

# The schooling of autistic children: Contributions from Historical-Cultural Theory

## A escolarização de crianças autistas: Contribuições da Teoria Histórico-Cultural

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### Summary

The present study aimed to present reflections on the schooling of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, having as theoretical contributions the perspective of the Historical-Cultural Theory. Therefore, it started with the characterization of the development processes and atypical behaviors of people with this diagnosis, discussing how the normalizing perspectives of learning can interfere in the development of people with the referred Disorder, as well as exposing the contributions of the Historical-Cultural Theory to the understanding of the theme. The methodological was based, with qualitative approach was carried out, with a bibliographical and contextualized theoretical character of Vigotsky's works, as well as texts by similar contemporary authors. Thus, the aim was to contribute to the theoretical consolidation of the issues that deal with the Disorder in question, exploring the notions of development and language, and how such concepts contribute to a successful praxis with autistic subjects.

**Keywords:** Autistic Spectrum Disorder. Historical-Cultural Theory. Development. Language.

### Resumo

O presente estudo teve por objetivo apresentar reflexões sobre a escolarização de crianças com o diagnóstico do Transtorno do Espectro Autista, tendo como contribuições teóricas a perspectiva da Teoria Histórico-Cultural. Para tanto, partiu-se da caracterização dos processos de desenvolvimento e condutas atípicas de pessoas com esse diagnóstico, discutindo como as perspectivas normalizadoras da aprendizagem podem interferir no desenvolvimento de pessoas com o referido transtorno, bem como expondo as contribuições da Teoria Histórico-Cultural para a compreensão da temática. A metodologia baseou-se em uma abordagem qualitativa, com caráter teórico bibliográfico e contextualizado das obras de Vigotski, bem como de textos de autores contemporâneos afins. Almejou-se, assim, contribuir para o adensamento teórico das questões que versam sobre o transtorno em comento, explorando as noções de desenvolvimento e linguagem, e como tais conceitos contribuem para uma práxis exitosa com os sujeitos autistas.

**Unitermos:** Transtorno do Espectro Autista. Teoria Histórico-Cultural. Desenvolvimento. Linguagem.

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## Introduction

Since the time of Leo Kanner's first publications, in 1943, the diagnosis of autism has undergone changes over time mainly due to the expansion of the elements considered for the disorder characterization, as well as the evolution of clinical reasoning itself (Cohen & Volkmar, 1997). Within the scope of Psychiatry, it is possible to follow this evolution in the different versions of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manuals of Mental Disorders (DSMs), published by the American Psychiatric Association (APA, 2014) – a reference in the diagnosis of mental disorders. In the first edition of the DSM, published in 1953, autism was classified as a symptom of "Child-type Schizophrenic Reaction". In the second edition, in 1968, autism was also linked to schizophrenia and childhood psychosis or Kanner Syndrome. In the third edition of the DSM, in 1987, autism was classified using its own nomenclature, entitled Global Developmental Disorders (GDD). In the fourth edition, from 1994, the GDDs included five disorders, namely: 1) Autistic Disorder; 2) Rett Disorder; 3) Childhood Disintegrative Disorder; 4) Asperger's Disorder; and, 5) GDD itself. In the fifth and final edition of the DSM, autism was renamed Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), being considered a neurodevelopmental disorder (APA, 2014).

With the growing demand for subjects with autism, not only was their diagnosis updated, but there was also growing interest from activists (in general, family members of autistic children) who put pressure on politics and the media, demanding their rights. This had repercussions not only on the treatment, but on the schooling of these subjects, resulting in the implementation of dictates and the guarantee of the right to regular public education, for example.

In the educational field, guidance for the participation of students with ASD in regular schools began with the movement for Inclusive Education in 2007, which resulted in the publication of the document National Policy on Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusive Education (Ministry of Education [MEC], & Secretariat of Special Education [SEESP], 2008) – document that provides

educational responses from regular schools to subjects with ASD. However, it was only in 2012 that Law no. 12,764 (2012) – Berenice Piana Law, which proclaims the National Policy for the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder, emphasizing the inclusion of these subjects in regular schools as a right. As a result of the new curricular guidelines and the establishment of these laws for the inclusion of students with Special Educational Needs (SENs) in schools, it was possible to observe a considerable increase in the demand for students with ASD in regular schools, resulting in for schools, the adaptation: school space and time; the snack; appropriate material resources; pedagogical activities; and, teacher training to successfully deal with this demand, which every day, has only increased (Pacheco & Freire, 2021).

Since 2012, there has also been an increase in the academic works production with an emphasis about the theme "autism", following the publication of the Berenice Piana Law. Regarding the issue, Peixoto (2019) points out that, after 2012, there was an increase in research and work about autism, reaching its peak in 2016. His research found 37 works in the database of the *CAPES Higher Education Improvement Coordination* and nine productions at the University of Brasília (UnB), including theses, dissertations and articles, in addition to 21 articles in the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO), totaling 67 productions focusing on the topic under discussion, which have, as their main theoretical basis, the works of Lev Semionovitch Vigotski and Paulo Freire. One hypothesis for the increase in the aforementioned productions is the greater visibility of the topic "autism" in the media, generating more information, accuracy in diagnoses and movements in society, which pressured government bodies to implement dictates that guarantee the rights of subjects with disabilities. autism (Pacheco & Freire, 2021).

Currently, ASD is one of the most prevalent and complex neurodevelopmental disorders. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

(CDC) of the United States of America (USA), which is currently the main global reference regarding the autism prevalence, there was an increase of 22%, in 2023, in comparison to the previous scientific study, published in 2021 (Paiva, 2023). Today, the prevalence is one autistic child aged 8 years old, for every 36 children considered neurotypical. In Brazil, there is still no data about the autism prevalence. However, it is possible that the number would be similar, as the prevalence is the same in any other country, as there is no genetic variability in other regions of the planet. Therefore, using the projection from the American study, Brazil would have around 5,997.222 autistic people (Paiva, 2023).

Another scientific study carried out in the USA, in the period 2019-2020, in order to estimate the autism prevalence among children and adolescents aged between 3 and 17 years, resulted in a prevalence of 3.14% – a finding that was higher than the previous result from the period 2014-2016. -2016, which was 2.47%, clearly indicating that the prevalence has been increasing over time (Li et al., 2022).

Another interesting data is the issue of gender in the autism prevalence. Also according to the CDC study, there continues to be a predominance of males, of 3.8, to 1, of females. One hypothesis for this phenomenon may be because of the diagnostic criteria, which focus more on common male characteristics and female abilities, which end up masking some signs of autism (Paiva, 2023).

The ASD is currently characterized by the inability to interact socially, persistent impairment in communication and the presence of restrictive and repetitive patterns of behavior, which affect the functional life of these subjects. Such symptoms must necessarily be present from early childhood, from mild to moderate and severe symptoms – degrees that make the subject need more or less support to develop. The severe level requires greater support, as it presents a serious deficit in verbal skills, as affected individuals are unable to communicate without support, presenting reduced cognition. The moderate level presents the same conditions as the severe level, but with less intensity. Finally, the

light level requires little support, that is, it may be difficult to communicate, but it does not limit social interaction (APA, 2014).

Furthermore, the diagnosis of autism is often associated with other comorbidities, making its identification and treatment complex and often confused with other neurodevelopmental disorders. The inclusion of autism in the neurophysiological category brought an increase in reports, “medicalization” and implications for therapeutic, methodological and educational forms, which are linked to a biologizing approach to the disorder (Kerche et al., 2020).

Given the above, the following lines firstly present a discussion about the therapeutic and educational implications traditionally used in the treatment of autism, such as Psychoanalysis and Behavioral Psychology. Next, we bring the Historical-Cultural Theory contributions for reflection and understanding about the topic. To this end, a conceptual study was carried out on the specific development of people with disabilities, syndromes, disorders, etc., in the works of Lev Semionovitch Vigotski and contemporary authors (Marchiori & Cortês, 2021; Martins & Monteiro, 2018; Orrú, 2010) who discuss ASD in Historical-Cultural Theory.

### **Autistic spectrum disorder from the psychoanalysis and behavioral psychology view**

The Psychoanalysis and Behavioral Psychology are pioneering areas in the study of ASD. The dominance of these theoretical foundations resulted in the establishment of objectives and developments consistent with these respective epistemological lines.

The Psychoanalysis was the first branch to address the issue of autism. The introduction of this psychological approach to the topic in question began in 1911, with Eugène Bleuler – a Swiss psychiatrist who, at the time, influenced by the Sigmund Freud’s theories, introduced the term “autism” as part of the picture of schizophrenia (Cohen & Volkmar, 1997). Leo Kanner, in 1943, focused on early childhood autism, as he called it

at the time, as a new clinical category distinct from schizophrenia, introducing a new clinical narrative about autism (Cohen & Volkmar, 1997). From then on, the topic in question attracted the attention of psychogenetic-inspired currents and later, less psychogenetic and more structural language, influenced by post-Freudian analysts. However, they did not disregard the Freudian foundations about drive and unconscious, advocating clinical management to alleviate anguish and not educational management for the autistic person. Such specificity is not the subject of current science, which is more interested in brain matter. With the evolution of genetics and neurosciences, the interest in the affective and instinctual life of autism was shifted to the functioning of cognitive consciousness – an action reflected in the editions of the DSM manuals, which expresses a deficient view of autism, which considers the body of child from a genetic, neurological and biochemical point of view, but not libidinal and instinctual (Barroso, 2019).

Currently, Psychoanalysis, based on the reports of autistic people, believes in the hypothesis of the formulation that autism can be part of a new psychic structure, distinct from neurosis, psychosis and perversion, due to the unique aspects of this condition that do not fully fit into those. This brings an important reflection to education based on the inclusion of autistic people: instead of including autistic people in the school program, which constrains their uniqueness, wouldn't it be more productive to do the opposite, that is, include the school in autistic initiatives? (Barroso, 2019).

The contribution of Psychoanalysis, more than offering an autistic structure or a specific technique, is expressed in the possibility of constructing a reunion between autistic people and others, which makes their defenses more flexible and their existence construction. It is about prioritizing an ethics that does not fit into universal adaptive ideals and goes beyond the classificatory diagnosis of autism, distinct from a deficient vision. The practice guided by Psychoanalysis focuses on case-by-case investigation, giving rise to the subject's singularity, towards the construction of what their autism is for each person (Barroso, 2019).

Within the behavioral perspective, therapy and pedagogy aimed at children with ASD have historically been marked by interventions associated with a clinical model focused specifically on the biological aspect, which prioritizes skills training and the reduction and possible exclusion of behaviors considered inappropriate, or normal according to what is socially conventionalized. As an example, there is the manual adopted by the Ministry of Education (MEC), which recommends the Treatment and Education of Autistic and Communication Handicapped Children (TEACCH) method (Monte & Santos, 2004). With a behavioral basis, this manual focuses on the acquisition of skills and the extinction of behaviors considered socially inappropriate.

The TEACCH method is based on behavioral theory, understanding autism as a neurobiological disorganization, which causes the brain to receive stimuli in an unstructured way. It is based on: the structuring of behavioral strategies; the use of prompts (visual cards); alternative communication; sensory integration; and, discriminative stimuli, with the aim of teaching the autistic subject to adapt to the environment (Fonseca & Ciola, 2014).

From an educational perspective, the TEACCH method focuses on communication, organization and memorization capabilities of an individualized routine via visual cards. In it, "external structuring" allows the subject to develop "internal structures" that will be transformed into strategies, which will be automated, allowing their use in less structured environments (Fonseca & Ciola, 2014; Rodrigues & Spencer, 2010). Furthermore, each child has their own individual collection of visual cards and their own individualized routine – which ends up making interactions and dialogues among commonly heterogeneous students in a regular teaching class difficult (Martins & Monteiro, 2018).

Within this conception of development, the emphasis is directed to the disorder and, consequently, to the deficit, that is, what the subject lacks, to the detriment of the focus on this and its possibilities and potential.



The TEACCH method gained visibility and notoriety after the sanction of Law no. 12,764 (2012), which indicated and reinforced the model. From then on, it was widely disseminated in the educational environment and, later, used in the classroom, especially in Brazil, as an appropriate means of educational practice.

Another therapeutic work that gained strength in the treatment of subjects with ASD was the Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) method – one of the best known and most sought after for treating ASD, primarily in the clinical context. It is a high-cost method that requires professional certification and specialized training – which ends up benefiting only a minority of the population who have health insurance or are able to bear the costs (Rodrigues & Spencer, 2010).

The services are individualized and the learning of new skills is presented through a model and an instruction (stimulus), carried out by the mediator, while the child has to reproduce according to the instruction, completing the instruction-repetition symbiosis. It is a sequential and gradual method. When the child manages to reproduce the model positively, the behavior is rewarded through positive reinforcement, aiming at its reproduction. In addition to the stimulus-response, there is the application of operant conditioning, which consists of learning new behaviors, reinforcing them via the modeling process (Rodrigues & Spencer, 2010).

The TEACCH and ABA methods are based on Behavioral Psychology, which has as its premise that human behavior is controlled by the environment. The criticism highlights the deterministic, reductionist and hegemonic approach to human development, leaving the child's spontaneous action in the background (Rodrigues & Spencer, 2010). Another issue to be observed is the focus on individualized teaching, which tends to deprive children of contact with their peers, thus making possible and productive exchanges arising from this social relation impossible. However, diagnoses, historically, have highlighted the condition of socialization difficulties of individuals with ASD as an indicative sign of the disorder. Next we will

observe that socialization is the *sine qua non* basis for the development of any subject.

### **Contributions to the understanding of autistic spectrum disorder from the Vygotsky's works**

In the subjects with ASD education, an aspect that must be investigated is their constitution as subjects, based on the meanings produced by their actions and interactions experienced in different social situations. Children with ASD sometimes present atypical behaviors, which are interpreted as lack of interest and difficulty in interacting with other people, since these ways of expressing themselves in the world are not yet signaled, signified and standardized in the current culture. However, these children present a peculiar way of interacting with objects and their peers, but because this is not within the standard norm of behavior, it is not encouraged and understood by their educators. On the contrary, based on behavioral theories, we work to extinguish these peculiar modes of expression, which are interpreted as abnormal because they are not socially accepted.

Vygotski (2019) argues that atypical development is marked by psychological processes that, based on culture and social history, make it possible to understand the diversity of human forms of development. For that author, in traditional development theories, the subjects are, for the most part, seen from a quantitative approach, in which the biological aspect is privileged to the detriment of their historical-cultural aspect.

Vygotski (2012) does not minimize the biological aspect, on the contrary, without it there would be no condition for human development as it depends on biological maturation. However, development does not occur as something natural and predictable, it is a dialectical process between the biological and the cultural. As the child becomes part of the culture, his movements (such as the act of pointing) are recognized, named and given cultural meaning by others and these return to him in a modified, signified form (it is not the same act of pointing as before) transforming their elementary psychic functions into superior ones.

In this process, language assumes a primary role, as the semiotic operation is what allows interaction and mastery of the social means of thought, enabling the subject's relation with the external environment. Furthermore, the forms of communication and language functioning, especially in the case of autistic children, do not always occur orally. The children often communicate through gestures, looks, writing, smiling and even refusing to do what is asked of them. Therefore, it is necessary to observe language in different forms of expression, welcoming and giving meaning to these alternative ways of communication (Coelho & Ribas, 2021; Marchiore & Cortês, 2021).

Vygotsky (1987) states that the development of verbal thinking is determined by the child's language and sociocultural experience. The child's development depends on his mastery of the social means of thought, that is, language. In this sense, there is no innate and natural behavior, but one determined by a historical-social process, with specific properties and laws that cannot be found in natural forms of thought and speech.

Emphasizing the thought-language relation and the interrelation between them, Vygotsky (2000) points out the constitutive feature of the word in meaning; that is, it is the word seen in its inner aspect. Therefore, it is considered a phenomenon of discourse. It is a generalization that becomes a concept. Generalization and concept are an act of thinking, therefore, a phenomenon of thought. However, the meaning of the word is only a phenomenon of thought to the extent that it is signified, that is, present in speech and in the conscious word, being the unity of the word with thought.

Another important point is that linguistic thought goes from the primitive form of generalization to higher and complex forms, expressing itself in abstract concepts. The word represents the object of reality in consciousness – it is an important aspect of development because the meaning, being inconstant, changes in the child's development and in the ways verbal thought works. Therefore, the relation between thought and words is a process of and in development, where both influence and

become more complex throughout the child's development. The child's thinking begins as a whole and confused, needing to find its expression in a word in language. However, when transforming into language, thought restructures and changes, and is therefore not a simple reflection of language. Thought is realized in words. As we speak, our thoughts are modified and reorganized, acquiring a new, increasingly complex version.

Vygotsky (2000) deals with egocentric language – a manifestation of the transition from the interpsych function to the intrapsych function – a law of development. During the child's development process, it is transformed into inner language (addressed to oneself), translating into an abstraction that develops from the sound of language, constituting an autonomous function that serves the child's thinking as a growing capacity to imagine words instead of speaking, operating with the image (abstract) of the word instead of pronouncing it. Therefore, egocentric language should not be understood as a motor release of the impossibility of socialization, but rather, a fundamental aspect of the child's development.

In this epistemological direction, thought and language, although they have different roots, at a certain moment intertwine, expressing themselves in the form of the word meant by the child, at this moment thought becomes verbal. Therefore, being attentive to all communication manifestations of autistic children, verbal or non-verbal, is very important for professionals that deal with human development. To this end, it is important to provide places for social interaction for the spontaneous expression of language, as the subject is constituted through social relations established with their peers and educators through communication, regardless of their form of expression. The first step is for them to be together in the same physical place. The second step is to carry out the same activities, even if they are adapted to each case. We cannot help a child if he is isolated, out of context from the culture and concreteness of the real world. It needs to be in relation with the world, through mediating action. Therefore, the school constitutes a privileged space

for offering this symbolic universe, reproducing the laws that govern social relations and enabling the child to appropriate them in a contextualized and socialized way.

Vigotsky (2019) opposes attempts to biologize the conceptions of children with disabilities development, as according to him, this is not only biological in nature, but also social. Their insufficient development is essentially due to the absence of adequate special education, which allows similar development to that of normal children. For this author, there should be no difference between teaching a child with a disability and one without a disability. To this end, he uses the concept of social compensation to guide educational work in which children with disabilities are inserted into different everyday places, obtaining the same opportunities to access knowledge as any child. In this way, there is a change in the conception of educational work as the issue of disability leaves the organic order and becomes focused on social processes of development oriented towards the subject's potential (Dainez & Smolka, 2014).

The analysis of biological and social character leads that author to establish an important concept for organizing work with neurotypical children. This is the concept of primary and secondary defect, being the one that results from the biological character, (such as loss of vision or hearing) and this, referring to the consequences produced by the primary defect in the child's development arising from the lack of adequate education; that is, one thing is the cause and the other thing is what to do with it, what procedure to take in forwarding the case based on the data about it. "[...] it is clear that blindness and deafness in themselves are biological facts and by no means social facts, but the educator has to face not so much these facts in themselves, but their social consequences". (Vigotsky, 2019, p. 23)

Disability, as well as the way of dealing with it, for Vigotsky (2000), is produced and marked by the sociocultural history of a society. This can be seen in the reissues of the DSM in relation to the nomenclature and diagnostic criteria for autism, which have been transformed over time.

In fact, it is common to name what is unknown – what generates anguish and discomfort. By giving a name to what is not understood, it reduces its negative and threatening impact. However, regarding people with disabilities and their cultural universe, it is believed that there is an immediate identification and classification of these, configured by stigmas. These are stipulated by society as to what is normal and what is pathological, both bodily and behaviorally. This is historically determined by clinical bias and materialized by the report. Therefore, it is always necessary to question what the consequences of this vision will be for therapeutic and educational practice. Is it really optimizing and focusing on the subject? Have other, less ableism conceptions been sought, or are we helping to perpetuate those? (Sarmiento & Aguiar, 2022).

The above brings two important reflections for the therapeutic and educational field. First, the impact of adopting a certain conception of development and the theory on which it is based, as this will influence procedures, techniques and developments in pedagogical practice and, consequently, its results. Secondly, it is the investment that is made in this subject, in his singularities and potentialities, as this brings an optimistic and driving approach to development – something very important in directing work with children with disabilities.

### **The oriented practices contributions by historical-cultural theory**

Marchiori and Cortês (2021), supported by Historical-Cultural Theory, present, as an example, the deaf and autistic student Diamante, who was welcomed into a bilingual Early Childhood Education Center. Diamante didn't speak, she was deaf, she threw herself on the floor, banged her head and appeared disinterested. Despite this, the teachers spoke to her in the same way they spoke to other children, respecting her way of expressing herself. Her inappropriate behaviors were not targeted for extinction, but were given meaning as forms of interaction within her reach. On the part of those professionals, firstly, there was an acceptance of her way of being and efforts to establish some emotional bond with Diamante.

In this way, there was an investment by professionals in their potential as a subject: legitimizing, signifying and, at the same time, presenting a new way of interacting in the world with objects and people. Little by little, Diamante's unique behaviors were replaced by more socially accepted behaviors, while professionals started from objects of her interest to expand her restricted language. Thus, when she pointed out wanting something, her gesture was signified, her demand was verbalized by the teacher and Diamante was invited to express it in her time and with her resources, until she took ownership of the concept.

Therefore, the educator needs to be aware of these different ways of relating and learning from autistic children, enabling spaces where social relations are present – a fertile place for the development of language and thought. It is through language that autistic children will undergo transformations in their attention, learning to differentiate one object from another and building internal tools to integrate new information (Orrú, 2010).

Something very important about this intervention lies in the fact that Diamante was in a class with other children – which in itself is already considered a powerful development enhancer because not only the teacher gave meaning to her actions, but also her peers, building a social bond that included her as a subject belonging to that group, thus providing opportunities for social relations in a contextualized and culturally constructed way.

Orrú (2010) corroborates the idea that social interaction favors more meaningful learning, with the mediating role of the teacher being very important for the autistic subject to transcend immediate and reactive affective reactions to more functional and lasting ones. That author developed research in the period 2000–2006 with ten autistic students and five teachers, in a school in the interior of the State of São Paulo. The teachers were trained and guided their pedagogical practice using the historical-cultural approach as a theoretical framework. Alternative communication was used to help build language and develop relationships with others, bringing the possibility of producing meanings

– which can only happen via social relations and in culturally contextualized environments.

As a result, Orrú (2010) found that the historical-cultural approach gave rise to new pedagogical possibilities in relation to the language constitution, through social relations in the school context, in an inclusive and optimistic conception in relation to the development of these students, providing a more meaningful learning for autistic students.

Martins and Monteiro (2018) investigated the social interactions of autistic children aged 6 to 10 years old with their peers in a philanthropic special education school, in order to observe, through the lens of Historical-Cultural Theory, the processes of meaning that emerged in this school context. It was observed, in many moments, that these children had their attempt at communication validated and given meaning by the teacher, allowing them to attribute meaning to her actions, even if these were a gesture, a look or a smile. There was an investment on the part of the teacher and researcher in social relations and processes of meaning, revealing the importance of semiotic mediation in these children's education. This involves introducing the world to this child, attributing meaning to everything around him/her and paying attention to how he/she receive and signal what has been transmitted, helping them to develop meanings. It was also observed that the direction of the interventions was focused on the subject and their potential, and not on their limitations.

Vygotsky (1987) criticizes the special schools of his time for making students unable to participate in collective school life, isolating them in a place adapted to their defect, depriving them of experiencing real life. According to that author, the focus of the special school was marked by a biomedical view of disability, emphasizing the deficit and not the student's potential. In this way, it was based on the clinical study, starting to build its practice based on this, giving more importance to what is missing, rather than the subject and their development potential.

Martins and Monteiro (2018) highlight the importance of this reflection because, if professional



work focuses on pathology, techniques and efforts that only address this limitation will be prioritized. However, if the teacher values the subject holistically and their respective experiences, privileging the social relations and meanings arising from this process, there will be many possibilities for the success and development of this intervention.

## Considerations

The contributions of Historical-Cultural Theory are still very up to date in current times, contributing to the adoption of an education conception that has the subject as its central point, and not their disability. This does not determine his future; on the contrary, what will be done with it is what may or may not result in these subjects developing successfully and having a life that is not only functional, but mainly autonomous and generates meaning for themselves, despite their limitations and difficulties.

The diagnosis does not define a person, because they are more than that label. What often happens is that the school clings to the diagnosis and forgets the subject, preparing methods and procedures that orbit around the diagnosis and forgetting the subject in front of it. This lies in the fact of a deterministic, pessimistic and biologizing development conception, which does not privilege its potential, but its difficulties and inadequacies.

It is necessary to understand that each autistic subject is different and that the ways of dealing with it will be different, not because it is complicated, because autism presents itself in different ways, but because each subject is unique, regardless of their difficulties. In this sense, it is necessary to see the subject and give him a voice via sensitive reception, meaning his actions in the way he can express it, there is no standardized method for everyone. On the contrary, they will be the ones who will provide the necessary clues to advance towards their development.

In fact, it is necessary, first of all, to see, welcome and understand the peculiar ways of symbolic functioning of children with ASD. This is essential

for the performance of professionals who work directly with it, in the adoption of unique and creative methodologies, promoting different paths of learning opportunities, creation of stimuli and educational strategies that promote the development of higher psychological functions - which marks the character dynamic and creative development, enabling the appropriation of knowledge historically accumulated by the subject.

In short, teaching must be “beyond becoming”, because there is a focus on this subject – which generates an optimistic attitude that drives development.

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