

Aging and people with disabilities from a Vigotskian and life-span perspective

Envelhecimento e pessoas com deficiência nas perspectivas Vigotskiana e *life-span*

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Summary

In contemporary society, a topic that has been gaining interest by scholars has been population aging. The increase in life expectancy of people with disabilities reflects on the aging of this population, and as a result, intersectionality arises: disability and aging. A recent phenomenon, relevant and still little studied, but with great potential for advancement and intervention. In this perspective, considering the context presented and with a view to contributing to the construction of knowledge about the aging process of people with disabilities, the objective was to carry out an analysis in the light of life-span perspective of Baltes and the Lev Semionovich Vigotski's Defectology, which even (at that moment) did not contemplate aging in their discussions, it is believed that it brings an important conception of development throughout life, especially when it comes to people with disabilities. The methodology adopted used the analysis of the aforementioned perspectives and their contributions to the aging of people with disabilities. The results showed that both the life-span perspective and defectology believe in the cultural and integral development of the personality of people with disabilities and advocate that these people achieve new learning throughout their lives through social interactions. The discussion presented here highlights the relevance of the topic addressed, the emergence of interest among researchers in the field of aging, and the importance of including elderly people with disabilities in studies of human development. It is concluded that both perspectives contribute to studies of the development of elderly people with disabilities.

Keywords: Human Development. Aged. Disabled Persons. Defectology. Aging.

Resumo

Na sociedade contemporânea, um tema que vem ganhando foco de interesse por estudiosos tem sido o envelhecimento populacional. O aumento na expectativa de vida das pessoas com deficiência reflete no envelhecimento dessa população e, por consequência, surge a interseccionalidade: deficiência e envelhecimento, um fenômeno recente, relevante e ainda pouco estudado, mas com grande potencial de avanço e intervenção. Este estudo tem caráter teórico-bibliográfico, considerando o contexto apresentado e com vistas a contribuir com a construção de conhecimentos sobre o processo de envelhecimento das pessoas com deficiência. Objetivou-se realizar uma análise à luz da perspectiva *life-span* de Baltes e da Defectologia de Lev Semionovich Vigotski que, mesmo (naquele momento) não contemplando o envelhecimento nas suas discussões, acredita-se que traz uma importante concepção de desenvolvimento ao longo da vida, especialmente em se tratando de pessoas com deficiência. A metodologia adotada utilizou-se da análise das perspectivas supracitadas e suas contribuições no envelhecimento de pessoas com deficiência. Os resultados apontaram que tanto a perspectiva *life-span* quanto a Defectologia acreditam no desenvolvimento cultural e integral da personalidade das pessoas com deficiência e defendem que essas pessoas alcancem novas aprendizagens ao longo da vida por meio das interações sociais. A discussão aqui apresentada destaca a relevância do tema abordado, o surgimento de interesse dos pesquisadores pelo campo de estudo do envelhecimento e a importância da inclusão das pessoas idosas com deficiência nos estudos do desenvolvimento humano. Conclui-se que ambas as perspectivas contribuem para os estudos do desenvolvimento das pessoas idosas com deficiência.

Unitermos: Desenvolvimento Humano. Pessoa Idosa. Pessoas com Deficiência. Envelhecimento.

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Introduction

The increase in life expectancy of people with disabilities is positive and at the same time challenging (Souza & Vilaça, 2023). According to the Demographic Census of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2012), approximately 45.6 million people in Brazil, 23.9% of the total population, and around 63% of Brazilian elderly people, mentioned having some type of disability. This category includes people with difficulty seeing, hearing, moving around or with any physical, mental or intellectual disability (IBGE, 2012). Without a doubt, scientific and social advances have favored an increase in the longevity of the population. It is important to point out that the life expectancy of people with disabilities began to increase from the moment they were considered subjects of rights, including being “deserving” of access to health and rehabilitation programs, as discussed by Aranha (1995).

The aging process in Brazil was organized differently from the rest of the world. As it is considered a very accelerated phenomenon, there was a disadvantage in terms of strategy and knowledge, since other countries had more time to plan the care of their elderly population, including through scientific research on the topic (Closs & Schwanke, 2012; Santos et al., 2022; Silva et al., 2022). In order to understand the aging process, it is necessary to define what is considered an elderly population: according to the National Elderly Policy (Law No. 8,842, 1994), the Elderly Statute (Law No. 10,741, 2003) and the Policy National Health Council for the Elderly (Ministry of Health, 2006), that population aged 60 or over (Camarano & Fernandes, 2022).

In Brazil, the Social and Family Commission Project (Law No. 1,118, 2011) establishes that a person with a disability is considered elderly at 45 years of age or older, due to the life expectancy of these people not being the same as that of people without disabilities. There is evidence that the aging process of people with Intellectual Disabilities (ID) is faster when compared to the rest of the population, specifically those with Down Syndrome. There

are studies that indicate the signs of aging in people with intellectual disabilities around 30 years of age, due to the prolonged use of medications that cause various health problems (Alves, 2012; Castro, 2022; Girondi et al., 2018; Hayar, 2015).

It is regrettably known that these two developmental factors (disability and aging) are still classically and hegemonically constituted by a conceptual negativity linked to biological insufficiency. The hegemonic discourse about disability, for example, will argue that people with disabilities, for biological reasons, are incapable, smaller, inferior and, therefore, limited to a series of developmental limitations. This same justification applies to the human aging process, mostly understood as a decline in biological processes.

The fact is that there is an overlap of factors when talking about disability and aging. There are many difficulties faced by those who have disabilities and are elderly people in an unprepared and discriminatory society, there is a double penalty (Alves, 2012; Girardi et al., 2012). In this sense, demands for improving public policies and the development of coherent theories that can provide answers to the confluence and overlap of these two social situations, which are emerging and urgent, are necessary.

The growth of the movement to demand rights and the struggle of people with disabilities to be recognized as protagonists of their own lives occurred with the consolidation of studies on disability in the 1960s, when the social model of disability emerged in opposition to the medical model of disability, which considers it as a disease and the person with a disability being seen as someone who is not adapted to society, who is outside the medical norm and who must be cured to be part of this society. People with disabilities had to articulate themselves and invent a new concept of disability, by criticizing the medical model and bringing the social model, which interpreted the oppression experienced by people with disabilities as the result of exclusion and social injustice (Guerra, 2021; Maior, 2017; Piccolo & Mendes, 2022).

The social model of disability is a social concept that arises from the interaction of a body that functions differently than the hegemonic standard with a society that creates barriers for this body to enjoy its rights in a full, dignified way that is not a “personal tragedy”. From this perspective, disability is seen as oppression, as an injury or disadvantage, as a form of human diversity and as a political issue. The objective of the social model of disability is to state that it is not the physical impediment, the injury, that makes social participation impossible, but rather the social structure, which is not very sensitive to the inclusion of people with disabilities in a situation of equality with others. people of society. The responsibility for the inclusion process depends on this society, as disability is a social construction. (Diniz, 2007; Pereira et al., 2023; Maior, 2017).

At the end of the 1970s, awareness grew in Brazil that resulted in the political movement of people with disabilities. In the 1980s, the most important achievements corresponded to the inclusion of the rights of people with disabilities in the 1988 Constitution (Brasil, 1988), in accordance with the wishes of the activists’ movement. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 2006, and ratified by Brazil as a constitutional amendment in 2009 (Decree n° 6,949, 2009) is the most recent international treaty of human rights and was the first to count on the voice of social movements in the drafting phase, under the motto *Nothing about us, without us*, in which the document highlights the set of measures to be fulfilled by society and governments, with equality of responsibility, with a view to social justice arising from the equalization of opportunities (Maior, 2017; Paula, 2008).

It is important to point out that laws, such as the Elderly Statute (Law n° 10,741, 2003) and the Brazilian Inclusion Law (Law n° 13,146, 2015), have contributed to the strengthening of these people in society. The fight against welfare brought advances and Brazil became known in the world for changing paradigms regarding people with disabilities. The scenario changed from the protagonism of the political movement to the inclusion of basic rights in the 1988 Constitution (Maior, 2018).

As a result of these actions, laws related to sectoral policies, such as health, social assistance, education and work, covered people with disabilities and project management structures were created to promote and pay attention to the rights of these people. All of these actions have helped to increase the life expectancy of people with disabilities, impacting the statistics of the country’s elderly population.

Currently, there are important movements aimed at the cause of people with disabilities, awakening to the phenomenon of aging of these people, which is perceived worldwide, however, important gaps still remain to be investigated (Martins et al., 2018).

Among the theories that cover the discussion about the aging process of people with disabilities, the historical-cultural theory has its important contribution, because for Lev Semionovich Vigotski, disability is not a barrier specific to the person, but social and cultural barriers found in the society. These barriers reflect how these people deal with peculiar aspects of their development, and the aforementioned author makes two important highlights in this discussion: first, the indication that disability cannot be seen as a negative process in human development and, second, the idea of that development is procedural and unlimited.

This article is configured as a bibliographic study, of an exploratory and descriptive nature, with a qualitative approach. The objective of this article is to carry out an analysis in the light of Baltes’ life-span perspective and Lev Semionovich Vigotski’s Defectology which, even (in that moment) not considering aging in its discussions, it is believed that it brings an important concept of development throughout life, especially when it comes to people with disabilities. We will seek to present a historical-cultural analysis of the phenomenon, highlighting that, in addition to biological issues, the aging process of people with disabilities must consider the group to which these people belong, the place where they live and spend to most of the time, in addition to the relations established between them and their peers.

Considering the different ways of writing the name of Lev Semionovich Vygotsky (1896-1934), such as Vygotsky, Vigotski, Vygotskii, among others, in this article Vigotski will be used.

Development

Disability, Culture and Human Development: contributions from Historical-Cultural Theory

Lev Semionovich Vigotski was born in 1896 in the city of Orsha, Russia, and died in 1934 of tuberculosis. He graduated in law, history and philosophy, was a scientist, literature teacher, writer, medical student and psychologist, developing concepts recognized as important by current psychology and pedagogy. According to Santos (2001), one of the fundamental principles that guided Vigotski's attempts to formulate psychology from Marxist, historical-dialectical assumptions was that, to understand the individual, firstly, one must understand the social relations in and through which it develops, therefore, it is possible to show how individual responses emerge from collective life forms. Vigotski was against explanations based on individual psychological reductionism.

Among the subjects that aroused Vygotsky's interest, disability was a theme that crossed his path, studying children with more severe disabilities, aiming to develop their potential, even the most discredited ones. He transformed practice into theory, publishing studies that have had an impact to this day, and which were developed directly in the place he helped found, the Moscow Institute of Disabilities, in the early 1930s. In his defectological studies, it is important to overcome the vision biologizing disability. A view still present in psychology studies about human development today is common in understandings of old age, including. Vigotski distances himself from environmentalist and biologicalist conceptions of development, being contrary to references to standards of normality that oppress bodies that distance themselves from the psychophysical type

valued within an ableist, unfair and unequal social order (Souza & Dainez, 2022).

For Vigotski, the development of people with disabilities is considered from a qualitative approach, in a positive perspective on atypical development. According to Mecacci (2009), Vigotski criticizes the quantitative approach to development, considering that it does not adequately describe the particularities of the psychic processes of people with disabilities. For the Belarusian psychologist, children with visual impairment are not pathological and children without visual impairments are physiologically normal, but they have different developmental paths. What is important to know is that the development of one or the other obeys the same general law.

Vigotski outlines the theoretical tasks and fundamental practices that were established for Soviet defectology and for the special school of its time: social education, a fact that took place in a post-Russian Revolution context, with the author living in a chaotic scenario of destruction and social disorganization, facing to a challenge proposed by the communist regime to overcome theories and paradigms that did not share Marxist theses and to seek to face problems, such as poverty and high levels of illiteracy that existed at the time, intensified by the war (Vigotski, 2019). It is worth noting that Vigotski's position is completely aligned with the centrality that culture assumes in his theoretical framework. The author also argued that the subject is constituted in social relations, characteristically human, mediated by language and instruments, as these relations are important in human development, due to the human being being a social being and, outside the relation in society, they would not develop the qualities and characteristics that are the results of the methodical process of all humanity.

According to Vigotski (2019), the environment is considered as a source of development and he further states that this development is doubly conditioned by this social environment: one way is how the individual feels in relation to the disability, the feeling of worthlessness or inferiority, the

other form is characterized by the social tendency of compensation that the individual establishes in the search for overcoming the disability.

Development is a consequence of this dramatic tension between the subject and the environment, and this constitutes, transforms and alters the development routes. The creation of development routes are, therefore, linked to the demands that emerge from culture. Thus, people with disabilities not only need stimuli, but also need to be introduced to the complex forms of knowledge available in culture. This, as we know, concerns their dignity and their condition of belonging to the human race (Vinha & Welcman, 2010).

For Vigotski (2019), disability becomes more complex when the person is deprived of being a participant in social life, and the author distinguishes it into primary and secondary dimensions. The primary dimension of disability concerns the biological aspect, therefore related to organic and brain injuries, malformations, etc. The secondary dimension comprises the impact of these changes on personality formation and is engendered in the social life of the person with a disability. It is exactly in the cultural dimension that the problem worsens, after all, it is through social relations that human beings develop and constitute themselves.

The primary disorder affects the primary sensory or psychological functions, but does not put an end to the quality and severity of the secondary defect. This secondary result depends on systemic reorganization, as occurs in a child without primary defects, developing under the influence of the historical-cultural context. In other words, all those mediation processes provided by family, school and society that drive and create new routes of development. Hence, there is the historical-cultural character of what is understood as *normal* and *pathological*; psychic life is not predetermined and fixed in the organism, but depends on social relations to fully develop.

Vigotski (2019) presents us with the complexity that involves the process of social formation, by highlighting the factors that impact and affect the development process and the constitution of the

personality of people with disabilities. Its position makes us take a position not focused on the defect, deficit or intellectual delay, but on the concrete social conditions of life of the person with a disability, orienting ourselves towards the development possibilities that emerge in social practices, particularly therapeutic and pedagogical ones. It is in this condition engendered by social relations that the forces that mobilize, through over compensatory processes, originate, that is, new possibilities for development. In overcompensation, the individual seeks to overcome their limitations and uses the disability as a driving force (incentive) for growth, without asking for help, even when they need it. Psychic reorganization, that is, the heightened development (development that occurs in another way) of the remaining senses, which can be established according to the social conditions given to people with disabilities, makes overcompensation possible or not.

For Sierra and Facci (2011), the central thesis of Vigotski's defectology is that every person with a disability develops incentives to compensate, which implies not alleviating the difficulties that arise from the disability but, rather, exerting all their strength towards their compensation, that is, there are compensatory possibilities that allow limitations to be overcome. Compensatory cultural behavior overlaps natural, biological behavior through the appropriation of intellectual and material instruments.

Still on compensation, it guides a positive way of conceiving disability and that the condition of organic damage can be precisely the place for the production of new possibilities (the defect-overcoming dialectic). Vigotski (2019) argues that compensation, to a large extent, comes from the child's collective social life, the sociability of their conduct. Next, Vigotski (1997) highlights the importance and psychological role of disability:

In modern times, science has come closer to mastering the truth about the psychology of the blind person. The school of the Viennese psychiatrist A. Adler, who developed the method of individual psychology, that is, the

social psychology of personality, highlighted the importance and psychological role of the organic defect in the process of development and formation of personality. If any organ, due to morphological or functional deficiency, is unable to fully carry out its work, then the central nervous system and the psychic apparatus take on the task of compensating for the insufficient functioning of the organ, creating over it or over the function a psychic superstructure that tends to secure the organism at the threatened weak point (p. 77).

Vigotski also points out that this compensation for the organ's insufficient functioning does not occur alone, but through the conflict established between the person who has a disability and the social environment. In this way, disability is transformed into strength and capacity (Silva et al., 2017).

When coming into contact with the external environment, conflict arises caused by the organ's lack of correspondence, or deficient function, with its tasks, which leads to a high possibility of morbidity and mortality. This conflict gives rise to great possibilities and incentives for overcompensation. The defect thus becomes the starting point and the main driving force of the psychic development of the personality. If the fight ends with victory for the organism, then not only are the difficulties caused by the defect overcome, but the organism rises in its own development to a higher level, creating a capacity from the defect; from weakness, strength; from minus value to super value [...] (Vigotski, 1997, pp. 77-78).

Vigotski considered disability as a human condition of development, considering the interweaving between the organic and social, biological and cultural dimensions (Souza & Dainez, 2022). The creation of development routes is linked to the demands that emerge from culture, therefore, people with disabilities not only need stimuli, they need to be introduced to the same forms of knowledge as anyone else, as this concerns their dignity and their human condition. This issue seems to worsen when it intersects with aging.

Intersectionality between disability and aging

The intersectionality between disability and aging becomes relevant as it is a phenomenon of few scientific productions, even though it is essential in improving public policies and studying theories that encompass this phenomenon. Research about elderly people with disabilities in Brazil requires in-depth analysis aimed at these people, due to the increase in demands for social programs and services aimed at this part of society, as described by Sousa and Chariglione (2017).

Still about intersectionality, the importance of prioritizing this type of analysis is highlighted, as categories such as race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, disability, among others, are interrelated and shape each other, as Collins and Bilge (2021). Future investigations should increasingly approach these intersections, making more diverse proposals regarding samples and research contexts. This type of investigation and its results can identify gaps, censorship and taboos that continue to be present in topics such as the aging of people with disabilities.

As previously discussed, historical-cultural theory can bring interesting contributions to thinking about the aging of people with disabilities in Brazil and around the world, since Vigotski's theory focuses on human development in the concrete life trajectory. For Reis and Facci (2015), the focus of historical-cultural psychology is based on human activity that constitutes the relation between man and his environment through culture. For Vigotski (1996), culture originates special forms of conduct, modifies the activity of psychic functions and the process of historical development. Social man modifies the modes and procedures of his conduct, transforming his natural inclinations and functions, elaborating and creating new forms of cultural behavior.

In this sense, the subject's psychic development is a dialectical process, in which the passage from one age to another occurs in a revolutionary way, not uniform, not even rectilinear or evolutionary. Human development, in historical-cultural theory, is characterized by contradiction, often interrupted

by the emergence, in its course, of new formations. Thus, to understand the formation of the subject, one must consider the historical focus of the rhythms of development, the historical advancement of humanity, with the characteristics of each age moving amidst the concrete conditions in which the subject is inserted (Elkonin, 1987). This is no different with elderly people or people with disabilities, as this highlights, once again, the importance of an intersectional perspective in these analyzes that highlight different ways and situations of developing as a subject.

According to Martins (2013), the senses and meanings of aging are linked to the very condition of man as an active and interactive subject. Man as a historical being is constituted dialectically, encompassing present, past and future, in a process of constant physical, psychological and social transformation. In the specific case of physical disability, for example, the aging of a person with a disability leads to dependence due to a double burden of reduced mobility, as it can mean the aging of a body that is already relatively limited (Martins et al., 2018).

For Santos (2018), old age is not just the final stage of development or the individual process of humanization. Old age is its peak. Placing old age on the descending curve of a parabola no longer seems to represent it adequately, as was done in the past. Even in a view restricted to the biological dimension. This becomes increasingly evident as people's life expectancy increases and the number of elderly people increases in many countries, including Brazil.

Elderly people experience time and its implications for development processes, such as suffering, predictable limitations, overcoming, but also possibilities not imagined until very recently. This statement speaks to Vygotsky when he argues that human development is unlimited and processual and with intersectionality, through a heterogeneous understanding for all those who age.

That said, it is important to clarify that gerontological studies have made significant progress

in this intersectionality of disability and aging, a phenomenon of great relevance not only for people with disabilities, but for the entire society in which these people are inserted.

Contributions from contemporary authors in Gerontology

Gerontology studies the processes associated with human aging, being an area of convergence among several areas such as: Biology, Sociology, Education, Psychology, among others. The word gerontology was introduced by Élie Metchnikoff, in 1903, and means the scientific study of the aging process of all living things and the multiple problems that involve the elderly (Souza, 2022).

Gerontology is a multi and interdisciplinary field that investigates the description and explanation of changes typical of the aging process and its genetic-biological, psychological and sociocultural determinants. According to Neri (2008, 2013), psychological theories about human aging are divided into classic, transitional and contemporary. Classical theories associated aging with a stage of loss and inserted within a psychology oriented towards productivity and the physical and cognitive autonomy characteristic of adults. Transition theories discuss psychosocial aspects throughout life, from an interactionist perspective of development. Contemporary theories advocated a paradigm of optimization and compensation, where aging is also a developmental process. Contemporary aging theories are classified, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Contemporary Theories of Aging

Theory	Authors
Life-span Development	Baltes (1987); Baltes (1997)
Lifelong Behavioral Addiction	M. M. Baltes (1996)
Socioemotional selectivity across the life-span	Carstensen (1991)
Primary and secondary control throughout life	Heckhausen e Schulz (1995)
Critical events throughout life	Diehl (1999)

Fonte: Neri (2013).

From this perspective, this article is in line with contemporary theories of aging, specifically with Baltes' life-span paradigm, with a view to being a trend in the psychology of aging internationally, and therefore converge with the Vigotski's theory. That said, it is extremely important to bring the contributions of Paul Baltes, a German psychologist who was born in 1939 and died in 2006, an important theorist in the field of aging psychology. The author argued that development occurs as a continuous, multidimensional and multidirectional process of changes caused by genetic-biological and sociocultural influences of a normative and non-normative nature, marked by competing gains and losses due to individual, cultural and interactivity between levels and times of influences, which contradicts past theories when they relate human aging only to decline and losses in all aspects (Neri, 2013).

Baltes was considered one of the world's leading developmental psychologists. The most influential human development of its time and even today for scholars of human aging. According to Neri (2006), Baltes believed in the incomplete nature of human development, in the relevance of culture to compensate for the limits of ontogenesis, in the normative character of aging and in the initial and advanced discontinuity.

In the life-span development paradigm, the author defends the multiple levels and dimensions of development, seen as an interactional, dynamic and contextualized process, while the lifelong behavioral dependence paradigm argues that dependence is not solely a function of developmental circumstances, but at all stages of life; dependence can take on a nature that qualifies it as behavioral, that is, patterns with two basic functions.

The life-span paradigm identifies three classes of influence on development: normative by age, normative by history and non-normative. Age regulations occur due to predictable changes of a genetic-biological nature throughout the ages. The maturation process, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, aging, includes biological and cultural factors. In historical regulations, psychosocial events associated with the socialization process occur in

which all people from the same cohort, that is, the same period, experience the same historical events, at the same times in their lives. In non-normative classes, changes that are not predictable due to biological or social factors occur, however, which generate a great impact on people, due to losses, divorces, accidents, etc. These influences tend to be negative for people, as they threaten their ability to adapt (Neri, 2012, 2013).

For Baltes, elderly people can recover from the effects of these adversities and maintain their development, according to the reserve capacity of their biological and psychological resources combined with their behavioral plasticity, bringing their full potential for change, transforming this experience into new learning. The author also defends successful development and aging through strategies and processes of selection, optimization and compensation (SOC theory), as mediators of the relations among losses, risks and accumulated losses, personal resources and the adaptation represented by well-being psychological, activity, functionality and social involvement (Neri, 2013). Selection means specification and reduction of the range of alternatives allowed by individual plasticity. Optimization, in turn, concerns acquisition, application, coordination and maintenance and, finally, compensation, which concerns the adoption of alternatives to maintain operation.

In this context, it seems important to put into dialogue the positions of Vigotski and Baltes when dealing with the relation between aging and disability. This dialogue is not very common, but it can be interesting to think about from an intersectional perspective on the treatment of the issue. Especially at this time, when it is necessary to improve public policies that cover aging people with disabilities with a view to guaranteeing their rights, this discussion is crucial. Even more specifically, when it comes to the elderly population, political values and attitudes began to have an impact on legal provisions, defining guidelines for priority in meeting the demands arising from this population segment, which is the highlight for the continuation of this article.

Vigotski and Baltes: limits and possibilities in facing the issues of aging and disability

It is also important to point out the life-span perspective, in which Baltes defends the achievement of new learning throughout life to improve cognitive capacity, ensuring that elderly people have access to the social environment, which is in line with Vigotski when stating about the importance of social relations for the development of people with disabilities.

Participation in stimulating contexts and the presence of development opportunities have been shown to be fundamental for better intellectual performance throughout life. The education of elderly people allows for a new meaning of experiences prior to old age and, mainly, of experiences throughout life.

From Vigotski's perspective, regarding the possibilities of developing learning, he does not discard the biological core, but considers the social and cultural environment as mediators of the relations among people with disabilities and the environment, so that when exposed to objects of knowledge, stimulate learning, considering that man is not only a being that develops organically, but also socially and culturally (Bueno & Oliveira, 2023).

Another important point of connection between the authors refers to the term "dependence", in which Baltes highlights that it can be intensified in infantilizing and/or overprotective environments. Studies in Gerontology indicate a high prevalence of dependent behaviors in elderly people, even when they were able to carry out a certain activity independently. These studies also highlight that the support offered can exceed the real needs of elderly people (Baltes, 1995; Pavarini, 1996; Ribeiro & Brito, 2022). And when you think about elderly people with a disability, this premise remains the same, right? Does it actually intensify?

Such conceptions of dependence, especially when talking about elderly people with a disability, demonstrate that, socially, these are often reinforced. On the other hand, actions that

promote the independence of these elderly people are reduced. Therefore, once again the importance of the SOC theory by Baltes and Baltes (1990) stands out, as, according to this theory, it appears that elderly people can increase their functionality, regardless of their condition, by selecting and optimize behaviors that bring you more gains. The possibility of real loss of capacity is understood, but compensation can improve the coping skills of these elderly people and increase the performance of their daily activities (Ribeiro & Brito, 2022; Zhang & Radhakrishnan, 2018).

Considerations

In line with the objectives outlined at the beginning of this article and with the perspective of presenting an outcome for the discussion presented, it is concluded that, although Vigotski's theory does not have specific points about issues of the aging of people with disabilities, it contributed and further contributes to studies of the development of these people. Vigotski's theory of defectology was written at the beginning of the 20th century, thinking about an education for a new man in a new society, as the author claimed that the separation of people with disabilities from the majority society would imply the formation of another type of humanity, in other types of men. He sought social relations that break with capitalism and from the perspective of historical-cultural psychology, the appropriation of culture is responsible for the process of humanization, which is in line with Baltes' life-span perspective, considering that both authors believe in development of people, regardless of their characteristics as people.

Despite advances in relation to interest in studies on the aging phenomenon of people with disabilities and the importance of the perspectives of Vigotski's defectology and Baltes' life-span for the development of these people, as well as the intersectionality between disability and aging, the invisibility of these people with disabilities is still perceived, even with the support of social movements. A clear example is that 13 years ago, the Law Project No. 1,118/2011 was instituted, which establishes that a person with a disability is considered

elderly when they are aged 45 or over, and it was not even transformed into a law that supports these people, in other words, there is no interest on the part of politicians in supporting these people.

The topic addressed here is relevant, given the growing interest of researchers in the field of study of aging, which is an excellent step towards the inclusion of elderly people with disabilities, corroborating the perspective of Vigotski and Baltes about the intersectionality of disability and aging.

As can be seen, there is a lot to be done and there are still difficulties to be overcome by elderly people with disabilities who still remain invisible in our society. In this sense, it is necessary to provide opportunities for development processes with the intention of enabling these people to acquire new skills and maintain existing ones. The greater promotion of development, the greater chance of prolonging their independence and autonomy, enhancing the individual himself and not his deficiencies or difficulties.

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