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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN THE APPROPRIATION OF THE ARCHITECTURAL AND SOCIAL COMPLEX OF CEU BUTANTÃ - SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL

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ABSTRACT

This Report aims to share the researchers' experiences and perceptions and the theoretical and methodological paths of the research *Dealing with New Spaces: Children and Adolescents in the Appropriation of the Architectural and Social Complex of CEU Butantã (São Paulo, Brazil)*. We highlight the concepts of social appropriation, social and cultural structures, childhood, adolescence and youth, family, peer culture, school culture, educator training, integral education, popular culture, territory, subjectivity and mediation, anchored in Lev Vygotsky's theories, Paulo Freire, Anísio Teixeira and Milton Santos.

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INTRODUCTION

This report highlights the conception, the method and the participants involved, as well as the first conclusions of the research at CEU Butantã, *Dealing with new spaces: children, adolescents and young people in the appropriation of the architectural and social complex of the Unified Educational Center - CEU Butantã (São Paulo, Brazil)* - which started in 2017. Financed by Mackpesquisa, the project went from the perspective of academic internationalization, in a partnership between the Postgraduate Program in Education, Art and History of Culture at Mackenzie Presbyterian University (UPM), the Universities of Siegen and Alanus (Alemanha), the Municipal Secretary of Education of the City of São Paulo (SME-SP), CEU Butantã and the collaboration of researchers¹ from eight institutions, in the period from 2017 to 2020.

Among the results obtained, we mention the production of 01 post-doctorates, 02 doctorates and 02 master's degrees, the beginning of another 02 master's degrees and 02 post-doctorates, the publication of 18 articles, 10 in international journals and 08 in national journals, 04 extension courses, with a workload of more than 300 class hours. The purpose of the project was to understand how the process of appropriation of the CEU architectural complex by educators, students, young people and the community took place, responding to the wishes and demands of the school community, researchers and institutions involved. More than being restricted to strictly academic requirements, it sought to find answers to questions with a pedagogical, sociological, architectural, socio-cultural and educational background, which can subsidize the writing of another pedagogy. To paraphrase Paulo Freire, we feel the need to write a pedagogy that refuses the misery of pedagogy, that is, that promotes

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its decolonization. In the Municipality of São Paulo, CEUs are public facilities run by public servants from the Municipal Secretariat of São Paulo and designed with the objective of reducing inequalities and contemplating the multiplicity of local knowledge. Aimed at the popular classes, they were conceived and implemented as a place / territory, where social actions and relations are conditioned by the territorial context, in the recognition of the "I" by the "other" and the "other" by the "I", involving belonging, collectivity, participation and integration between staff and the community. Territory, here, takes on the aspect of a set of material and immaterial dimensions, working in a network, tense and contradictory, where social practice is in charge of updating the space, articulating the various levels of intervention, whether local or regional, so that there is the possibility of social change.

CEU Professor Elizabeth Gaspar Tunala, in Butantã, opened on September 12, 2003. It consists of the Educational Units of the Center for Early Childhood Education (CEI), the Municipal School of Early Childhood Education (EMEI) and the Municipal School of Elementary Education (EMEF), and for the cultural block and sports spaces. The Butantã region consists of a middle class population (Districts of Butantã and Rio Pequeno), alongside regions of great poverty and lack of physical and social resources (District Raposo Tavares). In this research, we adopted the hybrid case study methodology (narrative map, ethnography, participatory research), in order to capture, by an interdisciplinary attitude, the process of appropriation of the architectural, social and educational spaces of CEU Butantã. It should be noted that, beyond the physical-geographical character, we speak of social spaces, territories and contexts loaded with meaning and symbolic representations, historically created from the social relations and actions of the various groups that make up the community, in a given time and circumstance.

Marked by an interdisciplinary attitude and an international view (Germany-Brazil), the research allowed observing, describing and analyzing the CEU Butantã's daily process of occupation and appropriation of the architectural complex by students and educators, subjects of the educational process of the three educational units in it (CEI, EMEI and EMEF). Therefore, the aspects discussed in this report range from the political pedagogical project to the architectural and social complex of CEU Butantã, illustrated by a theoretical framework supported by authors from the sociology of childhood, critical pedagogy, social pedagogy, popular culture and cultural history. In summary, each step of the research aimed to analyze the way in which the strategies created by students and educators at CEU Butantã are expressed in learning capable of promoting the development of human capacities of creativity, attention, thought, language (gestural, oral, writing, artistic), curiosity, concentration, memory and affectivity, among others. It was also observed the way of children, adolescents and young people acting in the "appropriation of social and architectural spaces" and in the complex reality of their neighborhood.

Over the years 2017 and 2018, the team of academic researchers was formed, based on face-to-face and virtual meetings, with participants from Brazil and Germany. The team described an arc of activities and procedures, starting from the establishment of some initial contacts with the CEUs, the management of their educational units (CEI, EMEI, EMEF) and the Management with its Centers, responsible for socio-educational, cultural and sports activities, in which we highlight the library, leisure areas, the pools and the theater. From the formulation of the initial proposal to the conclusion of the field activities, a "marathon" of meetings and exhibitions was held, both at UPM, as well as in schools, CEUs, at SME headquarters and at DRE. The research project, developed in a collective work by the team of researchers, was presented and evaluated by the last three Municipal Secretaries of Education of São Paulo, being considered by all as an interesting and timely researcher work proposal, having been approved by the aforementioned administrations. In this type of research, everyone is a subject and producer of knowledge, both teachers and managers are researchers and not just transmitters of

information and knowledge. Social subjects (children, adolescents, youth, educators and managers) were invited to participate in the research, with a view to promoting reflections and social transformations for their benefit. Three rooms of each educational unit, with their respective teachers, were continuously monitored, involving the school community of CEU Butantã. The seminars, training courses, work groups, participation and development of academic events, in Brazil and Germany, in person and online, helped to establish the guidelines, the approximation of people and the dimensions for carrying out research in the field. The analyzed data, taking into account the discursive elements, intertextuality, playfulness, contextuality and intersubjectivity present in each stage of the process, brought up sensibilities and subjectivities.

The development of the research involved pedagogical-administrative dimensions, with its projects and activities for the appropriation of spaces, architectural-urbanistic, referring to spaces destined for learning / behavior change, ludic, with games, images and appropriations that children and young people make of what the complex offers them, of the collective and individual expressions and languages of culture, art and sport, namely, how they feel, how students of CEU and their neighborhood communicate and write about culture, art and sport. The analyzes revealed that children, adolescents and young people conquer architectural complexes as their social spaces and appropriate them, experiencing specific possibilities of acting in accordance with the available spaces. These experiences provide students, educators and family members with the opportunity to read, interpret and understand their biographies and that of their peers, and to place themselves in daily life in a transformative way. In one way or another, it is the configuration of subjectivities, with a view to strengthening citizen, ethical and democratic actions. During the research, it was possible to perceive the appropriations made by educators and students, from the methodological path traced by the narrative maps, intertwined with the records of testimonies of the teachers and students, photographs and audio recordings. Narrative maps are tools that collaborate to capture memories, affectivity and appropriation of social, physical and cultural spaces. They served as an instrumental basis in the execution of this research, assisting in the narrative organization of the educators' lived experience.

The procedures for the elaboration of narrative maps consisted of: orientation for the elaboration of drawings in a free and relaxed way; reading and explanation of the instrument and its stages; supply of colored pencils and sheets and request for verbal narration of what was being represented. In this phase, the team silently observed the structuring of the drawings, together with listening to the teachers' verbal narration, about each chosen place, remembered and drawn. Gestures and speeches were recorded in audio and photos with the aim of intermingling verbalized and drawn memories. From the material obtained, guiding questions for the second phase were elaborated. The confection took place in the EMEI teachers' room. It should be noted that the most prominent places were the grove, the vegetable garden and the EMEI.

The new stage was carried out in two periods following the steps outlined: intervention by the team of researchers, through instigating questions; explanations about the construction of the second drawing layer, now in transparent sheet, to overlay the first representation without affecting the visualization of the previous drawing; guidelines for resuming the first layer of the narrative map, in order to observe the highlighted places in more depth, in addition to other perceptions from the selected questions. The educators were given the opportunity to talk about the experience so that, in the sequence, they could return to their maps in yet another exercise, returning to their memories. They remembered the physical spaces of their schools and how they interacted comparing CEU with the schools they attended. Several Narrative Maps were produced (Figure 1)



Map produced by one of the teachers participating in the research

At the end of the stage, the group described the places highlighted in the experience, the importance of the proposal (with the adults), the open possibilities that cartography provides for understanding the appropriations of the architectural complex and how these spaces enable meetings of the community on the outskirts, in addition to formal institutional and educational relationships. The educators' reports pointed out that CEU's pedagogical proposal articulates knowledge of children, youth and adults, multiple languages, art and culture in dialogue with communities and scientific knowledge, by showing that children play and experiment with objects, instruments and "teaching materials" of the architectural and social complex and that there is an intense coexistence between CEU and the community. CEU is a training space for teachers and social educators. The educational dimension is broad and one of the elements that contribute to the human development of the region, the neighborhood and the city of São Paulo. CEU's pedagogical practice takes up several previous progressive educational experiences in Brazil, is in line with the Education Pioneers Project and meets the Freirean

principles and the concept of the Educating City, as it seeks to integrate social, cultural, artistic and sports activities, with the purpose of enhancing the processes of socialization and human coexistence. Based on the results of data collection, exchanges between researchers participating in this research, seminars and meetings of research groups, we can see, even if provisionally, that a democratic environment that values the baby, the child, the teenager, the young people and the educator as reproducers and producers of multiple knowledges, concretize a humanizing pedagogy, through which everyone appropriates, each in their own way, the contents established in the curricular matrix. It should be noted that the architectural design of CEU Butantã, in itself, communicates content, favors the process of appropriation and learning, and contributes to the configuration of subjectivity. A democratic environment, as described in CEU's original proposal, creates the conditions for the development of a sense of belonging and recognition. From this perspective, the appropriation of the CEU's architectural and social complex makes it possible to build an existential sense and to raise awareness of the need to engage in building a movement founded on social justice, solidarity, freedom and security. The political pedagogical project of CEU has as a methodology the dialogicity, which affects the transformation of the subject, the other and the territory. To clarify this perspective, we recall the Gramscian principle that, when the subject is transformed, he transforms his surroundings and his collective, or vice versa. When the environment changes, the subject also changes. In this sense, CEU's pedagogical proposal is innovative, since it articulates multiple languages, scientific knowledge, art, culture and the knowledge of children and communities. Appropriation, in a Freirian reading, appears as an awareness in itself and for itself, a decision before the world or, in Vygotsky's line, as creation and imagination. This we were able to observe, gradually, in the activities outside the classrooms, especially in the library and in contact with nature, in exploratory walks, in the joy and in the creative and imaginative lightness of the children, and in the way they resolved conflicts between peers. Details about the research can be found in the researchers' articles, published especially by the RoSe Journal: *Research on Steiner Education*, <https://www.rosejourn.com/index.php/rose>, in which six articles will be published throughout this year 2021.
