

## 68 - CULTURES OF CHILDHOOD IN CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: A PROPOSAL FOR ACTION RESEARCH.

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### INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL BASIS.

The Childhood Education in Brazil has many advances over the past twenty years and several factors contributed to this, besides the social struggles, we highlight the 1988 Federal Constitution, Status of Child and Adolescent of 1990 and the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education of 1996 (LDB). The expansion of the rights of children to education and Childhood Education who has attained the status of sport in Basic Education were important steps, however, the struggles do not cease and design in improving the quality of care for children. With a view to the paradigm of quality in education, this research is the result of fruitful belief in childhood education and its importance for building up the subject who attend; a position which is shared by a number of theoretical issues, among others, the Historical-Cultural Theory and Sociology of Childhood.

The research team believes that the construction of pedagogical projects for childhood education should be guided by respect for children and their cultures. Given this, the path envisioned by the team is the training context, where there were the challenges of educational practice, contemplating childhood teachers and also university students who need to be through an understanding of concepts of childhood and education visions beyond naturalistic or behaviorists. Therefore, in addition to the training of professionals for this task, it is necessary to know, organize and equip, also the physical spaces in order to be functional. The concept of quality commitment is based on the Document "indicators of quality in Childhood Education, Ministry of Education and Culture - MEC - (BRAZIL, 2009), of which definition of the term depends on many factors: quantity, quality and suitability of materials; multiple languages and diverse experiences; social interactions; mutual respect; food; hygiene; security; space; furnishings; teacher training.

Venguer (1986, p.23-36) points out that the Childhood Education can provide for children with appropriate conditions for their full human development. It explains the author, the child at birth, receives a structure and functions of the organism, such as the inheritance of their predecessors. Behaved, even the human brain, depending on the conditions of life and education, can become the responsible organ for own psychic activity of man. The qualitative development of higher psychological functions depends on the mediation and, in particular the systematic communication and objective conditions offered, providing the means for the child to incorporate the social experience, develop their psychic qualities and personality.

Educational influences, according to Lima (2008), however, can not overload the child and need to be dosed and varied. The prospect of this project, therefore, is to contemplate multiple languages, among others, social interaction, play, recreational expressive activities, and game, considering that these means are indicated by different theoretical trends (Fröebel, Wallon, Bruner, Piaget Vygotsky, Sarmiento) as fundamental to the development of the child.

According to Elkonin (Apud DAVIDOV and SHUARE, 1987), the adult to play the role of mediator in the education of the child needs to know the forces that drive his human development. The multilateral development and complete of the child requires the full use of her capacity in the limit of each period. Knowing the periodization of psychological development, we can organize an educational system able to intervene positively in the succession of different periods. The confluence of the periodization of psychological development and pedagogical periodization enables effective educational activities and intentional. However, we must not forget that the expectations of adults and the space occupied by the child in social relations, will determine different activities in which children are in and which characterize the various periods of development.

During the periods of development, appear different interests and needs that drive the children to carry out certain activities. Among the various activities, some in particular, stand out and are called main activity. According to Leontiev (apud VYGOTSKY et al., 1988, p.122), at each stage of child development, in view of the historical and social determinations, the main activities promote the most important changes in psychological development and personality of the child and within which develop processes that pave the way for the child's transition to a new and higher level of development. In the period from birth until the end of the preschool, Elkonin (apud DAVIDOV and SHUARE, 1987) presents three main types of activities that are: the emotional relationship between child and adult, the activity with the object and play or game roles.

The period extending from birth to entry into school, corresponds to the stage in which form the knowledge, skills and psychological qualities more general and fundamental to life in society, language acquisition, action on objects, perception, thought, memory, imagination, concentration, spatial-temporal orientation, desire domination, socialization and development of motor skills. The intentional action of the adults, in this period, acquires a fundamental importance for the full development of the child, bearing in mind that development is not triggered by internal forces, but the influence of social relations. Therefore, it is essential to rethink the pedagogical periodization in order to achieve a complete psychological development and multilateral of children, that takes into account the living conditions and education in which children are inserted, the general characteristics of development times and the individual characteristics of development inherent of childhood and every child.

When we think about childhood and children's education, studies and researches the Sociology of Childhood (SARMENTO, 2004) also show children as social actors belonging to a social group who have identity and culture not completely reduced to the cultures of adults. This relative autonomy of children against adults is the fundamental question that guides the study of cultures of childhood. To Sarmiento (2004, p. 21), the cultural forms of child sign up and develop in specific ways for children to relate to cultural production, with adults and with peers. Alert the author, that this assumption does not ignore the psychological and cognitive dimensions of children. The cultures of childhood, therefore, express the way of being of the child in the historical context in which she is inserted, however, they differ from adult cultures, because they print their own forms of understanding and representation of the world. The author concludes that the four axes that distinguish the cultures of childhood: interactivity, playfulness, fantasy of the real and repetition form in a scientific challenge to teachers and researchers of Childhood Education.

The pedagogical work, therefore, the institutions of Childhood Education can not be restricted only to orality, writing and mathematical concepts, despite the undeniable importance of these areas, are not, however, the only forms of knowledge, understanding, interpretation and production of knowledge. The child from birth is surrounded by verbal and nonverbal

languages: oral language, written, graphic, tactile, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, artistic, motor and that can be perceived by different senses. Through these languages, we look, act and become aware of ourselves and the surrounding reality.

### OBJECTIVES

The project establishes as main objectives assist in improving the quality of education of children; perform intervention processes, aiming at professional teachers training teachers and employees involved, promoting an interdisciplinary research, produce didactic teaching materials, supporting educational practices of teachers of Childhood Education guided by the theoretical and methodological approach.

Another important objective is the deepen theoretical that allows to expand the domain of Historical Cultural Theory and Sociology of Childhood as main theoretical references that guide the actions and purposes of the Project. The theoretical references cited subsidizes seminars and collective discussions of the main concepts that guide the educational practice, involving the project team. The readings and observations, in turn, allow the group to understand the play, the game, fantasy, recreational expressive activities, movement, social interactions such as axes of the cultures of childhood and privileged contents and essential for learning and development of human capabilities of children. Everything is being possible thanks to active participation in the institutions and to the collective work and process of initial and ongoing training, that aim the dominion of knowledge by the Coordinators, students at UNESP and teachers of childhood in the themes worked.

### METHODOLOGY

The research is qualitative and the guiding methodology is action research. For Barbier (2002), this type of research leads the researcher:

[...] to recognize his fundamental part in affective and imaginary life of each one in society. He discovers all the mythic and poetic reflections, as well as the sense of the sacred often disguised in activities more banal and daily. To lend meaning to the forms of sociality and found to share and discuss them [...] (BARBIER, 2004, p. 15)

This understanding of the methodology drives us to make use of action research with on-site monitoring of the daily experiences of the subjects; it allows (re) cognize the subjects and build possible working partnerships; having as proceeding the collective action and the observation. Dezin (apud LÜDKE, 1986) describes the performance of a participant observer as that one who combines interview, questionnaire and direct participation. The author understands that the commitments of the observer are:

[...] The "observer as participant" is a paper in which the identity of the researcher and the objectives of the study are revealed by the research group since the beginning. In this position, the researcher can have access to a wide range of information, even confidential, asking for cooperation to the group. However, you generally will have to accept the control group about what will or will not become public by the research. (LÜDKE et al, 1986, p. 29).

With this perspective and according Barbier (2004), the aim is to compromise all concerned in order to involve the majority, in all dimensions: in the definition of the problem, possible alternatives, in the questions and study activities, in the methodology and collective participation and solidarity in interventions. Beyond clarification meetings and search for a contract to carry out the collective research, visits were made in municipal schools. From there were collected the first assessments of the space and its functionality. Concomitant to this, we initiated discussions with teachers, in the seminars, for adherence to the project, discussion of concepts and questionnaires' application.

The recorded diagnosis was developed by the group of researchers, scholarship students, employees and by the professionals of each institution. As a result of these "collections" of information, we set up files with digital images, photos and database comprising tabs of the questionnaires answered by the professionals.

Periodically all involved in research, are for discussion and theoretical study in this activity, the texts are predetermined in advance by the group and they are intended to expand the concepts of childhood, education and learning and support the educational practices, of both professional education as scholarship students and colleagues involved in the project.

### CLOSING REMARKS

According to MEC Document: "Indicators of quality in Childhood Education" are five structural aspects of the diagnosis about the quality (BRAZIL, 2009). The first point takes as presupposed the basic human rights to men and the second the importance of considering and valuing differences in gender, ethnicity, religion, culture, and inclusion of people with deficiency; the third the fundamentation of conception of quality in education in broader social values; the fourth point discusses the goals of education and organization form of the education system, regulating this policy at the federal ambit, state and municipal; and finally meet and consider the scientific knowledge about child development, the culture of childhood, the ways to care for and educate young child in collective environments and training of professional of Childhood Education. In addition to that, the document provides other quality indicators, warning that they do not allow comparison between institutions and also the need to consider the real and concrete dimensions of the institution. The diagnosis made by the multiprofessional team is in the basis of the ideas of this MEC document, especially the first, third and fifth point, even though it has been published after the beginning of the project.

Among the instruments used in the research visits were possible in all institutions to diagnose; literature, questionnaires application and tabulation of data and initiate the activities of continued education.

The tabulation of the questionnaires answered by twenty-five professionals, of the city partner, named as their greatest difficulties: inadequate space (27,91%) and secondly the lack of materials (23,26%).

Educators to be asked about "what do you mean by childhood?" - responded as follows: "childhood is a time for play" and also "moment of learning for adult life", with both categories (29,79%) compared to the amount of subject respondents. As regards the role of Childhood Education it is understood as the develop capabilities, skills, language (19,51%) and learning enjoyable (19,51%). The answers to the question: "the amount of hours playing with their children", explained that (36%) of the subjects play between 56 and 69 minutes on average per day. In this issue, it is important to consider that most children do not stay full time in the institution.

Faced with what has been accomplished so far, we emphasize that the investigation is in progress, considering the methodology used. However, we have science that, despite the complexity of the project, it becomes a very promising way to advance in quality of education offered to children and to seek a closer relationship between the theoretical advances on the subject and educational practice. In addition to data and knowledge related to the theme, the research is committed to cooperate in the simultaneous processing of reality studied. Other experiences, experienced by team members, demonstrate the great

challenge of trying to change history and crystallized conceptions that guide the educational practice of teachers and institutions of Childhood Education in the Brazilian reality, however, can not fail to insist and find ways to collaborate improving the process of educating children.

Work in partnership, involving universities and institutions of Basic Education are quite complex, because they are surrounded by expectations, values and ideologies of various kinds. In referring to expectations, students who make up the team of the university, are more willing and immediacy, the teachers, however, are less anxious and process information more slowly and gradually. These differences require tolerance and recognition of levels of representation and commitment of each one to the project and their themes. We must, in this context, that, mainly the coordinators analyze the various situations and seek to emphasize the importance of the link, patience and the differences that distinguish the two groups. These conflicts and adjustments were made explicit and worked in seminars and meetings for planning and evaluation.

As for values, it is noticed certain disagreement as to the conduction of the playful situations; the scholarships, because of the age, are part of a generation that is closer to the children, so they are more open, spontaneous, less tied to the accuracy of standards; the teachers, in turn, are more regulators and more stringent in the conduct of children. As the activities are carried out in partnership, the positions are highlighted, discussed and both gain with the process. Some teachers point out that by having the opportunity to observe what happens and to understand the characteristics of the playful activity, took a position less demanding and rigorous as the attitudes of children.

In turn, the students learn that the educational practice, while admiring the playful, in the school context, must consider aspects related to the school organization, that is, the existence of time, space, activities, materials that are shared by all and so each class should consider and respect the other in their needs. Interpersonal relationships, on the other hand, they need investment and supports so that they can reduce the levels of tension, anxiety and conflicts.

Issues relating to work in partnership with the university team with the school team, however, are in the process of solution, only the time, the continuity of work, the extension of the theoretical and enriching the experiences, they can improve the project and advance the results. The methodology itself of action research points in this direction, because, according to Barbier (2004), certain degree of consensus that refer to conceptions is essential to the achievement of results.

The complexity of the formal education context requires that the subjects have common projects, supported by converging paradigms. This goal is necessary so that expend energy and agglutinate efforts, in order to achieve the objectives assumed with the social context in which they are inserted, which, briefly, it will reflect in improving the quality of education for children.

By the assumptions highlighted, we found that observe and understand the needs of children requires from those involved a solid understanding of childhood, of the child and the process of teaching-learning. The formation process is an ongoing learning that goes beyond the (re) construction of looks and conceptions. We must learn from each children, with each class and each researcher involved, in a process of dialogue that depicts conducts, conceptions and behaviors differentiated and heterogeneous. Despite the complexity of this context, common grounds were reached, that means, it was concluded about the need to consider in the process of forming children the axes of cultures of childhood, that is, the reiteration, the playfulness, fantasy of the real and interactivity. The observations and systematic records of the activities developed at the partner institutions allowed this assumption.

The achievement of playful activities, supported by plots of children's books, allowed to work on games construction, playing with circuits, role-playing games, cooperation and these in turn contemplated and exercised various functions, especially, the imagination, the symbolic capacity, thought, memory and social interaction.

One of these educational practices was conducted with the book "Nita's birthday", written by Lieve Baeten, from Publisher Brinque-Book, which made it possible to develop several languages. Through the words of children, we observed that the imagination flowed strongly during the activity of both reading and construction. Children could dress up as chefs, with bonnets and aprons, sanitize their hands as if they were actually cooking and they prepared the delicacies of a party (cheese cake, chocolate cake, chocolate truffle, candies, donuts, pizza, pastry) and also they built little presents (collars for Téo not to escape anymore, snakes, small plate) all to celebrate the return of the cat. The entire production was performed with mass of flour color (orange, green, red and blue).

The flour used to prepare the mass turned to magic dust and other ones played with the couple as if they did witchcrafts. There were surprises and enchantment when the mass was dyed and at this time the children were able to relate the color of their favorite characters (Sherek), or even to observe it in the air, still dry, reflecting the sun's rays before focusing on the table. Other children, to ascertain the water with orange dye used to color the clay, associated it with the magic potion orange flavor that "Nita" had bought for her pet kitten. The symbolic capacity was explored extensively in this activity, but that was not all, because the children expressed and shared their fears and tensions.

- There is snake around her neck, she will be hanged! Alan said, in tones of crying, as he watched the witch of the book with a snake around her neck.

- Open the present. - Said one of the children, to the character, as if "Nita" was in from of her while she received the gifts from the witches.

- The dog caught him. - Another child answered back referring to the cat that had disappeared. This young boy, at that time, made inference to a dog that did not exist in history, that is, he brought a new element to the plot.

The mass magic generating content as texture, color, smell, taste, analyzed and categorized; it was perceived and conceived in a significant and active process in which all children who were there, tried and experienced the process; they built knowledge and manipulated with their hands and minds something they seemed distant. From what was reported, not knowing what the child brings to the playful world and how much that space is rich for multilateral development of the child is an attitude that can no longer conceive in educational institutions and educational practices of childhood teachers, considering the damage that this option may result, in the formation and development of the child.

According to Lima (2005), it is a mistake from educators who believe that the inclusion of playful activity, in the educational environment, dispenses study, training and research. The degree of complexity required by the use of this type of activity, as a pedagogical resource, requires an initial formation and continuing strong on the subject. The play, in the Theory and Cultural History perspective and Sociology of Childhood, becomes a space of synthesis of knowledges and information, interpersonal relations, *exercitação* imagination, imitation of social roles, acquisition and expansion of skills, incorporation and (re) elaboration of feelings and values, autonomous and creative experience. We end, therefore, claiming that to keep the flame of play or game, the school trajectory of the child, is to ensure the permanence of the imagination in adult life or supported in Drummond, we would say it is to preserve the poets that emerge from the children and that, unfortunately, time is responsible for placating. However, it is a daring political choice to ensure that candid expression, which appears in childhood, remains even with critical thinking and consciousness with that the experience of life contemplate us. (Carlos Drummond de Andrade, apud

MACHADO, 1998, p.52-53).

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#### CULTURES OF CHILDHOOD IN CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: A PROPOSAL FOR ACTION RESEARCH.

##### RESUME

Professional educators have made efforts to analyze and collaborate on improving the quality of Childhood Education in the Brazilian reality. This research project, funded by the Nucleus Program for Teaching of UNESP, also assumes on this goal of progress in quality of Childhood Education and it is resultant of a partnership between the FCT / UNESP of Presidente Prudente and the Secretary of Education of the City of Alvares Machado, SP. It is supported by the Historic Cultural Theory and the Sociology of Childhood, because these two theoretical perspectives conceive the childhood with features and own identities and the children as interpretative and creative subjects, which the right to education it is directly related to participation, communication and the search for sense. Children to advance their development need educational proposals that address their interests and needs, focus on playful activities, fantasy and social interaction. However, it turns out in reality is that educational practices do not consider these assumptions and the child ends up suffering the consequences of this discrepancy between theory and practice. Because of this complex task of transformation of reality, the methodology that guides the research is action research. So far, diagnoses have been made about conceptions of education, childhood, child who guides the practices of teachers; beyond the recognition of the physical and material structure. It is ongoing the process of training of the participants in bi-weekly seminars; aimed at seeking a consensus level of conceptual and procedural enabling partnership and commitment to research. This perspective, we seek to involve teachers, in all dimensions: in defining the problems and needs, questions, study activities and methodology of the project. Once a week the participants, both from the university and partner institutions, carry out joint operations with the children, trying to achieve the objectives of the investigation.

**KEYWORDS:** Childhood. Education. Training.

#### CULTURES DE L'ENFANCE EN ÉDUCATION À L'ENFANCE: UNE PROPOSITION DE RECHERCHE-ACTION

##### RÉSUMÉ

Les éducateurs professionnels ont fait des efforts pour analyser et de collaborer à l'amélioration de la qualité de l'éducation de la petite enfance au Brésil. Ce projet de recherche, dont le thème est les cultures de l'enfance, suppose également CET objectif d'améliorer la qualité de l'éducation de la petite enfance et est le résultat d'un partenariat entre le Centre d'enseignement FCT / UNESP et Le departement de l'Education et la Culture de Álvares Machado , SP. Elle cherche appui a oa theorie historique-sociale et à la sociologie de l'enfance, puis, ces deux perspectives théoriques concevoient les enfants avec des caractéristiques et des identités et des enfants comme des sujets interprétatives et créatrices, le droit à l'éducation est directement liée à la participation, la communication et la recherche de sens. Les Enfants, pour avancer avec leur développement, ont besoin de propositions éducatives qui répondent à leurs intérêts et leurs besoins, se concentrer sur les activités ludiques, l'imagination et l'interaction sociale. Toutefois, il s'avère que la réalité est que les pratiques éducatives ne tiennent pas compte de ces hypothèses et l'enfant finit par subir les conséquences de ce décalage entre la théorie et la pratique. En raison de cette tâche complexe de transformation de la réalité, la méthodologie qui guide la recherche est une recherche-action. À ce jour, il y a des diagnostics sur des conceptions de l'éducation, l'enfance, les enfants que les pratiques de guider les enseignants, au-delà de la reconnaissance de la structure physique et matérielle. Ce processus en cours de formation pour les participants, des séminaires hebdomadaires, visant à rechercher un niveau de consensus des concepts et procédures permettant un partenariat et d'engagement envers la recherche. Dans cette perspective, nous cherchons à impliquer les enseignants dans toutes les dimensions: dans la définition des problèmes et des besoins, des questions, activités pour les élèves et la méthodologie du projet. Une fois par semaine, les participants, l'université et les institutions partenaires, menent des opérations conjointes avec les enfants, en essayant d'atteindre les objectifs de l'enquête.

**MOTS-CLÉS:** culture, infance, education

#### LAS CULTURAS DE LA INFANCIA EN LA EDUCACIÓN INFANTIL: UNA PROPUESTA DE INVESTIGACIÓN-

ACCIÓN.

##### RESUMEN

Los educadores profesionales han hecho esfuerzos para analizar y colaborar en la mejora de la calidad de la educación de la primera infancia en Brasil. Este proyecto de pesquisa, cuyo tema es las Culturas de la infancia, también supone que el objetivo de mejorar la calidad de la educación inicial y es el resultado de la colaboración entre el Centro de Enseñanza FCT / UNESP y el Departamento de Educación y Cultura de Álvares Machado , SP. Busca apoyo a la teoría histórico-cultural y Sociología de la Infancia, pues estas dos perspectivas teóricas conciben La infancia con características e identidades propias y los niños como sujetos interpretativos y creativos, el derecho a la educación está directamente relacionada con la participación, la comunicación y la búsqueda de sentido. Los niños para avanzar con su desarrollo necesitan de propuestas educativas que

respondan a sus intereses y necesidades, se centran en actividades lúdicas, la imaginación y la interacción social. Sin embargo, resulta que la realidad es que las prácticas educativas hacen caso omiso de estos supuestos y el niño termina sufriendo las consecuencias de esta discrepancia entre la teoría y la práctica. Debido a esta compleja tarea de transformación de la realidad, la metodología que guía la investigación es la investigación-acción. Hasta la fecha, ya hay diagnósticos sobre las concepciones de la educación, la infancia, los niños que orientan las prácticas de los profesores, más allá del reconocimiento de la estructura física y material. Hay un proceso continuo de formación de los participantes-seminarios bi-semanales, dirigidas a la búsqueda de un nivel de consenso conceptual y de procedimiento que permitan la colaboración y compromiso con la investigación. En esta perspectiva, se busca la participación de maestros en todas las dimensiones en la definición de los problemas y necesidades, preguntas, actividades de los estudiantes y la metodología del proyecto. Una vez a la semana a los participantes, tanto de la universidad y las instituciones asociadas, llevan a cabo operaciones conjuntas con los niños, tratando de alcanzar los objetivos de la investigación.

**PALABRAS CLAVES:** Cultura, Infancia, Educación.

#### **AS CULTURAS DA INFÂNCIA NA EDUCAÇÃO INFANTIL: UMA PROPOSTA DE PESQUISA-AÇÃO.**

##### **RESUMO**

Profissionais de educação têm despendido esforços para analisar e colaborar na melhoria da qualidade da Educação Infantil na realidade brasileira. Este projeto de pesquisa, financiado pelo Programa do Núcleo de Ensino da UNESP, assume também essa meta de avanço na qualidade da Educação Infantil e é resultante de uma parceria entre a FCT/UNESP de Presidente Prudente e a Secretaria de Educação do Município de Álvares Machado, SP. Tem como suporte a Teoria Histórico Cultural e a Sociologia da Infância, pois essas duas correntes teóricas concebem a infância com características e identidades próprias e as crianças como sujeitos interpretativos e criativos, cujo direito à educação está diretamente relacionado à participação, à comunicação e à busca de sentido. As crianças para avançar no seu desenvolvimento necessitam de propostas educativas que contemplem os seus interesses e necessidades, destaque para as atividades lúdicas, fantasia e interação social. Todavia, o que se constata na realidade é que práticas educativas não consideram esses pressupostos e a criança acaba sofrendo as conseqüências dessa discrepância entre teoria e prática. Em função dessa complexa tarefa de transformação da realidade, a metodologia que orienta a investigação é a pesquisa-ação. Até o presente momento, já foram realizados diagnósticos sobre concepções de educação, infância, criança que orientam as práticas dos professores; além do reconhecimento da estrutura física e material. Está em andamento o processo de formação dos participantes em seminários quinzenais; visando à busca de um nível de consenso conceitual e procedimental que possibilite parceria e comprometimento com a investigação. Nesta perspectiva, busca-se envolver os professores, em todas as dimensões: na definição da problemática e das necessidades, nos questionamentos, atividades de estudo e metodologia do projeto. Uma vez por semana os participantes, tanto da universidade como das instituições parceiras, realizam intervenções conjuntas junto às crianças, buscando concretizar os objetivos da investigação.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Infância, Educação, Formação.

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