

## PRELIMINARY PROPOSITIONS FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF PRESCHOOL TEACHING

### *PROPOSIÇÕES PRELIMINARES PARA ORGANIZAÇÃO DO ENSINO NA PRÉ-ESCOLA*

### *PROPOSICIONES PRELIMINARES PARA LA ORGANIZACIÓN DE LA EDUCACIÓN EN PREESCOLAR*

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**ABSTRACT:** In this work we present the results of a research whose objective was to reveal the contents taught to preschool children in the public school in a city in the interior of the state of São Paulo. Eleven institutions participated in the study, with thirty-six classes of children aged four and thirty-two classes of children aged five. Seventy-two activities developed by fourth-stage teachers and sixty-four by fifth teachers were observed. The theoretical-methodological assumption is based on historical-dialectical materialism. This assumption makes up part of the theoretical syntheses of Cultural-Historical Psychology and Historical-Critical Pedagogy, which were also taken in this research as foundations. The results indicate that the contents taught to children are concentrated on concepts from different areas of knowledge, without simultaneously observing the teaching of contents whose objective is to promote the development of new habits, motor skills, perceptual, mnemonic, among others.

**KEYWORDS:** Early childhood education. Cultural-historical psychology. Teaching. Educational practices.

**RESUMO:** Neste trabalho apresentamos os resultados de uma pesquisa cujo objetivo era revelar os conteúdos ensinados às crianças pré-escolares da rede pública de um município no interior do estado de São Paulo. Participaram do estudo onze instituições, sendo trinta e seis turmas de crianças de quatro anos e trinta e duas turmas de crianças com cinco anos. Foram observadas setenta e duas atividades desenvolvidas pelas professoras de quarta etapa e sessenta e quatro por professoras de quinta. O pressuposto teórico-metodológico está pautado no materialismo histórico-dialético. Este pressuposto compõe uma parte das sínteses teóricas da Psicologia Histórico-Cultural e da Pedagogia Histórico-Crítica, também tomadas nessa pesquisa como fundamentos. Os resultados indicam que os conteúdos ensinados às crianças se concentram em conceitos das diversas áreas do conhecimento, sem que se observe concomitantemente o ensino de conteúdos cujo objetivo é promover o

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*desenvolvimento de novos hábitos, acuidades motoras, perceptivas, mnemônicas, entre outras.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Educação infantil. Psicologia histórico-cultural. Ensino. Práticas educativas.*

**RESUMEN:** *En este trabajo presentamos los resultados de una investigación cuyo objetivo fue revelar los contenidos que se enseñan a los niños en edad preescolar en el sistema escolar público de una ciudad del interior del estado de São Paulo. En el estudio participaron once instituciones, con treinta y seis clases de niños de cuatro años y treinta y dos clases de niños de cinco años. Se observaron setenta y dos actividades desarrolladas por profesores de cuarta etapa y sesenta y cuatro por profesores de quinta. El supuesto teórico-metodológico se basa en el materialismo histórico-dialéctico. Este supuesto forma parte de las síntesis teóricas de la Psicología Histórico-Cultural y la Pedagogía Histórico-Crítica también tomadas en esta investigación como fundamentos. Los resultados indican que los contenidos enseñados a los niños se concentran en conceptos de diferentes áreas del conocimiento, sin observar simultáneamente la enseñanza de contenidos cuyo objetivo es promover el desarrollo de nuevos hábitos, habilidades motoras, perceptuales, mnemotécnicas, entre otras.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *Educación infantil. Psicología histórico-cultural. La educación. Prácticas educativas.*

## Introduction

This text presents the data and analyzes of a research carried out from 2014 to 2018<sup>3</sup>, with Early Childhood Education schools and the educational practices of preschool teachers in a city in the interior of the state of São Paulo as an object and field. The identification of the contents taught, and the means used for their appropriation by children provides us with a characterization of the teachers' perception regarding the relationship between teaching, learning and the development of preschool children.

The research results point to two fundamental aspects pertinent to discussions in the field of Early Childhood Education. The first aspect refers to the need to develop content, both theoretical (scientific knowledge) and operational (formation of habits and skills), ensuring children not only the mastery of initial notions of different areas of knowledge, but also those connected the formation of habits and mastery of procedures (MARTINS, 2009). As a second aspect, we indicate that the teaching of preschool children should be structured

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considering the main activity characteristic of the periodization of development, ensuring the consolidation of educational practices committed to the process of humanization of children.

This article is divided into three parts. In the first, we present the number of institutions and classes of early childhood education that make up the sample and a characterization of the service and structuring of the municipal network, the teachers' career and journey and the guiding assumptions of their educational practices. Then we analyze the data referring to the contents taught to preschool children and at the end we reflect on the consolidation of a teaching that takes the main activity, guiding for development in each stage, as one of its fundamental organizational principles. The reflections are theoretically mediated by the contributions of Historical-Cultural Psychology and Historical-Critical Pedagogy.

### **General features of the research**

The researched municipality has forty-two institutions of Early Childhood Education serving, in the same physical equipment, the children of daycare and preschool. In 2017, the network served around ten thousand children, approximately one thousand babies aged up to two years and, of preschool children, less than 1/3 are full-time. The care and education of children under the age of two is carried out by lay professionals, not belonging to the teaching career. With children from approximately two and a half years to six, the educational work is carried out by pedagogues approved by public notice. The teachers and professors of the municipality have a twenty-four-hour week, of which twenty are in teaching practice, two hours of HTPC (Collective Pedagogical Working Hours) and two hours of HTPI (Individual Pedagogical Working Hours). The classes do not exceed the number of twenty five children and where there are children with disabilities, that number drops to eighteen and there is a technical agent accompanying the teacher.

A study on the career and working conditions of preschool teachers in this municipality, carried out by Alvarenga (2012) indicated a different reality from most other Brazilian municipalities, since an expressive investment in the creation of consistent public policies, between the decades of 1980 and 1990, achieved working conditions and a Career, Job and Wages Plan whose pioneering spirit is still recognized today, considering the requirements regarding the level of professional teacher formation, the infrastructure of the institutions and the offer of continuing education courses offered by a specialized technical team.

From the point of view of curricular structuring, the municipality has an official document: *Preschool Curriculum Guidelines (2011)*, consisting of theoretical and conceptual principles about: childhood; relationship between development and learning; educational needs; function of early childhood education and content divided into the following areas: Knowledge of Self and the World; Oral and Written Language; Mathematical Language; Nature and Society and Art, following the areas found in the National Curriculum Reference for Early Childhood Education.

Synthetically, we can define that its theoretical framework results from a hybrid between the assumptions of constructivism, especially the understanding that children's learning results from the individual and spontaneous experience of children and the assumptions of the authors of *Pedagogy of Childhood*, particularly the defense that knowledge socialized should privilege the contents that emerge from the daily interrelationship between children and adults, in addition to practices situated in the care and other forms of insertion and social manifestation of children in cultural, social and family relationships.

Although the confluence of these aspects that we have just discussed with the other data that the research reveals to us indicates the existence of structural and pedagogical aspects that are well consolidated by this network, we highlight in the analysis some advances that we consider common to public education networks, especially when it comes to to establish educational and political goals for the formation of new generations. The research results corroborate the arguments built since the eighties in defense of preschool education.

Campos (1997), when presenting an overview of research on daycare centers and their relationship with preschools, in Latin America and Brazil, presents us with conclusive results regarding the importance of preschools. In Latin America, the studies presented by the author, indicate a great impact on the cognitive development of children who attended the so-called kindergartens. In Brazil, in turn, a sample of children who attended the third grade of elementary school, in 1985, in the northeastern capitals of Fortaleza and São Luís, revealed that because they were graduates of the preschool “it shortened in half year the duration of school path of students in the three grades considered” (CAMPOS, 1997, p. 123, our translation).

Abramovay and Kramer (1991) in an article produced three decades ago, argued that it was a political and ideological ingenuity that conditioned the solution of the cultural deficiency of poor children and the high repetition rates from primary education to preschool. At the same time, they warned of the risk of emptying its function, since, with objectives in

itself and unrelated to primary education, preschool education could easily be characterized by informal, unsystematic practices and without requirement of quality. The authors clarify, “We do not deny the immediate goals of the preschool. We are far from underestimating its role in child development. However, to mischaracterize the preschool/school relationship is to avoid discussing the quality that this preschool should have” (ABRAMOVAY; KRAMER, 1991, p. 33, our translation).

More recently, although divergences remain regarding the specificity and function of Early Childhood Education, a consensus has been built regarding the importance of educational experiences provided to children under six years of age in the various areas that serve as the foundation for Pedagogy, with emphasis on the theoretical-methodological studies based on the assumptions of Historical-Cultural Psychology and Historical-Critical Pedagogy, for which school practices should promote in children their “maximum possibilities for development” (MARTINS, 2009, p. 93, our translation).

Based on these assumptions, we will discuss below the need identified in the research to promote curricular choices that contemplate both theoretical (scientific knowledge) and operational content (formation of habits and skills), ensuring children the mastery of initial notions of different areas of knowledge, as well as those related to the formation of habits and mastery of procedures (MARTINS, 2009).

### **Traces of a reality: the contents taught in the preschool visited**

The research sample corresponds to the observation and recording of thirty-six episodes of the practices of four-year-old children, whose grouping is called the 4th stage, and thirty-two teachers of five-year-old children, a group called the 5th stage. These sixty-eight classes belong to eleven Early Childhood Education institutions that are called Education and Recreation Centers. Data were collected between the months of February and October 2017, observing the daily routine of activities performed from the beginning to the end of the morning or afternoon periods. The hours of the morning period are from 7:30 am to 11:30 am and in the afternoon from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Only the activities listed in the teachers' plans were noted, and the rest are considered free activities, without the teacher having established any objective for their accomplishment. We observed two activities of each teacher respecting the separation of three months between one activity and another. This means that if a class's first activity was observed in February, the second occurred in May. In turn, when the first observation occurred in June, the second occurred in October, except for the recess of July.

Such an initiative is justified in order to have a more accurate picture of the dynamics given to teaching by teachers.

As it will be possible to notice, the data corresponding to the knowledge taught to the children are concentrated on what Martins (2009) called knowledge of a theoretical nature. According to the author, such knowledge corresponds to that extracted directly from different areas of knowledge, such as: Portuguese, mathematics, science, history, geography and art. This knowledge, when taught, has a direct impact on children's learning and indirectly on their development. However, Martins (2009) reminds us that, regardless of the age group it serves, the school has the role of transmitting culture beyond everyday spheres. To this end, school educational practices, in addition to ensuring that scientific knowledge becomes present in the teaching of children under the age of six, should also be concerned with promoting content that directly affects the development of children, adding to them new habits and skills such as: “self-care; healthy eating habits; psychomotor dexterity; perceptual and sensory acuity; significant communication skills; identification of emotions and feelings; group experience; among others” (MARTINS, 2009, p. 95, our translation).

The table and chart below show the total activities observed in each group and the nature of the content taught to the children.

**Table 1** – Knowledge areas and the number of activities observed

Class	Knowledge of Self and the World	Oral and Written Language	Mathematical Language	Nature and Society	Art	Total
4 <sup>th</sup> stage	8	28	17	6	13	72
5 <sup>th</sup> stage	4	32	12	4	12	64

Source: Devised by the authors

**Chart 1** – Knowledge areas and the contents of the observed activities

Class	Knowledge of Self and the World	Oral and Written Language	Mathematical Language	Nature and Society	Art
4 <sup>th</sup> stage	Family knowledge: understanding family compositions (4)	Recognize the name and alphabet; (13)	Position: Front, back, before, after; (5)	Elements of nature- Air; (3)	Free draw; (7)
	Recognition of Others (2)	Phonological awareness: sound differences and similarities; (11)	Working with numbers from 1 to 6; (8)	Primary and secondary colors; (2)	Oriented drawing; (3)
	Different school spaces (2)	Understand phoneme/grapheme relationship; (4)	Notions of time: day, week, month and year; (3)	Respiratory system - the lungs; (1)	Aesthetic appreciation (3)
			Acréscimo e decréscimo (1)		
	Construction and	Recognize the name	Quantify; (5)	Fruit trees; (2)	Graphic



5 <sup>th</sup> stage	expansion of autonomy; (2)	and alphabet; (18)			Expression - Drawing (4)
	Geographic location: what is in the neighborhood; (2)	Textual Genres - Parlenda (2)	Correspondence one by one; (3)	Rain (water cycle); (2)	Puppet production (2)
		Writing - word formation (5)	Recognize the numbers; (4)		Pasting and painting with different materials (6)
		Phonological awareness: sound differences and similarities; (7)			

Source: Devised by the authors

The contents of the observed activities, to a certain extent, reveal the persistence of the preparatory function and, in opposition to it, we resume, following the tradition of understanding a phenomenon by the way it presents itself throughout history, the discussion of Abramovay and Kramer (1991), in which a consensus was sought regarding the role of preschool education that did not condemn children to schooling limited to informal experiences and did not anticipate the full load of activities characteristic of literacy. These contents show a continuity with the reality found in research carried out in this same municipal network, whose data are of 2005/2006, carried out by Barbosa (2008). The research synthesizes an extensive panorama of the theoretical and pedagogical elements guiding the teaching practices, indicating adherence to a pedagogical perspective guided by the age criteria and the interests of the children. In turn, the research by Silva and Hai (2012), whose data are from 2008, in this same municipality, aimed to reveal the educational practices developed with children up to three years old. The results point to the prevalence of pedagogical propositions and spontaneous practices, objectives and content are not demonstrated, and planning is reduced to care activities.

We can say that the research by Barbosa (2008) and Silva and Hai (2012) highlight the elements of the relationship between school knowledge and educational purposes, explaining the formative project that the institutions are developing with children in early childhood education. However, these contents observed in 2017 indicate an advance, in relation to what Barbosa (2008) reveals, regarding the number of activities intentionally planned by preschool teachers, since in the previous scenario, two thirds of the activities that made up the children's routine in preschool classes were free and their goals were not made explicit.

In summary, we conclude that although some theoretical contents are being intentionally taught to children, the contents of an operational nature, fundamental

components in the integral formation of children, are not present. Saviani (2012) when defining the nature and specificity of educational work, tells us that its nature is non-material because it is linked to the production of ideas, concepts and habits and its specificity is defined by the transmission of historically accumulated knowledge, with the objective to intentionally produce, in each individual of the human species, the capacities socially developed by the group of men, whose results are synthesized in Art, Sciences and Philosophy. In this attempt, the author states that the object of education requires, in addition to identifying the cultural elements that need to be taught to children, to decide on the best ways to teach them. For the choice of content, Saviani (2012, p. 13, our translation) indicates the need to privilege classical knowledge, understanding it as that which “[...] was established as fundamental, as essential”.

For us, reflecting on the specificity of childhood in school circumstances and on the purpose of preschool education includes recognizing as intentional and essential the intentional promotion of activities that also deal with the development of content of an operational nature. The tendency to privilege theoretical contents as opposed to those related to new motor, affective mastery and sensory and perceptual acuity, although it can be explained by the historical mark of the preschool in preparing for elementary school, must be confronted with the understanding that a good curriculum for preschool will be the one that best integrates these two types of knowledge, considering that the smaller the children, the more investments must be made in teaching operational contents, especially because their current psychic functioning does not enable them to master abstract concepts typical of theoretical contents (MARTINS; PASQUALINI, 2020).

To contribute to the improvement of this identified reality, we reflect, next, on an alternative for the organization of teaching that favors children's learning and its consequent influence under the general domains of child development. For this, we consider the main activity specific to each children's period as a structuring framework for the planning and organization of preschool education.

### **Language and the main activity as structural elements of preschool education**

The resources and/or pedagogical means used by the teachers, for teaching the knowledge present in the activities that compose the sample, are characterized below and highlight the predominance of the teachers' speech in relation to other means. Pedagogical objects correspond to materials such as word cards, golden material, mobile alphabets and geometric figures.



**Chart 2** – Objects and resources used by the teachers in the development of the observed activities

4 <sup>th</sup> stage					
Areas	Knowledge of Self and the World	Oral and Written Language	Mathematical Language	Nature and Society	Art
	Speech (6)	Speech (26)	Speech (15)	Speech (4)	Speech (10)
	Pedagogical objects (2)	Pictures or prints (2)	Pedagogical objects (2)	Pedagogical objects (2)	Pedagogical objects (2)
					Pictures or prints (1)
5 <sup>th</sup> stage					
	Speech (4)	Speech (27)	Speech (9)	Speech (3)	Speech (07)
		Pictures or prints (3)	Pedagogical objects (3)	Pedagogical objects (1)	Pictures or prints (03)
		Pedagogical objects (2)			Pedagogical objects (2)

Source: Devised by the authors

It is legitimate the predominant use of speech by teachers as the main resource for teaching, as this is the main way for the child to enter the social world, but also because the adult language appropriate for the child is the structuring of all human psychological functions. For us, this perspective of language as a fundamental instrument of communication, social exchange and regulatory of child conscious behaviors, associated with the observance of theoretical contributions extracted from the concept of main activity advocated by Historical-Cultural Psychology, constitutes a fertile ground for reflections on the preschool didactic, in a scenario whose predominant conception, advocates the defense of spontaneous processes of children's learning and teaching, as a horizontal activity, involving a necessary unpredictability to accommodate the interests of children for certain themes or contents.

According to the studies of Historical-Cultural Psychology, man performs involuntary (reflexive) and voluntary (conscious) acts, the latter being defined by the human capacity to establish and carry out actions based on verbal instruction. For Luria (1986) the scientific explanation of the voluntary act must be based on the analysis of the child's linguistic development and its essence lies in the social forms of behavior. The voluntary act begins through the child's subordination to the adult's verbal instruction, to later turn into an internal, self-regulating process. At approximately four years of age, conduct that was previously regulated externally under adult instruction, is regulated by the child's own external language, in a unity between speech and actions. Finally, in the later stage, this external language is internalized, constituting the basic structures of thought.

Similar to the development of voluntary conduct, adult speech and then the child's own internalized speech is a precursor to the development of functions such as language itself, thinking, attention, memory, imagination, among others. This development depends on the possibilities of symbolic mediation that adult speech offers to children, taking those functions to a higher level. Such theoretical evidence suggests that the teachers' speech contributes to an effective learning of children, of cultural contents that ensure the continuity of their humanization, as it adds to them characteristics of psychic functioning not present at birth.

Certainly, other pedagogical objects arranged by the teachers requalify the mediations interposed for the consolidation of the voluntary conduct found in the actions of object manipulation, be they material or symbolic and in the conducts in the activity of social role games, an expansion of the process of consciousness about the reality that will occur supported by the activity that is characteristic to it. With this we are advocating that the organization of preschool education pay attention to pedagogical contributions that can be extracted from the psychological principles of main activity, widely discussed by Historical-Cultural Psychology. For this theory, the explanation about the genesis and developments of conscious processes in man must be sought in the relationship between human productive activity, work and language (LURIA, 1986).

For Vygotski (2006), at each stage of age we always find a new central formation (main activity), as a kind of guide for the whole development process that characterizes the reorganization of the child's entire personality on a new basis. Around this new central or basic formation of the presented age are located and grouped the remaining new partial formations, related to isolated facets of the child's personality, as well as the development processes related to understanding child development properly, if we analyze it from the development of the activity, as it is formed in the concrete conditions of life of the child and the role played by language. However, life or joint activity do not form mechanically, from isolated types of activity. Some types of activity are, at a given stage, main and have great importance for the further development of the personality (ELKONIN, 1987).

The main activity has three basic characteristics: it is within this activity that other types of activities emerge and are differentiated; it is in the main activity that the particular psychic processes take shape or are reorganized and; from the main activity results, in a more intimate way, the main psychological changes in the children's personality (LEONTIEV, 2006a). Elkonin (1999) states that from birth to adulthood, we have the following main activities for each stage: the baby's emotional communication; manipulative object activity; games/playing social roles; study activity; intimate personal communication and professional

activity/study. Children between four and five years old, who make up the researched groups, are located in the period in which the main activity is the manipulative activity in transition to the activity of social role games, with the latter predominating among the five-year-old children.

Elkonin (2009, p. 215) affirms that the activity with objects is the premise of learning “actions planned by society”, because the novelty that children seek to understand in this manipulation changes the types of relationships maintained with adults and different types of activities will emerge. Communication with adults, limited to a predominantly practical purpose in the Emotional Communication activity, changes in the Manipulatory activity, as the adult now becomes the “depository of models of actions with objects” (ELKONIN, 2009, p 215, our translation).

In the text by Barbosa, Escudeiro and Silva (2016) we find an analysis that shows the fertility of pedagogical actions guided by the principle that considers the child's main activity as a relevant area for decisions about the organization of teaching. It is about the presentation and analysis of a didactic sequence developed with children of three and four years of age from the same network of the city of our research, whose purpose was to develop the design of the body scheme. The work demonstrates that the successive activities that included the manipulation of objects such as dolls, images of body parts, modeling, constructions, cutting and collage, contributed to a significant advance in the representation of the self by children. Such analysis corroborates with the defense that the mediations with the greatest pedagogical value are those that occur when children produce the chain of actions specific to their activity.

For Elkonin (2009), the manipulative activity bases the premises for the next activity of Social Role Games or Protagonized Game, in which the progressive development of playful actions with objects and their substitution by others not present is observed. Thus, according to the theoretical precepts of Elkonin (2009) and Leontiev (2006b), in preschool age child development occurs under the influence of role games as a guide or main activity. This means, according to Leontiev (2006b), that it is through the activity of role playing or protagonists, that children produce their collective existence, subjectively incorporating new skills, objects, aptitudes and faculties into their actions and relationships. Elkonin (2009) points out that in the passage from the game with objects, a previous guide activity, to the protagonized game, the transformation does not happen due to a change in the quantity or quality of the objects available for the children to manipulate, nor by the traces of the initial actions observed in this new activity, such a transformation occurs because children who used to act with adults, perceive that they can act like them and in that sense, [...] “all the objects

and acts performed with them are now inserted in a new system of relations of the child with reality, in a new activity of pleasurable sensations” (ELKONIN, 2009, p. 404, our translation).

The different spaces of early childhood education are everyday scenarios for the emergence of the protagonized games, which in many cases spans several days. However, these games emerge and unfold without planning or pedagogical interventions that could result in an expansion of the conscious processes of understanding reality by children, unveiling for them, for example, the relations of domination and expropriation that are typical of capitalist societies. In this sense, we have argued that the contributions that the games played make to the psychic development of children should be the subject of discussion with preschool teachers, also bearing in mind the need to denaturalize play as a natural activity for children.

When we take the assumptions of Historical-Cultural Psychology regarding the main activities as organizers of teaching activities, we seek to advance the proposition of educational practices that consider that the activity is the element that connects the being to the social world and the understanding of the processes of appropriation, implies considering not only the place occupied by the child in society, but also understanding that each period conquered by the child is determined by its sociocultural relations, especially by the way in which the school fulfills its primary function of humanizing children.

### **Final considerations**

At the end of the research, we reiterate the urgent need for investment in the solid theoretical formation of preschool teachers as a framework for the development of educational practices that, when considering the specificities of children, underlines the theoretical cultural contents of the areas of knowledge, without, however, promoting them from the perspective of an early schooling of children, typical of the historical conception of preparatory preschool and, concomitantly, give the operational contents a non-pragmatic configuration, because when we talk about the development of new skills, perceptual and mnemonic skills, formation of habits, we refer to typically human actions not consolidated through care routines or repetition of rituals, typical of the concept of custody prevalent in the origin of Brazilian children's institutions, whose features are still frequently found.

We seek, based on the totality revealed by the research data, to point out theoretical elements, well formulated in the psychological field, as presuppositions for the constant challenge that impels students of early childhood education and their contributions to the

integral development of children, which is to reflect and outline propositions so that the teaching of children under six years is not forged in a movement that, even if updated, coexists with historical weaknesses such as the defense of a principle that the preschool function is the promotion of simple sociability of children, dispensing the mediation of historically produced knowledge.

Inspired by the mythology of Prometheus, we indicate that our propositions in this text aim to offer contributions to the field of Early Childhood Education, which needs to resist the hegemonic tendencies to reduce teaching activity to a range of informal practices with the prevalence of everyday knowledge to the detriment of the different. Mythology tells us that after deceiving Zeus by making him choose the worst parts of a sacrificial bull, the Titan Prometheus saw his creation, humanity, being punished thanks to the intolerance of a tyrant, but even so he did not give up guaranteeing man supremacy over all other living animals. The return to humans of fire, figurative representation of knowledge, was expensive, Prometheus was chained in the Caucasus mountains, destined to have his liver devoured by vultures (or in some versions, an eagle), an endless punishment due to the regeneration power of the organ. At the intersection of Hercules, Prometheus was freed from his martyrdom years later, however, the epic character truly belongs to the resemblance between fiction and reality: the certainty that man holds knowledge and makes it his bonds or his heroes.

It is in this sense, of knowledge as what liberates or condemns us that the famous Greek myth seems to replicate aspects that are repeated throughout history. The defense of educational practices committed to the full development of children is thus represented in the merit of Prometheus, a mythical being. It contains the ideal of hope, the arduous promise of a slow and gradual change, capable of reducing cultural inequalities that condemn a portion of children, served in public schools, to a slow and gradual process of social exclusion.

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