

School inclusion of students with disabilities: a reading from Pierre Bourdieu*

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ABSTRACT

This essay aims to discuss and understand the process of school inclusion of students with disabilities in the public system of education in Brazil, after the 1990s, based on the concepts and theoretical and methodological positions of Bourdieu. As investigative material of the research, it is resorted to the empirical data from field research conducted in a multifunction resource room; the results of research already produced on the subject in Brazil; and, above all, the analogies between the bourdieusian analysis of the French education system and the situation currently lived in Brazilian schools, with the incorporation of this new clientele. It is argued that the inclusion of students with disabilities in and by the common schools, although presents itself as democratic, proves to be selective, qualifying and stigmatizing, contributing to the reproduction of the established order and to legitimize inequality between school agent, the which is the process of exclusion within the school system.

KEYWORDS

inclusive school; special education; sociology of the school reproduction.

* My thanks to professor Lucas Krotsch.

A INCLUSÃO ESCOLAR DE ALUNOS COM DEFICIÊNCIA: UMA LEITURA BASEADA EM PIERRE BOURDIEU

RESUMO

Este ensaio tem por objetivo discutir e compreender o processo de inclusão escolar de alunos com deficiência no sistema público de ensino brasileiro, pós-década de 1990, valendo-se de conceitos e (pro)posições teórico-metodológicos de Bourdieu. Como material investigativo da pesquisa, recorre-se aos dados empíricos obtidos em uma pesquisa de campo realizada em uma sala de recursos multifuncionais; aos resultados de pesquisas já produzidas sobre o assunto no Brasil; e, sobretudo, a analogias entre as análises bourdieusianas sobre o sistema de ensino francês e a situação atualmente vivida nas escolas brasileiras, com a incorporação dessa nova clientela. Argumenta-se que a inclusão de estudantes com deficiência na e pelas escolas comuns, embora se apresente como democrática, revela-se seletiva, classificatória e estigmatizante, contribuindo para a reprodução da ordem estabelecida e para a legitimação das desigualdades entre os agentes escolares, o que constitui o processo de *exclusão por dentro* do sistema escolar.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

escola inclusiva; educação especial; sociologia da reprodução escolar.

INCLUSIÓN ESCOLAR DE ESTUDIANTES CON DISCAPACIDAD: UNA LECTURA DESDE PIERRE BOURDIEU

RESUMEN

Este ensayo pretende discutir y comprender el proceso de inclusión escolar de los estudiantes con discapacidad en el sistema público de educación brasileño, desde los años 1990, a partir de conceptos y (pro)posiciones teóricas y metodológicas de Bourdieu. Como material investigativo de la pesquisa, se recurre a datos empíricos de una investigación de campo llevada a cabo en una sala multifuncional; a resultados de otras investigaciones ya producidas sobre el tema en Brasil, y, sobre todo, a analogías entre el análisis bourdieusianas del sistema educativo francés y la situación vivida en la actualidad en las escuelas brasileñas, con la incorporación de esta nueva clientela. Se argumenta que la inclusión de alumnos con discapacidad en las escuelas comunes, aunque se muestre como democrática, demuestra ser selectiva, clasificadora y estigmatizante. Esto contribuye a la reproducción del orden establecido legitimando la desigualdad entre los agentes de la escuela constituyéndose como proceso de exclusión interna del sistema escolar.

PALABRAS CLAVE

escuela inclusiva; educación especial; sociología de la reproducción escolar.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, especially since the 1990s, the inclusion in schools of students with disabilities has been experienced on a daily basis in regular schools throughout Brazil, although the way this inclusionary education was conceived and implemented can be criticized in many ways (Bezerra, 2012). It should be noted that the expansion of services to students with disabilities in common classrooms in the public school system was mainly due to the launching, by the Ministry of Education (MEC) in 2008, of the National Policy on Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusionary Education (Brazil, 2008). This policy, at least in theory, abolished the enrollment of pupils with disabilities in special schools or classes, which were substitutes for regular schools, although in practice this has not always occurred.

The National Policy on Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusionary Education resignified the concept of special education, whose primary responsibility became to organize, foster and support the offer of Specialized Educational Services to students with special educational needs, in *a form that is complementary and/or supplementary* to their attendance in common classrooms. In principle, students would attend normal classes and then receive the specialized services at another time. The *locus* of these Specialized Educational Services became both the former special schools – which were redefined as specialized educational centers for students with disabilities, and which established a formal relationship with the school systems – as well as public schools. In the latter case, the Specialized Educational Services were conducted in multifunctional resource rooms, which were installed in the school where students who required it were enrolled or were made available in other public schools in the regular school system (Brasil, 2008, 2009, 2011; Fávero; Pantoja; Mantoan, 2007). In this context, it can be said that the country has followed a global trend towards the creation of inclusionary educational systems that are supposedly more open to the participation of people with disabilities or other singularities. These measures have ensured these people the right to attend school alongside other children and youth of their generation, rather than remain segregated in special schools, classes or institutions, as historically occurred in Brazilian education (Bueno, 1993; Jannuzzi, 2006; Mendes, 2010).

In view of this recent educational phenomenon, we will use the theoretical-methodological framework inaugurated by Bourdieu (1930-2002), as a magnifying glass, which allows us to see more clearly what we may see but do not understand. This is not to say that the ideas of the French sociologist will be used as an immediate reference for understanding the Brazilian reality after the 1990s, when the debates, clashes and practices of school inclusion of people with disabilities became more intense (Bezerra, 2012). Instead, it is fair to consider Bourdieu's ideas and methodology as an instrument that serves as a mediator between man and nature, intensifying man's action on nature. For this reason, I will use Bourdieu's sociology to help read and decipher the reality and mechanisms of the production and reproduction of school exclusion. The Bourdieusian legacy can help us (re)think the consequences and implications of this process that we have experienced in Brazilian schools, as far as the mechanisms of conservation of hodiernal society are concerned.

This article is not a treatise on Bourdieu's concepts. To the contrary, it is the result of a reflexive appropriation, through which I construct meanings to interpret the power games that are currently played in the *field* of so-called inclusionary education. To do so, I make an analogy with Bourdieusian theories, using results of other studies in the field and empirical data I collected in a field survey from mid-2013 to March 2015, in a multifunction resource room created and maintained by the municipal public education system of a small municipality, in southern Mato Grosso do Sul state.¹ This multifunction resource room served as a center, and was responsible for serving the entire demand for Specialized Educational Services for students in the municipal school system during this period.

The empirical data was collected in a very specific and particular situation, which may seem to be risky. At first, I might be accused of presenting conditions of school reproduction that may not be observed in other contexts of the region concerned, or even of taking the exception for a rule. Nevertheless, in my defense, I can mention that I have been researching the inclusion of students with disabilities in the public school system of the targeted location since 2013, through my supervision of final course projects in pedagogy. I also work in the initial training and continuing education of local teachers, through university extension actions. This has given me access to a mass of data and information about how this process occurs locally, from the point of view of municipal and/or state policies as well as from that of the objectified pedagogical practices and concepts. Due to the inherent limitation of this essay, I cannot immediately provide an account of all this data, which can be found in the final course projects of students I have been supervising at my university.²

1 THE MEANINGS OF CONTEMPORARY REPRODUCTION

In 1970, Bourdieu and Passeron published "The Reproduction" in France – revealing the operation of the French school system and its practices of symbolic violence, which were largely responsible for the perpetuation of social inequalities and exclusionary selection within schools, of those who did not inherit cultural capital legitimized by the dominant strata (Bourdieu; Passeron, 1992). At this time, there was no debate in Brazil about the inclusion of people with disabilities in

1 The research project is entitled *Verbal Mediation in the Specialized Educational Assistance for students with intellectual disabilities: theoretical-methodological contributions of Historical-Cultural Psychology*. It began in July 2013, with the approval of the Dean for Research and Graduate Studies (PROPP) of the Universidade Federal do Mato Grosso do Sul – CI nº 2173/2013, of July 25, 2013 – and accepted by the Committee of Ethics in Research (CEP) through feedback 675.245, dated June 4, 2014. Regarding the methodological procedures, I conducted study sessions and collaborative work with the participating teachers, which resulted in dialogues recorded in audio and transcribed for analysis. Some of the fragments of these dialogues are reproduced in this essay.

2 The titles of these works and other information about published articles are available on the author's Lattes curriculum.

schools and, to be more precise, not even in European countries, such as France. The book, however, provided support for reflecting on this contemporary phenomenon, since the authors analyzed the social and pedagogical effects of the massive entrance into schools of a public that was previously overlooked. Analyzing how *reproduction* occurs in school domains, the authors affirmed that “the educational system objectively tends to produce, through the dissimulation of the objective truth of its functioning, the ideological justification for the order that it reproduces by its functioning”³ (*idem*, p. 215).

This order is exclusionary, selective and conservative, in a way that makes the educational system responsible for the “*consecration of the social order* [...] under the guise of neutrality”⁴ (Bourdieu; Saint-Martin, 1998, p. 196, grifo do original). To do so, this system performs, especially on the symbolic level, “the transmutation of social truth into scholastic truth”⁵ (*idem*, p. 199), proclaiming a democratization of opportunities that is, in fact, only an appearance, because it is denied by conservative practices and classifications used by schools. Even the narrow margin of social mobility provided by schools favors the maintenance of class relations, since the few individuals who ascend to a more privileged position in society – through the educational system – are the result of a controlled selectivity made by this system. These “chosen few” help reinforce the ideology that schools are democratic entities that promote social ascension, and are neutral towards class differences, as long as the agent strives and has the “natural” aptitudes for this purpose. The authors of *The Reproduction* also affirm,

[...] the *School can*, better than ever, and in any case, *in the only conceivable way in a society that proclaims democratic ideologies, contribute to the reproduction of the established order, since it can, better than ever, disguise the role it plays*. Far from being incompatible with the reproduction of the structure of class relations, *the mobility of individuals can contribute to the conservation of these relations, guaranteeing social stability through the controlled selection of a limited number of individuals*, moreover modified by the individual ascent, and thus lending its credibility to the ideology of social mobility that finds its form realized in the school ideology of the liberating School⁶ (Bourdieu; Passeron, 1992, p. 175-176, emphasis added).

3 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: “Assim, o sistema de ensino tende objetivamente a produzir, pela dissimulação da verdade objetiva de seu funcionamento, a justificação ideológica da ordem que ele reproduz por seu funcionamento” (Bourdieu; Passeron, 1992, p. 215).

4 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: “[...] *função de consagração da ordem social* [...] sob a aparência de neutralidade” (Bourdieu; Saint-Martin, 1998, p. 196, grifo dos autores).

5 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: “a transmutação da verdade social em verdade escolar [...]” (Bourdieu; Saint-Martin, 1998, p. 199).

6 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: “[...] a *Escola pode* melhor do que nunca e, em todo caso, *pela única maneira concebível numa sociedade que proclama ideologias democráticas, contribuir para a reprodução da ordem estabelecida, já que ela consegue melhor*

Well, these reflections, which provoked great excitement in that historical context, motivate me to ponder how the legacy of Bourdieu and his collaborators can contribute to reading the reality of the current Brazilian school context. The question is, are new forms of reproduction of the *status quo*, new ways to maintain the established order, being produced under the guise of an unprecedented democratization? It is worth asking what it has meant, in sociological terms to remove students with disabilities from old special schools and bring them into the daily life of common schools, since the last decade of the last century. How is the balance of social relations in these conditions and how does it (re)configure symbolic power in daily school life? Thinking about these issues and using them to guide a reading of the work of Bourdieu and his collaborators, I understand that it is necessary to describe and understand the social phenomenon being considered, by explaining the mechanisms for their (re)production, because this may be a way to reverse it.

To understand the analogy I propose between Bourdieu's presumptions and the problem presented, I must raise a few ideas and make some digressions, to then return to the issue and extract the possible consequences of the analogy. To begin, I recall that Bourdieu and Champagne (1998, p. 219) affirmed that "until the end of the 1950's, secondary education institutions experienced very high stability based on the early and brutal elimination (at the time of entry into the *sixième*) of children from culturally disadvantaged families".⁷ This means that the selection barriers, particularly admission exams among others, were much more explicit and efficient in the French school system, for maintaining the social *status* attributed to the school and to the qualifications conferred by it to those who entered it. The brutality of this early elimination was concealed by the fact that those who failed to enter convinced themselves that they were not really meant for school or for the social positions which, hypothetically, could be reached through it. In the words of the authors,

The socially based selection was thus widely accepted by children who were victims of this selection and by their families, since it seemed to rely exclusively on the gifts and merits of those selected and since those rejected by the school felt convinced (especially by the school) that it was they who did not want the school⁸ (*idem, ibidem*).

do que nunca dissimular a função que desempenha. Longe de ser incompatível com a reprodução da estrutura das relações de classe, a mobilidade dos indivíduos pode concorrer para a conservação dessas relações, garantindo a estabilidade social pela seleção controlada de um número limitado de indivíduos, ademais modificados por e pela ascensão individual, e dando assim sua credibilidade à ideologia da mobilidade social que encontra sua forma realizada na ideologia escolar da Escola libertadora" (Bourdieu; Passeron, 1992, p. 175-176, emphasis added).

7 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: "Até o final dos anos [19]50, as instituições de ensino secundário conheceram uma estabilidade muito grande fundada na eliminação precoce e brutal (no momento da entrada em *sixième*) das crianças oriundas de famílias culturalmente desfavorecidas" (Bourdieu; Champagne, 1998, p. 219).

8 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: "A seleção com base social que se operava, assim, era amplamente aceita pelas crianças vítimas de tal seleção e pelas famílias, uma

This situation changed at the end of that decade, with “the introduction – into the school interplay – of social categories that until then considered themselves excluded or practically excluded from schools [...]”.⁹ Among these, we may include immigrants from the former French colonies or poorer regions of Eastern Europe, as well as “small merchants, artisans, farmers and even (due to the extension of mandatory schooling to the age of 16 and the correlative generalization of the entry into the *sixième*), industrial workers”¹⁰ (*idem*, p. 220). Although this process reshaped the appearance of the game and brought in more players, it did not much change the rules, so the “newcomers” generally were not in a position to play the school game, even if they were immersed in it.

The authors report that this process was quickly called school *democratization* in France, thus revealing itself to be a decoy, since “one of the most paradoxical effects of this process – to which people would refer, with a little precipitation and a lot of prejudice, as ‘democratization’ – was the progressive discovery, among the most deprived, of the conservative functions of the ‘liberating’ school”¹¹ (*idem, ibidem*). From this situation emerged those said to be *excluded from within*. They were ostensibly allowed into the game, but did not have the same opportunities as the “veteran” players. The *players* excluded from within knew beforehand that they would be defeated, especially since they were oblivious to the rules of that game and more precisely, to its strategic subtleties and instruments for symbolic domination.

Since they lacked the cultural capital sought and valued by the school, the new players were and still are symbolically violated and neglected in terms of pedagogical investment, while it is possible to observe “an intensification of competition and a growth of educational investments by the categories that already used, on a large scale, the school system”¹² (*idem, ibidem*). Hence, these players from the popular strata and/or lacking the cultural capital required by the school system, were merely there to appear, to make it possible for other players, who were knowledgeable of the subtle rules, to be recognized for their “innate” ability to win. These abilities are inherited, however, from the familiar or social milieu from which these successful

vez que ela parecia apoiar-se exclusivamente nos dons e méritos dos eleitos, e uma vez que aqueles que a Escola rejeitava ficavam convencidos (especialmente pela Escola) de que eram eles que não queriam a Escola” (Bourdieu; Champagne, 1998, p. 219).

- 9 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: “[...] a entrada no jogo escolar de categorias sociais que, até então, se consideravam ou estavam praticamente excluídas da Escola [...]”.
- 10 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: “[...] pequenos comerciantes, os artesãos, os agricultores e mesmo, (devido ao prolongamento da obrigação escolar até os 16 anos e da generalização correlativa da entrada em *sixième*), os operários das indústrias” (Bourdieu; Champagne, 1998, p. 220).
- 11 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: “um dos efeitos mais paradoxais deste processo – a propósito do qual se falou, com um pouco de precipitação e muito preconceito, de ‘democratização’ – foi a descoberta progressiva, entre os mais despossuídos, das funções conservadoras da Escola ‘libertadora’” (Bourdieu; Champagne, 1998, p. 220).
- 12 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: “[...] uma intensificação da concorrência e um crescimento dos investimentos educativos por parte das categorias que já utilizavam, em grande escala, o sistema escolar” (Bourdieu; Champagne, 1998, p. 220).

players emerge and where they coexist, thus *naturalizing* their successes and the expected failure of the others. As Bourdieu and Champagne rightly point out, these mechanisms

make the system of education, *widely open to all and yet strictly reserved for some*, achieve the feat of combining the appearances of ‘democratization’ and the reality of reproduction that takes place in a higher degree of concealment, therefore, with an accentuated effect of social legitimation¹³ (*idem*, p. 223, emphasis added).

It can thus be inferred that French schools were opening up to different clienteles, but new symbolic ways of legitimizing and reproducing, in a disguised way, the social inequalities inherent to them, were also being activated by agents of economic and cultural domination, by devaluing and discrediting the potential of the new players. Internalizing this conception, they felt they were responsible for their supposed natural incapacity, and the fact that they lacked the “gifts” required for study and, therefore, were even more alien to the school universe. Far from the language and way of life of these new players, schools – through a curriculum that was incomprehensible and *meaningless* to members of the popular strata and/or those “dispossessed” of cultural capital, but legitimized by those in a dominant position, who were “in charge of the field” – contributed to institutionalizing and maintaining an internal exclusion, without altering its essential concepts and working methods. In this way, the effects of the promising school democratization become unfeasible, dissimulated or restricted.

The similarities and differences between this process marked by the generalized entry of those clienteles formerly excluded from school and the reality previously lived in France up to the 1950s – when the agents of the popular classes were kept away from schools or who entered them for short periods of time, only for “primary” education – are described by the authors mentioned, when they affirm that:

[...] in the completely different state of the school system that was established *with the arrival of new clienteles, the structure of the differentiated distribution of school benefits and correlative social benefits was essentially maintained* through a global translation of distances. *However, with one fundamental difference: the elimination process was deferred and extended over time, and therefore as if diluted through this duration, the institution was permanently inhabited by the potentially excluded* which introduce into it the contradictions and conflicts associated with an education whose only goal is itself¹⁴ (*idem*, p. 221, emphasis added).

13 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: “fazem com que o sistema de ensino, *amplamente aberto a todos e, no entanto, estritamente reservado a alguns*, consiga a façanha de reunir as aparências da ‘democratização’ com a realidade da reprodução que se realiza em um grau superior de dissimulação, portanto, com um efeito acentuado de legitimação social” (Bourdieu; Champagne, 1998, p. 223, emphasis added).

14 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: “[...] no estado completamente diferente do sistema escolar que foi instaurado *com a chegada de novas clientelas, a estrutura da distribuição diferencial dos benefícios escolares e dos benefícios sociais correlativos foi mantida*,

In another passage, to which I turn to form my analogy and to make it possible to deduce the pertinent considerations, the authors comment on the “new” state of the French school: “as always, the School excludes; but from now on it excludes continually at all levels of the *cursum* [...] and retains in its womb those it excludes, contenting itself with relegating them to more or less devalued branches”¹⁵ (*idem*, p. 220). This creates a group of *excluded from within*, to use the expression of these sociologists. It is here that I want to focus the analogy between this French case and the present opening of Brazilian schools to students with any physical-cognitive syndromes, deficiencies, or limitations – given that this is a social fact that is lacking greater analysis and scientific considerations; in spite of the passionate political defenses about the inclusive school, made in an almost mystical and mythical way in Brazil (Bezerra, 2012; Bezerra; Araujo, 2010, 2011, 2012).

By raising this analogy I am affirming that Brazilian schools also opened their doors to all these students who were not part of the daily interplay in schools – since they were detained by the systemic selection barriers and sent to special schools or institutions, special classes or even received no schooling or pedagogical-institutional monitoring, as the educational history of the handicapped in our country reveals (Bueno, 1993; Jannuzzi, 2006; Mendes, 2010). They had been objectively barred from common schools, under a social consensus. At the end of the last century, this prohibition was not only abolished, but rejected in discursive theorizations, in social representations and in political guidelines, which led to allegedly inclusionary practices.

This opening, however, involved tensions and contradictions, consequences that affect, above all, the new players. Similar to what happened in France after the 1960s, we are creating a group of excluded from within, who enter and remain in school, but without this making sense to them, which reinforces strategies of symbolic violence and domination over the “different”. To use expressions borrowed from Bourdieu (1998a), the discrimination against the most disadvantaged and the favoring of the most favored increased, and these strategies are increasingly more perverse and more hidden, under the seemingly democratic banner of inclusion. That is why I have affirmed that the greater the affirmations of democracy in school today, the less democratic this institution behaves. This is because this “democracy” is based on a formal and thus abstract equality of all the students who enter it. Consequently, school makes inequalities objective, imposed by deficiency, in a permanent, (self) imposed disadvantage for those who present this ontogenetic condition.

no essencial, mediante uma translação global das distâncias. Todavia, com uma diferença fundamental: o processo de eliminação foi diferido e estendido no tempo e, por conseguinte, como que diluído na duração, a instituição é habitada, permanentemente, por excluídos potenciais que introduzem nela as contradições e conflitos associados a uma escolaridade cujo único objetivo é ela mesma” (Bourdieu; Champagne, 1998, p. 221, emphasis added).

- 15 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: “Como sempre, a Escola exclui; mas a partir de agora, exclui de maneira contínua, em todos os níveis do *cursum* [...] e mantém em seu seio aqueles que exclui, contentando-se em relegá-los para os ramos mais ou menos desvalorizados” (Bourdieu; Champagne, 1998, p. 220).

Since the specific needs and qualities of these agents are not recognized and since they succumb to the cloak of institutional neutrality and its alleged equality of opportunity, they may be seen as being unqualified for school life, victims of veiled indifference, and thus abandoned to their own fate in school (Bezerra; Araujo, 2011; Bezerra, 2012). Perhaps this situation is another example that confirms the already consecrated and anecdotal saying that when students learn in Brazil, they do so despite the school. Nonetheless, democracy is regularly associated to schools in political discourses and in social representations. Although I have already addressed this issue of equality/inequality in other texts, under other approaches (Bezerra; Araujo, 2011; Bezerra, 2012), I now perceive how Bourdieu's propositions still offer deep and fruitful ideas that help us understand school inclusion *à la mode brésilienne*.

In making these approximations, one cannot forget, however, that the French sociologist did not speak specifically of inclusion, or of "the handicapped", as we observe in Brazil today. He was addressing the incorporation of lower income groups into schools that, paradoxically, sought to preserve an aristocratic relationship with culture (Bourdieu, 1998a). For this reason, I affirm that by using the analogy with care, the observations of French society of the second half of the twentieth century make a great heuristic and hermeneutic contribution to understanding the present Brazilian context. This can be seen from the following quote, which is relatively long, but indispensable for its enlightening content. Bourdieu affirmed (1998a, p. 53, emphasis added):

Now, if we seriously consider the socially conditioned inequalities in the face of school and culture, we are forced to conclude that the *formal equity which the whole school system obeys is in fact unjust and that, in every society where democratic ideals are proclaimed, it better protects privileges than the open transmission of privileges.*

Indeed, *to favor the most advantaged and jeopardize the most disadvantaged, it is necessary and sufficient for schools to ignore, within the content of the education they transmit, the methods and techniques of transmission and the evaluation criteria, the cultural inequalities between the children of different social classes. In other words, by treating all learners, no matter how unequal they actually are, as equal in rights and duties, the school system is led to sanction the initial inequalities of the culture.*

*The formal equality that guides the pedagogical practice serves as a mask and justification for indifference towards the real inequalities of the teaching and culture transmitted, or rather demanded*¹⁶.

16 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: "Ora, se considerarmos seriamente as desigualdades socialmente condicionadas diante da escola e da cultura, somos obrigados a concluir que a *equidade formal à qual obedece todo o sistema escolar é injusta de fato e que, em toda sociedade onde se proclamam ideais democráticos, ela protege melhor os privilégios do que a transmissão aberta dos privilégios. Com efeito, para que sejam favorecidos os mais favorecidos e desfavorecidos os mais desfavorecidos, é necessário e suficiente que a escola ignore, no âmbito dos conteúdos do ensino que transmite, dos métodos e técnicas de transmissão e dos critérios de avaliação, as desigualdades culturais entre as crianças das diferentes classes sociais. Em outras palavras, tratando todos os educandos, por mais desiguais que sejam eles de fato,*

Similarly, there is constant discussion in Brazil today of the pluralistic school, which is open to differences and deficiencies and offers the same opportunities for access and permanence to all students, without distinction. From the start, everybody is considered equal by and in the inclusive school and any differentiation is considered dangerous, irreconcilable with this “democratic” attitude. In this context, legal and ideological mechanisms normalize the difference, until they almost erase it completely in school routines to guarantee the formal equalization of the unequal. I understand, however, that this egalitarian treatment of students with intellectual or physical limitations in common schools, when taken to the final consequences, not only deprives them of the right to the full exercise of citizenship, but also tends to jeopardize their cognitive, psychosocial and cultural development (Bezerra; Araujo, 2011). The truistic nature of this observation goes unnoticed, because this illusion of democracy is one of the forms of reproduction of the established order and of reaffirming its antidemocratic commitments, despite the opposite appearance.

This analytical perspective is even more valid when we note that Brazilian schools have not undergone substantial changes with the advent of the so-called inclusive education. Once again, the analogy with France since the 1960s persists insofar as the fictitious defense of the liberating school was highly propagated there, while the institution remained, however, culturally aristocratic and conservative. (Bourdieu, 1998a; Bourdieu; Champagne, 1998; Bourdieu; Saint-Martin, 1998). In Brazil today any student with a disability can enter regular schools, but, in general, the distances between students without disabilities and those in this ontogenetic condition are increasingly widened and extended – albeit disguised – the longer they remain in school – the architect of their differentiated destinies.

For the disabled, school becomes, above all, an institution of symbolic domination that attempts to establish normalization. Instead of valuing students with disabilities for their capacities to learn and develop, they are valued for what they lack, since they are represented, *a priori*, as physically, intellectually and culturally “decapitalized agents”. Therefore, their chances to appropriate and take advantage of the supposed benefits promoted by the inclusive public policies are limited. As in France, there has been a feeling in Brazil of frustration among those who have been the target of these “democratizing” and or “inclusionary” measures, since

[...] the school institution tends to be increasingly considered, both by the families and by the students themselves, as a deception, a source of immense collective deception: a kind of promised land, similar to the horizon, which recedes as one moves towards it¹⁷ (Bourdieu; Champagne, 1998, 221).

como iguais em direitos e deveres, o sistema escolar é levado a dar sua sanção às desigualdades iniciais diante da cultura. A igualdade formal que pauta a prática pedagógica serve como máscara e justificação para a indiferença no que diz respeito às desigualdades reais diante do ensino e da cultura transmitida, ou, melhor dizendo, exigida (Bourdieu, 1998a, p. 53, emphasis added).

17 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: “[...] a instituição escolar tende a ser considerada cada vez mais, tanto pelas famílias quanto pelos próprios alunos, como um

At this point, I consider it pertinent to present some empirical data from the research project that I have been conducting since August 2013 in a public school in a small city in the interior of the Brazilian state of Mato Grosso do Sul, to show this reality, since sociology is not conducted in only a speculative and critical way, at least in a Bourdieusian case. From this point of view, sociological research is inseparably theoretical and empirical. Bourdieu (1998b, p. 11) was always concerned with “conducting a theoretically based empirical sociology that may have critical intentions (like every science), but that must be empirically conducted”¹⁸. Therefore, to place myself *within* this reality and to know its implications, I have been researching what happens in the multi-function resource room of the municipal school system by observing the activities performed there. I have discussed with teachers their representations and conceptions about students with disabilities who attend this space, and about their work.

I emphasize that the example presented here has no pretensions to exhaust the investigated reality, but to illustrate it and examine it as “a particular case of the possible”. There is a vast bibliography – with an abundance of theoretical and empirical data, that denounces the contradictory and paradoxical, if not perverse and exclusionary effects of school inclusion in Brazil, in several regions of the country and under different theoretical-methodological approaches – that corroborate the results of this study (Alcântara, 2011; Bezerra, 2012; Briant, 2008; Garcia, 2013; Glat; Pletsch, 2011; Marques, 2001; Meletti, 2014; Nozu, 2013; Pletsch, 2009; Souza *et al.*, 2012; Victor; Drago; Chicon, 2013). From this perspective, I understand that the universal is present in the singular, especially in the case of multi-function resource rooms, whose organization and operation are conditioned by common political, technical and operational guidelines applied throughout Brazil (Brasil, 2010; Garcia, 2013), although there may be variations in the materialization of this policy, as it is carried out by different agents, in multiple contexts, under different relations of power and resistance.

Thus, with these considerations, I understand that using the empirical dimension of the case, as Bourdieu (1998b) recommends, allows the researcher to grasp the logic of the social practices and representations that move agents in the school *field*, denaturalizing them and exposing their mechanisms of action. In addition, the simple finding and disclosure of facts that discredit the inclusion of agents with disabilities in the educational system, cannot suffice for the sociologist-researcher, whose work must go farther. I believe that this is what Bourdieu asserted when he defended “The Heirs” – which he wrote in 1964 with the collaboration of Passeron – in an interview in 1989 with Japanese professors when he affirmed:

engodo, fonte de imensa decepção coletiva: essa espécie de terra prometida, semelhante ao horizonte, que recua na medida nem que se avança na sua direção” (Bourdieu; Champagne, 1998, 221).

18 Translated from the quotation in Spanish: “[...] hacer una sociología empírica fundada teóricamente, una sociología que puede tener intenciones críticas (como toda ciencia), pero que se debe realizar empíricamente” (Bourdieu, 1998b, p. 11).

In hindsight it seems to me that *Les Héritiers* [The Heirs], the first book in which the results of the work on education were exposed, was a real outburst in the political scene. The book was very successful. It was read by a whole generation and produced the effect of a revelation although it did not say anything extraordinary: the facts were well known by the scientific community. Surveys on the differential elimination of children according to their means of origin had been available for a long time. *I think what was impressive is that this book, unlike the Anglo-Saxon works, drew the consequences of all this, or better yet, cleared the mechanisms at the base of the empirical observations. We were not content with saying that the school system eliminates children from the disadvantaged classes: we sought to explain why it happened this way* and, in particular, what was the responsibility, the contribution – because the word responsibility is already normative – that the school system, and therefore the teachers, brought to the reproduction of social divisions¹⁹ (*idem*, p. 38, emphasis added).

In this sense, the author is convinced that “the deepest logic of the social world cannot be grasped except by submerging oneself in the particularity of an empirical, historically situated and limited reality, but by constructing it as a ‘particular case of the possible’”²⁰ (Bourdieu, 1998b, p. 7). This was, in general terms, what I have undertaken since 2013, by delving into the empirical particularity of the multifunction resource room that served students with special educational needs from the entire municipal education system, and which is a prototype of many other multifunction resource rooms throughout the country. With this plunge, it was possible to verify, through the statements and practices of the teachers considered in the case under analysis, that the medical report, responsible for attesting to the supposed deficiency of the students and thus guarantee their access to the multifunction resource room, is one of the new mechanisms for internal exclusion

19 Translated from the quotation in Spanish: “Retrospectivamente me parece que *Les héritiers* [Los herederos], el primer libro en el que fueron expuestos los resultados de los trabajos sobre educación, fue un verdadero estallido en el cielo político. El libro tuvo mucho éxito. Fue leído por toda una generación y produjo el efecto de una revelación aunque no decía nada extraordinario: los hechos eran bien conocidos por la comunidad científica. Se tenían, desde hacía mucho tiempo, encuestas sobre la eliminación diferencial de los niños según su medio de origen. *Yo creo que lo que ha impresionado es que este libro, a diferencia de los trabajos anglosajones, ha extraído las consecuencias de todo ello, o mejor aún, ha despejado los mecanismos que están en la base de las observaciones empíricas. No nos contentamos con decir que el sistema escolar elimina a los hijos de las clases desfavorecidas: tratamos de explicar por qué pasaba de este modo* y, en particular, cuál era la responsabilidad, la contribución – porque la palabra responsabilidad es ya normativa –, cual era la contribución que el sistema escolar, y por ello los enseñantes, aportaban a la reproducción de las divisiones sociales” (Bourdieu, 1998b, p. 38, grifos no original; grifos meus).

20 Translated from the quotation in Spanish: “[...] no se puede asir la lógica más profunda del mundo social sino a condición de sumergirse en la particularidad de una realidad empírica, históricamente situada y fechada, pero para construirla como ‘caso particular de lo posible’” (Bourdieu, 1998b, p. 7).

and depreciation of these students. This may or may not legitimate the school investment in their potential. After all, they are dispossessed of the cultural capital and/or *corporal hexis*²¹ expected and predetermined by the school, becoming the “excluded from within”, that is, absent presences, bodies marked by physical and symbolic rejection because they are socially disqualified and therefore inappropriate for school practices (Bourdieu, 1998a; Bourdieu; Champagne, 1998; Bourdieu; Saint-Martin, 1998).

It seems to me that, like the diploma – which can attribute, through institutionalization, a certain cultural capital and symbolic power, in the interplay of social (dis)position, to its bearers (Bourdieu, 1998c) – medical reports have functioned as an *a priori* declaration of disability, relatively independent of the agent himself to whom it is addressed and who it classifies, to the degree that it establishes for the person considered disabled a given social place. These medical reports have a sentencing power that is analogous to the instituting and instituted power of the diplomas, when they are issued in an arbitrary and discontinuous manner, which allows to be “clearly seen, in this case, the *performative magic of the power to institute*, the power to make one see and believe, or, in a word, to recognize”²² (Bourdieu, 1998c, p. 78, emphasis in the original). That is the medical reports have the power to represent and create representations about the person it refers to, to legitimize, through the mask of impartiality, the inferior and discredited social position that comes to be occupied by some of the players in the field, thus steering school practices that reproduce exclusion within the act of inclusion.

These considerations are revealed by a statement of one of the teachers who participates in the project, Alice (A),²³ who served in the multifunction resource room as a kind of coordinator of this space and tutor of the other teachers who arrived there, since she had more professional experience and had worked for years in a special education institution for students with intellectual and multiple disabilities. In one of our meetings, I asked whether the medical evaluation, used as one of the requirements²⁴ for admitting students considered to have disabilities

21 I believe that, in view of the reproduction of social inequalities and the maintenance of privileges for the “heirs” in and by the school, the depreciative judgments and school taxonomies focus mainly on *corporal hexis* (Bourdieu; Saint-Martin, 1998), in the case of students with physical disabilities, although the implications of the interrelated concepts of *habitus* and *cultural capital* cannot be disregarded. In the specific case of intellectual disability, in its various manifestations, these concepts become operative as a group, with the notion of *cultural capital* perhaps being more determinant, given the objective difficulties of these students to express themselves according to the dispositions and *habitus* of the culture socially recognized as legitimate or to be acculturated by it. I intend to better develop these theses in another study.

22 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: “Vê-se claramente, nesse caso, a magia *performática do poder de instituir*, poder de fazer ver e de fazer crer, ou, numa só palavra, de fazer reconhecer” (BOURDIEU, 1998c, p. 78, grifos do autor).

23 The names of the teachers are fictitious.

24 Until recently, many public school systems in Brazil conditioned the admission and permanence of students with disabilities in the multi-function resources rooms to the existence of a medical report (clinical diagnosis) attesting that the subject has a disability.

to the multifunction resource room, continued to be conducted throughout their attendance of this space or if it was only done in an isolated manner to justify that they be sent to such room. She responded:

A: It [the medical evaluation] does not continue after, but I think that these neurological reports, in a way, have been harmful. Because, from the moment that the teacher receives a student with a report that they have a disability, the teacher already says: “This one is not going [to progress]!”. So, it’s a label.

Researcher (P): In the common classroom or in the multifunctional resource room?

A: No, in the multifunctional resource room it [the medical evaluation] has no influence; it is just a formality for us, because we prioritize the students, their individuality, we do not think about whether they have a report of intellectual disability, whether they have Down syndrome, whether they are autistic, or whatever. We value the individuality of the students. So, we conduct activities that complement their difficulties. Then, they will have activities that will help their intellectual development, according to their need. So the neurological report does not matter to us, but it is important in the regular teaching room, because if the teacher, not knowing the individual qualities of the students, will think that they are unable to learn and we know that they do have abilities [...]²⁵.

However, Technical Note no. 04, from January 23, 2014, issued by the Secretaria de Educação Continuada, Alfabetização, Diversidade e Inclusão (MEC/SECADI), finally established that “it is not necessary to present a medical report (clinical diagnosis) by students with disabilities, global developmental disorders or high skills/giftedness, since the specialized education services are characterized by pedagogical and non-clinical care (Brasil, 2014, p. 3). In the municipality studied, even before this measure became official, the multi-function resource room already accepted students “without a medical report”, as long as they presented marked difficulties of learning and cognitive development, characteristics or evidences of some deficiency, through complaints of teachers of the common classes, pedagogical coordinators and/or the results of psycho-pedagogical evaluations conducted by professionals of the municipal school network.

- 25 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: “A: Ela [a avaliação médica] não continua depois, só que daí eu acho que esses laudos neurológicos, de certa forma, eles têm sido prejudiciais. Porque, a partir de um momento que o professor recebe um aluno com laudo de deficiência, o professor já fala: “Esse já não vai!”. Então, quer dizer, é uma coisa que marca. Pesquisador (P): Na sala comum ou na sala de recursos multifuncionais? A: Não, na sala de recursos multifuncionais influencia em nada [o laudo]; só no papel para nós, porque nós priorizamos o aluno, a sua individualidade, nós não pensamos se ele tem laudo de deficiência intelectual, se ele tem síndrome de Down, se é autista, ou o que é. Nós valorizamos o aluno na sua individualidade. Então, nós vamos elaborar a atividade complementar à sua dificuldade. Então, ele vai ter atividades que vão ajudá-lo no seu desenvolvimento intelectual, conforme a sua necessidade. Então, o laudo neurológico para nós é indiferente, só que daí ele pesa [o laudo neurológico], ele pesa na sala de ensino regular, porque o professor não conhecendo o aluno na sua individualidade, ele vai achar que ele não tem condição de aprendizagem e nós sabemos que alguma condição ele tem [...]”.

The teacher acknowledges that the medical report thus has a negative influence on the judgments and assessments that the common classroom teachers make of students considered to be “disabled”. Nevertheless, she defends her *field* of action, the multifunction resource room, as a place where she and the other teachers under her influence are not tied only to the medical report, since their work is focused, above all, on the students’ individuality. This aspect needs to be explored more deeply in later studies, because, in my view, the teacher’s discourse about her work is contradictory and may result, above all, from a dispute over power, space and representations that she and the other colleagues in the multifunction resource room have with professors of the common classes and with the doctors themselves, for in other parts of our conversations Alice recognized that the medical report was – and still is – one of the basic criteria for students’ access to this room and for later interventions from the teachers.

It seems to me that the teacher, denying the descriptions of the reports and or the necessity for their existence, tries to distance herself from the selective and esoteric character of the multifunction resource room itself, and from responsibility for the stigmatization and classification of students with disabilities. This would be imputed to doctors, thus allowing the continuation of the classificatory practices instituted in and by the common school, an agency that claims for itself the right to recognize whether students have disabilities or not, to legitimize them or not, to better control the mechanisms of social reproduction and exclusion.

In this context, the pedagogical interventions considered successful in the multifunction resource rooms, which even contradict the fatal determinations of some medical reports for the “disabled” individuals, and the model cases of school inclusion ratify the supposed democratic character of the school and its equalizing virtues, justifying the established order, by allowing for some consented “de-stigmatization” or “de-labeling”, as Bourdieu and Passeron (1992) theorized on the social mobility controlled by the reproductive school. On the other hand, the removal of the requirement of a medical report to determine the attendance of students labeled as disabled in a multifunction resource room has inflated the number of agents in this condition, because common class teachers and other agents with pedagogical authority assign themselves the right to establish this “diagnosis”, which is objectified in quickly prepared lists, as will be seen in the following statements. According to Alice:

A: The doctor has the authority, he can. The teacher, however, cannot, because the doctor has the authority. So the family, half-heartedly, accepts [the doctor’s evaluation] and knows that here we provide this care [of students with disabilities]. We have no problem with this, *but when the indication to look for [the doctor] comes from us, things get complicated, families seldom accept.*

In this room, it’s been operating for three years, [there was] a family [...] I recommended that the mother: “look for a neurologist, check everything with him”, because the boy came here and knew nothing. But, even I was wrong, because he really did not know anything at all, but with time and work he started

developing. But, the neurologist diagnosed a *slight intellectual disability*, and [the student] was also sent to a psychologist. The psychologist began treatment and we started working here as well and had results. Now we realize he was not intellectually disabled, but at the time [his problem] was diagnosed by the neurologist as a light intellectual disability [...].

So, I think it was even a... because at the beginning, this was at the very beginning, I was told this: “look, you should only accept in the resource room [students with medical reports] ... I know it’s only for students with a medical report, I know that! But then, we told his mother that he had to have a medical report to stay here, and it was my mistake, a mistake I assume, right, because then I asked his mother to take him [to the neurologist] so he could participate in activities here, because *I saw that he really had difficulties, a psycho-pedagogical evaluation was made. He was in the first grade, at the end of the first grade, and had really not learned anything.* I said, it could be a ... In that case, I asked his mother to take him to a neurologist so he could attend activities here [in the multifunction resource room]. After that, we started making exceptions, on account of these, of our mistakes[...].

I think I could have given the child more time, but that’s the issue: “we don’t accept [any student]! Only [those] with a medical report”. We ended up having to follow the rules to the letter in the beginning, *then we lowered our guard on this issue*, but in the beginning it was only with a medical report and very few students had a report to present [...]²⁶.

26 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese “A: O médico tem autoridade, ele pode. Então, agora, o professor não, porque o médico tem autoridade. Então, até que a família, meio a contragosto, aceita [a avaliação do médico] e sabe que aqui faz esse atendimento. Aí, nós não encontramos nenhum problema, *mas quando vem de nós a indicação para procurar [o médico], a coisa complica, é uma ou outra família que aceita.* Nessa sala, faz três anos que está funcionando, [teve] uma família [...] que eu indiquei assim: “mãe, procura um neuro, vê com ele certinho”, porque o menino chegou aqui e não sabia nada, só que até eu me enganei, porque ele não sabia nada mesmo, só que com o tempo e o trabalho ele foi desenvolvendo, só que daí *o neuro já tachou a deficiência intelectual leve*, e foi também numa psicóloga. A psicóloga fez um trabalho e aqui nós começamos a trabalhar e teve resultado e agora nós percebemos, ele não é deficiente intelectual, só que na época foi deficiente intelectual leve tachado pelo neuro. [...].Então, eu acho que até foi uma... porque, no começo, isso foi bem no comecinho, no comecinho foi me falado assim: “olha, só aceita na sala de recurso [aluno com laudo] ... Eu sei que é só aluno com laudo, eu sei disso! Só que, aí, nós falamos para mãe né, ele tem que ter laudo para ele vir para cá, e foi meu erro, esse erro eu assumo, né, porque daí eu pedi para a mãe levar [ao neuro] para poder estar frequentando aqui, porque *eu vi que ele tinha realmente dificuldade, foi feita a avaliação psicopedagógica. Ele estava na primeira série, no final da primeira série, e não tinha aprendido realmente nada.* Eu falei, pode ser um... [N]Esse caso, pedi para a mãe levar num neuro para poder estar frequentando aqui [a SRM]. Depois, nós abrimos exceções, por conta dessas, desses erros nossos. [...].Eu acho que poderia ter dado um tempo maior para essa criança, mas daí essa questão: “não atende! só com laudo”. A gente acabou tendo que seguir fielmente no

Moreover, whether the medical reports have a significant impact on the specialized educational services does not invalidate the character of internal selection, which occurs almost always subtly and tacitly in the common classes, as a function of these diagnoses or of a mere suspicion of disability. I can state this because the classification and promotion of students in our education system is an attribute of the common classes and not of the multifunction resource rooms, which serve as complementary or supplementary appendixes to the compulsory schooling of students with disabilities, with global developmental disorders or with high skills or giftedness. Thus, the multifunction resource rooms, in terms of their successful achievements, also become, *pari passu*, instruments of legitimation of the established order and of authorized (re)production of “disabled” students, who have little chance of success in the school meritocracy, subverting the supposed democratization of the inclusive school or the “school for all”.

Looking closely at the operations and conception of the multifunction resource rooms in recent years, my analysis is that this space creates the illusion that the school system is democratic and consolidates a formal process that has little ability to modify the fate of students with disabilities, who are predetermined to school failure. To do so, it is sufficient to observe that they are represented – and also end up representing themselves, except for those with cases of high cognitive impairment in which the perception of oneself is altered – as agents that were not supposed to go to school, that they are usurpers of a space where they do not belong and, therefore, targets “of violence of an absolutely new kind that schools practice over those who are not supposed to be there”²⁷ (Bourdieu; Champagne, 1998, p. 224). Therefore, this is also *exclusion from within* based on implications of the ideology of natural gifts and teacher judgments about the absence of cultural/cognitive capital and the “clumsy” *corporal hexis* of these students, among other Bourdieusian concepts (ourdiu; Champagne, 1998; Bourdieu; Saint-Martin, 1998).

For this reason, if students with disabilities, with or without a medical report, are assured that attending a multifunction resource room can guarantee the recognition of their particularities and provide them equal conditions to access and remain in common classrooms, it is possible to observe, however, in daily practices, that the democratizing potentialities of this space are disqualified and sabotaged *a priori*, to the degree that it exerts a dual stigmatizing function: 1) on the teacher who works there and 2) on the students who are part of it. In fact, I asked the teachers if the multifunction resource room produced any form of stigma on the students, and I received surprising answers. Here is a dialogue between the teacher responsible for the room and another colleague, Helena (H), who had recently begun this type of work, in 2014:

comecinho, *depois nós abrimos a guarda nessa questão*, mas no começo era só com laudo e eram pouquíssimos alunos que tinham laudo [...].

27 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: “[...] da violência de uma espécie absolutamente nova que a Escola pratica sobre aqueles que não são feitos para ela” (Bourdieu; Champagne, 1998, p. 224).

A and H (together): Not only is the student labeled, but the teacher as well.

[...]

A: This is real. It's real! This one is real! This is real!

H: It's true!

A: Every school teacher from special education is also labeled as "he has some problem!"

[...]

A: So this is a serious issue!

Researcher (P): You have just arrived, Helena, have you already felt this?

A: She has already been labeled!

H: Yes! I've already been labeled! ... But you?!

A: Yeah, they still say, in awe, "Wow, I didn't think you'd end up there!"

[...]

A: [...]. It's like saying: "Ah, he's from the APAE,²⁸ he's a teacher from APAE, you know?!" And here it's the same thing: Ah! "He's from the resource room!"

P: In relation to the students, do you think that this label is also present in the case of the resource room? Is this evident in relation to other students [that is those without disabilities]?

A: Sometimes, they [the non-disabled colleagues] question [those with disabilities]: "Ah! you go to that room there?!" So yes... this label still exists.

[...]

A: [...] complicated situation. Until some time ago... Now it seems to have decreased. They did not call me teacher Alice. [It was] Alice from APAE.

P: But the students or the [school] professionals?

A: Everyone! Everyone! Alice from APAE. [...]. Today less so, because I have been out of the APAE for four years, but at the beginning it stuck to me for some time.

28 APAE stands for Associação de Pais e Amigos dos Excepcionais (Association of Parents and Friends of Exceptional People). This specialized institution was founded in Brazil in 1954, with a private-philanthropic character, to take care of people with intellectual and multiple disabilities mainly under the clinical, pedagogical and assistance approaches, as a substitute that is parallel to the common schools, which until the end of the twentieth century, segregated or expelled these agents from its premises.

H: Now you imagine me, I had never worked [in a special school], this is my first time [as a teacher in a multifunction resource room]. Wow, but you ... It's a shock! Even outside, the folks [inaudible] ... "Wow, you shouldn't be there!"²⁹.

The dialogue reveals that, since the multifunction resource room is a place where pupils do not possess the gifts cultivated by the school tradition, the teachers who work in it also become dispossessed of their professional aura, they are lowered in the dispute for positions in the educational field, with a consequent loss of *status*. I believe that, without the teachers noticing or acting deliberately for this purpose, this corroborates that schools that are supposedly "for all" actually reproduce inequalities. Moreover, the mechanism is more efficient the less rationally it is understood by and intelligible to the agents (Bordieu; Saint-Martin, 1998). Under these conditions, the very existence of the multifunction resource room represents a way of institutionalizing segregation from within and disguising the school crisis, since the existence of this space gives teachers a supposed legitimacy and tranquility to classify as "disabled" students who do not learn in the desired way. By making this classification, they can attribute their learning difficulties only to supposedly unfavorable natural conditions, and not to educational deficiencies and their meritocratic, selective and formalistic character, which results in the marks of symbolic violence perpetuated and perpetrated by schools against students with disabilities, whether it is a fact or fiction.

Ordinary class teachers see the multifunction resource rooms as a fair alternative offered by the school system to these students to compensate for their limitations and to "capitalize" them so they can face the inclusive classroom. It becomes the responsibility of the specialist teachers to initiate this process. However, in this way, the circle of reproduction is closing in the school that is considered democratic, because the proclaimed objective of the multifunction resource rooms is not to rein-

29 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: "A e H (juntas): Não só o aluno é rotulado, mas o professor também. [...] A: Essa é real. É real! Essa é real! Essa é real! H: É verdade! A: Todo professor de escola, de ensino especial, ele também é rotulado como: "ele tem algum problema!". [...] A: Então, quer dizer, essa questão é séria! Pesquisador (P): Você já acabou de chegar, Helena, já sentiu isso? A: Já foi rotulada! H: Já! Já fui rotulada! ... Mas você?! A: É, ainda dizem, admirados, "nossa, eu não imaginava que você fosse parar lá!". [...] A: [...]. É a mesma coisa de você [dizer]: "Ah!, ele é lá da APAE, ele é professor lá da APAE, sabe?!" E aqui é a mesma coisa: Ah! "Ele é lá da sala de recursos!". P: Em relação aos alunos, vocês acham que também esse rótulo é presente no caso da sala de recursos? Isso chega a ser evidente em relação aos outros alunos [isto é, sem deficiência]? A: É, às vezes, eles [os colegas sem deficiência] questionam [aqueles com deficiência]: "Ah! você vai naquela sala lá?!" Então ... existe esse rótulo ainda. [...] A: [...] situação complicada. Até algum tempo atrás... Agora parece que diminuiu. Eles não me chamavam de professora Alice. Alice da APAE. P: Mas os alunos ou os profissionais [da escola]? A: Todo mundo! Todo mundo! Alice da APAE. [...] Hoje diminuiu, porque já faz quatro anos que eu saí de lá [da APAE], mas no começo ainda permaneceu algum tempo. H: Agora você imagine eu, que eu nunca trabalhei, é minha primeira vez [como professora na SRM]. Nossa, mas você... É um espanto! Até fora, ainda, o pessoal não [incompreensível]... "Nossa, mas você não devia estar lá!"

force school education and its selective and competitive characteristics, but to work with the specificities of the students, through the specialized educational services. As explained by Batista and Mantoan (2006, p. 17), in a publication subsidized by the Ministry of Education, “this assistance exists so that students can learn what is different from the curriculum of common teaching and what they need to overcome the barriers imposed by disabilities”³⁰.

This problem was also noticed in our dialogues with teachers, in which the (re)production of disability by the school was clearly evident at various points, given the high number of students sent to multifunction resource rooms with this justification, exceeding its operational capabilities. This represents the growing *pathologization* of students and, consequently, a mode of school selectivity, of transforming “actual inequalities into legal inequalities”³¹ (Bourdieu, 1998a, p. 59) and, therefore, of disinherit and excluding agents from within the school system, breaking the main barriers to access this system, the situation, as explained in the previous paragraphs, can also be seen, paradoxically, as a sign of the fragility of the service instituted to ensure the permanence and “success” of students with disabilities in the common classes. This is, then, another fact that challenges the democratic perspective of school inclusion. The following dialogue confirms this:

A: In the beginning, the classroom teacher would write on a sheet of paper. There, he would note the difficulties he was having in the classroom, but lately it's just the list, and there are 25 students on a list. How do you select? Generally, I'm looking at the school year, because a student who is in second or third grade is more urgent.

[...]

A: In the beginning, the teachers began to refer [the students], but then the coordination started making a list and send [students] here. So, what do we do? There was a school that sent 25 students here. Wow! Twenty-five students is the amount I have in a period. So I end up looking at the ones who have a medical report, the one who has more difficulty fitting in, and I leave the others on a waiting list.

H: The school thinking, today, regarding the regular teaching, is the following: “Ah! This student doesn't learn, he doesn't learn!” They already think it's a disability. I counted in my room alone, I have 10 students [who, possibly, don't learn]³², but you see ... now I realize why I am [here]. These students, they are not disabled, they have no disability at all, they have learning difficulties. I realize this because I'm here, because if I weren't here, for me, it would be a disability and it's not.

30 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: “Esse atendimento existe para que os alunos possam aprender o que é diferente do currículo do ensino comum e que é necessário para que possam ultrapassar as barreiras impostas pelas deficiências”.

31 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: “[...] desigualdades de fato em desigualdades de direito [...]” (Bourdieu, 1998a, p. 59).

32 Helena keeps working as a teacher in a common classroom in another shift.

A: And that's what happens.

H: *And that's what happens. So for them, who are not aware of the situation, for them it's a disability, you understand? And it results in a lot of students here for us.*

A: So much so, that here at school x, the time he gave me a list with 25 students, I said: "this is not a reinforcement class, it's a multifunction resource room, you can't send me any more than four, five students, because I have to think of the other schools as well".

P: One school sent 25?

A: One school, yes.

P: Wow, that's a lot!

H: That's what I'm telling you!

P: Statistically, that's a lot.

A: That's a lot.

H: *It's a lot, isn't it?! It's scary!*

A: *It's too much, it's scary!* I told them, "it's not a reinforcement class, it's a resource [room], so it's just for students who really have disabilities or who are suspected of having a disability but do not have a medical report yet" [...] So we will accompany them and see, if he is not ["disabled"], I'll send him back. Like a girl that came from the fourth grade, right Helena?

H: Yeah, the fourth grade.

A: Fourth grade, but because she had a report, they sent her, but the teacher was not consulted, she was not talked to, nothing, she just had a report, [the school] sent her.³³

33 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: A: *Até que no começo, o professor da sala, ele fazia uma folha de caderno. Lá, ele colocava as dificuldades que ele estava tendo na sala de aula, mas, ultimamente, é só a lista, e aí vêm 25 alunos em uma lista. Como é que você faz para selecionar? Geralmente, eu estou olhando a série, porque daí o aluno que está lá na segunda, terceira série ele tem mais urgência. [...]*A: *Então, mas no começo, os professores começaram a mandar, mas depois a coordenação começou a fazer lista e mandar para cá. Então, aí o que a gente faz?! Você vê lá uma escola mandar 25 alunos para cá. Poxa! Vinte e cinco alunos é o que eu tenho num período. Ai, acabo olhando aquele que tem laudo, aquele que tem mais dificuldade para poder encaixar, e deixo os outros na fila de espera.* H: *É que a escola, hoje em dia, no ensino regular, pensa o seguinte: "Ah! Esse aluno não aprende, não aprende!". Eles já acham que ainda é uma deficiência. Eu só contei na minha sala, eu estou com 10 alunos [que, possivelmente, não aprendem] , mas você vai vendo..., agora que eu percebi porque eu estou [aqui]. Esses alunos, eles não são deficientes, eles não têm deficiência nenhuma, eles têm dificuldades de aprendizagem. Eu estou percebendo isso porque eu estou aqui, por que se eu não estivesse aqui, para mim já seria uma deficiência e não é.* A: *E é o que acontece.*H: *E é o que acontece. Então,*

In this context, I believe I have unveiled, based on a particular case of the possible, some general tendencies in the daily life of the common schools that have been producing and reproducing the segregation and internal labeling of “disabled” students, a category that has been increasingly “forged” by schools to justify their exclusionary practices and to maintain their tacit commitment to the established culture, although the democratic virtues of inclusion are proclaimed. If the prominent discourse had been that the student did not have “the ability” or a “gift” for study, converting the social disadvantages of the popular classes into natural and individual “deficits”, now, in addition to that, one more argument is used against the members of the discredited classes, i. e., that they are also *disabled*. Therefore, the responsibility for non-learning is unilaterally imposed on them, because they have been guaranteed the right to be in the game, to be in the common classroom and in the multifunction resource room. If they do not succeed, this is no longer the problem of the school or the teacher. Ultimately, it seems to me that this practice of school inclusion in the public education system suggests a concession of the dominant pedagogical authority and, therefore, in this aspect appears as a form of symbolic violence, destined to value even more the position of “those who learn” and are able to play, to the detriment of those who become, day by day, marked cards, mere spectators of the game.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This essay results from a first approximation of the author to the theses of Bourdieu and his collaborators to help analyze massive school inclusion – that is in a certain way imposed – of students with disabilities in the Brazilian public education system, especially since the 1990s., It should not be considered as a mere reproduction, in the same way that the works of the French sociologist cannot be read under this deterministic label. It is also not intended to impute to teachers and or common schools all the responsibility for the situation presented. In fact, based on empirical data from my research, the results of already well-known studies and the use of analogy, I sought a different focus of analysis on inclusive education to explain why students with disabilities are in a common school, but have benefited

para eles, que não estão a par da situação, para eles é uma deficiência, você está entendendo? E aí então vai gerando esse tanto de aluno aqui para nós. A: Então, tanto é que a hora que, aqui na escola x, a hora que ela me deu uma lista com 25 alunos, eu disse assim: “Fulana, não é reforço filha, lá é recurso, você não pode me mandar mais do que quatro, cinco alunos, porque eu tenho que colocar as outras escolas também”. P: Uma escola mandou 25? A: Uma escola. P: Nossa, é muito! H: Mas é o que eu estou te falando! P: Estatisticamente, isso é muito. A: É muito. H: *É muito, não é?! É assustador!* A: *É muito, é assustador!* Eu falei assim, “filha, não é reforço, é recurso, então é só aluno que tem realmente deficiência ou que tem-se suspeita que ele tenha deficiência e não tenha laudo.” [...] porque daí a gente vai acompanhar e vai ver, se ele não for [“deficiente”], eu devolvo, tanto é que veio uma menina lá da quarta série, né Helena? H: É, quarto ano. A: Quarta série, mas porque ela tinha laudo, aí mandaram, mas a professora não foi consultada, não foi conversado, nada, simplesmente tinha laudo, [a escola] mandou.

little from it, becoming the new *excluded from within* in our school system, which is considered “democratic”.

In this line of reasoning, I tried to argue that the massive entry of these agents did not only alter the exclusionary, meritocratic and reproductive structure of our common school, but it also made more evident the success of a few, to the detriment of many who failed, and who are considered “disabled” – although some are not – and therefore incapable of being schooled. Although formal law guarantees their entry into common schools and the fictitious prerogative of playing the game of that institution, they are barred from possible success – which is at best limited to a very small number of agents presumed to have a disability – since they are almost always considered to be losers from the start. Therefore, it can be seen that there are several practices, strategies and representations that are triggered by the agents of pedagogical authority, usually unconsciously, that sabotage and blunt the possibilities for students with disabilities to appropriate school contents and *habitus*.

In this direction, before concluding, and to not leave a bad impression that the considerations made here may have caused – I must also warn that I have described a macrosociological process from a factual example of its operation. Under these conditions, agents do not always act deliberately, because they participate in relationships that they do not recognize. As Bourdieu and Saint-Martin (1998, p. 199, grifos do original) affirm, “mystified mystifiers, they [the agents in charge of classification operations] are the *first victims* of the operations they conduct”.³⁴ Moreover, I am not affirming that I favor the old schools and specialized institutions and am against the entrance of students with disabilities to common classes, or that I am a radical opponent of the work carried out in the multifunction resource rooms. This is not the case. What I have done was describe and explain how this sociological process of exclusion within inclusion functions. It must be the subject of new studies, research and inferences, so we can learn more about its details and develop new understandings.

The intention of this work was not, therefore, to say how to carry out the school “inclusion” of students with disabilities in common classes, or whether or not there should be multifunction resource rooms and specialized educational services. These discussions have already been the subject of other reflections, of a didactic-pedagogical nature, which I cannot conduct at this time or have done in other occasions. In addition, to avoid being called a new reproductivist or deterministic researcher, I would like to remind readers that understanding these processes of reproduction and school segregation, from within the educational system, allows us to treat these mechanisms and their underlying ideologies with greater chances of success. Fighting an unknown enemy means facing even greater risks and often leads to expending efforts and energies in the wrong direction. If we know the ground we step on, we feel safer to take the next steps. I believe this

34 Translated from the quotation in Portuguese: “Mistificadores mistificados, eles [os agentes encarregados das operações de classificação] são as *primeiras vítimas* das operações que efetuam” (Bourdieu; Saint-Martin, 1998, p. 199, grifos dos autores).

was Bourdieu's greatest intent, as it is mine now: to present the mechanisms of (re) production and naturalization of social inequalities in and by schools, which are now also reinforced by the argument of subjective deficiency, so that, known by the agents, these mechanisms begin to be denaturalized and combated. After all, is this not the role of the sociologist-researcher?

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