



ANSWERS AND
INNOVATIONS
IN PRE-SCHOOL
EDUCATION IN



PORTUGAL
AND
SLOVENIA



Edited by
Luís Castanheira and Tatjana Devjak



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**Answers and Innovations in Pre-School Education
in Portugal and Slovenia**

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Modern School Movement (MSM)

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Abstract

In this article we have highlighted the pedagogical model of Portuguese Modern School movement (M.E.M.) as an excellent contribution to ensure the construction of a perceptive quality, achieved several ways by each institution, either in the performance graduates ' professional either in production of professional knowledge in the field of childhood education. We feature initially, in the model, one of its principal founders and your organizational structure of professional cooperation. After we stress the relevance of democratic construction in the social organization of the learning of children in pre-school age. We discuss the Organization of the Group of children, the room and the daily routine, as well as the system of pilotage of the pedagogical work cooperative.

Keywords: *pedagogical model Portuguese; childhood education; professional performance*

Introduction

The pedagogical model of the Modern School Movement (MSM) is well known and implemented by several early childhood educators in many Portuguese early childhood education schools as well as in other cycles of education. It is also recognized by national and foreign universities as a model of cooperative self-training and a pedagogical model for in-service training of teachers, as a consequence of the positive results obtained from its practical and scientifically based application (Grave-Resendes & Soares, 2002).

In fact, the MSM develops a pedagogical practice that is permanently reflected and committed to the comprehensive way of thinking and doing what is educational, the integrative mode of what the educator does and of what the children do.

In this publication we seek to contribute to reshaping the role of the early childhood education school and of its educator, through the dissemination of the setting developed within the MSM. Having Sérgio Niza as one of its main founders, we begin by briefly presenting his biography and explain the historical and organizational evolution of this movement. Subsequently, we will seek to clarify the objectives and principles that underlie the movement, and then present some dimensions of pedagogy as examples of how MSM practices reflect the philosophical and theoretical bases of this Pedagogical Model. In the model we highlight the organization of the group of children, of the activity classroom and of the daily routine. We also address the pedagogical evaluation, underlining its formative character through a set of instruments that help the educator and the children to guide what happens in the room. We will then conclude with some final considerations.

Sérgio Niza: Brief Biographical Notes

Sérgio Niza was born in 1940 in Campo Maior. He comes from a wealthy family and he was a professor of primary education in Évora, obtaining a postgraduate specialization diploma in educational research (1963) and a postgraduate specialization in education psychology (1996).

Due to his school model based on the respect of the individual and his freedom, he was forbidden to teach in public schools by decision of the Salazar regime in 1963–64. When he returned to Lisbon and after being prevented again from teaching at a private school, he entered the Helen Keller Children's Centre, where a group of professionals based on Freinet's techniques was rehearsing a pioneering project of school integration for the blind, partially sighted and visually impaired children. Once there, he elaborates on useful references for the definition of his

educational path, thus originating the Modern School Movement (MSM) in 1966. This movement was not legally formalized, but still the International Federation of Modern School Movements, in the Perpignan Congress, appointed Rosalina Gomes de Almeida and Sérgio Niza as delegates of the Portuguese movement.

It was only after political change in the country, more specifically after the Carnation Revolution, in 1974, that the legal formalization of the MSM was effected, in 1976, when the constitutional Portuguese democratic regime was already consolidated.

This was the first formalized step of a long process of associative organization of teachers that prevails since the 1960s, and which currently mobilizes members of different levels of education throughout the country, always giving voice to the pedagogical experiences of its members through the quarterly publication of the *Revista da Escola Moderna*, initially developed as a newsletter in 1974. It can thus be said that the history of the Modern School Movement (MSM) is fairly confused and intertwined with the life story of Sérgio Niza, briefly portrayed resourcing to Nóvoa, Marcelino and Ramos do Ó (2012, p. 685). He is undoubtedly a contemporary Portuguese scholar who is distinguished in the Portuguese pedagogy essentially by the coherence and persistence of pedagogical practices convergent with a coherent set of values and educational principles.

Organic and Functional Structure: For a Deeper Understanding

The Modern School Movement, whose origins and development dates back to the 1960s, is an association of early childhood educators and teachers of several levels of education, from pre-school to higher education, for the cooperative self-training of its members and the support of in-service training and pedagogical context of educational institutions.

The historical creation of this movement arises after the fusion of three convergent practices: the design of a “*município escolar*” (school municipality) in a primary school in Évora (1963/1964), the educational integration practice of visually impaired children at the Hellen Keller Children’s Centre and the organization of courses of Professional Development at the union *Sindicato Nacional de Professores* (1963/1966). Within this context great Portuguese pedagogues stand out as builders of its foundations (Serralha, 2009).

The MSM comprises 15 regional centres with headquarters in cities that cover the Portuguese territory, each with an elected coordinating committee. This committee encourages the training and activity of its area, including cooperative self-training programs. Each regional hub also organizes, on a monthly basis, the pedagogical Saturday, where the practices of MSM are disseminated and reflected

on. Every month, the regional hubs coordinate their activity in a national collegiate body, the Pedagogical Coordination Council, which includes the management, the committees coordinating the centres and other specialized permanent committees. In fact, there are several training support structures: the Cooperative Groups, the National Easter Meeting, the National Congress, the Speciality Meetings (Pre-School, 1st Cycle, Teaching through Subjects, Higher Education, of the Support and Training, all of them of national scope), the initiation courses to the Pedagogical Model of the MSM (Workshop and internship) and the Pedagogical Coordination Council Afternoons (Serralha, 2009, p. 8).

Although we opted not to describe each of these formative structures, we would like to emphasize that the MSM organizes an annual open congress to members and non-members, a privileged moment of training where the work carried out throughout the school year is analysed through reports and discussions of pedagogical practices. There is also a national meeting, only for members, for reflection and deepening of the pedagogy of the Movement, as well as pedagogical intervention of its members. The movement also publishes a quarterly magazine called *Escola Moderna* (Modern School), which serves as a newsletter to share pedagogical practices (Nóvoa, Marcelino, & Ramos do Ó, 2012). It can therefore be said that one of the most significant aspects of the MSM is undoubtedly the construction of networks and communities of reflection and sharing.

In fact, the concept of cooperative self-training is central to the understanding of its ideas (Niza, 1995), because it portrays the “projeto de uma comunidade de profissionais que proporciona aos seus membros a construção cooperada da profissão docente, por retroação do ato pedagógico, que se (re)constrói continuamente, por meio da reflexão crítica e avaliativa de práticas no coletivo, de onde resulta, conseqüentemente, a construção de uma pedagogia” [project of a community of professionals that provides its members with the cooperative construction of the teaching profession, by the retrospection of the pedagogical act, which is (re)built continuously through the critical and evaluative reflection of practices in the collective, consequently originating the construction of a pedagogy] (Serralha, 2009, p. 5).

Thus, the teacher is mobilized as both an agent and subject of his own training in a cooperative and interactive dynamics, in which he recognizes not only the valorisation of his experiential knowledge but also finds the wealth and, in cooperation with his peers, the value of growing and progressing as a person and as a professional. According to Niza (1992a), “não somos uma cooperação, não é a um ‘espírito de corpo’ que aspiramos. Constituímos antes um colégio colaborante onde em comum trabalhamos sobre as nossas obras. O tudo que nos vai espanando por sermos vários, multiplicando cada coisa, é o deslumbrante movimento

de cultura pedagógica que assim vamos erguendo insatisfeitos. Mas sempre renovadamente curiosos e críticos. Continuamos olhando no espelho poliédrico do Movimento as nossas práticas. São as nossas vidas profissionais que co-avaliamos”

[we are not a cooperation, it is not a ‚spirit of body‘ that we aspire to. On the contrary, we were a cooperative college where we work together on our works. Everything that amazes us by being several, multiplying each thing, is the dazzling movement of pedagogical culture that we are raising dissatisfied, although always being curious and critical. We continue to look at our practices in the polyhedral mirror of the Movement. It is our professional lives that we “co-evaluate] (p. 40).

It is in this system of shared development, where each one assumes himself as a trainer and student and must think and critically reflect his paths through shared awareness in solving the problems of the profession, in the transformation of knowledge and in the revision of practices. This shared form of practicing and building the profession is inspired by the same concepts and principles, which should be used later with children themselves. In other words, it points to the relevance of an epistemological homology, incorporating an integrative vision of the goals and principles of education, which we will now explain.

Influences and Pedagogical Principles

The Modern School Movement started with Freinet’s pedagogy, the Institutional Pedagogy and the Non-Directive Procedures in education (Niza, 1998; Santana, 1998). Later it has moved away from this matrix and evolved to a perspective of learning development through social centred interaction, rooted in the socio-cultural heritage to be rediscovered with the support of the peers, following the research line of Vygotsky and Bruner (Niza, 1998; Santana, 1998), and more recently, the theoretical post-Vygotskian idea (Folque, 2012). Thus, according to Vygotsky’s theory, Niza stresses that the social organization of learning is essential. On the other hand Bruner places the construction of meaning on and within practice, since many innovations are more apparent than real. These authors also follow the cultural roots, the role of language and of the Other.

In pedagogy it is not enough to deconstruct, but it is necessary to define the pillars of construction. This is what MSM does when it defines the three interdependent purposes that give meaning to the act of teaching: (i) the initiation into democratic practices; (ii) the re-imposition of values and social meanings and (iii) the cooperative reconstruction of culture (Niza, 1998, p. 141). It is through the direct democratic participation of children in the organization and management of the curriculum, with the educator, that we proceed, through progressive negotiation, from the planning to the sharing of responsibilities and consequent evaluation.

It is also in this interactive cooperation system that knowledge is acquired and integrated, through the formal communication circuits which circulate the products and, that learning take place. The systematic exchanges of productions and knowledge do not only materialise the social dimension of learning but also the solidary sense of the cultural construction of knowledge and of the instrumental skills which express them.

From the purposes referred to above arise the following structuring principles regarding pedagogic action:

- The pedagogical means have to convey, in themselves, the democratic ends of education. This more comprehensive principle gives ethical significance to the choice of materials, processes and forms of organization that best fit the rules and objectives imposed in the educational process.
- School practice, as a social and educational contract, takes place through the negotiation among adults and children and children amongst themselves;
- The democratic practice of the organization shared by all is imposed in the Cooperation Council. It covers the entire school life from the planning of activities and projects to its accomplishment and cooperative evaluation. The Council is the formal institution which regulates the school life from the moral and social viewpoint.
- Working processes must be similar to the processes of productive social life, and the learning strategies must be as close as possible to the several scientific, technological or artistic areas.
- All the information and achievements of children are shared through systematic communication circuits as social validation of production work and learning.
- School practices have to provide immediate social meaning to the children's learning, through the sharing of knowledge resulting from the various work projects, thus structuring knowledge.
- Children challenge social environment and bring people from the community into the classroom to act as a source and resource of knowledge and culture (Niza, 1998a, p. 142).

The principles mentioned result in three strategic movements that guide and illuminate the teaching-learning process (Niza, 1998): from production to understanding, from intervention to communication, and from personal experience to subsequent didactics.

The first strategic movement argues that the awareness exercise from production processes should be reinforced, as they are essential to their understanding (from production to understanding). The second shows that intervention

is essential, since its validity will only make sense if it is socially communicated (from intervention to communication). The third suggests the transition from personal experience to subsequent didactics, in other words, it is necessary to consider the previous experiences of children in order to give meaning to new constructions. This means that the learning process is embodied in a social centered and structuring interaction of communication, cooperation and negotiation among adults and children and children amongst themselves (Novo, 2009, p. 75).

According to Niza (quoted in Folque, 1999) “esta perspectiva de fazer do grupo-turma em cooperação, o centro de toda a actividade e de toda a dinâmica social, retira a este modelo de trabalho o enfoque pedocêntrico em que as actividades e organização do trabalho se centram na criança em abstracto” [this perspective of making the cooperating group of students the centre of all activity and of all the social dynamics takes out to this work model the pedocentric approach in which the activities and organization of work focus on the child in abstract] (p. 6). Thus, the major purpose is to implement a model where the democratic practice of content management, activities, materials, space and time is done cooperatively, being the group the motor of moral and social development.

Constitution of the Group of Children

One of the key conditions for the social dynamics of educational activity in the early childhood education school is the constitution of cross-age groups (the vertical form) with the purpose of ensuring *heterogeneity* that guarantees respect for individual differences. Diversity is perceived as enriching and as a promoting an ethos of inclusion (Folque, 2014), based on the unavoidable value of respect and openness to human relationships. Within the instructional line of Vygotsky and Bruner, diversity also allows to know how to highlight the mediating importance of children’s knowledge obtained from the free expression of their interests, experiences and ideas, but reinforced by a public validation in the group. The need for a *free expression* environment, referred to in the work of Freinet, and the existence of a *playful nature* in the exploitation of ideas, materials and documents for questioning, are essential conditions for children to get actively involved and to try to understand the world around them (Folque, 1999, 2012). The MSM roots itself in extracurricular knowledge as a *potential*, namely in the plans and projects that will meet the goals of life in early childhood education schools. Sharing the conceptions of Niza (1992b), “por isso nos repugna a invasão indiscriminada de meios didáticos pré-fabricados que reforçam a tendência infantilizadora [do jardim-de infância] [we are repelled by the indiscriminate invasion of prefabricated didactic means that reinforce the childish tendency [of early childhood education

school] (p. 7). As such, it is necessary to emphasize the relationship between the real world and knowledge, because it is this that gives meaning to the world they communicate. We will now explain the organization of the educational area.

The organization of the educational area

In this pedagogical model the classroom is organized by a central polyvalent area, which is in the centre of the activity classroom intended for the development of activities in large groups, and by a set of six basic areas of activities, which are described below (Niza, 1998, p. 146):

- The *library area* is a small documentation centre where, in addition to books and magazines, there are works produced within the framework of activities and projects by the children who attend or have attended the early childhood education school, their friends or from other early childhood education schools.
- *The writing workshop* is an area that integrates several text and illustration reproduction materials like typewriter, press, computer with printer, among others. In this workshop the texts of the children and the various attempts of pre-writing and writing are exhibited, since they mediate the memory and the reflection. Writing is present throughout the room, because an extreme value is given to the orality of the child, to the report of their stories and their news, all of them recorded.
- *The arts workshop* integrates the materials for painting, such as inks, pens, pencils, different types of paper, cutting and gluing material and modelling and tapestry material.
- *The carpentry workshop* is used for the production of several constructions, whether they improvised or designed to serve other projects. These constructions can be built by the children, the parents or guests.
- In the *science laboratory* activities of measurement and weighing (with measures of capacity, length, scales, etc.) are provided, as well as creation and observation of animals (birds, fish, rabbits, etc.), experiment reports in illustrated files, record of climatic variations (weather map) and other materials to support the recording of observations and problem-solving within scientific initiation. In this area we observe more closely the phenomena of nature by questioning, experimenting and recording the results, since children are indeed small-scale scientists.
- The *toy area* includes role-play activities and traditional games, sometimes integrating the traditional dollhouse. This area has a trunk with clothes and props that help the children to build their characters and drama projects.

- The *multi-purpose area* consists of a set of tables and chairs sufficient for all type of collective meetings of the whole group (welcome, advice, communications and of other kind) and which will serve as support for other small group or individual activities and projects.

These different areas of the room, where different types of activities are developed, are not necessarily fixed. They are open and flexible areas, allowing children to move freely and they have different uses, identified and enriched according to the age configuration of the group.

It is also noteworthy that the materials are not specifically addressed to children, so that they can recognize in them the approximation to their social world. Consequently, an attempt to escape the pressure of educational toys industry, which sometimes infantilizes the child, is made.

The environment of the activity classroom should be organized in a stimulating and aesthetic way, and it should represent several cultures as well as the children's productions, "utilizando as paredes como expositores permanentes onde rotativamente se revêm nas suas obras de desenho, pintura, tapeçaria ou texto" [using the walls as permanent exhibitors where rotatively they review themselves in their works of drawing, painting, tapestry or text] (Niza, 1998, p. 148). In fact, it is important to post the instruments of regulation and piloting of learning (activities chart, weekly project list, tasks/responsibilities chart, attendance chart and the classroom diary) on the walls, in order to facilitate the management and evaluation of educational activities.

Organization of the educational routine

The organization of the daily and weekly routine is a basic organizer, a source of security that allows to recognize the reason of the activity in which children are involved and, thus, to participate in them with autonomy and protagonism. In this sense, rather than defining the daily sequence of activities, it is important to identify them by explaining their reason, thus supporting the educators to maintain their social and cultural setting.

The daily routine is composed of two distinct periods, namely: the morning period and the afternoon period. The morning focuses essentially on the work or activities chosen by the children, with the discreet support of the educator. On the other hand, the afternoon is composed of "sessões plenárias de informação e de atividade cultural, dinamizadas por convidados, pelas crianças ou pelos educadores" [plenary sessions of information and cultural activity, boosted by guests, children or educators] (Niza, 1998, p. 150). Therefore, the organization of the day

takes place in nine different moments:

1. Reception.
 2. Planning Council.
 3. Activities and projects.
- Break.
6. Communications.
 7. Lunch.
 8. Outdoor activities.
 9. Collective cultural activities.
- Evaluation council.

The reception is intended to gather all the children around a first conversation after the attendance register, in which everyone participates. The educator stimulates participants and registers what is more relevant, gathering texts to be exhibited during in the writing workshop. After the first welcoming conversation, the activities and projects are planned, based on the suggestions made during the welcome or the sharing from the day before. Then, in whole or in small groups, the children choose and record the activities, and move on, autonomously or with the collaboration of their peers, to the actions that they set out to accomplish. Children should not stay for more than an hour in the different areas. The break in the morning has the duration of about half an hour and usually involves a fruit meal and free play. After the morning break, the children gather for the moment of communication. At this moment, the children share their discoveries, this is a moment of great social and training meaning because the communicator explains what they did, how and why, and those who listen and observe question them. Communications are performed in turn so that everyone has the opportunity to present their work.

After this, children prepare for lunch (wash their hands and set the table), this being another moment of training and social coexistence. This is followed by a one-hour recreational moment, comprising songs, traditional games and guided movement sessions. This moment is parallel to the resting period of those who need a nap and will do this autonomously. Later they meet in the multi-purpose area for a collective cultural activity, finishing the day with the balance of the educational journey. Usually, the time of cultural activity follows the model common to the educators of the Modern School, ending the day with a balance of the educational journey. So,

- Mondays are story-telling days; the teacher reads and the children give opinions, add things and tell their stories by association;
- On Tuesdays parents will tell things from their lives, as well as other people who know things that are related to the ongoing projects;

- On Wednesdays, the report and the balance of the study visit of the morning is made because, according to Niza (1998), “as saídas sistemáticas de estudo são a forma mais eficaz de estabelecer e garantir uma ligação constante com o meio envolvente da escola e de assegurar a colaboração da comunidade no alargamento dos conhecimentos das crianças” (p. 154); [systematic study visits are the most effective way to establish and ensure a constant liaison with the school environment and to ensure community collaboration in broadening children’s knowledge];
- On Thursdays, the afternoon is made of the children’s initiative. Correspondence can be completed; as well as the newspaper; the presentation of a conference; dramatization of a story or a role-play moment;
- On Fridays, it is time to gather the as Cooperation Council for the educator to read each column of the Diary and discuss the negative and positive judgments with the children (Niza, 1998, p. 153).

Despite this well-defined organization, the routine should naturally be flexible to meet the needs of the group and of the child, according to the contextual factors of daily life (Folque, 2014).

Nevertheless, it should be stressed that it is in the Cooperation Council that the group’s life in the early childhood education school is built and determined. Yvone Niza and Santana (1996) point out that “o poder da tomada de decisões na gestão do espaço, dos recursos, dos tempos e dos conteúdos é partilhado com o grupo” [the power of decision-making in the management of space, resources, times and contents is shared with the group] (p. 42).

That is why the educator emerges as an element of the group, being attentive, challenging and supportive of the interests and requests of the children, always seeking consensus through negotiation on activities, means, timing, responsibilities and their regulation (Niza, 1998).

According to Niza (1998), the adult is the promoter of a participated organization that credits the child as a competent being, guiding the learning towards cultural productions which later circulate in the room, in the garden, in the community. This organization shows that knowledge is not perceived as private property and learning is not just an individual construction, given that it is systematically extended to the whole group where children are encouraged to communicate. As such, the adult is the active driver of communication circuits, hence allowing the child to build knowledge, to build values and to add meaning to the learning paths. The adult is still an active auditor, as they provoke children’s free expression and stimulate cooperation, relying on the idea that one’s success depends on the success of others (Folque, 2012; Niza, 1998; Novo, 2009).

Formative Evaluation: The Piloting Tools

In the MSM model, planning and evaluation are interconnected, the latter being considered as a means for learning (Niza, 1998, Folque, 2012).

Thus Niza (2006) emphasizes that “avaliar é produzir juízos de adequação e de valor. (...) Avaliar é expor e comunicar, pôr em comum a participação de cada um numa comunidade de aprendizagem. Avaliar é ajuizar sobre os percursos, os métodos e as produções para se poder prosseguir e progredir nesses projetos em comum”. [to evaluate is to produce judgments of appropriateness and value. (...) To evaluate is to expose and communicate, to pool one’s participation in a learning community. To evaluate is to make judgments about the paths, methods and productions in order to be able to continue and progress in these common projects“ (p. 3)].

Formative evaluation, considered by MSM as an essential part of the educational development process, is based on a set of tools known as „*piloting tools*”, which help the educator and the children to guide and regulate what happens in the classroom (Folque, 2012; Grave-Resendes & Soares, 2002; Niza, 1991, 2006). The piloting instruments are as follows:

Attendance Chart

It is a table with two entries that serves for the child to mark with a conventional sign its presence, in the square where its name crosses with the column of the respective day of the month and week. Every morning as children come in they mark their own presence. Presence rhythms alternating with absences help build awareness of time from experiences.

Free texts

The moment of the writing of the free texts occurs during the hosting, when the children consider that the occurrences that they are narrating are so significant that they deserve to be written. It is in this context of exposition of their novelties, in which children choose to tell their friends only or to register them through the written code, that the educator must support verbal expression and to provoke dialogue and exchange of knowledge and experiences. Thus, these texts are reports that the educator mediates because it helps the discourse to be worked, seeking the collaboration of the peers, the organization of ideas in space and time, and the enrichment of what one wants to verbalize and the development of vocabulary.

Activities Chart

It refers to a table with two entries that allows the child's name to be crossed with the possible activities, usually represented by writing or by a pictorial symbol. The children's names are in the vertical column on the left and the activity areas in the upper horizontal column. Before they start working, children plan and record what they chose on the chart, thus learning how to anticipate activities, plan and self-regulate their work, also allowing the educator to verify the children's choices regarding the group, and to make an individual evaluation with the child (what she did more, what she did not choose, why, ...).

Inventories

They allow children to have a real knowledge of the objects and equipment available, as well as their potential uses. Only through awareness of what we have we can project what we are going to do. That is why in the main areas of the classroom are written lists of materials and activities that are illustrated by the children and help them to remember and see the possibilities of working in this area.

Classroom Diary

This instrument (paper sheet with a minimum dimension of 90x60) consists of four columns: "we do not like", "we like", "we did" and "we want to do". The first two columns collect the significant occurrences arising from social behaviour; the third presupposes the registration of productions considered as the most significant, and the fourth column introduces the survey of needs or ideas for new activities and work projects.

For Niza (1991) it is in the first two that the sociomoral balance of the weekly life of the group is based. They have the role of "raising awareness of situations of diversified social interaction between children and these with the adult" (Vieira, 2004, p. 5). On the one hand, they contribute to the elucidation and the awareness of the affections that certain kind of occurrences provoke in oneself and in others. On the other hand, it makes visible the right to the word, without fear of censorship, for deepening and shared construction of the everyone's rights and duties. This reflection, which is collective, particularly discloses that rules make sense when responding to the real problems of daily life, and reveals that it is important to discuss and confront ideas. Sometimes negative occurrences can give rise to new rules that are "fixed on the wall as group laws, which should be followed democratically and are only revocable in council" (Niza, 1998, p. 153). In fact, the written record of *group rules* (or called "what we agreed") for a better management of behaviour and conflict does not arise from the imposition of adults but from a progressive negotiation between them and children, as the events have been requiring it.

Metaphorically called “Moral Thermometer of the Class” (Niza, 1991), this instrument is undoubtedly a piloting instrument in the “social construction of morality” (Oliveira-Formosinho, 1996). For this development to take place, the adult has the important role of providing a safe environment and helping the child to decentralize and be more receptive to different perspectives.

Social Rules Chart

It includes the registration of the rules that were agreed for the regulation of the group. They are always discussed together and arise from a real need based on a problem that is sought to solve. Therefore, the listing should be progressively updated to the needs that the group is showing over time.

Responsibilities Chart

It allows the visualization of the allocation of the responsibilities of the room, which must be rotating by the children and divided by all. This framework usually consists of multiple folders headed by the name of the maintenance and routine support tasks.

In the folders tags are inserted with the names of the children responsible for their tasks. It is an open, dynamic table under construction that allows you to add or delete tasks according to the needs of the group and the room. When performing a certain task, the child feels responsible and useful, contributing to the cooperative and social life of the group.

In this horizon, teaching moments are carried out to regulate and improve, not as the a priori direction of learning. We have chosen to present a small illustration of this organization, thus transcribing for this purpose one of the occurrences portrayed by Novo (2009) in an early childhood classroom of a group of three-year-old children. Peers are highlighted as informants of the training regulation that results from the exhibition of the works and in which the interpellation of the adult only serves to clarify the suggestions and to stimulate the cooperation and mutual help:

The educator reads: “Yesterday I cut my snail with a pair of scissors and then I painted it. Who’s making a snail in this room?” – “It’s Andreia,” a child responds. “It’s Andreia, indeed.” Meanwhile, the teacher places the snail in front of the child. “And the little horns?”, asks a child. “Look, André is saying that the little horns are missing. Are you done yet?” The educator asks. – “And the eyes? I haven’t seen the eyes”, says another child. “The eyes are missing, too”, adds the educator. “The eyes, the mouth and the nose”, André, repeats. “Andreia, they are helping you, aren’t they?”, asks the educator. (...) Listen up. Andreia, when your friends looked at your

snail said: Carlos said that the little eyes were missing. André said that the eyes, mouth, and nose were missing. You got some help for your work today. You're going to finish the snail today, aren't you? "And the ears", says António. "And the ears. Look, so many details. Do you think you're going to need help, Andreia? Do you think you're going to need help to finish your work? Look, António, she says she needs help, okay?" – "I need to do my ant", António replies. "Your ant? Look, it may be that while you're on working the ant you can help her by reminding her what she can't forget about. What do you think? Is that ok?" António nods. "Is that fine, Andreia? He'll remind you of what you cannot forget in your snail, okay? "Andreia also nods. (translation from Novo, 2009, p. 226).

It should be emphasized then that it is in the social aspect that the child manifests itself individually and in this sense the appreciation of children's work is also achieved because they share the result of their effort with their peers. Dedication is included in the dialogue, in the form of evaluation, to launch new activities and projects (Niza, 1998). It is this critical reflection that drives the group, creating conditions for the democratic game that is experienced within the group.

In short, all those instruments are part of the group organization and arise from the information progressively recorded and analysed together. However, it should be remembered that the institutionalization of these tools along the daily routine does neither guarantee a true sociocentric approach nor the formative evaluation (Folque, 2012).

Conclusions

We believe that the study of this model may give us tools for a deeper reflection on the social organization of learning that proposes to break with the simultaneous teaching and with the early implementation of curriculum through subjects happening in early childhood education and care (ECEC). In addition to integrating a curriculum developed from a comprehensive and well-articulated perspective on how the child learns and the appropriate ways of providing meaningful learning experiences, we also believe that this model establishes that adult education should be consistent with the way in which educational contexts should be organized for children. In fact, there is an analogy between the forms of in-service training proposed by the MSM and the organization of the activities that are proposed by the educators to the children who participate in this model (Niza, 2009). Aware of these premises, and sharing the disbelief of "educational trends" and "didactic tricks" or simulations which, according to Niza, are the best

way to avoid shared reflection and debate. When this is linked to joint work on the profession; and being aware that the general description of this model does not aim at its “pre-defined reproduction”, it is, however, an important scaffold to support the educator in the search for a daily life with educational intentionality.

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