio's intention is to make the teacher reflect and act on her actions in the face of the difficulties presented by the student before referring her to the SRM.

Topázio's intentionality is very valid, however, when analyzing the instrumentals, we realize that they do not stimulate the expected reflections. The student's referral form to the SRM (first instrument), for example, contains three topics: 1) the student's data; 2) the reason for the referral; and 3) the observations that justify the referral. The second topic presents several options that can motivate referral, but all of them are centered on the student and the alleged difficulties identified. The second instrument is the observation report, composed of three items. The first refers to identification; The second addresses the difficulties observed by the teacher and is subdivided into five areas: learning, behavior, recreation, psychomotor and speech. For each area, there is a list of situations and/or possible conditions observed in the

student. All of them, however, are based on negative and student-centered aspects. The third topic of the instrument is the classroom teacher's opinion. When analyzing the instruments, we understand that Topázio's intention is lost, as there is no observation about the school context or the pedagogical practices that could encourage teachers to reflect on their actions towards the student in question; on the contrary: the content of the instruments can lead the teacher to be exempt from responsibility in relation to the student's learning, thus configuring itself as something that is at the service of exclusion and the perpetuation of prejudices.

It can also be seen that the alternatives presented highlight more the absences and negative issues allegedly observed by the teacher in the regular classroom. This fact suggests that the consequences of the notes made by teachers are similar to the aspects discussed by Facci and Tada (2012) in relation to the reports issued by health professionals, which do not consider the historicity of the subject, nor the learning situations provided in the context educational.

Identification of special educational needs

The beginning of the process of identifying the special educational needs of the student who arrives at the resource room depends on whether they have been sent with a report or not. If the student presents the report, the SRM teacher carries out a survey to identify possible difficulties and begins the service. If she does not have a report and the regular classroom teacher initiates the complaint, she receives an instrument and, after filling it out, the SRM teacher meets with her. The coordination and/or pedagogical guidance contacts the family and, subsequently, the student is seen at SRM. Initially, she is subjected to a survey and, based on the results of this, the teacher prepares activities with concrete material.

Topázio reported that, when the student arrives at SRM with the report, she carries out a survey to guide the production of concrete material to be worked on with the student. However, when there is no report, she begins her actions based on the instruments filled out by the professional who carried out the referral. With these instruments in hand, Topázio organizes a meeting with the teachers to clarify the form that was filled out and then invites the student to go to the resource room, to then carry out the survey.

Safira reports that she begins the identification process by talking to the student. Then carry out several activities in order to see where the difficulty lies. To do this, she uses toys. Her attention focuses on motor coordination, as she realizes that some students have many difficulties in this area. To give an example, she described that she carried out an activity with

a student to cover, paint, assemble and disassemble the alphabet, in addition to contents. By observing their performance on the proposed tasks, the teacher can 'see where the difficulty lies'.

Esmeralda said that, when the student arrives at SRM, she tries to identify what he can accomplish. Based on the skills observed, new challenges are presented to the student. Despite stating that it seeks to identify what the student does, when reporting their practice, it is clear that the emphasis is on what the student does not know; thus, faults and limitations are placed in the foreground.

Âmbar reported that the process of identifying the needs required by the student begins with the educational counselor who carries out an investigation with the parents and formalizes the referral to the SRM. Afterwards, Âmbar talks to the parents and the student; based on the information obtained, the material to be used to meet the needs required by the student is surveyed and, thus, the AEE begins.

Pérola begins the investigation through a reading and writing test, as well as observing the student's thinking through an informal conversation. Her attention, however, focuses on how quickly or slowly the student responds to the questions she asks.

Turmalina reports that, in the first contact with the student, she uses games, such as puzzles and logical sequences. Then observe how he organizes the game pieces. Then, ask to tell an event and, from there, explore the student's writing. To check students' mathematical knowledge, Turmalina also uses games, such as dominoes. From this game, check whether you can count, number sequence, etc. Like Esmeralda, Alexandrita offers activities, the degree of difficulty of which increases based on the student's performance. She highlights that it starts with the name, with issues that she considers basic, such as reading and writing.

Rubi reported that she used the questionnaire not to identify students' educational needs, but to identify students who have educational needs in common classrooms. This was because the SRM at his school was being reactivated that school year. Therefore, she began a survey of regular classroom teachers to identify potential students. Then, together with the pedagogical coordination, they called the parents to request a report and collect information about the students. However, the process of identifying students' educational needs had not yet progressed, nor had their assessment begun, as the space where the resource room would be located was under renovation.

Despite the existence of training materials organized by the MEC, to support the process of investigating the educational needs presented by the student, none of the teachers made

reference to these materials. However, during the individual interview, Pérola was the only one who reported having participated in a course that addressed the elaboration of the intervention plan, but highlighted that the guidance given was that this action should be preceded by an interview with the family and, based on the information collected, a case study would be carried out to then arrive at the intervention plan. He highlighted, however, that he did not do the case study, due to lack of time.

The teachers' report on issues concerning the process of identifying special educational needs indicates that there is no systematization of this process. At times, the focus is on referring the student to the AEE; in others, the description of the activities carried out suggests composing what is offered to the student in the day-to-day care, and not as a means for preparing the PAEE.

When comparing the data obtained so far in relation to the process of identifying the special educational needs of the student referred to SRM, with the productions of Bridi (2011), Veltrone (2011), Aguiar (2015), Barbosa (2016), Silva (2016), Pessoa (2018) and Melo (2018), it is possible to establish some approximations, mainly regarding the lack of references to support this process and the need for more studies on this topic.

Barroco, Silva and Leal (2012) point out that the mere identification of the limits imposed by disability and the removal of the historicity of the development of the individual man make it difficult to intervene in actions that actually promote increased student development. It is essential that the identification process leads to an understanding of how the student uses signs and resources to resolve situations, how he thinks and acts and which paths he uses to form potentialities.

Cruz (2003) warns that subjecting the child to an activity that they cannot solve should not be understood as an action that will provide conditions for understanding the functioning of their capabilities; By the way, the insufficiency of their knowledge and skills is expressed. The investigation process carried out through assessments must enable the understanding and identification of the learning and teaching needs that the teacher can provoke and promote in the student (ROSSATO; LEONARDO, 2019).

Although there is no systematization of actions to identify the educational needs of students who arrive at SRM, teachers resort to similar activities, which involve reading, writing and the use of educational games to identify the knowledge that the student has already mastered.

Some descriptions seem to demonstrate similarities with the concept of real development level, for example, when teachers report that a certain activity is offered with the

intention of identifying the knowledge that the student has already mastered. Shuare (2017) highlights, however, that the central aspect of Pedagogy should not only be the functions already formed, but what is not yet formed, but is in the process of formation.

For Vygotsky (2000), the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is important both for intellectual development and for teaching the current level of development. From this perspective, Ruso (2018) understands that, in relation to diagnosis, one must choose, as a first step, the creation of potentialities instead of exploring potentialities already mastered by the subject, given that the initial diagnosis is a moment that reveals the ZDP value. For the author, a diagnosis that results from the exploration of current activity, understood as a previous basis, does not offer normal or compensatory development guidelines. Furthermore, training and repetitive practices are not the result of a ZPD, but rather the extension of potential, as real modification only occurs in the relationship with new spaces.

Theoretical-methodological subsidies that guide pedagogical practice

To effectively understand the pedagogical practices carried out in SRM, we consider it important to know the theoretical references that support teaching work. This topic was addressed during the individual interviews and, through them, we obtained similar responses among the research participants, as expressed in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Theoretical-methodological subsidies that guide the pedagogical practice of research participants

Teachers	Stories
Safira	"When I got Down and autistic, what did I do? I went there on the computer, I went there on Google, I went there to search, to see".
Âmbar	"No, not specific. I've already asked this question in some courses... we end up doing a bit of crazy work because, sometimes, we use a theory and it doesn't work."
Esmeralda	"No, to tell you the truth, no. Never! I'm going to do it more in practice. I don't have a reference, any theoretician to work with."
Pérola	"That literacy method by Paulo Freire, by Montessori too, that's how I see those stages of children. I respect this stage of the child."
Topázio	"My handouts from the AEE course, but I don't have a line with someone to guide me."
Rubi	"No, I haven't picked it up yet to begin with."
Turmalina	"The laws. I look for different material on the internet, suggestions for activities."

Source: Prepared by the authors

The majority of research participants declared that they had no references. Safira and Turmalina reported that they do not have a frame of reference and that, when necessary, they use the internet to search for suggested activities and information about disabilities. Âmbar, Esmeralda and Rubi responded that they do not use any reference. While Rubi justifies the lack

of references by the fact that she has not started providing services yet, Âmbar and Esmeralda claim to support the work at SRM, based on daily practice. Only Pérola made reference to the method of Paulo Freire and Montessori, highlighting that it observes the children's developmental stages. Topázio also does not have a reference, but reports that she uses handouts from courses taken in the context of AEE, and Turmalina reports that his contribution is based on legislation on Special Education. In fact, the teachers pointed out that the continuing education and specialization courses they took do not have a specific theoretical foundation, as the texts available are fragmented, not allowing them to see the whole.

Regarding the continuing education courses offered to teachers, Fávero, Tonieto and Consaltér (2019) mention that these have not effectively contributed to improving the pedagogical work of Basic Education teachers. When investigating how these courses have been organized, the authors found that schools tend to ask teachers to indicate which topics they wish to discuss in the courses. Teachers, in turn, opt for worthy courses, wrapped in affective tones, to the detriment of courses that provide a better appropriation of a theoretical nature. There are also situations in which the school itself and the municipality decide which contents will be covered in the courses. These contents almost always do not take into account the needs of these teachers. In other words, many continuing teacher training courses distance themselves from their original purposes and bring superficial themes, turning the moments intended for training into spaces to address the teacher's self-esteem and spirituality, for example.

The authors also criticize the fact that many of these courses present a set of prescriptions and tricks based on love and affection, as if these elements could offer magical solutions for teachers to overcome the challenges posed by teaching.

In this sense, Facci and Lima (2012) argue that pedagogical practice requires constant study from the teacher, based on a consistent theoretical foundation, which gives him the conditions to think and organize the daily life of classes. Regardless of the type of teaching in which he works, the characteristics of the students, whether regular or special education, the teacher must not just be an 'applicator' of specific methods and techniques, but must be aware of the theoretical framework he adopts when conducting his teaching practice, seeking solid knowledge of curricular content, teaching-learning relationships and other aspects involving the educational system.

Pedagogical practices in AEE

To understand the teachers' work with students referred to SRM, we paid attention to the content that emerged in the focus group meetings and the examples given during the interviews. It is interesting that, although this topic was specifically addressed in the 1st meeting, it was possible to identify, in the teachers' reports, descriptions and indications of the activities carried out with the students served at the SRM. In Table 2, we present a summary of activities developed by the teachers.

Table 2 – Summaries of activities developed at SEM

Teachers	Activities
Safira	Painting, covering activities.
Topázio	Writing production, typing on the computer.
Esmeralda	Puzzle, memory game, games.
Rubi	Games, painting activities, drawing activities, educational games.
Pérola	Games, puzzle, memory game.
Turmalina	Computer typing, mobile alphabet.
Âmbar	Daily activities, do the calculations for their daily lives. It's putting them in contact with the internet. Assistive technology, daily life guidance on hygiene issues.
Alexandrita	Reading and writing activities with pictures.

Source: Prepared by the authors

When reporting on the activities that are available to students, teachers highlight that they seek to offer those that are consistent with the knowledge that the student demonstrates mastery. It is observed, however, that the majority resort to educational games and recreational activities, and the main focus is related to reading and writing.

Âmbar highlights that, considering that her students are of legal age, she prioritizes activities related to everyday life, involving handling money, personal hygiene issues, among others, and seeks to develop student autonomy in these activities.

Barroco (2012) reports that it is common to observe educational services focused on the development of skills aimed at the independence of people with disabilities, especially for young and adult students. In this context, it is possible to identify curricular proposals and educational projects centered on this perspective, with activities focused on self-care, cooperation with family and school groups, as well as home care and preparation for the job market. The author considers that this approach is important, but not sufficient. It is necessary to highlight the importance of work and its role in human development: constituting it as content for both regular and special schools, for teaching people with or without disabilities.

Topázio also works with older students. Therefore, she emphasizes that she prefers to work with an emphasis on the student's reading and writing; To do so, use the computer. For mathematics activities, use concrete materials and even a calculator, in order to facilitate learning. The other teachers mention activities with pedagogical games, such as puzzles, memory games and logical sequences.

In this sense, Tuleski and Eidt (2016) reiterate the importance of activity for the formation of complex psychic functions. However, for this relationship to be effective, it must be driven by intentionality and the search for necessity. In turn, action requires the mobilization of internal and external processes. After all, not everything a subject does can be considered an activity, just as not all learning promotes development. For school education to truly differentiate itself from other forms of education, intentional planning of form and content, of didactic actions and systematized knowledge is essential (MARTINS, 2016).

Pérola reports that her main objective when working on games with students is to develop memory, as she realizes that students with intellectual disabilities, for example, have difficulties in retaining the content taught.

When studying the structure of memory, Leontiev (1978) points out that its development will depend on the place it occupies within the activity. It is necessary for memory to be converted into action, that is, its mobilization needs to be intentional and conscious.

Gonzalez, Leonardo and Leal (2012) indicate the creation of auxiliary means so that students can use tools in order to develop memory. Barroco, Silva and Leal (2012) also point out the use of mediating elements so that memory takes on a symbolic character, attributing the act of remembering to the sign, given that it performs the function of a mediator of a psychological nature by assisting in the development of tasks that require higher psychological functions, such as attention and memory.

In the proposed activities, it is observed that the teachers use mediating instruments. The use of mediating resources (instruments and signs) is fundamental to developing Higher Psychological Functions (FPS). It is essential, however, that all mediating action is intentional, planned and systematized, so that changes are brought about and the appropriation of scientific knowledge is, certainly, promoted. This premise applies to teaching and learning processes that involve students with and without disabilities.

It is considered that the aim of AEE should be to promote the development of higher psychological functions. Therefore, it is essential that pedagogical work develops in a prospective dimension, not focused on lack or what the child does not have. Thus,

methodological alternatives must prioritize the transmission of curricular content that aims to take the student to higher levels and the appropriation of scientific knowledge, which, in turn, will provoke the development of higher psychological functions (FACCI; LIMA, 2012).

Therefore, the instruction system must be implemented with systematized and organized actions to socialize knowledge, as pedagogical actions need to be intentional (SAVIANI, 2014). Teaching, with these characteristics, can focus on overcoming possible delays presented by the student in SRM (LEONTIEV, 2005; TULESKI, 2011).

Historical-Cultural Psychology as a possibility

When we propose the analysis of Historical-Cultural Psychology (PHC) as a possibility to support the process of identifying special educational needs, we do not intend to judge it better or worse than other theoretical approaches, but to reflect on it as a theory that presents innovative concepts about human development, learning, disability, among others. Barroco (2007) states that many PHC concepts were developed from Special Education, making it possible to identify important studies carried out by Vigotski in the field of human development and disability. This fact presents itself as a theoretical and methodological source for contemporary professionals.

Another important point of the PHC is the methodological framework for undertaking the investigation and explanation of the phenomena that involve the development of the psyche – historical-dialectical materialism. This implies considering the movement, phases and changes that involve a given event. Thus, development should not be studied as a predictable, universal, linear or gradual process, but as a phenomenon that occurs in a dynamic and dialectical way.

When addressing the genesis of higher psychic functions, Vygotsky (2000) highlights that, as it is social, every higher psychic function goes through an external stage of development, appearing on two planes: first on the social level and then on the psychological level. In this way, higher psychological functions only come into existence in the subject through the mediated relationship with the external world, that is, the collective is the source, if not the most nutritious means for the development of all people.

In Vygotsky's (1997) conception, the basis of the scientific study of disability must be the unity of the laws that govern development; These laws apply to both normal children and children with disabilities. For the author, a child who had a disability would not be less developed than others without a disability, but merely developed in another way. In this context,

Vygotsky's central thesis regarding Defectology is configured: "[...] indirect paths of development are made possible by culture when the direct path is impeded" (VYGOTSKY, 2011, p. 863), that is, the author points to cultural development as the main sphere in which it is possible to compensate for disability, as, for him, the problem of Defectology must be understood as a social problem (SHUARE, 2017).

He also considered that the history of the cultural development of children with disabilities constituted the deepest problem of Defectology of his time, as it presented quantitative and static characteristics. The methods used to assess child development were limited, focusing on negative aspects and faults (VYGOTSKY, 1997). From this perspective, Vygotsky (1997) emphasizes that, to obtain a complete and adequate notion of children with disabilities, it is necessary to undertake a dynamic study, not limited to the levels and severity of the disability.

For Vygotsky (1997), a disability – whatever its nature – challenges the organism and results in double and contradictory situations. On the one hand, deficiency weakens the organism, limits its activities and acts as a negative force. On the other hand, it acts as a stimulus to enhance the development of other functions in the body. Furthermore, it activates and awakens the organism to redouble its activity, which will compensate for the deficiency and overcome the difficulty.

From the perspective of PHC, the theory of compensation is fundamental, as it serves as a basis for the theory and practice of educating children with disabilities, regardless of their nature. Vygotsky (1997, p. 17, our translation) also highlights the importance of the teacher knowing the peculiarity of the path along which he will lead the child, as "[...] the key to peculiarity is provided by the law of transformation of the minus of the defect into more than compensation."

Furthermore, Vygotsky (1997) emphasizes that compensatory processes do not only depend on the characteristics and severity of the disability, but also on the social reality of the disability. According to the author, a cultural environment lacking in opportunities, with few possibilities for interaction with children, will result in secondary complications, given that the incomplete development of higher functions is linked to 'pedagogical negligence'.

Vygotsky (1997; 2011) states that the development of higher forms takes place based on necessity. In this way, if the child does not need to think, he will never think, however, when overcoming a complication that is configured as secondary to intellectual disability, the entire

picture constituted by the disability will be modified, in such a way that the clinic itself would not recognize the deficiency. To achieve this, in-depth educational work is necessary.

When considering that compensatory cultural behavior overlaps with defective natural behavior, it would be up to the school to create compensation through a positive approach to disability. It is not about denying disability, but conceiving it based on the recognition of the possibility of human development, regardless of the limitations it presents. In this sense, the target of Special Education would be to promote the development of FPS, enabling cultural development.

In line with the assumptions of PHC, Facci, Eidt and Tuleski (2006) point out that an adequate psychoeducational assessment must consider the study of child development in a prospective manner, that is, make efforts to understand the student's potential and to apply ideas derived from notions and concepts about the level of proximal development, in order to develop the FPS. The authors consider that the development of evaluation procedures that enable the production of practical information suitable for instructional programs, based on the results and analyzes of qualitative descriptions of learning processes, is one of the main challenges in the educational field.

Anache (2019) adds that the challenge of the assessment process is the commitment to offering knowledge about the possibilities and limits of the students who undergo it. To this end, the entire process must be built based on the student's life story, seeking to identify and qualify the higher psychological functions that are preserved and those that are compromised.

However, to carry out this type of assessment, it is essential that the professional has theoretical and methodological support to carry out an effective action that, in fact, can contribute to the organization of the content to be taught and interventions that enable the student to develop FPS. Otherwise, all the teacher's efforts, even if motivated by beneficial intentions, will become an instrument of discrimination and labeling of the student, in order to justify learning problems and impose limitations on the student's performance.

Final remarks

The description of the process of identifying educational needs, as well as the practices carried out in SRM, highlights the theoretical and methodological gaps faced by professionals working in AEE. The student can arrive at SRM through a referral made by the regular classroom teacher or through a medical report, however the assessment to identify the educational needs required by the student does not present a systematization.

In most cases, a survey is carried out with activities focused on reading and writing, which highlight gaps more than the possibilities and/or knowledge that the student has already mastered. There is no separation between the actions of assessing needs and planning assistance with the preparation of the PAEE. Some proposed activities are related to activities of daily living and the development of skills aimed at the person's independence.

Regarding the theoretical foundation that supports the teachers' practice, it was clear that there is no consistent basis. Sometimes, some speeches highlight the dichotomy between theory and practice, as they state that the basis for developing activities is everyday practice. It is important, however, that the teacher is equipped theoretically and methodologically to organize assistance to SRM students, since understanding about coping and the possibility of educational actions can become possible through the appropriation of consistent theoretical foundations that, by in turn, they elevate the feeling of collectivity and humanization of the person through the appropriation of scientific knowledge (FACCI, 2009; FACCI; LIMA, 2012).

Pointing to a theory as a possible path does not respond to all the demands that permeate the process of identifying and meeting special educational needs. Otherwise, a manual with step-by-step guidance on how to carry out student assessment would not be sufficient to fill the gaps in this process. It seems pertinent to us, however, that understandings about the laws of psychic development and the concepts surrounding Defectology precede practice. Therefore, the teacher will not only be an applicator of specific methods and techniques, but will act aware of the theoretical framework he adopts when organizing both the identification process and the elaboration and execution of the PAEE.

Historical-Cultural Psychology is in line with these perspectives and presents conditions to answer the questions that involve the process of identifying educational needs, through a prospective view of the learning and development of students referred to SRM. It is necessary, however, to carry out studies and research that enable training actions, in order to enable teachers to gain knowledge and appropriate these theoretical assumptions.

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