

**THE SCHOOL NOTEBOOK AS A SOURCE OF RESEARCH IN SPECIAL
EDUCATION**

O CADERNO ESCOLAR COMO FONTE DE PESQUISA EM EDUCAÇÃO ESPECIAL

***EL CUADERNO ESCOLAR COMO FUENTE DE INVESTIGACIÓN EN EDUCACIÓN
ESPECIAL***



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How to refer to this article

GALVÃO, P. E. S.; SILVA, C. M. C. de S. e. The school notebook as a source of research in special education. **Revista Educação e Fronteiras**, Dourados, v. 10, n. 00, e021003, 2021. e-ISSN: 2237-258X. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30612/eduf.v11i00.9003>

Submitted: 06/11/2018

Revisions required: 02/01/2021

Approved: 15/02/2021

Published: 01/03/2021

ABSTRACT: The present work aims to discuss the possibilities of using the schoolbook as an object of analysis in the schooling process of students with intellectual disabilities. Studies carried out present the school book as a favorable resource for the understanding of the inclusion of the student with intellectual disability in the common teaching. In this text, the school notebook is taken as a documentary source. Documentary research covers any written document and constitutes an extremely valuable source for every researcher in the social sciences. School notebooks are true testimonies of activities developed in the classroom context. It is intended, therefore, to point out issues inherent in the use of this didactic instrument as an object of research. Therefore, a bibliographical survey was made in order to highlight the possibilities of using the notebook as a source of research in the field of social sciences, education and especially special education. In this sense, some theoretical and methodological notes about documentary research and the use of the schoolbook as a source in this field of research are presented

KEYWORDS: School notebooks. Documentary research. Intellectual disability.

RESUMO: *O presente trabalho tem como objetivo discutir as possibilidades do uso do caderno escolar como objeto de análise no processo de escolarização do estudante com deficiência intelectual. Estudos desenvolvidos apresentam o caderno escolar como recurso favorável para a compreensão da inclusão do estudante com deficiência intelectual no ensino regular. Neste texto, o caderno escolar é tomado como fonte documental. A pesquisa documental abrange qualquer documento escrito e se constitui uma fonte extremamente preciosa para todo pesquisador nas ciências sociais. Os cadernos escolares são verdadeiros testemunhos de atividades desenvolvidas no contexto de sala de aula. Pretende-se, assim, apontar questões inerentes à utilização desse instrumento didático como objeto de investigação. Para tanto, fez-se um levantamento bibliográfico de forma a destacar as possibilidades do uso do caderno como fonte de pesquisa no campo das ciências sociais, da educação e especialmente da educação especial. Nesse sentido, apresenta-se alguns apontamentos teóricos e metodológicos sobre a pesquisa documental e o uso do caderno escolar como fonte nesse campo de investigação.*

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PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Cadernos escolares. Pesquisa documental. Deficiência intelectual.

RESUMEN: *El presente trabajo tiene como objetivo discutir las posibilidades del uso del cuaderno escolar como objeto de análisis en el proceso de escolarización del estudiante con discapacidad intelectual. Los estudios desarrollados presentan el cuaderno escolar como recurso favorable para la comprensión de la inclusión del estudiante con discapacidad intelectual en la enseñanza común. En este texto, el cuaderno escolar se toma como fuente documental. La investigación documental abarca cualquier documento escrito y se constituye una fuente extremadamente preciosa para todo investigador en las ciencias sociales. Los cuadernos escolares son verdaderos testimonios de actividades desarrolladas en el contexto del aula. Se pretende, así, apuntar cuestiones inherentes a la utilización de ese instrumento didáctico como objeto de investigación. Para ello se hizo un levantamiento bibliográfico para destacar las posibilidades del uso del cuaderno como fuente de investigación en el campo de las ciencias sociales, de la educación y especialmente de la educación especial. En ese sentido, se presentan algunos apuntes teóricos y metodológicos sobre la investigación documental y el uso del cuaderno escolar como fuente en ese campo de investigación.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: Cuadernos escolares. Investigación documental. Discapacidad intelectual.

Introduction

The objective of this article is to discuss the possibilities of using the school notebook as an object of analysis in the schooling process of students with intellectual disabilities. We consider the school notebook as a favorable resource for understanding the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in regular education. Thus, the school notebook is taken as a documentary source. This article is a section of the research entitled: "The schooling of students with intellectual disabilities: school notebooks as educational resources of analysis", linked to the Professional Master's Program in Education offered by the State University of Mato Grosso do Sul. For the elaboration of the research, the period 2008 - 2015 was taken as a time frame, the year 2008, the year of implementation of the National Policy of Special Education in the Perspective of Inclusive Education and 2015, the end of the research of professional master's research.

The notebooks contain the records of the learning teaching process, as well as the educational relationship established between teachers and students. The issue of the schooling of students with intellectual disabilities in regular education has become an object of discussion in numerous studies, as it still presents a proposition of great challenge for educators. Schooling is understood in the sense attributed by Vigotski "[...] establishing a unity between learning processes and the processes of internal development of culturally organized higher psychological functions" (FONTANA, 2005, p. 30, our translation). | 3

By choosing the school notebooks of students with intellectual disabilities to understand the schooling process, we seek to answer the question: How has the pedagogical practices of teachers with students with intellectual disabilities been presented through the educational relationship?

Treating the school notebooks of students with disabilities as documentary sources that record the organization of didactic work, the educational relationship between the teacher and the student is perceived. Historical source means, according to Bravo (1991), all the achievements produced by man that are shown as indications of his action and that can reveal his ideas, opinions and ways of acting and living. In this conception, it is possible to point out several types of documents: the writings; numerical or statistical; sound and image reproduction; and the object documents.

Thus, the school notebook is understood as a document, as it presents the written record of school activities that evidence the school routine, as well as the existing educational relationship. The school notebook is a documentary source of fundamental importance for the

interpretation of this relationship. Another relevant factor is that through school notebooks it is possible to understand the school organization. According to Cellard (2008), the use of documents in research is important because it allows adding the dimension of time to the understanding of the social.

According to Guindani and Almeida (2009), the use of documents in research should be appreciated and valued. The wealth of information that we can extract and rescue from them justifies its use in various areas of human and social sciences because it makes it possible to broaden the understanding of objects whose understanding requires historical and sociocultural contextualization. For example, in the reconstruction of a lived history,

[...] the written document is an extremely precious source for every researcher in the social sciences. It is, of course, irreplaceable in any reconstitution referring to a relatively distant past, for it is not uncommon for it to represent almost all traces of human activity at certain times. Moreover, very often, it remains the only testimony of private activities that have occurred in the recent past (CELLARD, 2008, p. 295, our translation).

School notebooks are true testimonies of activities developed and occurred in the classroom context. Through their studies as documents, it is possible to analyze and understand the schooling process in which the students are inserted. With regard to the schooling of students with intellectual disabilities, the notebooks show the educational relationship between students and teachers and the way in which the schooling of these students is configured.

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The school notebook as a source and documentary research

The school notebook can be understood as being a documentary source, because,

[...] responds to an action of the teacher aiming at a learning function of the contents treated through the remembrance, as well as the learning function of the rules of school writing and the discursive choices of the work of each discipline (texts and exercises, problems, memory records and tasks). (GOULART; WILSON, 2013, p. 14, our translation).

For Lombardi (2004), "the sources result from the historical action of man and, even if they were not produced with the intention of recording his life and his world, end up witnessing the world of men in their relations with other men and with the surrounding world" (p. 155, our translation). In this perspective, speaking in sources means "speaking in human productions, in testimonies that make it possible to understand the world and the life of men, in records constructed by men and women in different historical contexts" (OLIVEIRA, 2005, p. 3, our

translation).

Accordingly, Le Goff (1993) affirm that documentary sources are generally understood as any objects, any materially fixed knowledge base that clears, instructs, reconstructs, proves or scientifically proves any fact or event. From this perspective, one can consider the plurality of the field of the documentary source that involves from writings of all kinds to figured documents, products of archaeological excavations, etc. Thus, elucidating the schooling process of students with intellectual disabilities using school notebooks as a documentary source allows us to know this reality.

According to Vieira (2001), documentary source is a classic and permanent theme of historiography and, above all, of the theory of history. The identification, use and interpretation of sources are constituent elements of the character and quality of the research, besides carrying the identity and self-understanding of historical research. However, the research treated here uses school notebooks as a documentary source in the analysis of the organization of didactic work, with the main bias of questioning, the problematization of the schooling of students with intellectual disabilities having school notebooks for analysis of this process. In this perspective, documentary research, according to Flores *apud* Calado and Ferreira (2004, p. 3, our translation),

[...] it allows the investigation of a given problem not in its immediate interaction, but indirectly, through the study of documents that are produced by man and therefore reveal his way of being, living and understanding a social fact. Studying documents implies doing so from the point of view of those who produced them, this requires care and expertise on the part of the researcher not to compromise the validity of his study.

Still dealing with the school notebook, research conducted by Vinão (2008) indicates that these appear as organizers of work in the classroom, being support for the execution of activities. "The notebook is not a mere physical device, on the contrary, it is a device that generates effects on the dynamics of the classroom, through the interaction of students and teachers in the performance of the school task" (PORTO; PERES, 2009, p. 27).

According to Flores (*apud* CALADO; FERREIRA, 2004, p. 3, our translation),

Documents are raw data sources for the researcher and their analysis involves a set of transformations, operations and verifications carried out from them for the purpose of assigned a relevant meaning to them in relation to a research problem.

The school notebooks as a documentary source present important data for the researcher to complete the analyses. These are important sources that clarify the questions asked for the

investigation.

The method of document analysis

According to Luís (2012), the documental analysis consists in identifying, verifying and assessing documents for a specific purpose and, in this case, it is recommended the use of a parallel and simultaneous source of information to complement the data and allow the contextualization of the information contained in the documents. The documental analysis should extract an objective reflection from the original source, allow the location, identification, organization and evaluation of the information contained in the document, in addition to the contextualization of the facts at certain moments (MOREIRA, 2005 apud SOUZA; Kantorski; LUIS, 2012). Some advantages of the document analysis method consist of the low cost and stability of information because they are "fixed sources" of data and because it is a technique that does not alter the environment or subjects. Regarding limitations, we highlight the lack of experience of the phenomenon to better represent it, the lack of objectivity and the questionable validity that consists of a critique of the positivist current (OLIVEIRA, 2007 apud SOUZA; KANTORSKI; LUIS, 2012).

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Thus, when taking the school notebooks for documentary analysis, it is observed their importance in the use as a parallel and simultaneous source of information to complement the data and allow the contextualization of the information contained in the documents. In other words, the notebooks contain relevant data capable of complementing other information about the schooling process of students with intellectual disabilities.

When a research is carried out, according to Gaio, Carvalho and Simões (2008), documents are used that aims to abstract this information, this happens through investigations and examinations, using appropriate techniques for treatment and analysis, presents specific steps and procedures, organization of the information to be categorized and later analyzed; finally, the synthesis is elaborated, that is, in reality, the actions of researchers – whose objects are documents – are impregnated with methodological, technical and analytical aspects:

To research we need methods and techniques that lead us judiciously to solve problems. [...] it is pertinent that scientific research is based on the method, which means elucidating the ability to observe, select and scientifically organize the paths that must be followed for the investigation to be carried out (GAIO, CARVALHO; SIMÕES, 2008, p. 148, our translation).

By making the use of school notebooks as a source of investigation, it is possible to

appropriate these as a didactic resource of mediation between the teacher and the student. Because they show how the organization of the teacher's didactic work is structured, the relationship established with the student and, mainly, the direction of their learning. Taking here the school notebooks of students with intellectual disabilities allows us to approach this organization that is intended for these students.

The school notebook and the inclusion of students with disabilities

When a document is taken for analysis, you must first verify the veracity of the document. Important questions such as: Was the author of the document able to faithfully report the facts? Or does it further express the perceptions of a particular fraction of the population? These are questions that must validate the documental analysis in such a way that a real perception of the analyzed object is perceived. With school notebooks being an important role to play in understanding the educational relationship between teachers and students, the analysis performed with these documents should favor the approximation of reality.

The researcher committed to carrying out the analysis should launch himself from the resources and information he has in possession. This is often the case, the document is incomplete, partial or inaccurate. Therefore, the researcher should be aware of the actual document in order to produce a coherent analysis or expression of reality without making changes in documentary value. For this, the school notebooks should be analyzed as documents that reveal a context of educational relationship, in which they present in their records evidence of this relationship. Thus, it is essential to use caution and properly evaluate, with a critical eye, the documentation that is intended to be evaluated.

The study of school notebooks favors the understanding of phenomena such as the educational relationship. The information contained in the documents allows the formation of new concepts and the redevelopment of new knowledge about the document.

The documentary analysis that has the school notebooks as documents allows those who study this object the possibility of having an understanding of the schooling process of students at that moment when the notebooks were taken for analysis.

The knowledge developed by research that analyzes situations related to the school inclusion of students with disabilities, from the notebooks, reveal that school practices are still far from what the guidelines of educational policies in this area propose. Studies such as Mendes' (2010), based on the analysis of school notebooks, show that there is a school culture that favors a typical way of registering independently of the child's development. It is

understood that the school notebooks of students with intellectual disabilities in common education reveal a different reality from what is proposed by the National Policy of Special Education. The conditions and potentialities of students with disabilities are not considered in the learning process, placing them in the same schooling process as the other students in the class.

The research conducted by Mendes (2010), records that in the school notebooks of students with disabilities, there are contents that are distinct from those who are developed with students from the same class. The activities are usually repetitive and show that they have been performed by another person and not by the student. This finding of the research allows the understanding of the schooling process of students with intellectual disabilities taking the school notebooks as a documentary source, because they show that records that portray the blurred reality of what is proposed for this process of these students. The study also reveals that there are no curricular innovations in the records made in the notebooks of students with intellectual disabilities.

The research by Pletsch and Glat (2012), who also used as a source the school notebook, shows that little has been done in pedagogical practices and activities carried out in the common room to meet the learning needs of students with intellectual disabilities.

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According to Neres (2015, p. 38, our translation),

[...] the schooling of students with intellectual disabilities having school notebooks as analysis, it is observed that despite the proposition of education for all so propagated / disseminated in educational policies, in the case of special education through school inclusion that proposes the "adequacy" of schools to meet all children, what is visualized is still the perpetuation of practices that produce exclusion.

The pedagogical practices that involve students with intellectual disabilities have presented themselves as actions that do not contemplate the learning process of these students, because they are configured in a homogeneous way, distancing themselves from what is proposed by the policy that ensures these students in the schooling process.

The study prepared by Ferreira and Ferreira (2013), in turn, evidences opinions of actions that seek to materialize school inclusion, strategies that can resignify people with disabilities, not only changing the labels with which they characterize their identities, but resignifying the "other" in pedagogical practice.

According to Pimenta (1999), the school has the function of incorporating students into the civilizing process, ensuring that disabled students, as well as other students, appropriate the advances of knowledge, technology and the diversity of cultural manifestations.

In a study elaborated Ferreira and Ferreira (2013), it is pointed out that regardless of the peculiarities of students with disabilities, the education intended for them should be based on the same meanings and meanings that it has for other students who do not have disabilities; for them, as for any other student, the importance of the spaces of interaction that the educational system can systematically promote in the appropriation of the school knowledge and personal development.

Thus, when the schooling of students with intellectual disabilities is approached by having the school notebooks by analysis, it is observed that these students still remain distant from a meaning of schooling. The schooling system adopted differs from that proposed by the policy and becomes exclusionary, reaffirming a homogeneous school linked to an ideal student.

There is a need to change this paradigm, to take new perspectives of schooling of students with intellectual disabilities in common education. According to Bueno (2001, p. 27, our translation), one should consider,

[...] whereas the prospect of inclusion requires, on the one hand, profound changes in education systems; whereas these modifications ... require boldness, on the one hand, and prudence on the other; - that an effective policy of inclusive education should be gradual, continuous, systematic and planned, with a view to providing disabled children with quality education; and that gradation and prudence should not serve the postponement "ad eternum" for inclusion [...] but [...] should serve as a basis for overcoming any and all difficulties that may be brought to the construction of a single and democratic school.

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The democratic school must offer all students, whether disabled or not, the right to the schooling process. Therefore, the right to education is of all students and should seek to meet the needs of students in a heterogeneous way observing the peculiarities of each one.

Final considerations

Documentary research is an important approach to the human sciences because it takes written sources as a fundamental part of research. Its importance is effective because it encompasses the inquiry as the main way of implementing the investigation or constituting itself as a complementary methodological instrument.

This type of research favors the construction of an unknown past until then, or even to know a certain reality from a critical analysis of the data that allows the conclusions and inferences to this known reality. Thus, we consider the possibility that one has to start from the information of a reality of the past and, thus, to know and understand what led to the

construction of this reality in order to reconstruct the experiences and what was lived in that context.

It is concluded that the school notebook, as a documentary source, constitutes a valuable research instrument in the area of special education, since it reveals clues, traces and important records for understanding the schooling process and school inclusion of students with disabilities, as well as the knowledge of how the applicability of educational policies that guide this field has been given. Therefore, notebooks can serve as a tool to uncover reality and support actions and strategies to overcome exclusionary practices that still surround the education of students with disabilities.

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Processing and publishing by the Editora Ibero-Americana de Educação.
Correction, formatting, standardization and translation.