

# Apresentation

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The aim of the thematic section "Special Education: Contemporary Trends and Challenges" is to offer the reader reflections and contemporary discussions in the field of Special Education, involving different audiences in the area, from research carried out by teachers and other professionals. Nowadays, the right to education is guaranteed to those who need Special Education, but historically the school has been place that privileged some groups in the detriment of others, "legitimized by policies and practices that reproduce social order" (Brasil, 2008, p.1).

Discussing exclusion and inclusion of people with disabilities in the different fields of knowledge is quite complex. Inclusion is a comprehensive and challenging concept when applied to the educational context and other segments of society. In the educational field, it is the result of a historical process marked by struggles and achievements of social movements with the participation of different actors and it is now present in our educational scenario demanding new attitudes and actions from those involved in education.

The current National Policy on Special Education within the perspective of inclusive education advocates inclusive education as an educational paradigm based on the concept of human rights, whose purpose is to guarantee the right of all students, with or without disabilities, to be together, to learn and participate in all the opportunities offered by the educational environment, without any kind of discrimination (Brasil, 2008). Inclusive education is historically fairly recent in Brazilian education and its effective implementation process is still in process in many educational settings given the scope of its meaning.

Facing such a political proposition in action, the educational processes and their implications must be rethought in order to consider the specificities that involve the inclusion of students with disabilities in different educational spaces. A new scenario presents itself and it demands consistent principles and actions to meet the needs of each individual/group involved. This implies thinking about the constitution of pedagogical projects, pedagogical practices, teacher training, use of teaching resources, and general and specific accessibility conditions.

In order to widen and deepen the discussions, I begin by presenting the articles that have contributed to this thematic section and must highlight that the emphasis of the discussions is devoted to the following themes: the right to education, public policies, different groups of students in the area, schooling processes, and Specialized Educational Service.

Carla Biancha Angelucci, *Universidade de São Paulo*, Pamela Block, Stony Brook University, and Larissa Costa dos Santos, *Universidade de São Paulo*, wrote the first text entitled "People with disabilities: fighting for their rights in the United States of America and Brazil". The aim of their research is to discuss the right to education for those in need of Special Education in Brazil and in the United States through a comparative study. The authors discuss the design of the Special Education policy in both countries and the participation of social movements within this context.

The second article entitled "De inclusiones y exclusiones" by Gisela Untoiglich, *Universidad de Buenos Aires*, is a study on the emergence of Special Education in Argentina and its evolution. The author also discusses the development and work at the *Centro Educativo para niños em tempos y espacios singulares*, within the modality of Special Education.

The third article, "Inclusion of the target audience of special education in Brazilian higher education: history, policies and practices" is by Leonardo Santos Amâncio Cabral, *Universidade Federal da Grande Dourados*. The author systematically reviews the literature using different databases to monitor and analyze knowledge production in the field of special education over the last ten years, regarding the inclusion of Special Education students in higher education. The discussion focuses on the admission and permanence of these students in different higher education courses and the actions that have been undertaken to make this effective as well as the challenges.

The article "School inclusion, permanence and the right to learning: a study of trajectories and school performance in a municipal school" was written by Rosângela Gavioli Prieto, *Universidade de São Paulo*, Simone Girardi Andrade and Márcia Maurílio Souza. In this study, the authors analyze the processes of schooling of students with intellectual disabilities in the public schools of the *São Paulo* network. The study focuses on the issue of access and discusses how the permanence of these students occurs in the school context in view of inclusive education.

The next article, "EPLIBRAS: the experience of a bilingual project to prepare deaf students for ENEM", is by Maria Izabel Garcia, *Universidade Federal Fluminense*. The author presents a pioneering experience developed with hearing-impaired adults aiming to prepare them for the National High School Examination, called the Preparatory School in Libras. The article highlights the actions undertaken by a teacher in the area of education for the hearing impaired and her team who teach the syllabus related to the exam and, consequently, provide the participants with greater opportunities for access to higher education.

Finally, the article "Dialogism and cognitive impediments: reflections on communication between adult and child with intellectual disability" written by Tícia Cassiany Ferro Cavalcante, *Universidade Federal de Pernambuco*. The author presents a research that deals with the linguistic-discursive characteristics of communication between adults and children with intellectual disabilities in the context of the Specialized Educational Service. The purpose of the study is to contribute to the teaching practice in view of this specific population.

Through the studies on special education, some tendencies in Special Education in the contemporary world can be perceived, as well as the challenges in the educational spaces, but also some achievements obtained by public policies and the participation of different social actors. New demands are constantly increasing given that the national number of enrollments of students with disabilities has been increasing and the permanence of these students in different educational spaces is main concern of the discussions and studies in the area. We hope that the reading and study of the articles can promote a dialogue with other fields of knowledge and increase the movement of education for all!

## Reference

Brasil. *Política Nacional de Educação Especial na Perspectiva da Educação Inclusiva*. Brasília: MEC, 2008.