

SPECIAL EDUCATION IN TEACHER TRAINING: A STUDY ON UNDERGRADUATE COURSES IN PEDAGOGY¹

A EDUCAÇÃO ESPECIAL NA FORMAÇÃO DE PROFESSORES: UM ESTUDO SOBRE CURSOS DE LICENCIATURA EM PEDAGOGIA

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ABSTRACT: This text presents results of an investigation on Special Education (SE) in the initial formation of teachers of Early Childhood Education and initial grades of Elementary Education, in the Pedagogy degree courses offered by the Federal Universities of Minas Gerais, Brazil. It is a documentary and bibliographic analysis using as main sources the Legal Guidelines and the Courses Pedagogical Master Plans (PMP). In 2018, ten active courses were identified, in the face-to-face modality, at the Universities: UNIFAL, UFJF, UFLA, UFMG, UFOR, UFSJ, UFU, FACIP / UFU, UFV and UFVJM. It was found that the PMP met the National Guidelines for Higher Education Courses, approved in 2006. All courses offered curricular components related to SE, but with reduced course hours (CH) compared to the total CH. The study of “Sign Language” was included in all PMP in compliance with Decree 5,626/2005. The comparative analysis of the documents corroborates previous research, such as: Deimling (2013), Pedroso, Campos and Duarte (2013), Omote and Marinho (2017). SE occupies a restricted space in the curricula, in the objectives, in the profile of the graduate, in the CH, in the organization of the formative trajectories, which represents a gap in the initial formation. These evidences indicate the necessary expansion of SE space in Pedagogy Courses and the continuous training of teachers in this area in order to make inclusive education real.

KEYWORDS: Special Education. Teacher training. Pedagogy Course.

RESUMO: Este texto apresenta resultados de uma investigação sobre a Educação Especial (EE) na formação inicial dos professores de Educação Infantil e anos iniciais do Ensino Fundamental, nos cursos de licenciatura em Pedagogia ofertados pelas Universidades Federais do estado de Minas Gerais. Trata-se de uma análise documental e bibliográfica utilizando-se como principais fontes as Diretrizes legais e os Projetos Pedagógicos dos Cursos (PPC). Em 2018, identificaram-se dez cursos ativos, na modalidade presencial, nas Universidades: UNIFAL, UFJF, UFLA, UFMG, UFOR, UFSJ, UFU, FACIP/UFU, UFV e UFVJM. Constatou-se que os PPC atendiam às Diretrizes Nacionais para os Cursos Superiores de Pedagogia, aprovadas em 2006. Todos os cursos ofertavam componentes curriculares relacionados à EE, porém com uma carga horária (CH) reduzida em relação à CH total. O estudo de “Libras” figura em todos os PPC em atendimento ao Decreto nº 5.626/2005. A análise comparativa dos documentos corrobora pesquisas anteriores, a saber: Deimling (2013), Pedroso, Campos e Duarte (2013), Omote e Marinho (2017). A EE ocupa um espaço restrito nos currículos, nos objetivos, no perfil do egresso, na CH, na organização das trajetórias formativas, o que representa uma lacuna na formação inicial. Essas evidências indicam a necessária ampliação do espaço da EE nos Cursos de Pedagogia e a formação contínua dos docentes nessa área no sentido de concretizar a educação inclusiva.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Educação Especial. Formação docente. Curso de Pedagogia.

1 INTRODUCTION

The contemporary world requires from teachers multiple skills and knowledge in daily school work, which is marked by differences, diversity and innovations. It is in this scenario of educational challenges of the globalized world that, continuously, the teaching identities

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are (re)built. Given this, it is justified to investigate teacher training and its implications for knowledge and pedagogical practices in school contexts.

We share the conception that the process of teacher training is neither restricted to a certain life time, nor to the school and university space. It goes beyond the walls of the school and pervades the daily life, the cultural, leisure and many other educational spaces. According to the literature of the area (Gauthier, Martineau, Desbiens, Malo, & Simard, 1998; Tardif, 2000), teaching knowledge is plural, consisting of pedagogical, disciplinary, curricular and experiential knowledge. According to the Brazilian National Education Guidelines and Framework Law (Law No. 9.394/1996 - LDB) and the National Curriculum Guidelines, teacher training for Early Childhood Education and first grades of Elementary School is provided during Pedagogy Degree Courses. Resolution No. 1 of May 15, 2006, of the National Education Council, determines:

Article 4 The Pedagogy Degree course is intended for the training of teachers to perform teaching functions in Early Childhood Education and in the early grades of Elementary School, in High School, in the Teaching course mode, in Professional Education in the area of services and school support and other areas in which pedagogical knowledge is provided. (Resolution No. 1/2006).

Subsequently, Resolution No. 2 of July 1, 2015, which established the new National Curriculum Guidelines for Higher Education and Continuing Education, in Chapter IV, §3, provides that: “The initial education of Magisterium professionals will be offered, preferably, on-site, with a high academic, scientific, technological and cultural standard”. According to the National Curriculum Guidelines, teacher education for Early Childhood Education and Elementary School, including teacher training for Special Education, should be undertaken in Higher Education courses. Thus, Universities, University Centers and Colleges became the locus of initial teacher education. Universities, according to the National Curriculum Guidelines, are responsible for developing teaching, research and extension in an integrated manner, producing and disseminating the sciences, technologies, innovations, cultures and arts in order to promote the formation of critical citizens and committed to ethics, democracy and social transformation (National Curriculum Guidelines [*Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais Gerais da Educação Básica*], 2013).

The Federal Constitution of 1988 guarantees to Brazilians and foreigners residing in Brazil the right to universal school education. Thus, regardless of family income, education should be offered by the State, as required by article 205 of the Constitution. However, we realize from everyday experience how challenging it is to build an educational environment based on the principles of inclusion. In this regard, building an inclusive social and school context is extremely important to ensure the learning rights of all, including the rights of persons with disabilities. We understand inclusive education as a human right, a process that makes it possible to combat and eradicate the social stereotypes that separate “normal” from “abnormal”. It is the process in which differences favor the growth of the group, the collective. To be effective, it is necessary to break with conventional teaching and learning standards, and create conditions to effect a process in which everyone contributes to the realization, in fact, of the right to learn.

We understand that this depends on a set of factors, from the working conditions of teachers and education professionals, the physical conditions and materials of the spaces, the democratization of school environments, public policies, the existence of specific teaching material for teachers and students, and, above all, the training of professionals in Special Education.

In this perspective, we consider relevant to investigate the Pedagogy Courses offered by Federal Universities, as spaces for training teachers who work in Basic Education: Early Childhood Education and Elementary School, including Special Education (Pereira, 2019). The research universe consisted of the Pedagogy Degree Courses offered by the Federal Universities of the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil, as spaces for the training of teachers working in Special Education. We asked: what are the curriculum components of the Pedagogy course that focus on the teaching and learning process in Special Education? Do the disciplines offered allow the future teacher subsidies to promote the education of the Special Education target students? What is the profile of the undergraduate student outlined in the Pedagogical Master Plans of the Courses (PMP)? How is Special Education addressed in the pedagogical projects of the Pedagogy Courses at the Federal Universities located in the state of Minas Gerais? How do the curricular structures of Pedagogy courses contribute to the training of teachers to work with Special Education target students?

This text presents some of the results of the research conducted in 2017-2018 and focuses on Special Education in the pedagogical projects and curriculum components of Higher Education courses. We analyze the education of the pedagogue, in what is pertinent to the Special Education, in Pedagogy courses that graduate the teachers of Early Childhood Education and the early grades of Elementary School. Starting from the need for understanding and debate about the PMP and the relevant social role of the educator/teacher for the education of the citizen, we delineate as general objective of the research to analyze the initial education of the teachers of the Early Childhood Education and the early grades of Elementary School to work in Special Education. The study was held in the PMP of the Higher Degree in Pedagogy courses offered by the Federal Universities of the state of Minas Gerais.

2 PEDAGOGICAL PROJECTS OF PEDAGOGY HIGH EDUCATION TEACHING COURSES

This is a bibliographic and documentary study in the field of qualitative approach to research in education. Throughout the investigative process, we conducted a theoretical-methodological dialogue with reference works in the field of teacher education, such as (Freire, 2001; Saviani, 2012; Libiliar, 2010), Special Education (Bueno, 1999; Glat, 2004; Jannuzzi, 2004; Mantoan, 2003; Mazzotta, 1993, 2005) and the documentary *corpus*.

To research is to reflect on experiences, or even to experience what one investigates. Therefore, it is up to the researcher to choose the method, sources and references. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1994), this approach allows us to construct a scenario and not only to evaluate predefined scenarios. According to the authors, in this process, it is up to the researcher to build data and make a rigorous record. The usefulness of study is linked to the ability to generate theory, description or comprehension, as well as the construction of a broader awareness of the nature of social life (Bogdan & Biklen, 1994).

We believe that the bibliographic and documentary research enables the researcher to expand the ability to read, select and analyze the positions adopted by several authors who deal with the topic and who present relevant arguments about it. Bibliographic and documentary research favors the academic exercise of comparing, criticizing and analyzing the way each author evaluates the same facts and problems. After reading the works, we selected the authors who presented the highest relationship with our object of investigation. Flick (2009) highlights, in the literature analysis in qualitative research, the researcher's use of insights and literary information as a way of knowing the fact/problem, seeking in it the answers he/she needs.

Documents, as research sources, not only represent evidence, views of reality, but are also intended for a specific purpose. We made a comparison, considering them as "communicative devices methodologically developed in the construction of versions on events" and, at the moment of selection, we verified "authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning" (Flick, 2009, p. 233-234).

According to Cellard (2012, p. 298), when performing the documentary analysis, the researcher must have "the objective of constituting a satisfactory *corpus*, exhausting all the clues capable of providing information". Based on the above-mentioned author, we recognize the need for a critical look by the researcher, as well as the prudence and proper evaluation of the documentation analyzed in five primary dimensions: context, author or authors, authenticity and reliability of the text, nature of the text, key concepts and logic of the text. The documentary *corpus* consisted of documents and official data from international conventions, national public policies, PMP from the Pedagogy Degree Courses of the investigated Federal Universities, the subject sheets (curriculum components - CC) related to Special Education, in addition to theses, dissertations, books, chapters, and scientific papers that address the topic.

The universe of research was chosen from a survey conducted on the website of the Ministry of Education (<http://emec.mec.gov.br>). We identified a large number of universities, institutes and colleges that offered the Pedagogy course in Brazil (in 2018, there were 2,040) and, more specifically, in Minas Gerais (185 courses), on-site modality. We verified a spread of Pedagogy Courses in Distance Education centers in the country. Taking into consideration the norms that regulate the Pedagogy course, the requirement that the pedagogue must be able to teach, research and provide pedagogical coordination and that his/her training should occur, preferably in face-to-face mode, we chose as object of analysis the courses Pedagogy Classes, active in 2018, offered by Federal Universities and in the state of Minas Gerais (Table 1). These courses are references in the field of teacher education, research and graduate studies in Education.

Index	Higher Education Institutions	Acronym	City
1	Federal University of Alfenas	UNIFAL	Alfenas
2	Federal University of Juiz de Fora	UFJF	Juiz de Fora
3	Federal University of Lavras	UFLA	Lavras

Index	Higher Education Institutions	Acronym	City
4	Federal University of Minas Gerais	UFMG	Belo Horizonte
5	Federal University of Ouro Preto	UFOP	Mariana
6	Federal University of São João Del Rei	UFSJ	São João Del Rei
7	Federal University of Uberlândia	UFU	Uberlândia
8	Federal University of Uberlândia	UFU	Ituiutaba
9	Federal University of Viçosa	UFV	Viçosa
10	Federal University of Vales do Jequitinhonha e Mucuri	UFVJM	Diamantina
	Total: 9 Institutions – 10 Courses		

Table 1. Federal Universities located in the state of Minas Gerais that offer the Degree in Pedagogy.

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on data from the Ministry of Education (<https://emec.mec.gov.br>).

We built a comparative analysis of differences and similarities between PMP, through five categories of analysis, built on investigations developed by Gatti and Barretto (2009) and Veiga, Souza, Rezende and Damis (1997) on Bachelor Courses:

1. The universities: identification of the Federal Universities in Minas Gerais that offer the on-site Pedagogy course, location and year of the beginning of the Pedagogy Courses.
2. Objectives of Pedagogy Courses.
3. Undergraduate students' profile: the pedagogue's identity.
4. Curriculum components relevant to Special Education, compulsory and optional disciplines, as well as their workloads.
5. Course disciplines related to Special Education: contents; themes and bibliographical references.

From the comparative analysis of the documents used in the research and the dialogue with the literature of the area, we present a critical reading that aims to contribute to the analysis about the initial teacher education of the teachers of the Early Childhood Education and the early grades of Elementary School regarding Special Education. Our analysis was on PMPs in effect in 2018.

In a survey carried out on the Ministry of Education website, nine Federal Universities in operation were identified, which, in 2018, offered ten Pedagogy Degree courses. The political map of Minas Gerais (Figure 1) identifies the cities in which the investigated courses are located.

Index	Higher Education Institutions – Minas Gerais	Year of course creation	Number of annual vacancies	Course Hours
7	UFU	1959	80	3,530
8	FACIP/ UFU	2007	80	3,365
9	UFV	1972	60	3,450
10	UFVJM	2009	80	3,815
TOTAL			786	

Table 2. Vacancies offered and course load.

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on data from the Ministry of Education (<https://emec.mec.gov.br>).

We highlight the Federal University of Minas Gerais as the institution that has the oldest course (1943) and the Federal University of Lavras as the most recent (2014); the Federal University of Vales do Jequitinhonha e Mucuri had the largest workload of all. All courses offered workloads above the minimum required by the Legislation. In 2018, the Courses experienced a moment of transition and readjustment of curricula. This readjustment of the PMPs is due to the new guidelines for Basic Education teacher training approved in 2015. It is worth noting that our comparative analysis was limited to the existing PMPs in 2018, in accordance with the 2006 Course Guidelines.

Regarding the objectives of the Pedagogy Teaching Degree outlined in the PMP, only Federal University # 7 highlights Special Education, proposing “to accredit professionals to work in Early Childhood Education, the early grades of Elementary School and pedagogical disciplines for teacher training, in special education” (UFU, PMP, 2018). According to the curricular guidelines, approved in 2006, the aim of the Pedagogy course became, primarily, the teacher training inseparable from teaching, research and management training. We observed that the investigated institutions have their objectives anchored in the current Brazilian *National Education Guidelines and Framework Law* and the National Curriculum Guidelines. Specifically, the Federal University # 7 caught our attention because it is the only one to highlight Special Education in its objectives. Regarding teacher education in Pedagogy Courses, Cartolano (1998, p. 29-30) argued that “we should also think of a school that gives everyone the same basic education, since in this historical moment what we want to form in the first place, is the qualified teacher, the professional prepared to deal with the student, being ‘normal’ or ‘disabled’”.

Concerning the profile of the graduated student, of the ten courses investigated, five PMP do not mention Special Education when referring to the graduated student’s profile, two bring a text exactly the same as Art. 5 of the Guidelines (2006) and only three of them go beyond what the National Curriculum Guidelines propose. However, UNIFAL, UFOP and UFU Courses demonstrate in their PMPs the focus on “qualifying for the performance of the pedagogue as a teacher of target students of Special Education”. Concerning the teacher profile, Deimling and Caiado (2012) state that, although it is necessary to consider the current legislation pertinent to the educator’s education, it is necessary to go beyond what is determined

so that teachers prepared to teach in an effectively inclusive system are trained. In a study conducted with graduates of Pedagogy, Póker, Valentine and Garla (2017) concluded that 80% of respondents did not know or felt insecure about the attitudes that should be taken with students of Special Education. According to Fonseca-Janes and Omote (2013), “the education of students with disabilities, regardless of the degree and nature of impairment in the common school environment, together with their peers, is a basic principle” (p. 326).

The analysis of the curricula, syllabus and bibliographies outlined in the PMP allowed us to see that Special Education occupies a restricted space in the initial education of the Early Childhood Education and the early grades of Elementary School teacher. We identified that of the 606 disciplines offered by the ten courses, only 25 refer to Special Education. It is certainly not enough for the Federal Universities to offer theoretical disciplines on inclusive education. However, as stated by Deimling (2013):

Thus, we think it is important that the multipurpose teacher, responsible for the regular classroom, acquires in his/her initial education a solid theoretical base on the different areas of performance of school education, among them the knowledge about the characteristics of children with SEN and its teaching-learning process, so that it can, in practice, contribute to the success of this student’s learning process. (Deimling, 2013, p. 246).

On the other hand, one cannot throw all the weight and responsibility into initial education. Thus, we emphasize the importance of continuing education and experiential knowledge, since “teachers, in their pedagogical action, mobilize and rely on a series of knowledge from different sources” (Deimling, 2013, p. 246).

Next, in Table 3, we present the data collected in the documents about the curriculum of the investigated undergraduate Pedagogy course, focusing on Special Education.

Federal University	Curriculum Component		Semester	Course hours	
	Nomenclature	Compulsory / Optional		Theory	Practice
1 UNIFAL	Inclusive Education: Foundations and Methodologies I	Compulsory	4 th semester	60	30
	Inclusive Education: Foundations and Methodologies II	Compulsory	5 th semester	30	30
	Brazilian Sign Language	Compulsory	5 th semester	30	-
2 UFJF	Brazilian Sign Language	Compulsory	6 th semester	N/A	
	Grade I of BRAILLE reading and writing system	Optional	N/A	N/A	
	Special Topics Brazilian Sign Language II	Optional	N/A	N/A	
	Education and Diversity II	Optional	N/A	N/A	
3 UFPA	Inclusive Education: Fundamentals, policies and school practices	Compulsory	2 nd semester	68	17
	Introduction to Brazilian Sign Language	Compulsory	6 th semester	68	17

Federal University	Curriculum Component		Semester	Course hours	
	Nomenclature	Compulsory / Optional		Theory	Practice
4 UFMG	Inclusive Education Fundamentals	Compulsory	5 th semester	60	
	Brazilian Sign Language fundamentals	Compulsory	7 th semester	60	
5 UFOP	Special educational needs	Compulsory	7 th semester	60	-
	Brazilian Sign Language translation ⁴	Compulsory	8 th semester	30	30
	Psychosocial fundamentals of Braille code	Optional	N/A	60	-
6 UFSJ	Inclusive education	Compulsory	2 nd semester	72	-
	Brazilian Sign Language	Compulsory	6 th semester	72	-
7 UFU	Brazilian Sign Language	Compulsory	3 rd year	60	-
	Special education	Compulsory	4 th year	90	-
8 FACIP	Learning and inclusive education	Compulsory	5 th semester	60	-
	Brazilian Sign Language	Compulsory	9 th semester (day class) 10 th semester (evening class)	30	-
9 UFV	Brazilian Sign Language and visual literacy of the deaf	Compulsory	4 th semester	30	30
	Special Education	Compulsory	6 th semester	60	-
	Topics on Special Education	Optional	8 th semester	60	-
10 UFVJM	Inclusive and Special Education	Compulsory	3 rd semester Teaching Degree	60	15
	Brazilian Sign Language fundamentals	Compulsory	4 th semester Teaching Degree	60	15

Table 3. Curriculum Components (CC) related to Inclusive Education and Special Education in the Pedagogy PMP of the Federal Universities of Minas Gerais

Source: Elaborated by the authors from the PMP published by the investigated Universities (2018).

N/A = not available.

The curricula in effect in 2018 showed that Special Education teaching in Pedagogy courses meets the normative requirements, but it occupies a limited space in the PMP of teacher training courses, considering the specificities of teaching work and the challenges faced by multipurpose teachers in the school daily life. Referring to the attention to the Special Education target students, Resolution no. 1/2006 recognized the importance of the initial education and the offer by the Pedagogy Course of a solid base related to the teaching-learning process of these children.

⁴ The nomenclature of the curriculum component has changed with respect to that adopted in the curriculum organization elaborated in 2010, which was called "Introduction to Brazilian Sign Language". We chose to use the nomenclature used in the Discipline Program. Retrieved from <https://ichs.ufop.br/programs>

We verified that all investigated universities have components related to the Brazilian Sign Language, in compliance with Decree no. 5.626/2005, which recognizes Libras as an official language in the country, so that it is researched and taught in common courses and universities as a compulsory discipline in all undergraduate courses. In some universities, this is the only mandatory component of the curriculum, which also offers optional components. One of the justifications commonly used for the existence of only one discipline related to Special Education is that content can be worked across, in conjunction with other disciplines (Fonseca-Janes & Omote, 2013).

Among the analyzed Federal Universities, UNIFAL offers along the Pedagogy course three Curricular Components related to the training for teaching children with special needs, one in the 4th semester and two in the 5th semester of the course. The total course load of the Curricular Components is 180 hours, being 120 theoretical hours and 60 practical hours. We did not find, in the pedagogical plan, the specific bibliography that supports the teaching of these disciplines, nor the way the practical course load is implemented, since there is no prediction of a specific internship in the area. The UFJE, in turn, presents in its pedagogical plan four Curricular Components related to Special Education, being three optional and only the Curricular Component Brazilian Sign language, offered in the 6th semester, compulsory. Among the optional Curricular Components are the teaching of the Braille Reading and Writing System to work with visually impaired people, in depth study of the Brazilian Sign Language and the study of practices and policies of inclusion, which provides for addressing issues such as differences and inequalities in the school daily life.

In UFLA, according to the curricular matrix analyzed, two are the obligatory Curricular Components regarding Special Education, one of them being “Introduction to the Brazilian Sign Language”, in the sixth semester, with a total course load of 85 hours; and the other “Inclusive Education: school foundations, policies and practices”, taught in the second semester and with the same course load. Regarding the UFMG, according to the curricular organization, two are the compulsory Curricular Components referring to inclusive education, taught in the 5th and 7th semesters, both with 60 hours of course. The Curricular Component syllabus, however, was not made available, and the analyzed PMP does not spell out the objectives or bibliography used for the Curricular Components “Fundamentals of Inclusive Education” and “Fundamentals of Brazilian Sign Language”.

UFOP, in turn, offers four components related to inclusive education, three compulsory and one optional. Among the obligatory ones, the Curricular Component “Problems of teaching and learning”, which, according to the syllabus, focuses on the history and concept of these problems, as well as their impacts on pedagogical practice. UFSJ offers as compulsory Curricular Component “Inclusive Education” and “Brazilian Sign Language” in the 2nd and 6th semesters, respectively, both with a course load of 72 hours. The Brazilian Sign Language syllabus in the Pedagogy course was not available in the document. In the Inclusive Education syllabus, aspects such as valuing diversity and creating learning opportunities are mentioned.

At UFU, “Brazilian Sign Language” and “Special Education” Curricular Components are compulsory in the 3rd and 4th years of the Pedagogy course, respectively. The PMP sets as

objective the training of teachers to act in Special Education. The broad and inclusive approach is a feature of the syllabus. The Pedagogy course offered by FACIP/UFU also presents two compulsory Curricular Components related to Special Education, one of them being the “Brazilian Sign Language”, offered in the 9th semester for the day class students and in the 10th semester for the night class students, with a total of 30 hours, and the “Inclusive Learning and Education”, taught in the 5th semester with a total of 60 hours. The goal is to understand the foundations and principles of inclusive education, through the analysis of current legislation, the discussion of the pedagogical proposal and the development of actions aimed at inclusion.

UFV also offers two compulsory Curricular Components – “Brazilian Sign Language” and “Visual Literacy for the Deaf” - in the 4th semester of the Pedagogy course, with 30 theoretical hours and 30 practical hours; and “Special Education”, in the 6th semester, with 60 theoretical hours; besides an optional discipline: “Topics in Special Education”, in the 8th semester, with 60 theoretical hours. It is also planned to conduct supervised curricular internship, a mandatory component that aims to promote the contact of future educators with their professional field. Of the 480 hours of supervised internship planned, 120 hours are destined for the internship in Special/Inclusive Education, in school spaces in Viçosa and region.

Finally, UFVJM has two compulsory Curricular Components, in the 3rd and 4th semesters and both have a theoretical course load of 60 hours and a practice of 15 hours. The Curricular Component “Inclusive and Special Education” encompasses the study of concepts such as “special educational needs” and “inclusive education”, based on the legal parameters that permeate Special Education

We evidenced that the study of the “Braille Code” is offered as an optional curricular component in only two of the ten researched courses, demonstrating that the education of people with visual impairment is practically non-existent in the training of teachers graduated from Pedagogy courses, since the approach of this discipline is not prioritized by most institutions.

Another point to be noted is the minimal attention given by the Courses to students with high skills and giftedness. The topic is addressed in the syllabus of only one course investigated, which is offered by UFOP. In our view, this represents a gap that needs to be rethought, as there is a significant demand for children with high skills who must have the right to learn assured in public and private networks.

The analysis of the Curricular Component syllabus showed that the teaching of Special Education as a curricular component presents several approaches in different institutions. However, in common, it presents the fact that the courses prioritize the theoretical part focusing on inclusive education and the training of professionals to deal with diversity. Only in the PMP of the Course offered by UFV, 120 hours are destined for the Internship in Special/Inclusive Education.

The curricular organization of the UNIFAL Pedagogy course, according to the pedagogical project, is divided into axes of study, one of them being the “Center for deepening and diversifying studies”, which includes components related to “meeting different social

demands”. In this axis, there are the Curricular Components relevant to Diversity Education, in which Inclusive Education and the Study of Libras are addressed. We also did not find, in the pedagogical plan, the specific bibliography that supports the teaching of these disciplines, nor the way the practical course load is implemented, since there is no prediction of a specific internship in the area.

At UFJF, Special Education is inserted in the “Special Topics in Education and Diversity” which provides for a deepening of aspects of diversity education, based on the work of an author of great repercussion (not specified in the plan). The plan also presents the topic “Socio-historical approach and disability”, which proposes studies about students with disabilities, their development, learning, thinking and language.

At UFLA, the syllabus addresses topics such as diversity, types of disability (visual, hearing, intellectual, physical), equality, school inclusion, specialized care, syndromes and global developmental disorders. UFLA’s pedagogical project foresees, among the institution’s social responsibilities, actions aimed at social inclusion, accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities. In this sense, it provides for a Special Needs Student Support Program (called PADNEE), which aims to ensure adequate conditions for students in their academic development, as well as an Accessibility Center (called NAUFLA) and a Language and Communication Accessibility Program (known as PALCo). This approach is a differential of the institution’s plan, which shows care in ensuring the training of people with disabilities for the professional practice of pedagogy, which is also an important issue regarding inclusive education.

At UFOP, the Curricular Component “Special Educational Needs” broadly addresses Special Education, its background, concepts and public policies, and proposes the study of general aspects of human development and learning processes in order to outline the aspects regarding the inclusion of students with different special needs, such as those with hearing or visual impairment, cerebral palsy, autism, ADHD, Down Syndrome and giftedness. Regarding the optional Curricular Component, it is “Psychosocial Fundamentals of the Braille Code”. The syllabus provides a study of the history of the creation of the Braille code and how this code relates to spatial orientation, autonomous locomotion and the subjectivity of the visually impaired.

We emphasize that the simple offer of Curricular Component linked to Special Education does not mean that the training of teachers in undergraduate courses is satisfactory to meet students with special educational needs, nor that there is quality in the interdisciplinarity proposed by curricula and pedagogical proposals (Deimling & Caiado, 2012, p. 57). Thus, after analyzing the pedagogical projects of the Minas Gerais State Federal University, we found that, although having made significant advances, the teaching of these skills in higher institutions still remains a void. There is limited specific and effective attention to meet the demands of the current context, where more and more people with disabilities are enrolled in regular schools.

Understanding differences, individualities and the planning of educational actions to meet these needs, with innovative activities and to the detriment of a standardized and exclusionary action, are essential points in order to effectively contemplate learning rights. The training of teachers in Pedagogy courses, in this sense, should provide students/future teachers with an awareness of diversity, as well as providing theoretical and practical contact with Curricular Components related to Special Education. Oliveira (2015, p. 334) warns of the

possibility of the phenomenon of “pseudoinclusion” - when there is the reception of students with special needs without being really included in the teaching process - also resulting from the insubstantial training of teachers, poorly prepared for creating effective learning conditions according to the student’s particularities.

Pletsch (2009, p. 150) refers to this phenomenon as “precarious inclusion”. According to the author, public policies should be directed to the training of teachers in accordance with current educational demands, with the ability to act in the face of the heterogeneity proposed by the inclusive education system, surpassing traditional segregating practices.

The curricular organization of the Pedagogy Courses is marked by a small course load focused on the teaching of topics such as Special Education, but it is important to encourage the reflective behavior of teachers to promote inclusion through debates and the creation of transforming pedagogical practices (Omote & Marino, 2017).

Our study corroborates results from previous investigations. Studies, such as those performed by Macedo (2010) and Pedroso, Campos and Duarte (2013, p. 43), in the public universities of São Paulo, found that, despite the public policies of inclusion, the implementation of formative spaces - either as a specific discipline or content related to the teaching of students with “special educational needs” – was not taking place in all courses. We corroborate the study conducted by Deimling (2013), who indicated that the investigated Pedagogy Courses contemplated Resolution no. 1/2006 regarding teacher training for *diversity awareness*, as they offer, at least one compulsory subject on Special Education.

As well as in a study carried out by Gatti and Barretto (2009), we found that most of the researched Federal Universities present a very generic perspective of teacher/educator training, which reduces the time and space for developing specific skills for professional performance. Of the courses analyzed, we found a total of 25 disciplines related to Special Education, compared to 581 that refer to education, which denotes a limited offer of subjects related to Special Education. Despite the progress of discussions and studies of this area of knowledge in Pedagogy courses, we consider that Special Education should occupy more theoretical and practical spaces in the PMP of these undergraduate courses, in order to meet the training demands of teachers who work in the early grades of schooling.

3 CONCLUSION

After analyzing the pedagogical projects of the Minas Gerais State Federal Universities, we found that, as previous researches, although there have been significant advances in Higher Education institutions, in terms of research, *lato* and *stricto sensu* graduate programs, the Pedagogy Courses present gaps in the curricula. A limited specific and effective attention is predominant in order to meet the demands of the current context, specifically the Special Education target population.

We emphasize, however, that the insertion of disciplines alone will not be enough to promote significant advances in teacher education for the teaching of Special Education target students. Different curriculum components can focus on the area, study and research in a systematic way, thus enabling the student, future teacher, the acquisition of skills, abilities and knowledge.

We believe that it is not enough just to integrate students with disabilities into regular schools, it is intrinsically necessary to include them, recognize differences and respect their individual needs, in order to promote the reduction of social inequalities and the expansion of opportunities. According to Sasaki (1997), social inclusion is a necessary process for the transformation of society for all people.

The educational discourse of researchers, politicians and leaders, at the present moment strives for inclusion. However, the Federal Universities' documents, object of our research, showed in their PMPs that the offered Curricular Components do not allow the future teacher sufficient subsidies to promote the education of Special Education target students.

The Special Education student has the right to access, stay and learn within schools. In this perspective, Higher education Institutions as places of excellence, have the role of guiding the training of professionals who will work in school education, in order to achieve the goals of training educators committed to the inclusive education system. It is necessary to go beyond of what is provided by current legislation, as only knowledge and respect for diversity and inclusive education from a general perspective are not sufficient for proper Special Education training.

As Paulo Freire points out (2001, p. 2), "the ethical, political and professional responsibility obliges one's preparation, qualification [...], this activity requires that one's preparation and formation become permanent processes". We share the idea that the University's social mission is to promote initial and continuous teacher training, since it brings together teaching, research and extension, so as to enable the interchange between the Pedagogy course and the schools and enable the graduated student to understand the reality in which he/she will intervene.

We emphasize the novelty and the progress brought by the study carried out since, although inclusive education is widely discussed and the subject of recurrent research in the most diverse areas of knowledge, there has not been, until now, a detailed investigation of the pedagogical projects of Higher Education courses related to the Teaching Degree in Pedagogy and its curriculum components, in order to demonstrate the space given to Special Education, especially in Minas Gerais State Federal Universities, in the process of teacher training.

Finally, we understand the education of the pedagogue is not only complex and broad, but also his/her performance. The realization of an inclusive educational system goes beyond the initial education and commitment of this professional; it requires society and the State to realize the rights of all citizens to school education. The Teaching Degree in Pedagogy is part of this effort!

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