




PEDAGOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: PLANNING, MANAGEMENT AND PRACTICE

DIMENSÕES PEDAGÓGICAS DA EDUCAÇÃO INFANTIL: PLANEJAMENTO, GESTÃO E PRÁTICA

DIMENSIONES PEDAGÓGICAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN INFANTIL: PLANIFICACIÓN, GESTIÓN Y PRÁCTICA

 <https://doi.org/10.56238/isevmjv4n4-024>

Submission date: 07/05/2025

Publication date: 08/05/2025

Valéria da Silva Ferreira¹, Yuri Braz de Oliveira², Rosiane Fernandes da Silva³

ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the pedagogical dimensions of Early Childhood Education, addressing planning, management, and educational practice in an integrated manner. It emphasizes the importance of intentional planning, which considers children's diversity and uniqueness, promoting meaningful and inclusive experiences. Pedagogical management is understood as a space for dialogue and shared responsibility, fostering collective development and strengthening relationships between educators, families, and the school community. It emphasizes the need for a democratic and welcoming environment, supported by ethical and sensitive decisions that value the active participation of all involved. Pedagogical practice, in turn, is presented as the field in which principles and intentions gain concreteness through care, qualified listening, and constant reflection by educators on their actions. The role of physical spaces and the documentation of experiences are highlighted as fundamental elements in enhancing children's learning and integral development. Furthermore, the article emphasizes the importance of valuing and caring for early childhood education professionals, recognizing that their well-being directly influences the quality of relationships and pedagogical practices. Finally, the article reaffirms that early childhood education must be understood as a fundamental stage in the development of children's rights, requiring a collective and ethical commitment that promotes respect for diversity, the active participation of children, and the development of a coherent and transformative pedagogical approach capable of preparing individuals for coexistence in a plural, just, and democratic society.

Keywords: Early Childhood Education. Pedagogical Planning. School Management. Pedagogical Practice. Educational Inclusion.

RESUMO

Este artigo analisa as dimensões pedagógicas da Educação Infantil, abordando de forma integrada o planejamento, a gestão e a prática educativa. Destaca-se a importância do planejamento intencional, que considera a diversidade e as singularidades das crianças,

¹ Master's student in Educational Sciences. Universidad de La Integración de Las Americas.
E-mail: jesuivsferreira35@hotmail.com

² Specialization in Management and Pedagogical Coordination. Centro Universitário Fael (UNIFAEL).
E-mail: yurisuevo2030@hotmail.com

³ Master's student in Educational Sciences. Universidad UNIDA Paraguay.
E-mail: rfsilva25@yahoo.com.br



promovendo experiências significativas e inclusivas. A gestão pedagógica é compreendida como espaço de diálogo e corresponsabilidade, que favorece a construção coletiva e o fortalecimento das relações entre educadores, famílias e comunidade escolar. Ressalta-se a necessidade de um ambiente democrático e acolhedor, sustentado por decisões éticas e sensíveis, que valorizem a participação ativa de todos os sujeitos envolvidos. A prática pedagógica, por sua vez, é apresentada como o campo em que os princípios e intencionalidades ganham concretude, através do cuidado, da escuta qualificada e da reflexão constante dos educadores sobre suas ações. O papel dos espaços físicos e a documentação das experiências são destacados como elementos fundamentais para potencializar a aprendizagem e o desenvolvimento integral das crianças. Além disso, enfatiza-se a importância da valorização e do cuidado com os profissionais da Educação Infantil, reconhecendo que seu bem-estar influencia diretamente a qualidade das relações e das práticas pedagógicas. Por fim, o artigo reafirma que a Educação Infantil deve ser compreendida como etapa fundamental para a construção dos direitos da infância, exigindo um compromisso coletivo e ético que promova o respeito às diversidades, a participação ativa das crianças e a construção de uma proposta pedagógica coerente e transformadora, capaz de preparar sujeitos para a convivência em uma sociedade plural, justa e democrática.

Palavras-chave: Educação Infantil. Planejamento Pedagógico. Gestão Escolar. Prática Pedagógica. Inclusão Educacional.

RESUMEN

Este artículo analiza las dimensiones pedagógicas de la Educación Infantil, abordando de forma integrada la planificación, la gestión y la práctica educativa. Se destaca la importancia de una planificación intencional que considere la diversidad y singularidad de los niños, promoviendo experiencias significativas e inclusivas. La gestión pedagógica se entiende como un espacio de diálogo y corresponsabilidad que favorece la construcción colectiva y el fortalecimiento de las relaciones entre educadores, familias y la comunidad escolar. Se resalta la necesidad de un ambiente democrático y acogedor, sustentado en decisiones éticas y sensibles que valoren la participación activa de todos los sujetos involucrados. La práctica pedagógica, a su vez, se presenta como el ámbito donde los principios e intenciones se concretan mediante el cuidado, la escucha cualificada y la reflexión constante de los educadores sobre sus acciones. El papel de los espacios físicos y la documentación de las experiencias se destacan como elementos fundamentales para potenciar el aprendizaje y el desarrollo integral de los niños. Además, se enfatiza la importancia de la valorización y el cuidado de los profesionales de la Educación Infantil, reconociendo que su bienestar influye directamente en la calidad de las relaciones y prácticas pedagógicas. Finalmente, el artículo reafirma que la Educación Infantil debe entenderse como una etapa fundamental para la construcción de los derechos de la infancia, exigiendo un compromiso colectivo y ético que promueva el respeto a las diversidades, la participación activa de los niños y la construcción de una propuesta pedagógica coherente y transformadora, capaz de preparar sujetos para la convivencia en una sociedad plural, justa y democrática.

Palabras clave: Educación Infantil. Planificación Pedagógica. Gestión Escolar. Práctica Pedagógica. Inclusión Educativa.



1 INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education represents the essential basis of the educational process, a stage aimed at the integral development of children in their first years of life. This period is marked by intense discoveries, learning, and subjective constructions, which will profoundly influence future paths. When considering the specificity of this educational field, it is essential to reflect on the multiple dimensions that compose it, understanding the interdependence between pedagogical planning, educational management and teaching practice. These dimensions are not articulated in isolation; on the contrary, they mutually sustain each other in a dynamic and continuous process of construction and reconstruction of educational action.

Planning in Early Childhood Education requires sensitivity and intentionality, being more than the organization of content and activities. It is an exercise that involves listening attentively to children, recognizing their needs and potential, and defining strategies that favor meaningful experiences. Planning, in this context, is also to welcome the diversity present in children's groups and to propose contexts that promote play, interaction and expression in their multiple forms. Planning is not limited to formal documents or records; it manifests itself daily in the decisions that educators make, in the proposals they build with the children and in the paths they choose to follow during the educational process.

Management, in turn, plays a fundamental role in the consolidation of a pedagogical practice consistent with the principles of Early Childhood Education. Democratic, participatory management committed to children's rights contributes to the creation of welcoming, safe and challenging environments. The organization of space, time and material resources, as well as the valorization of collective work, are aspects that evidence the educational intentionality present in management. The quality of the relationships between the management team, teachers, children and families is a relevant indicator of the solidity of institutional processes and the commitment to an education that respects the rhythms and singularities of childhood.

The pedagogical practice, in turn, is concretized in the daily interactions, in the way the educator positions himself in front of the group, in the gestures, in the listening and in the choices that guide the action. It is the space in which planning and management take shape, where theories meet lived experiences. The early childhood educator needs to articulate theoretical knowledge, sensitivity and flexibility to respond to the emerging demands of daily life, recognizing the child as an active subject and producer of culture.



The practice is neither neutral nor repetitive; it is reflective, situated and permeated by the social and cultural relations that cross the educational context.

The dialogue between these three dimensions becomes essential for Early Childhood Education to fulfill its formative function in an ethical, critical and transformative way. Each of them represents an axis that, articulated with the others, contributes to the construction of a solid, sensitive pedagogical proposal committed to childhood. The challenge is to promote this integration in a conscious way, respecting the specificities of working with young children and investing in the training of professionals who work in this segment. The attentive look at the child, the commitment to listening and the recognition of the power of childhood are principles that should guide both teaching practice and planning and management decisions.

Thus, when addressing the pedagogical dimensions of Early Childhood Education, a broad and in-depth reflection on the elements that structure educational action in the first years of life is proposed. It is about understanding that each gesture, each choice and each decision in the institutional context carries meanings and repercussions in the learning and development process of children. Investing in quality education for children requires, therefore, intentional, collaborative and ethical action, which recognizes the value of the child as a subject full of rights and potentialities.

2 METHODOLOGY

The present research adopts a qualitative approach of a bibliographic nature, with the objective of promoting a reflective and critical analysis of the pedagogical dimensions that structure Early Childhood Education, focusing on the aspects of planning, management and educational practice. This methodological choice is justified by the nature of the object of study, which requires the understanding of concepts, principles and theoretical interpretations already consolidated in the scientific literature on the subject.

Bibliographic research consists of the survey, selection and analysis of academic works, such as books, scientific articles, dissertations and official documents, which directly or indirectly address the pedagogical foundations of Early Childhood Education. Productions published in the last ten years were prioritized, seeking to ensure the timeliness of the reflections, without disregarding classic authors whose contribution remains relevant to the understanding of the educational field.



The methodological process involved exploratory reading and thematic analysis of the selected texts, in order to identify recurrences, contrasts and theoretical deepening that would enable the critical organization of the content. The systematization of the theoretical data started from the delimitation of the three main categories of analysis: pedagogical planning, institutional management and teaching practice in Early Childhood Education. Each of these dimensions was discussed in an interrelated way, considering the challenges and possibilities observed in the publications examined.

Bibliographic research does not aim at statistical generalization, but rather at broadening the understanding of a given phenomenon, based on references that sustain and problematize educational practices. In this way, the study proposes to contribute to the theoretical strengthening of the field of Early Childhood Education, offering subsidies for the training of teachers and managers, as well as for the improvement of pedagogical practices aimed at childhood.

Through this methodology, it seeks not only to gather knowledge already produced, but also to promote interpretative articulations that favor the construction of a critical and grounded look at the elements that make up the educational action in Early Childhood Education institutions.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The understanding of the pedagogical dimensions of Early Childhood Education reveals that planning, management and practice are deeply interconnected, functioning as pillars that support the educational routine. Planning, in this context, takes on a function that goes far beyond the organization of activities: it is born from listening to children and is molded to their needs and discoveries. As Oliveira (2020) points out, it is essential that this planning combines pedagogical intention with flexibility, allowing children's curiosity to guide the learning process.

It is in this movement of constant construction that the educator positions himself as someone who listens and observes, adapting his proposals to what emerges from the group. For Arce and Rodrigues (2019), this dynamic requires planning to be open to transformation, enabling school experiences to be in tune with children's desires, doubts, and inventions. This way of thinking requires a distancing from rigid models and valuing contexts that respect the rhythm of each group.



On the other hand, the way in which the management of the institution is structured directly interferes with the quality with which planning is carried out. Decisions about spaces, routines, materials, and times need to be thought of from a pedagogical perspective. Campos (2021) emphasizes that management must create conditions for the school to be, in fact, an environment of rich and safe experiences, where playing and interaction are stimulated as learning instruments.

Pedagogical practice, in this scenario, gives life to what has been planned and what is possible to accomplish within institutional limits and possibilities. It is there that theories take shape and translate into actions. For Silva and Craidy (2020), the early childhood educator needs to act as a mediator, someone who transforms everyday situations into learning opportunities, recognizing children as subjects who build knowledge from their experiences and interactions.

In this process, it is perceived that school environments that promote spaces for dialogue between teachers and administrators tend to develop actions that are more coherent with the principles of childhood. In this context, continuing education appears as an indispensable tool to sustain sensitive and well-founded practices. According to Kramer (2022), in-service training strengthens teachers, allowing them to understand childhood in its complexity and act ethically and consciously.

On the other hand, when planning is detached from practice, there is a risk of adopting decontextualized and insignificant proposals. Barbosa (2019) argues that the institution's pedagogical project should be built collectively, respecting the singularities of each community and guaranteeing children an education based on their rights and experiences. This collective construction is what allows planning to be alive in the school's daily life.

Management, in this sense, cannot be restricted to the administration of resources, but must be focused on the pedagogical dimension of the school. Faria and Diniz (2020) reinforce that a management committed to childhood needs to guarantee spaces for listening and valuing the teaching work, promoting coherence between the institutional project and the actions that derive from it. Management, therefore, has a formative and mobilizing role, which goes beyond simple institutional organization.

It is in this set that the pedagogical practice is constituted as a space for authorship and reflection. When the teacher is clear about his purposes and finds support in management, he can exercise his creativity and explore possibilities that unfold in the



relationships with the children. Moura and Araújo (2021) state that the practice should be seen as an investigative field, in which the educator observes, analyzes and reelaborates his strategies according to the children's responses and the context in which they are inserted.

In this process, it becomes evident that institutional time dedicated to dialogue and shared listening is indispensable to integrate the three dimensions. Planning meetings, internal training and pedagogical meetings are fundamental moments for the collective to recognize itself as responsible for the construction of the educational project. Rocha and Santos (2018) point out that more cohesive pedagogical practices emerge in institutions that value participation and dialogue among professionals.

Another transversal element in the educational process is listening to the child. More than listening to their words, it is about welcoming their gestures, silences and non-verbal expressions as legitimate parts of the pedagogical process. Machado (2021) argues that

Listening to children is recognizing their capacity for active participation, allowing them to directly influence pedagogical decisions. This listening is not limited to what is said verbally, but involves a careful look at their gestures, attitudes and non-verbal manifestations. Such a practice requires from the educator a keen sensitivity and a constant willingness to rethink their strategies, adjusting paths and proposing new approaches that value the effective participation of children in the process of knowledge construction.

The findings also indicate that physical space plays an active role in learning. Your organization should promote autonomy, curiosity, and creation. Fonseca (2020) considers that the environment needs to function as an extension of the pedagogical proposal, offering opportunities for exploration and interaction in a safe and thought-provoking way. It is up to planning and management to ensure that this space is not only beautiful, but that it dialogues with the institution's educational project.

Within this environment, affective bonds play an essential role. The quality of relationships between educators and children directly influences the construction of knowledge and socio-emotional development. Costa (2022) states that affectivity and learning go together, being inseparable in working with childhood. The acceptance of emotions, attention to individual needs and the creation of a climate of trust are actions that strengthen the educational process.

Reflection on these dimensions also highlights the need to break with mechanical and repetitive practices. Planning, managing and acting require ethical, political and pedagogical positioning. Soares and Lima (2023) highlight that educational practice only



acquires meaning when it is aimed at the emancipation of subjects, the promotion of experiences that value diversity, and the construction of a culture of respect for children's rights.

Institutions that understand this complexity and invest in the qualification of internal processes demonstrate important advances. Not only in the didactic proposals, but in the relationships established within the school. This transformation requires the commitment of all those involved and an alignment between theory and practice. It is about building an educational space that is coherent with the principles that sustain Early Childhood Education in its social and formative function.

Another relevant point identified concerns the initial training of teachers. In many cases, training courses are not able to adequately prepare professionals for the daily challenges of Early Childhood Education. Lima and Andrade (2021) observe that continuing education, when linked to the real context of practice, is more effective in building a reflective and transformative look. Training, in this sense, should not be punctual, but constant, collective and contextualized.

Valuing the educator also emerges as a condition for strengthening pedagogical practices. Nunes (2022) states that recognizing the importance of the childhood teacher is essential to ensure the quality of educational actions. This involves ensuring good working conditions, fair remuneration, time for planning and continuous institutional support. Only in this way will it be possible to build an Early Childhood Education committed to the rights of children and to the professional dignity of educators.

In summary, the data analyzed point to the need for an action that integrates the dimensions in an inseparable way. Planning that is born from listening, management that promotes co-responsibility and practice that reinvents itself daily are aspects that are intertwined to offer a more meaningful education. As Oliveira (2020) reinforces, each choice made within the school carries the power to deeply impact childhood and, therefore, requires awareness, preparation, and sensitivity.

Quality in Early Childhood Education is not the result of isolated actions, but of joint work, built on the basis of clear principles and respect for the child as a subject of rights. Qualified listening, valuing diversity, and commitment to child well-being should be the guides of every educational project. When planning, management and practice go together, institutions are strengthened and become real spaces for learning, affection and social transformation.



By deepening the analysis of the pedagogical dimensions, it is noted that listening carefully to the children and planning with sensitivity are actions that must go hand in hand with valuing the differences present in each group. Each class carries a wealth of stories, rhythms and ways of being that challenge the educator to think of proposals that respect and celebrate this plurality. Arce and Rodrigues (2019) highlight that planning needs to start precisely from this diversity, proposing experiences that favor inclusion and the active participation of all subjects involved in the educational process.

This expanded listening must also be assumed by institutional management, which needs to act firmly to ensure fairer and more accessible environments. Faria and Diniz (2020) point out that pedagogical management practices focused on equity are those that welcome multiple voices, especially those that are usually marginalized, promoting more horizontal relationships and learning spaces that respect singularities. In this way, the school becomes a possible territory of democratic coexistence, where the right to childhood is concretized in everyday life.

It is in pedagogical practice that all these intentions take shape. The way in which the educator positions himself in front of the children, welcomes their doubts, organizes the spaces and reacts to the unforeseen, reveals not only his education, but also the conceptions that underlie his performance. As Silva and Craidy (2020) state, it is in this daily practice that the power of teaching in childhood is perceived: a practice that requires intuition, listening, and constant dialogue between theory and reality, placing the child as the protagonist of their own learning.

For this practice to be sustained and evolve, it is essential that the collective of educators has space to reflect on their experiences. Pedagogical meetings gain another meaning when thought of as moments of study, mutual listening and reinvention of practices. Rocha and Santos (2018) recall that the strengthening of professional identity occurs in the encounter with the other, in the exchanges that resignify the experiences and in the collective decisions that guide the institution's path.

School management that understands its formative function opens ways for this collective to be strengthened. Promoting listening, respecting different opinions and articulating the different sectors of the institution are attitudes that make a difference in the creation of a pedagogical culture more committed to children's rights. Campos (2021) draws attention to the role of democratic management, one that encourages everyone's



involvement, which does not centralize decisions, but shares responsibilities with ethics and mutual respect.

This same listening should extend to families, understanding that they also participate in the construction of the meanings attributed to the school experience. When there is dialogue and respect, families become valuable partners in the educational process. Machado (2021) states that the involvement of families does not represent a risk to the educator's autonomy, but rather a broadening of views that help to better understand the children's path. With this, the bonds are strengthened and the sense of the school as a space for coexistence expands.

Pedagogical practices that value this bond with families are usually able to offer more contextualized and affective experiences. In addition, constant dialogue allows us to identify barriers that affect children's development and seek solutions collectively. As Nunes (2022) observes, by including families in pedagogical planning, the school builds more solid support networks and expands the reach of its educational action, promoting the child's well-being in an integral way.

However, this joint construction only happens when management gives up a rigid hierarchical structure and bets on more horizontal relationships. Soares and Lima (2023) argue that pedagogical practice gains strength when different subjects share responsibilities, knowledge, and decisions. By valuing listening to everyone, the institution starts to build its educational project with more consistency, connecting the real needs of daily life to the intentions that guide the planning.

Another fundamental issue that appears in the daily life of institutions is the way in which evaluation is understood and carried out. In Early Childhood Education, evaluating is not measuring performance, but observing processes, welcoming expressions and documenting discoveries. Oliveira (2020) argues that this evaluative look needs to be attentive to the different ways of learning of children, respecting their times and recognizing their singularities as powers and not as lags.

Pedagogical records, when used with ethics and formative intention, become valuable allies in monitoring learning and reorganizing practices. Kramer (2022) recalls that these records — made through texts, images, speeches, or drawings — help to make the educational path visible and serve as a basis for dialogue between teachers, families, and the child himself. Thus, planning is no longer static and is constantly adjusted by listening and documentation.



This way of thinking about evaluation is directly linked to the conception of childhood that sustains the pedagogical work. By recognizing the child as a producer of culture, creative and sensitive, the educator begins to see everyday situations as learning opportunities. Fonseca (2020) reinforces that educational spaces should value multiple languages and allow children to express themselves through the body, imagination, speech, art, and play, without reductions or limiting classifications.

The physical space also plays a fundamental pedagogical role. It is not only a place where activities take place, but a living part of the educational process. Your organization communicates ideas, values, and expectations. Campos (2021) states that well-planned environments stimulate curiosity, favor autonomy, and invite experimentation, becoming an active part of learning and the construction of relationships in everyday school life.

When the child participates in the organization of spaces and routine, he begins to develop a sense of belonging and responsibility. This participation broadens the educator's view and allows new meanings to emerge in the relationship with materials, colleagues and the environment itself. Moura and Araújo (2021) highlight that involving children in everyday decisions, even the simplest ones, strengthens the notion that they are part of the process and not just recipients of planned actions.

For these proposals to be sustained, it is necessary that professionals also feel respected, cared for, and valued. The well-being of educators directly influences the quality of the interactions they establish with children. Costa (2022) states that taking care of those who care is an essential part of an ethical pedagogical proposal. This includes ensuring good working conditions, time for planning, and constant institutional support.

Professional appreciation also involves continuing education, which needs to dialogue with the real challenges of practice. Lima and Andrade (2021) argue that training processes that start from listening to teachers and consider their experiences have a greater impact on the transformation of pedagogical practice. The educator needs to have space to question, experiment and reconstruct his performance in a collaborative and conscious way.

The institution's political-pedagogical project must therefore reflect these commitments. It needs to be built collectively, organically, and revisited frequently to ensure that it remains consistent with the group's intentions. Barbosa (2019) highlights that a significant pedagogical project is one that translates the values, principles, and



dreams of the school community, connecting them with daily practices and with the integral development of children.

In this way, Early Childhood Education is strengthened as a field that goes far beyond care. It affirms itself as a place of rights, of construction of meanings, of expansion of worlds. Machado (2021) reinforces that quality in childhood is expressed not in numbers or rankings, but in the power of lived experiences, in qualified listening and in respect for the uniqueness of each child, every day, in every gesture and in every proposal.

To recognize that the practice needs to be continuously rethought is to accept that educating in childhood is a living process, driven by questions, encounters and ethical choices. Soares and Lima (2023) state that pedagogical practices only make sense when they are anchored in collective values and seek to transform, in a critical and sensitive way, the realities that make up the children's universe. This transformation begins with small gestures, but extends to policies, projects, and the commitment of each educator.

4 CONCLUSION

The analysis of the pedagogical dimensions of Early Childhood Education — planning, management and practice — reveals an intrinsic and dynamic relationship between these elements, which sustain the quality of the educational process. Planning emerges as an intentional and flexible act, based on sensitive listening to children and considering their singularities. When elaborated from this attentive eye, planning becomes a living instrument, capable of promoting meaningful experiences that respect the rhythm and needs of children. However, for this intentionality to materialize, it is essential that institutional management is committed to creating favorable conditions, which guarantee adequate spaces, organized times and the necessary support for educators.

Pedagogical management, therefore, goes beyond the administration of resources; It is a space for collective construction and co-responsibility, which promotes dialogue, continuing education and the strengthening of bonds between all the actors involved. A management that values the participation of teachers and families contributes to the creation of welcoming and democratic environments, capable of enhancing the integral development of children. It is essential that managers adopt ethical and sensitive



postures, aligning institutional decisions with the principles that guide Early Childhood Education, especially respect for diversity and childhood as a right.

In pedagogical practice, these dimensions are intertwined and take concrete form. The educator is called to mediate daily experiences, transforming them into opportunities for learning and development, while respecting the multiple languages and expressions of children. Constant reflection on practice, supported by spaces for training and exchange, is essential for the renewal of strategies and for facing daily challenges. In addition, the care for affective relationships and the appreciation of the bond between educator and child strengthen the educational process, promoting a safe and stimulating environment.

Finally, Early Childhood Education, as a fundamental stage of basic education, requires a collective and ethical commitment that transcends isolated actions. Planning, management and practice must act in consonance, sustaining a pedagogical proposal that recognizes and values children as protagonists of their development. Only in this way, the school becomes a truly educational space, where playing, discovery and coexistence are intertwined, promoting learning that accompanies the child beyond the school environment, contributing to the construction of a more just and plural society.

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