CONTINUING TEACHER TRAINING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: DEVELOPMENT POLICY STRATEGY

FORMAÇÃO CONTÍNUA DE PROFESSORES NA EDUCAÇÃO INFANTIL: ESTRATÉGIA POLÍTICA DE DESENVOLVIMENTO

FORMACIÓN CONTINUA DEL MAESTRO EN LA EDUCACIÓN DE LA PRIMERA INFANCIA: ESTRATEGIA DE DESARROLLO DE POLÍTICAS

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ABSTRACT: In this article, we divulge successful experiences of Continuing Education of Teachers in Early Childhood Education, carried out in municipalities of the State of Paraná between 2002 and 2019, highlighting the contributions of the Cultural-Historical Theory of Vigotski (1896-1934) and collaborators, based on the Historical-Dialectical Materialism, as a theoretical-methodological reference able to guide studies and reflections about the content. Intentional actions and systematized practices with themes of Children's Literature and Art are strategies for the continuous improvement of teachers and children, thus responding to the challenges of the current Early Childhood Education aiming at the integral development of students, with an Early Childhood Education of excellence.

KEYWORDS: Continuing education. Early childhood education. Educational interventions. Cultural-historical theory.

RESUMO: Neste artigo, divulgamos experiências exitosas de Formação Contínua de Professores na Educação Infantil, realizadas em municípios do Estado do Paraná entre 2002 a 2019, evidenciando as contribuições da Teoria Histórico-Cultural de Vigotski (1896-1934) e colaboradores, fundamentada no Materialismo Histórico-Dialético, como referencial teórico-metodológico capaz de nortear estudos e reflexões acerca do conteúdo. Ações intencionais e práticas sistematizadas com temas da Literatura Infantil e da Arte, configuram-se estratégias para o aprimoramento contínuo de docentes e crianças, respondendo, assim, aos desafios da Educação Infantil atual visando o desenvolvimento integral de alunos, com uma Educação Infantil de excelência.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Formação contínua. Educação infantil. Intervenções educativas. Teoria histórico-cultural.

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RESUMEN: En este artículo, difundimos experiencias exitosas de Formación Docente Continua en Educación Infantil, realizadas en municipios del Estado de Paraná entre 2002 y 2019, evidenciando los aportes de la Teoría Histórico-Cultural de Vigotski (1896-1934) y colaboradores, basada en el Materialismo Histórico-Dialéctico, como marco teóricometodológico capaz de orientar estudios y reflexiones sobre contenidos. Acciones intencionales y prácticas sistematizadas con temáticas de Literatura Infantil y Arte, se configuran estrategias para la mejora continua de docentes y niños, respondiendo así a los retos de la Educación Infantil actual orientada al desarrollo integral de los estudiantes, con una Educación Primaria de La Primera Infancia.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Formación contínua. Educación infantil. Intervenciones educativas. Teoría histórico-cultural.

Introduction

In the novel "The Leopard", the Italian writer Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa (1896-1957) refers us to how historical contextualization affects legislation and Teacher Training in Brazil by stating that: "If we want everything to remain as it is, it is necessary that everything changes" (LAMPEDUSA, 2017, p. 26, our translation), contributing to reflect and understand the specificity of Continuing Education in Early Childhood Education.

We believe that in the last decades there has been a significant advance in the condition of Education in our country, especially with the approval of the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education (LDB) - Law n° 9.394/1996 (BRASIL, 1996). However, in view of the Brazilian history, when it comes to public and educational policies, the possibility of advancement was limited to its announcement; the subsequent governmental actions predominantly contributed to keep everything as it is.

In the same logic described by Tomasi di Lampedusa (2017), we can consider that there were changes, yes, but not enough for a significant development of national Education. With regard to Early Childhood Education, there was no recognition of its importance, either in the Training of Teachers, or in the valorization as a professional category, or in its continuous development in service. And this seems to be the hallmark of Brazilian Education, despite the advances, as a rule.

After the current Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil (BRAZIL, 1988), the political order, the Brazilian educational legislation, as well as public policies and Teacher Training programs, were developed according to the orientations of International Organizations, by means of agreements signed by Brazil. Thus, the assumptions and actions that guide the planning and implementation of Teacher Education policies in the country have been marked by determinations of organizations such as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), or World Bank (WB), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the definition of educational policies for peripheral countries.

Thus, the apparent changes have served to continue policies that insist on being of the government, when they should be of the State, resulting in the historical marginalization of Teacher Education, as well as Continuing Education, which could contribute to educational development, but is still not a priority, despite the preparation and approval of Education plans. Unlike the Decennial Education Plan (PDE/1993), which was limited to Primary Education and Literacy, the National Education Plan (PNE/2001) - Law # 10.172/2001 (BRASIL, 2001) - covers Brazilian Education at different levels and modalities.

In relation to teaching professionals, the PNE/2001 presented a diagnosis of the profession and established guidelines, according to a set of objectives and goals to be achieved. The actions were part of a set of educational policies, together with the Union, the states and municipalities. In total, 28 goals and objectives were presented with the intention of improving the indices and impacting on the training and valuing of teachers.

If we observe and analyze the PNE/2001 and its results, as far as the Continuous Education of Teachers is concerned, we realize that the decisions and actions have not been successfully implemented, being insufficient to positively impact national education, thus following a historical trend in our country. Despite the very democratic debates and research, as valid as they may be, there is still a need for legislation, plans, and programs to be strengthened by a State policy.

In this scenario of challenges and possibilities, we wonder: can the Continuing Education of Teachers, especially the Continuing Education in Early Childhood Education, mean development for both teachers and children?

We believe so. We argue that, nowadays, the assumptions of the Cultural-Historical Theory of Lev Semionovich Vigotski (1896-1934) and collaborators can support a process of continuing education that results in professional improvement of teachers and development of intellectual skills of young children. According to Vigotski (1993, 2009, 2010), in social interactions, since the first days of life, the child begins to learn and, with the help of adults (mediation) more developed, gradually develops its higher psychic functions, as it appropriates the knowledge historically developed by humanity.

In this sense, daily, productive and successful experiences of Continuous Training of Early Childhood Education Teachers should be supported by the propositions of this theory, which allows us to understand human development in all its complexity and, thus, enables the teacher to choose meaningful content and issues that arouse the curiosity and interest of the child, in order to make interventions in the teaching-learning process, as well as to organize a daily educational practice consistent with the proposed objectives, i.e., to enhance the full development of the student (CHAVES; FAUSTINO, 2007; CHAVES; TEIXEIRA; FAUSTINO, 2008; CHAVES; LIMA; FERRAREZE, 2012; DUARTE, 2008; LIBÂNEO, 2004; MORAES, 2001; MOURA, 2018).

In this paper, we divulge successful experiences, elaborated through contents and themes of Children's Literature and Art, anchored in the Historical-Cultural Theory and carried out in municipalities of the state of Paraná (PR), in the period from 2002 to 2019, which can be considered as a strategy of effective educational interventions for the development of teachers and students of Early Childhood Education. These practices of Continuing Education for Teachers were conceived and coordinated by the researcher Prof. Dr. Marta Chaves and the Research and Study Group on Early Childhood Education (GEEI), from the Department of Theory and Practice of Education of the State University of Maringá (UEM), in partnership with the Municipal Secretaries of Education Institutions of the cities that participated in the courses, as we will see below.

The study is a bibliographical research, investigating the productions related to the themes Children's Literature and Art, highlighting the contributions of the Cultural-Historical Theory as a theoretical and methodological reference able to guide studies and reflections about the integral development of children and the personal and professional improvement of teachers, in the scope of the Continuous Training of Teachers in Children's Education.

The experiences reported here are part of a set of activities idealized and developed by the Group of Research and Studies in Early Childhood Education (GEEI in the Portuguese acronym) of the State University of Maringá, which carries out activities of study and composition of didactic resources, as well as the execution of works of professional and personal qualification of teachers, anchored in Vygotsky's Historical-Cultural Theory, since the year 2002, in several schools of Early Childhood Education, located in the cities of the State of Paraná (PR), which is part of chapter five of the doctoral thesis "Continuous Training of Teachers in Early Childhood Education: development strategy for teachers and children", defended by Eloiza Elena da Silva Martinucci, in 2020, at the State University of Maringá, under the mentorship of Dr. Marta Chaves.

Continuous training: Challenges and possibilities in contemporary education

We begin by recognizing that the definitions, concepts and policies of Teacher Education are directly related to the importance given to Education in any given country. The capitalist logic of work organization is a relevant factor in the development of the educational phenomenon. If the school institution has, ideologically, the function of contributing to the maintenance of society the way it is organized, the logic of teaching and professional performance will be to legitimize teaching for subservience.

Resisting this kind of teaching, activities of study and composition of didactic resources, as well as professional and personal training of teachers, anchored in Vygotsky's Cultural-Historical Theory, have been carried out, since 2002, in several schools of Early Childhood Education, located in the cities of the State of Paraná (PR), of which, among others³, we highlight the following.

In the municipality of Presidente Castelo Branco (PR), the training with the theme "Teachers Rethinking Practice: proposals, objectives and collective achievements" was developed in the period from 2004 to 2006, with the participation of 17 educators from two Centers for Early Childhood Education (1 to 6 years old) and 21 teachers from two Elementary Schools (1st to 4th grades), with lecturers from different higher education institutions and from several fields of knowledge, as well as from the Study Group on Early Childhood Education from UEM and from the Municipal Secretariat of Education. One of the themes discussed was Children's Literature. In 2006, the Elementary School 4th grade teachers, together with the pedagogical team, had an integrated formation experience with educators from the Cecília Meireles Municipal School, in the city of Indianópolis (PR), when the indigenous theme was approached (CHAVES; TEIXEIRA; FAUSTINO, 2008).

The whole process, organized and systematized in a dialogical way, made it possible to reach coherent results with the use of Vigotski's Theory. In the meetings, it was observed the teachers' interest in discussing the themes (especially those related to the course on the Cultural-Historical Theory) and the contents covered, as well as in deepening their knowledge, especially in the field of Special Education and in the aspect of cultural

³ Santo Inácio, north central region, 4,956 inhabitants, with training entitled: "Cultural-Historical Theory: contributions to pedagogical training and educational practices", held in 2010. Borrazópolis, north central region, with 9,453 inhabitants, training entitled "Possible Successes for Education Today: contributions from the classical and contemporary elaborations of the Historical-Cultural Theory", held in 2014; Boa Esperança do Iguaçu, southwest region, training entitled "Historical-Cultural Theory and the Organization of Teaching: contributions to learning and development in Early Childhood Education", held in 2014; Céu Azul, west region, with 11. 649 inhabitants, training entitled "Studies and Proposals for Humanizing Education: contributions of the Historical-Cultural Theory to Education", held in 2016.

diversity/social inclusion. Regarding the students, the practices developed (intentionally organized and based on content that awoke the curiosity and real interest of the children) allowed the creation of an effective learning space, capable of leading them to internalize human qualities and develop their potentialities (CHAVES; TEIXEIRA; FAUSTINO, 2008).

In the city of Indianópolis (PR), the extension event "Studies and Educational Practices for Early Childhood Education: challenges and achievements of teachers and children", held in the months of September and October 2006, made possible the exhibition of some studies carried out by teachers from the Departments (Theory and Practice of Education, Foundations of Education and Psychology) of the State University of Maringá and the State University of Paulista, from the city of Marília (SP). The activities of the event also made possible the socialization of the achievements of teachers and children from the Curumim Municipal Center for Children Education (CMEI), the result of an excellent training held in 2002/2003.

In this event, which counted with the participation of dozens of Pedagogy course students, teachers and coordinators from the municipal, state and private networks from Maringá and region, the studies and reflections mobilized for the evaluation of practices carried out in both public and private Preschool Education Institutions (CHAVES; FAUSTINO, 2007). One of the themes addressed was Children's Literature, with an emphasis on child development and Teacher Training in relation to the issue of disability and Children's Literature. In view of the theoretical framework that supported the experiences, the contributions of Vygotsky's Cultural-Historical Theory to the Training of Teachers and to the educational practices in childhood, as well as to Special Education in times of collective social practice, were also object of studies and reflections (CHAVES; FAUSTINO, 2007).

In the town of Paiçandu (PR), the experiences of Continuing Education of Teachers, presented in the book "Cultural-Historical Theory and teacher education: studies and humanizing pedagogical interventions", were developed in five Child Education Centers, with the purpose of providing the teachers of the whole school system with a formation focused on the specificities of each group of students. Organized based on the dialogue between teachers, coordinators and the Municipal Secretariat of Education team, the activities, developed between 2011 and 2012, had the participation of teachers from the municipal network and guest lecturers from different areas of knowledge, who work in institutions from the state of Paraná, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro (CHAVES; LIMA; FERRAREZE, 2012).

The themes, objects of reflection of the experiences, were basically those related to Children's Literature and Art: the art of telling and enchanting; the enchantments of Children's Literature in the teaching and learning process; besides those that dealt with Tatiana Belinky: Children's Literature as a humanizing practice in the development of the child; a journey with Ana Maria Machado; and Monteiro Lobato: a possibility of enchantment and learning (CHAVES; LIMA; FERRAREZE, 2012).

In the municipality of Telemaco Borba (PR), the practices of Training of Early Childhood Education Teachers were developed in the period from 2013 to 2016, with the title "Cultural-Historical Theory and Pedagogical Interventions: humanizing achievements of teachers and children", under the guidance of Profa. Dr. Marta Chaves, coordinator of the Research and Study Group on Early Childhood Education (GEEI) of UEM, and with the participation of coordinators of the Municipal Secretariat of Education, coordinators of the teaching units and teachers of the public education network in the definition of the theme, aiming at the development of a researcher conduct in the teachers who participated in the developed activities. In order to conduct the studies, teachers from Higher Education Institutions volunteered to be part of the group of trainers for a period of at least two years. The themes addressed were related to Art, Music, and Literature: toys and games, poems and songs by Vinícius de Moraes and Toquinho; poems and stories by Tatiana Belinky, Ruth Rocha, and José Paulo Paes; songs and nursery rhymes; studies of the work of modernist painters Tarsila do Amaral, Candido Portinari, and Aldemir Martins (MOURA, 2018).

In the municipality of Marialva, in 2014, teachers and coordinators of school institutions participated in professional training work entitled "Cultural-Historical Theory and Teaching Organization: contributions to learning and development in Early Childhood Education." At the time, teacher Dalva Linda Vicentini guided these professionals in theoretical studies and in the development of teaching materials and resources. It is essential to remember that studies and teaching materials are necessary to provide teachers with the tools to organize teaching with a view to maximizing children's development. It is also important to point out that pedagogical materials for study are essential to improve the activities carried out with the children.

According to the principles present in the adopted theoretical framework, as the Continuous Training of Teachers was developed, it was observed that the teachers' understanding in relation to the practice of educating children, guided by the theoretical assumptions of Vigotski and collaborators, was expanded. The teachers started to understand the importance of working with Literature in the integral development of the young child. Thus, we highlight that the collective, cooperative and coordinated study in an effective and scientific manner is capable of enabling learning and development for teachers and children.

These in-service Continuing Education experiences emerge as an assumption for the teachers' personal and professional improvement, and also as a condition for them to promote the children's integral development in Kindergarten schools, thus resisting the capitalist logic that sometimes writes laws that reaffirm the denial of knowledge. Contrary to this logic, we present elements to support our defense that the Continuous Training of Early Childhood Education teachers can be a development strategy.

Regarding legal guarantees, in the current context, Education is recognized as a fundamental right, responsible for instrumentalizing or preparing the citizen through a development process favorable to the realization of other rights. One of the most relevant characteristics of the Citizen Constitution (BRAZIL, 1988) is in raising the social rights of the population, especially in comparison to the previous Constitution (1967) and the CE/1969. The Magna Carta of 1988 establishes comprehensive guarantees, which represent purposes to be achieved, if we consider the full experience of these rights.

However, we can see that there is a gap between reality and the advances expressed in the Constitutional Charter and the laws derived from it. We can identify this premise in Art. 214, clauses III and IV, which bring, respectively, the goals of "improvement in the quality of teaching" and "training for work," something that is still far away when it comes to the Continuing Education of Teachers, the appreciation and recognition of the importance of this professional, especially for working in the stage that constitutes our specificity, Kindergarten.

The constitutional guarantees establish the right to Education, mobilize policies and programs of Continuing Education for Teachers, and this possibility appears as an opportunity to move forward in the debate and in the practices related to the training and performance of teaching professionals, especially those who work directly with children.

With regard to the debate and the constitution of arguments about a possible advance in Brazilian Education, we believe that Early Childhood Education can be configured as a time and space for development. And, for this, it is fundamental to consider that:

> Early Childhood Education as a political expression linked to a certain economic model that is beyond the particularities of childhood. Thus, the educational practices are only justified if, before preparing for work and anticipating the contents of later grades, they provide children and educators with the tools for maximum creative potential and are based on an appropriation of knowledge that is presented, as an educational practice, in favor of human emancipation (CHAVES, 2008, p. 255, our translation).

Chaves (2008, p. 255) states that Early Childhood Education represents a political expression "tied to a certain economic model", showing what value is given to childhood

nowadays and, above all, what value can be attributed to the Brazilians called "our children". The author defends a consistent Continuing Education from the theoretical and methodological point of view and capable of resisting the logic and dynamics of capitalist society, and more:

We bring up the issue of responsibility and political conduct, because **our** society (the capitalist society, which we are taught to call **our** own), as far as the intellectual and cultural formation of children is concerned, **grants** "insignificant works", or, as we usually say, authorizes the dropping of crumbs that are conventionally called music for children or "shorties", as we well know. This includes the neglect represented by reduced or hastily translated texts, which, in general, makes them impoverished - not to mention the hits of recent weeks that the children (of so much listening) arrive singing in educational institutions. [...] It is not the crumbs that should be offered or repeated in educational institutions (CHAVES, 2011, p. 101, emphasis added, our translation).

In this sense, to value Teacher Training in Early Childhood Education is to break with this logic and empower teachers to exercise an educational practice that promotes the development and potential of children, preparing them for their maximum intellectual development. Thus, it is worth mentioning a timid advance in legislation after the approval of the LDB, Law no. 9.394/1996, in §4° of Art. 87, which determined that after the decade of Education, scheduled to end on December 20, 2007, "[...] only teachers with higher education qualifications or trained through in-service training will be hired" (BRAZIL, 1996, our translation).

In this implementation deadline, the duality in the requirement of the level of Teacher Training to act in different stages of the same level of education reinforces, in our understanding, the devaluation of a fundamental stage in the development of the child, essential to offer learning and development in later stages. The wording of Art. 87 of LDB 9.394/1996 was revoked on April 4, 2013 by Law no. 12.796/2013 (BRAZIL, 2013).

Initially, this statement was defended as being temporary; however, in 2017, its wording was updated, repealing the requirement for higher education for the Early Childhood Education stage and the first years of Elementary Education, establishing, in Title VI, which deals with "Education Professionals", in Article 62, that:

The training of teachers to work in Basic Education will be done at a higher level, in a full degree course, admitting, as minimum training for the exercise of teaching in early childhood education and in the first five years of elementary school, the one offered at a medium level in the normal modality (BRAZIL, 1996, our translation)⁴.

The change in the text of the LDB/1996 by Law no. 13.415/2017 (BRASIL, 2017), in addition to not advancing enough, imposes a setback to the processes of Teacher Training for Early Childhood Education by confirming that this training can be held at the high school level in the normal modality, and not necessarily in higher education.

Contradictorily, the documents and reports present arguments related to the importance of Early Childhood Education. Currently, we see the defense of these early years as a strategy to positively impact the results of educational assessments, organized and legitimized by national entities and international organizations. However, there are few exceptions organized to favor the development of teaching professionals and also of the students; what we have is a governmental discourse on Education, without it being, objectively, a priority.

Within the limits expressed by the national reality, we analyze that the Continuous Formation in Early Childhood Education, as determined by the educational legislation, sometimes with advances, sometimes with setbacks, may constitute a research field that influences and modifies the curriculums of the Teacher Education courses at a higher level, favoring the articulation and dialogues with the Education Departments of the States.

In Paraná, a Guidance Document for Early Childhood Education (DOEI), prepared by representatives of the Paraná State Regional Education Centers and teachers from Paraná's Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), was delivered to all Municipal Education Departments in 2016. On the occasion, in the capital (Curitiba - PR), the pedagogical work carried out in 2015 and 2016 by teachers and educational teams from the municipality of Telemaco Borba (PR) was presented as a reference to the other municipalities in the state. This episode caused enthusiasm and pride among professionals from that municipality and confirmed, once again, the possibility of carrying out successful activities with teachers and children.

This DOEI mobilized debates and studies on the occasion of lectures and dialogues with representatives of the municipalities of Paraná and the National Union of Municipal Education Officers (Undime). The central theme of the set of lectures was the defense of Continuing Education, presented as a strategy for the development of teachers and children, regardless of the location of the municipality in the states, number of school institutions, and number of children per institution. We believe that the dialogues between HEIs, Education Departments, and professionals who work in the Basic Network is fundamental for mobilizing

⁴ Redrafted by Law No. 13,415, of 2017.

debates that contribute to reflection and analysis, and sometimes to the rethinking of pedagogical practice. The dialog and study activities were carried out in two different regions of the state of Paraná: the Regional Education Center of Maringá (Northwestern region: 25 cities) and the Regional Education Center of Dois Vizinhos (Southwestern region: seven cities).

With this, we can expand and reaffirm the importance of Continuing Education for Teachers in Early Childhood Education, which must have the same competence to improve all teachers and professionals who work with children, regardless of their level of initial training (CHAVES, 2008; 2014), and not as a mechanism to correct gaps in training, as Gatti (2008) states and as it is also conceived by many Education Departments in the country.

We understand that reflecting on and experiencing Teacher Training and Capacity Building actions is fundamental for the unveiling of interests, contradictions and limitations between the discourse and the actions present in the reform and in Brazilian educational policies, as well as the possibilities of Continuous Teacher Training in Early Childhood Education as a development strategy. There is work, such as the research, studies, and training carried out by the Early Childhood Education Study Group (GEEI) over the course of more than fifteen years of existence, that unites research to the field of training, investigation, and pedagogical interventions.

The elaborations and actions of the members of this research group were published and socialized in numerous national and international events, magazines, book chapters, and courses given, which favor the development of teachers, undergraduate students, master's and doctoral students, Secretaries of Education, and pedagogical teams from school institutions.

This represents one more reason for the State to comply with its own legal determinations, as per Art. 61 of LDB 9.394/1996, which establishes the right to in-service training, and Art. 67, the continuous professional development. These articles and their paragraphs deal specifically with education professionals, detailing the participation in inservice training. Developing teachers continuously is essential to the organization of pedagogical work as a strategy for their development and life, as well as for their sense of belonging and perception of how much the actions of these professionals have value in the society in which they live.

Early Childhood Education teachers must be prepared to elaborate pedagogical activities constituted with the defense that training must be sophisticated. In this sense, experiences with Art are essential for teachers to be able to organize teaching with meaning and significance for themselves and for the children.

Continuing Education, developed in school institutions, impacts the teachers' ability to teach, modifies their practice, and develops their students, especially in Early Childhood Education. Just as every worker, who performs a certain function and has been trained to do so, must continue to improve throughout his or her professional life, the teacher also has this need to be met.

Final remarks

In this study, we divulge experiences of Continuous Training of Early Childhood Education Teachers, arguing that this training is essential for the development of both teachers and children. We saw that actions and practices based on the Cultural-Historical Theory of Vigotski and collaborators can contribute in this sense, given the absence of a consistent and effective state educational policy.

In the continuing education courses and events, we observed that, by appropriating the theoretical and methodological assumptions of this theory, the preschool teachers became capable of moving towards the mobilization, intentional and planned, of didactic and pedagogical strategies and resources that stimulate the students' curiosity and maximize their creativity. They are also equipped to select and conduct the exploration of contents rich in specific elements of Arts and Literature, in a collective and collaborative school space, which provides meaningful learning for the full development of all children.

Thus, we can conclude that, if we wish to improve the quality of Brazilian Education, similar experiences can be implemented in other municipal schools, since the successes verified, proven by the learning and development of teachers and children, are an appropriate and effective strategy for the Continuous Training of Early Childhood Education Teachers. It is worth emphasizing that, in this way, we will make it possible for more children to benefit from good teaching, and for teachers to have the desired and deserved improvement, with both advancing in the conquest of their rights.

We believe that this is a possibility to rescue Early Childhood Education, because, if teachers appropriate the knowledge historically developed by humanity, through rich experiences, they will be able to offer their students opportunities for intellectual development while Early Childhood Education is not a priority in the Government's actions and continues to be tied to the interests of capital.

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