

Artigo

The educator and educational continuity in the *zerosei* integrated system in Italy. Virtues, skills and world context

O educador e a continuidade educativa no sistema integrado zerosei em Itália. Virtudes, competências e contexto mundial

El educador y la continuidad educativa en el sistema integrado zerosei en Italia. Virtudes, competencias y contexto global

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Abstract

In Italy, Legislative Decree 65/2017 establishes the integrated system of education and instruction from birth to six years, effectively establishing the institutional conditions for the creation of an educational proposal that has pedagogical roots dating back to the debates on educational continuity which have crossed the Italian scientific landscape since the 1980s. This proposal from the legislator has opened the way to numerous debates regarding a series of rather complex issues concerning pedagogical, political, organizational and financial issues. In the analysis and problematization of these themes, the question of the definition of the professional figure who can/should operate, precisely, in a zero-six context seems to emerge as emblematic. This issue appears to be particularly thorny since at the moment in Italy we are in a transition phase which sees on the one hand the push towards a new integrated educational system for early childhood, on the other the persistence of old training and organizational structures which on the one hand they can be considered a limit to change, on the other hand they can prove to be a solid reference base from which to start to achieve change. In the definition of operational paths to promote the integrated zerosei system, and in the definition of the related professional figures, the theme of educational continuity appears to be central, which emerges both in relation to the internal dimension of the educational structures and in relation to the contiguity between these structures, the services, the family and the territory.

Resumo

Na Itália, o Decreto Legislativo 65/2017 estabelece o sistema integrado de educação e ensino desde o nascimento até aos seis anos de idade, criando efetivamente as condições institucionais para a realização de uma proposta educativa que tem raízes pedagógicas que remontam aos debates sobre a continuidade educativa que atravessaram o panorama científico italiano desde os anos 1980. Esta proposta do legislador abriu caminho a numerosos debates sobre uma série de questões bastante complexas de carácter pedagógico, político, organizativo e financeiro. Na análise e

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problematização destas questões, parece emergir como emblemática a questão da definição da figura do profissional que pode/deve atuar, precisamente, num contexto de zerosei. Esta questão é particularmente espinhosa, uma vez que, neste momento, em Itália, nos encontramos numa fase de transição que vê, por um lado, o impulso para um novo sistema educativo integrado para a primeira infância e, por outro, a persistência de antigas estruturas de formação e organização que, por um lado, podem ser consideradas uma limitação à mudança e, por outro, podem revelar-se uma base de referência sólida a partir da qual se pode implementar a mudança. Na definição dos caminhos operacionais para promover o sistema zerosei integrado, e na definição das figuras profissionais relevantes, parece ser central a questão da continuidade educativa, que surge tanto em relação à dimensão interna das estruturas educativas como em relação à contiguidade entre estas estruturas, os serviços, a família e o território.

Resumen

En Italia, el Decreto Legislativo 65/2017 establece el sistema integrado de educación y enseñanza desde el nacimiento hasta los seis años de edad, fijando efectivamente las condiciones institucionales para la realización de una propuesta educativa que tiene raíces pedagógicas que se remontan a los debates sobre la continuidad educativa que han atravesado el panorama científico italiano desde la década de 1980. Esta propuesta del legislador ha abierto el camino a numerosos debates sobre una serie de cuestiones bastante complejas relativas a cuestiones pedagógicas, políticas, organizativas y financieras. En el análisis y la problematización de estas cuestiones, parece emerger como emblemática la cuestión de la definición de la figura profesional que puede/debe operar, precisamente, en un contexto zerosei. Esta cuestión es especialmente espinosa ya que en estos momentos en Italia nos encontramos en una fase de transición que ve, por un lado, el impulso hacia un nuevo sistema educativo integrado para la primera infancia, y por otro, la persistencia de antiguas estructuras formativas y organizativas que, por un lado, pueden considerarse una limitación al cambio, y por otro, pueden resultar una sólida base de referencia desde la que implementar el cambio. En la definición de las vías operativas para promover el sistema integrado de zerosei, y en la definición de las figuras profesionales relevantes, parece central la cuestión de la continuidad educativa, que emerge tanto en relación con la dimensión interna de las estructuras educativas como en relación con la contigüidad entre estas estructuras, los servicios, la familia y el territorio.

Keywords: Zerosei Integrated System; Educational Continuity; Educator Training

Palavras-chave: Sistema Integrado Zerosei; Continuidade Educacional; Formação de Educadores

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1. Introduction

The paper presents a reflection on the topic of educational continuity, highlighting the issue of the training of professionals involved in early childhood education. In particular, in the second paragraph, with reference to specific works of the European Commission, the concept of educational continuity as an element that positively affects the elevation of the quality of school education is explored. The third paragraph deals with educational continuity in early childhood, paying particular attention to the significance of the zerosei integrated education system

that was introduced in Italy by Legislative Decree 65/2017. The fourth paragraph returns a precise description of the ways in which, in Italy, nursery school educators (0-3 years) and pre-school teachers (4-6 years) are trained and the forms through which at the moment it seems possible to envisage a dialogue between the two levels and the possibilities of transition of professional figures from one educational system to the other. Finally, in the last paragraph, a holistic perspective is proposed of the competences and values that should constitute necessary and foundational elements of the professional figures who act in the first phase of children's schooling.

The work makes use of an argumentative methodology that takes into consideration certain aspects of the national legislation, placing them in relation to European research and to pedagogical theories elaborated at an international level. The purpose of the argumentation is to show how the possibility of fully implementing the horizontal and vertical educational continuity, in the zerosei system of the Italian context, is closely linked to the training of professional figures who, in addition to developing technical, methodological, psycho-pedagogical and relational skills, should direct them to assume the ability to act according to strong and orienting pedagogical principles.

2. Educational continuity

In the European Commission (EC) report published in 2018³, educational continuity is mentioned as one of the foundational elements that can improve the quality, inclusion and innovation of school education systems. Many researches are cited in the report (e.g.: Edwards et al, 2013; Evangelou et al, 2008; Field et al, 2005; Golding, 2013) that highlight how fragmented educational and schooling paths can expose students to serious risks, such as the emergence of states of distress, poor performance, school dropout. On the contrary, teaching/learning paths that are designed in a flexible manner and that envisage collaboration between teachers, managers, parents and students can have a very positive influence on the educational experiences of pupils. The assumption of educational continuity as a figure of the quality of the educational and training act, is evidently based on a value assumption that sees the growth of individuals within a complex and articulated system-world, in which stimuli, reflections, actions and personal initiatives generated in the various levels and training contexts are interwoven. Family, school, environment, formal, informal and non-formal situations all contribute to generating opportunities for meeting and learning, not only for children and young people, but also for adults and for the organisations themselves. In fact, the report states that it is necessary to recognise educators, teachers and school leaders as learners and schools as learning organisations, and that educational policies should intervene "to achieve continuity in learner development: to build links between levels of education and facilitate the transition between types of education; to generate and share data effectively with appropriate mechanisms (how to measure? how to communicate?); to verify the correct use of data communication and data analysis

³ European Commission (2018) Continuity and transitions in learner development. Guiding principles for policy development on learner pathways and transitions in school education. Produced by the ET 2020 Working Groups.

https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/downloads/Governance/2018-wgs3-learner-development_en.pdf

by those involved in supporting the learner in his or her decision-making process"⁴. The EC report emphasises that a quality school should: a. promote the knowledge, skills and competences necessary for the individual to play an active role in work and social life, both in the present and in the future; b. foster the individual's personal development and his/her relationships with others.

It would seem that the EC identifies the issue of continuity specifically in the transition between higher school levels, but the report makes it very clear that high quality learning experiences should be available to all children from an early age because in the early years the foundations are laid for building a positive disposition towards learning that will accompany the individual throughout his or her life. The report also points out that institutions should put in place specific interventions to support pupils and families in the transition between school levels by creating stimulating and developmentally appropriate learning environments, providing social and emotional support, ensuring the use of strategies aimed at identifying vulnerable pupils at an early stage and facilitating the inclusion of pupils who enter or leave at different times or who have difficulty accessing formal education. Among the listed points of intervention, an important emphasis is placed on the professionalism of educators since it is due to the construction of appropriate curricula and the pedagogical approaches used that the transitions are actually bridged and the growing sense of responsibility of the students for the development of their own competences and the construction of their own life project is promoted.

3. Educational continuity in the zerosei integrated system

Zaninelli (Zaninelli, 2018; 2021) highlights the central role played by the concept of continuity in the pedagogical sphere since it represents the dimension of the growth of the child, the adolescent, the young adult and emphasises the importance of this growth being accompanied by appropriate teaching/learning interventions. The concept of educational continuity shows the need to build a thread that can be the expression of the narrative of the subject's story, avoiding hiatuses or critical jumps that could hinder their serene and harmonious development from early childhood (Bruner, 1999; Dewey, 1979; Brofenbrenner, 1986).

Historically, the discussion on educational continuity in early childhood has focused on the transition between pre-school and primary school. The topic is complex and has given rise to many interpretative perspectives. Bowman (1993), argued that the care and education provided to children during the preschool period should not be interpreted as 'preparation for primary school' by anticipating content or methodology, but should foster the development of a common curriculum for both educational phases. Argos (Argos et al., 2019) corroborates this argument by stating that, in fact, the child is at the same stage of development straddling the preschool and early primary school years and, therefore, the two educational structures should share common principles and practices.

⁴ European Commission (2018): "There are key areas for policy work to achieve continuity in learner development: bridging transition points between levels of education and facilitating transition between types of education; effectively generating and sharing data with appropriate mechanisms (how to measure and communicate); and the appropriate use and reporting of data analysis by different stakeholders to support learner decision-making" p.2.

Evidently, it is not possible to use the same type of argument when anticipating the question of the transition between nursery and pre-school, given that the cognitive, relational and emotional characteristics of a 10-month-old child certainly cannot be compared to those possessed at 4 or 5 years of age. However, it is possible to devise an educational project that does not only see the nursery as a place of care and nursing, but also highlights its potential as a context in which the aim is to meet the child's social, emotional, cognitive and physical needs in order to build a solid and complete basis for learning and well-being that can be used throughout life⁵.

At present, as has been said, in Italy we find ourselves in a transitional phase, in which a division persists between crèches and pre-schools that is characterised both by the spatial dislocation of the two services, which are prevalently differentiated, and by the different training of those who perform the educational role in each of the two areas. Therefore, it seems interesting to analyse the issue of the transition between the two educational-school levels, trying to trace the arguments that may predispose to the continuity desired by the legislator in the integrated zerosei system.

The transition from nursery to pre-school is associated with changes that directly affect the agents involved: the child, the family, the educators/teachers, the school facilities. However, it must be emphasised that the child must be placed at the centre of all considerations, since he or she is the protagonist of the transition and perceives the changes as an individual. A transition that occurs sharply can generate stress that can manifest itself in maladaptive behaviour such as extreme hyperactivity, inattention, emotional difficulties and negative attitudes; research has shown that problematic behaviour at these early ages is predictive of lower levels of school performance and behavioural problems in adolescence (Margetts, 2005). It must also be considered that, at the social level, relationships with adults, progressively, tend to be based on elements that go beyond care and attention because interests related to knowledge of things, curiosity about others and about the world are formed in children as they grow up (Lehrer et al., 2017). Therefore, it is very important that adults, parents and educators, are aware of these progressive changes that are often exacerbated in transitions in which the child has to deal with new reference figures, new companions, new structures, new habits (Gairín, 2005).

Dorothy Cohen (Cohen, 1971), as early as the 1970s, posed the question of the significance of educational continuity in the transition between the nursery and pre-school, identifying the argument from two possible points of view: a. how can duplication of content be avoided, i.e. how can educational interventions be designed so that there is no overlapping in content and children can learn different things? b. what are the differences between children in the nursery and pre-school? What are their specific needs and how can they be met?

The author notes that the first argumentative hypothesis sees continuity in the transmission of specific and graduated content, and the second in the growth and learning of the child. If the issue of continuity is raised with regard to content, there is a concern that the activities carried out at the crèche should not be repeated in kindergarten to prevent children from becoming bored; this approach assumes that the path for young children is predetermined and controlled

⁵ United Nations Educational, scientific and Cultural Organization. (2020, April 1). Early childhood care and education. <https://en.unesco.org/themes/early-childhood-care-and-education>

exclusively by the educator. But if one considers the progressive development of the child, one can "recognise that there is no problem of duplication and that continuity lies in the child himself" (Cohen, 1971, 283) who uses the materials and responds to the activity and play proposals with the maturity that corresponds to the developmental stage he is going through.

Therefore, educators and teachers will not have to worry about repeating similar experiences between the two school levels. They will have to design educational activities by thinking of them as something that happens to the children and in which the children participate; they will have to construct a context that offers the children the opportunity to have experiences, to interact with other children and with adults, that can stimulate and accompany learning processes. "Learning itself should not be understood as the mechanical acquisition of facts and skills, but should be the completion of children's extension towards a wide variety of experiences within which facts and skills are a part, but hardly the main part"(Cohen, 1971, 285).

The author explores the topic of continuity by identifying its fundamental aspects in the satisfaction of three specific needs of children: curiosity, interest in other children and the management of emotional impulses. These needs cannot be treated as part of a content-structured curriculum, but must be considered as transversal elements already present in early childhood, concerning the disposition to relate, to respect, to research, and to a sense of responsibility. These elements will gradually take shape throughout life under the shrewd and loving guidance of the adults who accompany the child as he or she grows.

Therefore, there is no need to worry about repeating activities, games, readings, experiences because children's interests and curiosity evolve in relation to age and language development: "The child in the nursery who hears stories suitable for four-year-olds will be a better listener at five years old, but his teacher may have to broaden her knowledge of children's literature to match his level of interest and readiness. The child who learns a lot of songs at age four will love to sing at age five, even though he will want more complex songs and, at the same time, will enjoy singing some of the ones he learnt at age four" (Cohen, 1971, 286).

Therefore, educational continuity is not a problem that concerns the child, nor does it concern him or her when he or she has finished kindergarten and will have to face the new transition in primary school and so on, in the transition from one school level to the next. Rather, the problem belongs to school structures, to their organisation and management, to nursery school educators and preschool teachers who should be trained in a more complex and articulated vision of the educational methods to be implemented in a consequential perspective.

Lombardi (1992), notes that in the 1990s the experts in the field came to a convergence regarding the identification of the elements that could constitute appropriate educational practice in all programming for early childhood and up to primary school, summarising them in three fundamental conditions: a. adapting educational practice to the child's development; b. involving parents; c. considering childcare services a support for children and families.

On the first point, the author states that educational continuity between early childhood services is facilitated by adapting educational programming to the age group and abilities of the children. As children progress from nursery to pre-school and primary classes, they show greater motor and language skills, can pay attention for longer, can play more cooperatively and are able to develop

interests that go beyond the immediate. In early childhood services and in the first years of primary school, children learn best through active exploration of their environment and through objects and materials that build sense-motor experiences in interactions with adults and other children. Therefore, curricula should respond to the natural curiosity of young children, helping them to build recognition of their own identity, promote positive dispositions towards learning, and build increasingly complex skills in the use of language, problem-solving and cooperation.

For the second point, Lombardi (1992) points out that parental involvement is a very important element in achieving the success of the educational project. Parents' presence should not be limited to participation in meetings or sporadic events, but should involve them as active subjects not only with regard to their own child, but in class observation, in collegiate initiatives, in school management and in promoting opportunities for families with different cultural and social characteristics to meet, also with the aim of creating a network of solidarity and sharing that can help everyone in dealing with difficult situations of a different nature.

To the problems that families face, the author links the last point identified, which is the conviction that early childhood education services must play a supporting role for children and their families, particularly those on low incomes, in terms of health care, childcare and more. The construction of a network between services in the area, schools and families, produces a convergence in resources that generates processes of collaboration and the development of a community: childcare services and schools are an integral part of the community and make a decisive contribution to the building of healthy contexts by generating educational continuity between the environments frequented by the child.

To summarise, it seems that educational continuity can be identified in two substantial dimensions: the continuity that concerns the pathway in the educational/scholastic structures and therefore internal to the question of planning and programming based on the child's developmental phases, and the continuity that pertains to the contiguity between the agencies that deal with the child and that make up the world of early childhood (Brofenbrenner, 1986).

At this point in the reasoning, we seem to have arrived at the key issue of the question: the realisation of an educational service that is able to bring together all the elements pertaining to educational continuity, which are an expression of its quality, requires a responsible assumption of awareness on the part of educators and teachers as to the role and functions they will be able to play in this regard.

4. Educational continuity and the profession of educator in the zerosei integrated system

To date, the issue of entry-level training for professionals working in early childhood services is still rather controversial. In fact, at the moment, the initial training of zerosei operators is divided into nursery educator and teacher in the pre-school, since in fact, institutionally, in the territory, there still remains a differentiation between nurseries, and services that welcome children aged 0/3 years, and pre-schools aimed at children aged 3/6 years. Starting with Legislative Decree 65/2017, it was recognised that for access to the profession of educator

in the 0/3 sector, one had to have a three-year university education (L-19)⁶; the academic path had already been established for preschool teachers to whom access to the profession is allowed following a qualifying degree in Primary Education Sciences (L-85bis)⁷. The legislator has, however, identified a number of ways to facilitate the attainment of joint degrees: for the L-85bis graduate it is possible to enter the profession of educator in 0/3 through the attainment of 60 CFUs in the specific disciplines of the sector, and for the L-19 graduate educator it is possible to enrol in the third year of Primary Education Sciences, thus shortening the pathway to attaining the qualification to teach in pre-school and primary schools.

Therefore, at present, a distinction between the two figures remains in the entry training system, it being understood that each of the two could acquire transversal competences at the two educational levels should they decide to integrate the individual pathways either for reasons of employment opportunities or for the desire to broaden their knowledge, skills and professional horizons. It goes without saying that students who decided to integrate their education, using the opportunities offered by the legislator, would undoubtedly have a more harmonious and complete vision of the child's development starting from early childhood and up to primary school, and would therefore have a clear understanding of the dimension of educational continuity from the point of view of planning and educational-didactic programming.

While waiting for the possible project of specific entry training for the profession of educator in the zerosei system to be configured and put in place, one can aim at the realisation of educational continuity in the direction indicated by the same D. Legislative Decree 65/2017, i.e. through the construction of "poles for childhood" and in the activation of "territorial pedagogical coordinations".

The "poles for childhood" respond to the objective of creating spaces suitable for welcoming children in the 0-6 age group and generating learning contexts with a view to educational continuity in order to promote a quality intervention to be guaranteed to children, their families and the educators themselves. The "poles" are considered "permanent laboratories of research, innovation, participation and openness to the territory also in order to foster maximum flexibility and diversification for the best use of resources, sharing general services, collective spaces and professional resources" (Legislative Decree 65/2017, art.3). The 'poles', i.e. the construction of common educational contexts for facilities welcoming early childhood, are not an absolute novelty in Italy since, over the years, highly significant experiences have been carried out in this direction and certainly their concrete realisation poses a series of practical issues of an administrative, logistical and bureaucratic nature that will have to be progressively resolved (Bondioli et al, 2017; Falcinelli et al, 2022; Zaninelli, 2019). However, precisely because they are part of an already cleared terrain, 'poles' undoubtedly represent a clearly viable operational path in which one will need to be able to count on highly qualified professionals trained in research and sharing. These skills can be acquired in academic training.

⁶ For example, in the A.A. 2018/2019, at the Department of Education Sciences of the Roma Tre University, the Degree Course 'Educator of Nursery and Children's Services' (L19) was established.

⁷ The degree course in Primary Education, a single-cycle master's degree, was established by Ministerial Decree of 26 May 1998; since 2003 graduates have been qualified to work as teachers in primary and nursery schools.

Therefore, university entry training is to be considered a guarantee for the quality of the service, and so is continuous training in the working context, which can be achieved through cooperation between universities, services in the area and local administrative institutions (the municipality first and foremost). It is a question, specifically in the 'poles for childhood', of promoting opportunities for research in the field in which the educators of the 0-3 and teachers of the 3-6 are involved, with a view to identifying languages and teaching methodologies that enhance educational continuity in respect of the child's development, considered as harmonious and without jumps and interruptions. In addition to the implementation of a vertical continuity between 0-3 and 0-6, it is also a matter of promoting a horizontal one, between school, family, territory, for the progressive achievement of the reduction of "cultural, social and relational disadvantages and to favour the inclusion of all girls and boys through personalised interventions and an adequate organisation of spaces and activities"⁸.

To this end, Legislative Decree 65/2017 provides for the establishment of the "territorial pedagogical coordination" that in the Pedagogical Lines is defined as "a body stable over time that includes and brings together the pedagogical coordinators of the educational services for infancy and pre-schools existing on a territory (state, municipal, private, equal) and constitutes an indispensable element, from the technical-pedagogical point of view, of the local governance of the services playing a fundamental role of pedagogical orientation in the expansion and qualification of the 0-6 through collegial professional comparison"⁹. The territorial coordination can therefore be considered as a cultural project that aims at building an "educating community" in which all the service coordinators participate, bringing experiences and problems of the "lived school" in a context in which it will be possible to dialogue with academic experts and institutional representatives. The territorial coordinations, structured at municipal and regional level, will therefore have an orientation purpose with regard to the initiatives and decisions that will determine the character and quality of the interventions in the territory. Pedagogical coordination will not be carried out by educators, but by professional figures with specific training. Therefore, the professional figures that operate in the zerosei must be trained both in vertical educational continuity, the one to be implemented in the didactic/educational planning and programming between 0/3 and 3/6, and in horizontal continuity, which foresees, in the coordinator, the possession and use of organisational and managerial skills and the development of a vision of service quality based on practices of evaluation and self-assessment, knowledge of specific regulations, rudiments of management and leadership.

It therefore seems evident that the initial training of the professional figures operating in zerosei will have to aim at the development of pedagogical, methodological, didactic, relational and specific technical skills so that they can carry out a quality educational intervention in supporting the *vertical educational continuity* between 0-3 and 0-6. This training will also have to take the form of continuous/in-service training to corroborate that dialogic interaction and researcher posture that determine the basis of the exchange between empirical experiences and theoretical points of view between nursery school educators and pre-school teachers.

⁸ Adapted from Legislative Decree 65/2017, Art.1, para. 3, point b.

⁹ Linee Pedagogiche per il Sistema Integrato 0-6, Parte VI.

With a view to training for *horizontal continuity*, it will be appropriate to envisage, for three-year L-19 graduates, the possibility of ad hoc specialisations in the LM-50 degree courses, through specific address trajectories that aim to prepare for the functions of the service coordinator and that make explicit reference to the aims, functions and role of the coordinator within the territorial pedagogical committees. And of course, even in this case, there remains the need for continuous training that supports the coordinator in combining the knowledge and skills acquired in initial university training with the cultural, political and social instances that emerge in the territorial experience.

5. Professions in the integrated zerosei system. Not only skills, also values and virtues!

The initial and continuous training of the professional figures who act in the zerosei integrated system, in addition to providing knowledge and developing skills, should be contextualized in a broader epistemological and motivational framework, based on the search for the meaning of the profession and the construction of awareness of the values that they are the foundation of it.

Paulo Freire, in some speeches held on the occasion of public events of an international nature, wanted to highlight what he defined as a "critical reflection on the virtues of the educator" (Freire, 2017, p.23), assuming the term educator in the broad sense and therefore generally referring to those who deal with the education and training of people, from early childhood to adulthood. Freire underlines that virtues concern a way of being and behaving and must not be considered as abstract qualities that exist in some intangible hyperuranium, but are the expression of the concrete action of those educators who are not only concerned with the transmission of rules and contents¹⁰, but who wish to impact reality to change it in favor of a fairer and more supportive world.

The assumption is that the educator, while he educates, is educated, just as the student educates while he is educated, therefore education arises from a relationship between people who respect each other and recognize each other as bearers of knowledge and values and who live in a specific time and a specific space in the world, in which the virtues that must belong to an educator animated by cultural and civic passion for his work are generated. Below is the list of virtues which according to Freire (2017), if possessed, or rather built in the relationship between educator and pupil, allow an intervention that liberates the most authentic nature of education: respect for others and for the world in which you live.

1. The first virtue is the coherence between the speech that is made and the practice that should confirm this speech. Coherence between what is said and what is done is an objective to strive for and arises from the awareness of one's own incoherence, that is, it is in recognizing one's own inconsistency, in visualizing it, that the educator progressively achieves his own coherence. Therefore he must be careful to act in the sense of his theoretical beliefs and must always be careful in referring to these when he operates in his profession.

¹⁰ It is the "banking" conception of education, that is, the vision for which the educational process is an act of depositing content. An act in which the one who deposits is the educator and the depositary is the person being educated" (Freire, 2017, p.54).

For example, if he declares the value of autonomy in theory, he must then be consistent and learn to let the child experiment in his search for autonomy.

2. The educator must learn to manage the tension between speech and silence. This second is the virtue of listening: the educator must not overwhelm the students with excessive verbiage or with too many solicitations, but appropriately regulate the times of speaking and mutual listening. If you don't leave room for silence, you end up speaking in place of the students and their tension in asking questions or even protesting is eliminated; therefore we must listen to the student, remain silent to give him the opportunity to ask his questions and also to express dissent. The educator must therefore develop a pedagogy of questioning, placing himself in the position of being able to ask questions, even silent ones, to the students and to think of being able to receive answers from them because the educator is not the only one who has the answers to give and therefore to close the dialogue with his peremptory statements.

3. The third virtue consists in "knowing how to critically manage the tension between subjectivity and objectivity, between consciousness and the world, between the social and consciousness" (Freire, 2017, p.29). The educator must be aware of the fact that the world cannot be changed outside the world: it is illusory to think that to change the world you must first change the people. People live in the world and in history and therefore an educator who wants to influence the behavior of a student, who wants to support him in learning something new, will himself have to intervene to build adequate contexts. It is not the subject that changes the object-world and it is not the object-world that changes the subject: the change, the learning, occurs in the interaction between the subject and the object-world and in being aware of this relationship.

4. The educator must learn to differentiate the here and now of the student from his own here and now. That is, the educator must always become aware of the differences between his knowledge and his theoretical/practical knowledge and the knowledge and theoretical/practical knowledge of the students being educated. Educators have their own experience, their own knowledge of things, even very young children have already developed behaviors and expressions that define their character and skills (Catarsi and Fortunati, 2017). The educator must be able to differentiate his own requests from those of the student, taking the latter as a term of comparison and avoiding denying or ignoring them because they are considered of less or no interest.

5. The fifth virtue is that of avoiding spontaneity and at the same time not taking manipulative positions. The meaning is that the educator must be able to intervene in the educational context in a planned, intentional way, but at the same time he must be careful not to impose behaviors or ideas. The right attitude is the democratic one, that is, that of dialogue and respect for the student who must not be subjected but considered a sensitive and respectable otherness.

6. The educator must deeply experience the relationship between theory and practice: a good practice is nourished by the theory underlying it, just as a good theory must find application in a practice. Therefore, in the training of the educator, this dialectic between theories and practices must always be kept in mind, whatever the scholastic level at which the educator will provide his professionalism.

7. The educator will have to practice impatient patience. He will never have to be trained, and then educated, only in patience or only in impatience. Just being patient means passively accepting the way things go with resignation, just

being impatient means being in a hurry to change things without respecting the times that accompany the actions and interventions for change, for learning. Education must feed on both, be patiently impatient and vice versa.

8. The last virtue enunciated by Freire is that of knowing how to relate the text and the context. The knowledge of the educator and, consequently, the knowledge of the student, must be constructed in such a way as to promote an interpretation of the words of the text starting from the context in which they were generated and, in the same way, be aware that the text, words can intervene in the context to change it and direct it towards the desired direction.

It seems clear that the eight virtues proclaimed by Freire intertwine and overlap in the construction of a professional profile which sees its foundation in reciprocity, in the relationship and in the harmonization between the self and the other, between the subject and the object, between the person and the world.

6. Final note

The arguments elaborated in this paper aimed to propose a reflection on the need to closely connect the issue of educational continuity as a figure of the definition of the zerosei integrated system, the importance that the educator fully understands the meaning and value of promoting educational continuity vertical and horizontal and the construction of virtues that guide the attribution of meaning and value in the exercise of the profession.

The training of educators in the zerosei system is truly a challenge for those who deal with it. It is the case for initial training which in some way has the responsibility of professional imprinting and it is the same for in-service training in which there is a continuous recurrence in work groups, in communities of practice, between what is known, what is experiments, what is reworked.

It must be underlined that the scope of skills, values and virtues that shape the profession of the educator must remain both in initial and in-service training, involving individuals in dialectical dynamics that allow sharing in professional communities and that always take account of the world, understood as a context of dialogue and demanding care, attention and respect.

Skills and values are inextricably intertwined in building the professional profile of people who will have the enormous responsibility of contributing to the training of future generations, in the belief that education is constituted as a true human activity in a recursive process in which no one educates anyone, no one educates themselves, but men educate each other with the mediation of the world.

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