

International Journal of Human Sciences Research

Acceptance date: 16/01/2025

PUBLIC POLICIES AND EXPERIENCES IN SPE- CIALIZED EDUCATIO- NAL CARE BASED ON THE BILINGUAL APPRO- ACH FOR STUDENTS WITH DEAFBLINDNESS AND THEIR FAMILIES IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF RIO DAS OSTRAS/RJ

Flávia Regina França Pascoal de Oliveira
PhD in Educational Sciences from the UDS/Paraguay; Master's in Educational Sciences from the UDS/Paraguay; Master's student in Bilingual Education (DESU/INES/RJ); Postgraduate in Libras (DOM ALBERTO/2022), Public Management (UFF/2016), Inclusive Education (UCB/2007) and Psychopedagogy (UCAM/2003); Degree in Letras- Libras (IBRA/2023), Law (CNEC/2019) and Pedagogy (FAFIMA/1997). She has worked as a PMRO/1998, PMCF/2003 and CECIERJ/CEDERJ/UFRRJ Scholarship Tutor

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Abstract: This work contributes to pedagogical practice and the changes that have occurred throughout the historical process in relation to Public Policies aimed at people with disabilities. The general objective is to reflect on Specialized Educational Assistance as a Public Policy in the area of Special Education, based on the keywords: Public Policies; Specialized Educational Assistance; Bilingual Education; Visual Pedagogy; Brazilian Sign Language. Bibliographic research and action research were used in the studies. Throughout the work, it is proposed to understand the Historical Process and Public Policies of Special Education based on reality; to share the experiences of deaf people and their families; and to identify the contributions of new Technologies (ICTs). The final considerations include the significant pedagogical work done for deaf students in Specialized Educational Assistance (AEE) and their families, as well as the possibility of further research into public policies.

Keywords: Public Policies; Specialized Educational Assistance; Bilingual Education; Visual Pedagogy; Brazilian Sign Language.

INTRODUCTION

Public policies for people with disabilities, especially since 1994, with the Salamanca Declaration, propose new reflections on teaching practice and there is a need for a new look as a teacher.

In this context, this work presents contributions to pedagogical practice based on Bibliographical Research and Action Research. The general objective is to reflect on Specialized Educational Care as a Public Policy in the area of Special Education, based on the keywords: Public Policies; Specialized Educational Care; Bilingual Education; Visual Pedagogy; Brazilian Sign Language.

Throughout the work, the aim is to understand the historical process and public policies of special education based on reality; to share

the experiences of deaf people and their families; and to identify the contributions of new technologies (ICTs).

The final considerations include the significant pedagogical work focused on the current Public Policy in Specialized Educational Assistance (AEE) carried out in the Bilingual Education approach with deaf students and their families, as well as the possibility of further research.

METHODOLOGY

The studies presented here are based on bibliographical research and action research. Initially, there was research into current legal frameworks in relation to public policies and the work carried out in Specialized Educational Care.

The work presents Bibliographical Research, based on studies on the subject found in Gadotti (2013; 2014), Quadros (2000), Campello (2008), Lebedeff (2012), Cruz and Prado (2020), as already mentioned. According to Alyrio (2009):

The basic activity in bibliographical research is the investigation of theoretical material on the subject of interest. It precedes the recognition of the problem or question that will act as the delimiter of the subject of study. This means that even before delimiting the object of study, you can and should read up on the subject, which can even help you in this delimitation. (ALYRIO, 2009)

In this context, authors were chosen to help delimit the topic in question.

Following the Salamanca Declaration in 1994, Brazil introduced a document that has the *status of* a Federal Constitution, where the proposal is based on defining Public Policies based on Specialized Educational Assistance (AEE) for people with disabilities. Among the various disabilities, the author, who is a teacher in the area of Special Education / Hearing Impairment, works with students with deafness in the Municipal Education Network

and the proposal here demonstrates experiences of Bilingual Education with students and their families, where they demonstrated the need to learn the Brazilian Sign Language - Libras. These experiences are supported by action research, since there was cooperation from those involved, and planning, records and videos were made available with the participation of the author through the use of new technologies (ICTs).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The relationship between theory and practice is closely linked when it comes to Action Research, where the author shares the results of the Public Policies implemented around a dozen years ago in the Municipality of Rio das Ostras/RJ and the work carried out in Specialized Educational Care. In this context, it is necessary to understand the legal framework, starting with the historical process from the Salamanca Declaration in 1994, where Brazil was a signatory to the World Conference on Special Education:

1. We, the delegates of the World Conference on Special Needs Education, representing 88 governments and 25 international organizations assembled here in Salamanca, Spain, June 7-10, 1994, reaffirm our commitment to Education for All, recognizing the necessity and urgency of providing education for children, youth and adults with special educational needs within the regular education system, and re-endorse the Framework for Action in Special Needs Education, in the spirit of whose provisions and recommendations governments and organizations are guided.

2. We believe and proclaim that:

- Every child has a fundamental right to education and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an adequate level of learning,
- Every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs,

- Educational systems should be designed and educational programs implemented to take into account the vast diversity of such characteristics and needs,

- Those with special educational needs should have access to mainstream schools, which should accommodate them within a child-centered pedagogy capable of meeting those needs,

- Regular schools with such an inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover, such schools provide an effective education for the majority of children and improve the efficiency and, ultimately, the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system.

3. We bring all the governments together and demand that they do so:

- Give the highest political and financial priority to improving their education systems so that they are able to include all children, regardless of their individual differences or difficulties. (BRAZIL, 1994)

It is important to understand the concepts of “integration” and “inclusion” proposed in official documents, as they make it clearer that current public policies reinforce access and permanence for all children in mainstream schools. Sassaki (1999) collaborates with the respective concepts: “integration means insertion of the disabled person prepared to live in society and inclusion means modification of society as a prerequisite for the person with special needs to seek their development and exercise citizenship.”

It is necessary to understand the historical process and, according to Brasil (1994), the idea is that countries with special schools would be “advised” to concentrate their efforts on developing inclusive schools and specialized services: “Educational planning on the part of governments, therefore, should be concentrated on education for all people, in

all regions of the country and in all economic conditions, through public and private schools.” Schools should therefore invest in special education teachers with resources to support children and young people.

Studies show that in Brazil, care for people with disabilities began during Empire and two institutions in Rio de Janeiro stood out: the Imperial Institute for Blind Boys (1854) and the Institute for Deaf Mutes (1857), currently the Benjamin Constant Institute (IBC) and the National Institute for the Education of the Deaf (INES), respectively, with Special Education taking place as Specialized Educational Care in substitute teaching for regular teaching in pedagogical practices.

Another important legal milestone is Article 208 of the Federal Constitution, which states that Specialized Educational Assistance should preferably be provided in the regular school system and, in 2001, the National Guidelines for Special Education in Basic Education point to the provision of Specialized Educational Assistance that complements or supplements schooling, enabling the policy of inclusive education in the Public School System (BRASIL, 2001).

Brasil (2007) provides guidance on Specialized Educational Assistance (AEE), where it advocates Special Education as a teaching modality that goes through all levels, stages and modalities, with resources and services in regular education for students with disabilities for quality education.

Brazil (2008) set out the Guidelines for Specialized Educational Assistance as a Public Policy and the target audience for Specialized Educational Assistance: students with disabilities, global development disorders and high abilities to receive priority assistance in the Multifunctional Resource Room in the shift opposite to the school day, in the school itself, in pole schools or in a Specialized Educational Assistance Centre, in accordance with current

legislation and with the work of teachers with initial or continuing training in the area of Special Education. Among the AEE teacher’s duties are “monitoring the functionality and applicability of pedagogical and accessibility resources in the regular classroom, as well as in other school environments”, as well as “establishing partnerships with intersectoral areas in the development of strategies and the provision of accessibility resources” and guiding teachers and families on the Individualized Care Plan with regard to the pedagogical and accessibility resources used by the students and “promoting activities and spaces for family participation and the interface with the sectoral services of health, social assistance, among others.”

Brazil (2015) brings the Statute of Persons with Disabilities, which deals with the importance of eliminating “barriers”, which are “any obstacle” that prevents the “rights to accessibility, freedom of movement and expression, communication, access to information and understanding”;

(...) a) communication and information barriers: any obstacle, attitude or behavior that makes it difficult or impossible to express or receive messages and information communication and information technology systems; (...)

V - communication: a form of interaction between citizens that includes, among other options, languages, including the Brazilian Sign Language (Libras), the visualization of texts, Braille, signage or tactile communication systems, enlarged characters, multimedia devices, as well as simple, written and oral language, hearing systems and digitalized voice media and augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, including information and communications technologies. (BRASIL, 2015)

Still in Brazil (2015), other highly relevant topics are addressed, such as “accessibility”: the “possibility and condition of being able to use, safely and autonomously, spaces, furni-

ture, equipment, transportation, information and communication, including their systems and technologies” and such terminology is indispensable for our pedagogical practice, being the right to citizenship and social participation. Article 28 talks about the responsibility of public authorities:

Art. 28: The public authorities are responsible for ensuring, creating, developing, implementing, encouraging, monitoring and evaluating:

I - an inclusive education system at all levels and modalities, as well as lifelong learning;

II - improving educational systems, with a view to guaranteeing conditions of access, permanence, participation and learning, by offering accessibility services and resources that eliminate barriers and promote full inclusion;

III - a pedagogical project that institutionalizes specialized educational care, as well as other services and reasonable adaptations, to meet the characteristics of students with disabilities and guarantee their full access to the curriculum on equal terms, promoting the achievement and exercise of their autonomy;

IV - offering Bilingual Education, in Libras as a first language and in the written modality of the Portuguese language as a second language, in bilingual schools and classes and in inclusive schools;

(...)

VII - planning a case study, drawing up a specialized educational care plan, organizing accessibility resources and services, and making assistive technology resources available and usable for teaching ;

VIII - participation of students with disabilities and their families in the school community's various activities;

IX - adoption of support measures that favor the development of linguistic, cultural, vocational and professional aspects, taking into account the talent, creativity, abilities and interests of students with disabilities;

X - adoption of inclusive pedagogical practices by initial and continuing teacher training programs and the provision of continuing training for specialized educational care;

XI - training and provision of teachers for specialized educational assistance, translators and interpreters of Libras, interpreter guides and support professionals;

XII - offering the teaching of Libras, the Braille System and the use of assistive technology resources, in order to expand students' functional skills, promoting their autonomy and participation; (...) (BRASIL, 2015)

Among the principles that guide current legislation, “access and permanence in school” and “democratic management” stand out for this work, where it becomes feasible to carry out pedagogical practices in Specialized Educational Care, respecting the peculiarities of people with disabilities.

We can see that, throughout this journey towards public policies for Special Education and their consequences for Specialized Educational Assistance, there have been many achievements. It's important to note that, during this period, deaf people fought for INES and other institutions focused on Bilingual Education to keep their doors open, with respect for accessibility issues in communication. If, on the one hand, Specialized Educational Assistance became a policy for the realization of the rights of the deaf, on the other hand there was a need to respect Libras as a mother tongue, and the realization of this right came in Brazil (2021) with the proposal for Bilingual Education for the Deaf as a teaching modality, where Law no 14.191/2021 amends Law no 9.394/1996:

Art. 60-A Bilingual education for the deaf, for the purposes of this Law, is understood to be the type of school education offered in Brazilian Sign Language (Libras), as a first language, and in written Portuguese, as a second language, in bilingual schools for the deaf, bilingual classes for the deaf, common schools or bilingual deaf education centers, for deaf, deaf-blind, hearing-impaired, sig-

naling deaf, deaf with high abilities or giftedness or with other associated disabilities, opting for bilingual deaf education.

§ Paragraph 1 There will be, when necessary, specialized educational support services, such as bilingual specialized educational care, to meet the linguistic specificities of deaf students.

§ Paragraph 2 The provision of bilingual education for the deaf will begin at the age of zero, in early childhood education, and will extend throughout life.

§ Paragraph 3 The provisions of the **caput** of this article shall be implemented without prejudice to the prerogatives of enrolment in regular schools and classes, in accordance with the student or, where applicable, their parents or guardians decide, and the guarantees provided for in Law No. 13.146, of July 6, 2015 (Statute of Persons with Disabilities), which include access to assistive technologies for the deaf.

Art. 60-B In addition to the provisions of art. 59 of this Law, education systems shall ensure that deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing, deaf with high abilities or giftedness or with other associated disabilities are provided with teaching materials and bilingual teachers with appropriate training and specialization at a higher level.

Sole paragraph. In the processes of hiring and periodically evaluating the teachers referred to in the **heading** of this article, entities representing deaf people will be heard. (BRASIL, 2021)

Among the important points of Article 60-A, which conceptualizes Bilingual Education for the Deaf as a type of School Education prioritizing the mother tongue of the deaf, which is Libras, in the oral modality, we highlight paragraph 3 of that article, which deals with the permanence of assistance to the linguistic specificities of deaf students through Specialized Educational Assistance in the Bilingual Education approach.

Brazil (2021), in its Article 78-A, reinforces the development of integrated teaching and research programs in Bilingual School Education, as well as technical and financial support for Education Systems:

Art. 78-A Education systems, in collaboration, will develop integrated teaching and research programs to offer bilingual and intercultural school education to students who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing, deaf with high abilities or giftedness or with other associated disabilities, with the following objectives:

I - provide deaf people with the opportunity to recover their historical memories, reaffirm their identities and specificities and value their language and culture;

II - guaranteeing deaf people access to technical and scientific information and knowledge from national society and other deaf and non-deaf societies. Art. 79-C The Federal Government shall provide technical and financial support to education systems in the provision of bilingual and intercultural education for deaf communities, with the development of integrated teaching and research programs.

§ Paragraph 1 The programs will be planned with the participation of deaf communities, higher education institutions and entities representing deaf people.

§ Paragraph 2 The programs referred to in this article, included in the National Education Plan, will have the following objectives:

I - to strengthen the socio-cultural practices of deaf people and the Brazilian Sign Language;

II - maintain specialized staff training programs for the bilingual education of deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing, deaf with high abilities or giftedness or with other associated disabilities;

III - develop specific curricula, methods, training and programs, including the cultural content corresponding to deaf people;

IV - systematically develop and publish specific and differentiated bilingual teaching materials (BRASIL, 2021).

The objectives include strengthening the sociocultural practices of deaf people and the importance of respecting the Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) as the deaf person's first language.

In this context, the work shows the pedagogical practices carried out in Specialized Educational Care with deaf students from the Municipal Education Network of Rio das Ostras/RJ, in partnership with their families during Specialized Educational Care.

Some points guide this work: concepts such as the ideas of Public Policies, the Brazilian Sign Language as the mother tongue of the deaf, the concept of visibility, pedagogical practice focused on reading and writing and the support of families in the acquisition of Libras need to be clarified.

Gadotti's (2013; 2014) ideas stand out when it comes to studies with authors. His ideas collaborate on the concept of democratic management and the guarantee of Public Policies: "We cannot miss this opportunity to make popular education a policy, an opportunity to build a more popular power to strengthen a truly revolutionary process emancipation." In this sense, the author stresses the importance of seizing the opportunity to strengthen education as a political act. Here we could reinforce every point about the importance of guaranteeing Specialized Educational Care as a Public Policy, with financial resources directed to the purchase of equipment, for example, but the author goes further: he treats Education as "politics", that is, related to the organization of groups, where they have common goals, as in the case of deaf students and their families. It is through understanding the Brazilian Sign Language as the deaf person's first language that the "truly revolutionary process of emancipation" will be strengthened.

Understanding that it is necessary to appropriate the Brazilian Sign Language as the deaf person's mother tongue makes it possible to understand the interactions that take place in Specialized Educational Services and to take a differentiated

look at public policies for students with deafblindness. Quadros (2000) explains:

When we think of literacy, the most popular idea is related to deciphering the written code. Perhaps the very name given to this process is one of the causes of this idea, "literacy", linked to the "alphabet". (...) the subject of literacy involves a much broader concept of the term, a process that results from interaction with language and the environment. (QUADROS, 2000)

The Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) is the deaf person's first language and, when we think about Deaf Education, we must interact their mother tongue, in this case Libras, with the environment in which the deaf person is inserted. And what is the relationship with literacy? The author's idea here is to reinforce the fact that the deaf are also immersed in the literacy process and, unlike the hearing, where the process takes place through "hearing", the deaf and their families must be attentive to the process of interaction of Libras based on the visibility of the interactions that occur with the environment.

The theme of "visibility" is another interesting point in our work and the author Campello (2008) brings important contributions:

Visibility presupposes semiotically mediated imagery exercises, since it does not take place without the presence of signs, in other words, it does not take place as a direct activity of the sense organs. It can be constituted as discourse precisely because it can be produced by signs and because it produces signs (CAMPELLO, 2008).

According to Campello (2008), visibility is built from the production of signs. This theme becomes relevant to the work, since the mediations carried out in Specialized Educational Care for the deaf and their families are carried out using Libras and the presence of Semiotics as a study of signs based on verbal and non-verbal languages, so that there is communication between the deaf and the listeners who take part in the proposed activities.

Authors Cruz and Prado (2020) say about the acquisition of reading and writing by deaf students: "(...) It is thought-provoking to think about the possibilities of deaf children acquiring reading and writing in the current proposal for inclusion, in which the majority of the school community are listeners and do not master Libras." This is still the biggest challenge in deaf education, given that Portuguese is the deaf person's second language.

In this context, the family is an important part of the interactions in Specialized Educational Assistance. On the subject of family, Lebedeff (2017) contributes with some considerations:

Families need support in adjusting to and accepting deafblindness and learning new skills, and the sooner intervention takes place, the sooner language and cognitive development will be affected, as well as socio-emotional adjustment (LEBEDEFF, 2017).

When it comes to supporting families, the author stresses the importance of accepting deafness and the possibilities of early intervention for the development of deaf children.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of the work presented here is to take ownership of the pedagogical work carried out in Specialized Educational Care, with Public Policy, and to share the experiences of students with deafblindness served in this pedagogical space.

order to do this, it was necessary to make photographic records of the work with the deaf student with a cochlear implant, R. (7 years old), in Specialized Educational Assistance (AEE) from 2017, in partnership with mainstream education. At the time, the family opted for medical and speech therapy services, as well as learning to use Libras. In this context, there were opportunities in the ESA to work on Brazilian Sign Language as the mother tongue (L1) with a deaf teacher hired at the time and Portuguese (L2) with the he-

aring teacher. In 2018, the pedagogical work remained in the Bilingual Education proposal, where the hearing teacher uses Libras (L1) and works with the Portuguese language in the written modality to expand vocabulary.

In 2019, the mother was asked (before the pandemic) to participate in Libras classes in the AEE, since she always waited for her daughter to be seen outside the Specialized Educational Service. With the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, it wasn't possible to continue with the face-to-face monitoring, where it was possible to work from the making videos available through the use of new technologies (ICTs), as well as making handouts involving the use of Libras and activities remotely (online).

With the return to face-to-face classes, at the beginning of 2022, there was assistance in partnership with the family in Specialized Educational Assistance, continuing the pedagogical work in Libras (L1) and Portuguese Language (L2), work carried out based on the mother's request before the Pandemic for participation in the AEE. The photographic records can be found in the AEE archive, and some videos have been made available on the YouTube channel.

As of September 2022, the pedagogical work of AEE with deaf people and their families began at the Municipal Center for Specialized Educational Care (CEMAEE), which opened in the same year. In this context, the EEA was extended to other family members, who readily accepted the proposal to participate with their deaf children.

The Reports of the Experiences of students I. (9 years old), R. (currently 15 years old) and B. (12 years old), all deaf students (only the first two have a cochlear implant, where they are monitored by a specialist doctor and attend elementary school in the Municipal Education Network), were expanded.

The systematization of the Action Research records and one of the ways of proceeding in search of a harmony of opinions for the fee-

dback and sharing of the results was the Live on the experiences of student B. (11 years old in 2023) on the YouTube Channel Destaque Educativo on September 26, 2023 with the Theme “Blue September: Family and Education partnership in guaranteeing rights to deaf students”.

At the end of 2023, the author participated in the Oral Communication at the Scientific Initiation Day (JIC) of the National Institute for the Deaf (INES/RJ) and also left her records of the experiences made.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is imperative to record contributions of Public Policies for People with Disabilities and Specialized Educational Assistance in the bilingual approach for with deafness, which has brought possibilities in relation to pedagogical interactions based on the Brazilian Sign Language (Libras).

The use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) facilitates planning and discussions about the work carried out, mainly photographic and video records.

One of the challenges encountered was the need for Continuing Education in Portuguese (L2) based on the use of Libras (L1) in the proposal for Bilingual Education for the Deaf.

It is essential to fight for public policies, especially the proposal for Bilingual Education for the Deaf, as advocated by current legislation.

New reflections are suggested on public policies focused on Specialized Educational Assistance for students with deafblindness and their families, as well as the teachers who serve this target audience.



Blue September: Family and Education partnership in guaranteeing rights for deaf students.

322 views - Broadcast 4 weeks ago

Educational Highlight

Lecture with the theme: Blue September: Family and Education partnership in guaranteeing the rights of deaf students. It was held...

FIGURE 1: Using ICTs to record *feedback from* the family on educational work carried out.

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