

## EDUCATIONAL ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL REGIMES AND EDUCATION EQUITY OF THE CITY OF MAGNITOGORSK DURING 1930s

*ANÁLISE EDUCACIONAL DOS REGIMES ESCOLARES E DA EQUIDADE  
EDUCATIVA DA CIDADE DE MAGNITOGORSK DURANTE A DÉCADA DE 1930*

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EDUCATIVA DE LA CIUDAD DE MAGNITOGORSK DURANTE LA DÉCADA DE  
1930*

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**ABSTRACT:** The article examines the educational analysis of school regimes and education equity of the city of Magnitogorsk during 1930s that was formed in the new industrial center during forced industrialization. At present, the history of school regimes and education equity as a scientific trend is becoming extremely popular in world-historical science. However, research is mainly based on extensive material in the "educational aspect" from chronology and territorial framework. The authors offers a specific example of the emotional community study on local material and believes that the thoughts and feelings of the townspeople sought to unify within the framework of a "new city" development concept and imposed a specific set of normative emotions and official practices on the Magnitogorsk people, as well as the emotions expressing them, which acted as a support for the existing political regime.

**KEYWORDS:** Educational. New city. Industrialization. School regimes. Education equity.

**RESUMO:** *O artigo examina a análise educacional dos regimes escolares e da equidade educacional da cidade de Magnitogorsk durante os anos da década de 1930, que foi formada no novo centro industrial durante a industrialização forçada. Atualmente, a história dos regimes escolares e da equidade educacional como tendência científica está se tornando extremamente popular na ciência histórica mundial. No entanto, a pesquisa é baseada principalmente em extenso material na "vertente educacional" da cronologia e do enquadramento territorial. As autoras oferecem um exemplo específico do estudo da comunidade emocional sobre o material local e acredita que os pensamentos e sentimentos dos habitantes da cidade buscaram se unificar dentro da estrutura de um conceito de desenvolvimento de "nova cidade" e impuseram um conjunto específico de emoções*

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*normativas e práticas oficiais sobre o povo Magnitogorsk, bem como as emoções que os expressam, que serviram de apoio ao regime político existente.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Educação. Cidade nova. Industrialização. Regimes escolares. Equidade educacional.*

**RESUMEN:** *El artículo examina el análisis educativo de los regímenes escolares y la equidad educativa de la ciudad de Magnitogorsk durante la década de 1930 que se formó en el nuevo centro industrial durante la industrialización forzada. En la actualidad, la historia de los regímenes escolares y la equidad educativa como tendencia científica se está volviendo extremadamente popular en la ciencia histórica mundial. Sin embargo, la investigación se basa principalmente en un extenso material en el "aspecto educativo" desde la cronología y el marco territorial. Los autores ofrece un ejemplo específico del estudio de la comunidad emocional sobre material local y cree que los pensamientos y sentimientos de los pobladores buscaron unificarse en el marco de un concepto de desarrollo de la "nueva ciudad" e impusieron un conjunto específico de emociones normativas y prácticas oficiales en el pueblo de Magnitogorsk, así como las emociones que lo expresaban, lo que sirvió de apoyo al régimen político existente.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *Educativo. Ciudad nueva. Industrialización. Regímenes escolares. Equidad educativa.*

## Introduction

### Historiography of the issue

The history of emotions is a trend of interest to a historian, within the framework of social, cultural history, the history of everyday life, etc. The historiography of the history of emotions is presented by both foreign and domestic studies. The problem of studying emotions was first posed by L. Febvre (Feb. L.) in the West. He stated that emotions should be studied by historians using the methods of psychology, and formulated the concept of "ambivalence of feelings". N. Elias was also engaged in the study of emotions, he managed to analyze the epoch of new time development as a process of control increase over emotions. Following them, J. Heizinga and T. Zeldin took up the study of this issue. Independently of L. Febvre and his associates, the representatives of the "psychohistory" P. Gay, P. Lowenberg and L. DeMosa took up the study of emotions. In the 1980s P. Stearns began to study actively the emotional norms and standards of behavior. In general, the history of emotions in the West went through the period of universalism (1940-1980), social constructivism (1980-1995) and their synthesis (SINCE, 1995). In the 2000s the history of emotions is booming in the West. A significant

number of works are published, and conferences are held (REDDY, 2001; 1997; 2000; PLAMPER, 2010).

The attention of Russian historians to the problem of emotion study has been drawn relatively recently. In the context of the “anthropological turn”, more and more often Russian historians are attracted by plots related to the inner world of specific people. Historians involve the sources of personal origin in scientific circulation, among which diaries, memoirs, letters, and oral history materials play a leading role. The result of attention to the “little man” and the variety of forms of his daily life was the formation of the history of emotions as an independent research field. In Russia, this direction of historical science is only making its first steps (ZORIN, 2006; KRASAVSKY, 2008; KELLY, 2010; JOHANNISON, 2011), however, already during the Soviet period, the historians addressed these problems (while no one used the term “history of emotions”). Emotions were studied in line with the problem of "population life and customs". An important scientific event was the International Scientific Conference "Emotions in Russian History and Culture" and the publication of a collection of materials "The Russian Empire of Feelings: Approaches to the Cultural History of Emotions" (PLUMPER; SHAHADAT; ELI, 2010). Within the framework of everyday life history, the history of emotions acts as a sphere that allows emotional filling of the historical context, expansion of the historical vision horizon of the past. In 1985, the American historians P. Stearns and C. Stearns noted the following in the article devoted to the prospects for studying the "emotional standards" of the past: “We can use the history of emotions in order to understand better our own collective past - a fascinating prospect for a society absorbed in the daily measuring of your emotional temperature” (STEARNS, 1985). In this vein, a series of interesting scientific works were created by the historians E. F. Krinko, T. P. Khlynina, I. V. Tazhidinova (KRINKO; KHLYNINA; TAZHIDINOVA, 2011; 2013; KHLYNINA, 2013; KRINKO, 2010; TAZHIDINOVA, 2010), who managed to analyze a wide range of problems that directly or indirectly affect the emotional aspect of the Soviet Union population life during the years of war ... But the previous interwar period became the subject of close attention of historians quite recently. The period of 1920 - 1930 has become the object of attention of a number of historians (MAKAROVA, 2014) in the context of the history of emotions, also within the framework of the research project “Feelings under Control: Everyday Life of a Provincial City during the 1920s – 1930s in the Perspective of the Cultural History of Emotions” (IVANTSOV, 2014; PEROV, 2016; MIKULENOK, 2014; ROZHKOVA, 2014; TAZHIDINOVA, 2016).

## Purpose and source base of the study

The purpose of this article is to analyze the emotional regime formed in the new industrial center, i.e., a set of normative emotions and official practices serving as a support for the existing political regime. The article was based on a variety of historical sources: the materials of office documentation, the sources of personal origin, taken from archives, and from private collections of Magnitogorsk residents. Besides, the author relies on interview materials in which emotions are quite active. Periodicals are an example of the official discourse presented as the norm for the daily life of the city and its inhabitants. Memories play a special role in the development of everyday life history field. The letters from the people of different social and professional groups are of particular importance in the study. This type of ego sources reflects the spectrum of feelings and experiences of a little person most vividly.

## Main part

In the 1930s Magnitogorsk was a mega-site for a socialist experiment conduct in the socio-cultural sphere. This circumstance allows us to ask about the tools and the degree of their success to maintain an "emotional regime" in the 1930s. Besides, the article will focus on those emotions that were recorded in the texts not intended for public reading. This evidence makes it possible to judge the degree of the emotional regime strength, as well as the influence of the media and other methods of propaganda among the population of the city.

Brochures, leaflets, posters, newspapers make it possible to outline the circle of ideal emotions that a Soviet person should experience. Among them they should name patriotism, respect, pride, happiness, joy, love in relation to their homeland, party, city, labor collective, as well as intransigence and even anger towards external and internal enemies. "Light feelings" were replicated in the media, but it was not accepted to talk about "dark feelings" (either in the context of the citizens' struggle for justice). Traditionally, curiosity, obedience, respect, restraint, love, friendship, anger, enthusiasm, patriotism, and fear were among the socially approved emotions in Soviet discourse. But some of the emotions from this list could be among the socially labeled ones in a certain situation. In particular, these include anger, fear, and curiosity. So, curiosity was inherent in children who were striving for new knowledge in a positive way. Inquisitiveness was not good for an adult. On the other hand, an adult authoritative person could manifest righteous anger, but not a child. The fear of not fulfilling a promise or losing a social competition was socially approved, and the fear for the safety of a particular person or his health was assessed as an insignificant emotion in the context of a bright future

development. In Magnitogorsk, fearlessness in labor was promoted: "I worked for eight hours, and the arrow did not fall. They say risk is a noble cause. In order to carry out repairs and save the arrow, I think it was worth the risk" (KOMZIN, 1973, p. 24).

A network of propagandists and recruiters, who agitated to go to the all-Union construction site, promised future builders a huge factory and a comfortable city, housing, work in their specialty, increased supplies, and quite successfully recruited the masses of proletarians and peasants for Magnitostroy. But the very first and memorable impression of the "city" was the steppe: "From the very first days in Magnitogorsk we stayed to live and work in the steppe. According to the qualifications of our work, there was no one [...] we lived in tents" (RUSSIA, [21--]). This situation was no exception, but rather stood for the rule in the city. There was no opportunity for the workers who arrived in the city to find jobs according to their profession, nor to feed them, nor to settle them (sometimes even in a barracks). All of this led to high staff turnover. Not finding their place here, disappointed in the promises, many went back home.

One of the summaries on the mood at Magnitostroy reported: "Poor living conditions and poorly supplied public catering cannot but affect the mood of the workers, especially since a significant part of them consists of the countryside people [...]" (RUSSIA, [21--]). Indeed, the population of the city represented an extremely motley social mass. Among the builders of Magnitogorsk were prisoners, special settlers, the representatives of various social groups and nationalities. The motley ethnic composition of Magnitogorsk residents has been preserved throughout the entire period of the city existence. The age and sex composition of the population of Magnitogorsk was characterized by the predominance of young people. In 1930, wives and children began to come to the workers from villages and cities. Thus, the contingent of minors in the city increased every year. The predominance of workers in the city was a completely natural phenomenon during the period under review. But most of the proletarians belonged to the category of peasants quite recently. There were few hereditary workers in Magnitogorsk. Most of the villagers went to Magnitostroy hoping to find better living conditions. Recent immigrants from the village also dominated among prisoners and special settlers. All this undoubtedly influenced the "emotional regime" in the city. The desire for discipline and unification in the townspeople behavior, the imposition of a shift schedule of work activities, the abandonment of the usual religious norms and the building of a new system of secular values, put forward by official structures at the all-Union and at the city level, were counter to the aspirations of the population for emotional freedom. Large masses of the population gathered on the territory of the city from all over the Soviet Union, without clearly formed social and emotional guidelines, did not succumb almost to the "collectivization of emotions."

The category of "happiness", most often interpreted as a special state of a person, which corresponds to his internal attitudes about being, completeness and meaningfulness of life, the implementation of his human purpose during the formation of authoritarianism was one of the central emotions in the world. They tried to replace real "personal happiness" with "public happiness". Thus, A. Sulimov, a resident of Magnitogorsk, wrote that "a happy fate fell to his lot. Together with wonderful comrades, innovators of production ... we equipped a special tractor plow for soil loosening [...]" (ON THE LINE OF FIRE..., 1975, p. 54). Newspapers reported about happy Soviet childhood, happy motherhood, happiness at work, etc. And the letters from happy mothers (for example, a letter published in the city daily newspaper "Magnitogorsk Worker" on 3 February 1937) literally turned into a special genre during this period. However, happiness still remained quiet, family, and personal in the sources that were not intended to be published. So, in her reasoning about happiness, V. F. Berseneva concludes that happiness is the absence of unhappiness.

The sense of the emotion "enthusiasm" during the era of Stalinism was a specific goal achievement according to M. Rolf and A. von Klimo (PLAMPER, 2010, p. 30). In general, this period can be called the era of enthusiasm, and very often the population of Magnitogorsk was called a "battalion of enthusiasts" during these years (KOMSOMOLKA IN THE RANKS, 1977, p. 37). Judging by the official discourse, enthusiasm accompanied Magnitogorsk residents all the time: at work and rest, at home and at subbotniks, in school and during socialist competitions, etc. The authorities have adopted this positively colored emotion, which is a state of inspiration and a desire to take active actions.

A sense of pride, or rather the emotive "pride", was at the service of official propaganda in Magnitogorsk. In the newspapers of the 1930s, as well as in the memoirs of Magnitogorsk residents published during the Soviet period, "pride" was often used throughout the entire Soviet period. So, in the memoirs of the 1970s - early 1980s pride was still assigned a worthy place among the emotives: "... the residents of Magnitogorsk, the participants and eyewitnesses of everything that happened here during an incredibly short time, show their city with pride ..." (KOMSOMOLKA IN THE RANKS, 1977, p. 38). In the Soviet interpretation, pride is a positively colored emotion that reflects positive self-esteem, the presence of self-esteem and self-worth. That is why "pride" was associated mainly with real deeds in the periodicals: repairing the barracks, participating in a volunteer clean-up, overfulfilling the plan, cleaning the canteen. "The theory of small matters" was a reason for pride throughout the Soviet Union, because specific examples were used to educate and form proper behavior and even necessary emotions among the population. Therefore, the article "Good dining room is the pride of the

Komsomol" (Magnitogorsk Komsomolets, 14 December 1932,) on the pages of a local newspaper sounded like an emotional call for a specific action. Such appeals did not happen unnoticed and "pride" was gaining in scale: "I took part in the construction of most blast furnaces, coke oven batteries ... and I am proud of it!"; "Our Magnitka" was proudly pronounced by those who participated in the construction of the industry giant at the call of the Communist Party. I am one of them [...]" (SMERTIN, 1959, p. 79).

Undoubtedly, the feeling of joy was important from the results of the great and difficult work. The civil engineer of Magnitogorsk I.V. Komzin wrote the following: "The work was pleasing. The work was inspiring. We felt very necessary in the continuous "fever of everyday life"! (KOMZIN, 1973, p. 13). Among all the texts of the memoirs of the first builders available to us, there is not a single one where the thesis about the joyful moment of the blast furnace launch was not voiced: "On 1 of February, thousands of builders gathered at the blast furnace to see the first Magnitogorsk cast iron with their own eyes ... And they started to produce cast iron. The joy of the builders was great!" (SMERTIN, 1959, 79).

In official discourse, "patience" appears most often in a negative context. The category of "patience", included in the list of virtues of Western Christianity, is very characteristic of the Russian person as well. Patience is usually understood as calm endurance of troubles and misfortunes in one's own life or expecting a result from an uncontrollable process. However, during the Soviet period, "patience" migrated from the list of individually experienced emotions to public ones and began to be interpreted as passivity and unwillingness to act in the interests of society. Numerous newspaper articles of the city daily newspaper "Magnitogorsk Worker" and the publications in city circulations "Struggle for Metal", "Miner", "Komsomolskaya Pravda on Magnitostroy" associate patience with the unwillingness of citizens to fight irresponsibility, drunkenness, thefts in canteens, truants and etc. So, in the newspaper "Miner" we can read the following headlines and calls to action "Brigades, why do you tolerate truants in your ranks?", "The citizen Kiseleva still continues to sell wine, but she is still being tolerated in the barracks" (Miner, 13 April 1931).

Soviet discourse portrayed a sense of outrage flatteringly, which was often synonymous with righteous anger. In newspaper articles, you can often read the phrases that "the behavior of pupils causes an emotional reaction - indignation", "The workers laugh ... and more often they are indignant. Their indignation is just" (MARKEVICH. 1930, p. 23.); "A lot of outrageous disgraces" (MARKEVICH, 1930, pp. 29-31). In the Soviet interpretation, indignation was supposed to be one of the tools in the fight against poor-quality work, truancy and other deviations.

A sense of fear has accompanied the townspeople for many years. Poorly lit streets, lack of roads, a significant number of thefts in the city, possible famine, industrial and construction accidents, etc., could be the reason for its occurrence. The memoirs of the installers of Cowper stoves testify to the fact that many workers refused to "get into the cowper, arguing that they have families here, that their life here is worthless [...]" (RUSSIA, [21--]). Many workers mentioned despair, which gave rise to alcoholism, pushed for theft and other crimes (RUSSIA, [21--]). Despite the fact that the Krause-Bersenev's family lived quite well by the standards of the 1930s and in the conditions of Magnitostroy, a significant share of the mother's experiences was associated with the life and health of her household. In each letter V.F. Berseneva worries about the health of her family and friends. Feeling of fear arises in letters often. In the letter dated on 9 March 1933, V.F. Berseneva wrote the following: "Materially, our life is incomparably worse now than before. They feed us worse and the food cost increased... I often think about impending famine and am very afraid of it" (KRAUSE, 2009, p. 54). The feeling of fear was exacerbated in connection with the rumors of an impending war, with border conflicts, and, of course, the call of the eldest son to the recruiting office. V.F. Berseneva, like most mothers, was afraid for her youngest son, who often took part in fights with boys in the yard. But fear in such contexts arose exclusively in private correspondence and unpublished memoirs. The official discourse reported a different fear. So, A. Sulimov wrote about "a terrible moment" in his life (On the line of fire..., 1975. p. 56), when he had to go to the podium with a speech. This type of fear was not encouraged as an emotional state but was interpreted as a person's modesty.

One of the strongest feelings is love (the feeling of a mother's love for her children, relatives, friends, love for the homeland, for work, etc.). The official discourse and memoirs, subject to editorial revision, interpreted love exclusively as a deep attachment of a Soviet person to his work. So, the memoirs by I.V. Komzin, describe an entertaining story about a foreign journalist who did not understand why the workers of Magnitka work so selflessly. The answer of the Soviet engineer was simple: "We loved, no ... we were in love with our work, with our construction site" (KOMZIN, 1973, p. 24-33). Love looked different in ego-sources, not designed for publication and wide reading. Each letter from V.F. Berseneva was accompanied by love and hope for a quick meeting. The longer the separation lasted, the stronger the feelings became. So, B.G. Kozelev, in his first letters from Magnitogorsk, addresses his wife and daughter "Dear, Zinushka", and the content of the letters is factual about appointments, people, and everyday life. However, after three months, the tone of the letters changes significantly. The author addresses his wife and daughter "Zinushka, dear", "My dear daughter", and the



content of the letters demonstrates exclusively the emotional side, experiences, the feelings of melancholy, loneliness and hopes for an early arrival of the family in Magnitogorsk: "Zinushka dear! I sent a telegram and a letter ... I am sad to the point of madness. I can't work [...]" (The Letters from B.G. Kozelev 26/II, 1931).

However, the authorities did not need strong personal emotions. The key task in emotional regime development was the formation of a unified, socially approved complex of emotions that can be directed (restrained or rekindled at the right time). That is why, during the Stalinist era, a model child was the one who knew how to restrain his emotions, "curb his motives" (KELLY, 2010, p. 68). The hopes were pinned on children, they had to live in an ideal "new world". To foster the necessary set of emotions in the younger generation, great attention was paid to the education system. Among the many educational tools, it is worth mentioning a teacher who, by his example, should involve students in proper behavior. A sense of duty, love of work, patriotism, national pride, camaraderie - these are the set of emotives that were instilled in the younger generation. Local mass media regularly published the articles with typical headings: "Shame on the violators of the regime", "Discipline and self-discipline" (Struggle for metal, 5 January 1934, 16 January 1934). These headlines appealed to a wide audience of readers: from schoolchildren to adults, from free laborers to special settlers and prisoners. This range of addressees was not accidental, since discipline was a key tool in shaping the proper emotional regime.

## **Conclusions**

In general, during the "era of moods," thoughts and feelings tried to make them similar, tried to unify. This undoubtedly contributed to the strengthening of the Stalinist regime, the formation of we-identity on the scale of the city, region, and country. Besides, deviation from typical emotional manifestations could be used by the authorities as a marker of public sentiment. Love, delight, fear, anger, happiness - all these emotions were built into the official rhetoric of the authorities. But in this gamut of experiences, a mass of "bright" feelings prevailed more and more, which actually formed a system of values related to emotions and their perception. These values were imposed individually through laws, culture and traditions, i.e. through social norms to which people are obliged to obey, and by which they evaluate their behavior and the behavior of others. Joy and jubilation, pride in the results of labor, emotional unity were present at mass events. However, these constructs were wobbly and often at odds with actual emotional practices. The latter depended on personal experience, physical,

psychological, and gender characteristics. No “emotional community” can be characterized by any homogeneous “landscape of feelings”.

The world of sensory experiences was formed under the influence of numerous circumstances. At Magnitostroy, most often, emotional experiences and statements arose in connection with unsatisfactory social conditions. So, hopelessness and resentment arise in a letter from the worker whose name was not recorded in the source: “Good afternoon, Uncle Fedya! ... We were greeted badly in Magnitogorsk ... Here we have to sit hungry ... we are not given work in our specialty [...] I'll come to Leningrad ... it's hard to get out of here - they won't let me out for anything, but I will come anyway, since it's impossible to live [...] (RUSSIA, [21-]). It is obvious that the key reason for such an emotional state is unsettled life and unfulfilled expectations. The state of human health plays an essential role in the formation of his general emotional state. V.F. Berseneva, suffering from a progressive spinal cord disease, was in a bad mood for months. But as soon as her health improved, there were much more positive emotives in the texts of the letters. The social environment and the circumstances of social mobility undoubtedly influenced the world of human sensory experiences. In the context of a total post-revolutionary breakdown of the former social institutions and the formation of a new model of the society social structure, people's destinies changed dramatically. A number of representatives of the proletariat and peasantry at Magnitostroy went a difficult path from "ordinary guys in bast shoes to skilled workers", were able to get an education, an apartment, the places for their children in a nursery, etc. In former Russia, many of them could not have dreamed of such a thing. Despite the fact that this scenario was largely a myth of Soviet propaganda and the most famous examples of such "human growth" are in textbooks (V. Kalmykov, Kh. Galiullin, N. Korobov), the interviews of many respondents indicate that they received a "start in life" in Magnitogorsk and under Soviet rule (the Memoirs by A.I. Chesnokova; the Memoirs by N.Ya. Mitrokhin).

Any emotion as a representation of feelings at a given historical period and within given territorial boundaries was the culture embodiment of its time and of its country. The efforts of the authorities could not be in vain. The collectivization of emotional states was undoubtedly observed in Magnitogorsk, but it did not become total. Emotions, which are a combination of physical and psychological experiences, although they arose as a reaction to the surrounding reality, but always remained exclusively individual. There is no doubt that the residents of Magnitogorsk felt differently. The complex of sensory experiences largely depended on the social environment, on the circumstances of social mobility caused by revolutionary transformations, on the state of mental and physical health of a particular person, on social

conditions, etc. The increasing control over the life of the country and the city population required discipline in the emotional sphere. However, the utopia of the “new man”, who is ideal both physically and spiritually (including emotionally), was not developed. "Emotional work" was inherent in many residents of Magnitogorsk. It was carried out in several directions: the repetition of narratives corresponding to the official emotional regime and the search for alternatives, for example, in religion. The emotional community of the population of the city of Magnitogorsk was organized much more complicated than the normative "emotional regime" and was characterized by ambivalence of feelings, the presence of adaptive mechanisms and the strategies in the field of emotions. As the result of the intense “ideological influence on the part of the authorities, personal emotions, feelings, experiences gradually changed. Many residents of Magnitogorsk - typical “little people” involved in the maelstrom of significant events, began to perceive the “state” as personal, and “personal” at times turned out to be possible only in the context of conformity to the ideology of the state” (YUZEFOVICH, 2014, p. 280). Gradually, emotive states were ideologized, which contributed to the formation of we-identity and the strengthening of the authoritarian regime.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:** The research was funded by RFBR, project number 21-09-43032.

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### How to reference this article

MAKAROVA, N. N.; BURYAK, E. M.; CHERNOVA, N. V. Educational analysis of school regimes and education equity of the city of Magnitogorsk during 1930s. **Revista on line de Política e Gestão Educacional**, Araraquara, v. 25, n. esp. 7, p. 4099-4112, Dec. 2021. e-ISSN:1519-9029. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22633/rpge.v25iesp.7.16169>

**Submitted:** 13/03/2021

**Required revisions:** 26/07/2021

**Approved:** 28/11/2021

**Publsihed:** 31/12/2021

**Processing and editing: Editora Ibero-Americana de Educação.**  
Correction, formatting, normalization and translation.

