
Apuntes históricos sobre la superación profesional del maestro logopeda en Santiago de Cuba

Historical notes on the professional development of the speech-language pathologist teacher in Santiago de Cuba

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Resumen: Dirigido a caracterizar la superación profesional del maestro logopeda, se realizó un estudio de investigaciones desarrolladas en el país sobre el tema; se revisaron documentos normativos del Ministerio de Educación y metodológicos de la Dirección Provincial de Educación en Santiago de Cuba y se aplicó una entrevista a actores clave involucrados en el proceso de superación profesional del referido especialista. Los resultados revelan que el proceso ha transitado por diferentes etapas, de cuyo estudio resultan sus características fundamentales con especial interés en los educandos de la primera infancia con necesidades educativas especiales asociadas a discapacidad auditiva.

Palabras clave: Maestro logopeda; Superación profesional; Discapacidad auditiva; Primera infancia.

Abstract: Aimed at characterizing the professional development of the speech-language pathologist teacher, a study of research developed in the country on the subject was carried out; normative documents of the Ministry of Education and methodological documents of the Provincial Directorate of Education in Santiago de Cuba were reviewed and an interview to key actors involved in the process of professional development of the referred specialist was applied. The results reveal that the process has gone through different stages, the study of which reveals its fundamental characteristics with special interest in early childhood students with special educational needs associated to hearing impairment.

Keywords: Speech-language pathologist teacher; Professional development; Hearing impairment; Early childhood.

Introduction

The training of speech therapists in Cuba is based on two training models, master speech therapists, who work in the educational field and higher-level technicians in Speech Therapy and the medical specialty in Speech Therapy and Phoniatrics, who work in medical assistance areas. Thus, two different approaches and occupational profiles coexist, but converge in an integrated care model for prevention, diagnosis and treatment. This article focuses on the

history of the professional development process of speech therapist teachers in the province of Santiago de Cuba and focuses on the specialized nature of this process for early childhood care of hearing impaired students.

The professional improvement of speech therapist teachers is theoretically supported by basic concepts of improvement as a process; however, in Cuban educational research, the topic of professional improvement of this specialist for the care of early childhood learners with hearing impairment has not been sufficiently addressed as an independent object and field of action, for this reason there are few epistemological references that address the process in a singularized way; which demands to deepen it, with studies for its expansion and improvement in the specific historical context of Cuba. The identification of the deficiencies and needs of professional improvement of the speech therapist teacher for the care of hearing impaired students, emanate from its historical analysis and are significant in the projection of strategies that guarantee as a higher goal the improvement of the knowledge of the mentioned professional in order to contribute to the socio-educational inclusion of the hearing impaired person.

In Cuba, the emergence and development of the professional improvement process of the speech therapist teacher is closely linked to moments that constitute reference facts to delimit its historical analysis; one of them is the social change that occurred with the revolutionary triumph of January 1, 1959, another is framed in the emergence of a new conceptual paradigm in world education: educational inclusion, which has its beginnings in 1990, moment from which a series of meetings and congresses occur where the problem is discussed. In 1990, the Jomtien Conference was held, and in 1994 the Salamanca World Conference was held, which universalized the term special educational needs. This vision of education for all has its splendor in the first years of the 21st century; with the development of important international meetings: World Forum on Education for All in 2000 and the meeting of the International Education Organization (IBE) where Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future was proposed (UNESCO, 2008).

The main objective of this article is to offer the results obtained as part of the doctoral training studies that allow identifying the different stages and characteristics that distinguish the historical development of the professional improvement process of the speech-language pathologist teacher in the care of early childhood learners with hearing impairment in the province of Santiago de Cuba.

Development

Theoretical and empirical research methods were used for the study of the historical development of the professional development of the speech-language pathologist teacher. The analysis and synthesis method allowed the interpretation of the theoretical and empirical information, the determination of regularities of the professional improvement process of the speech-language pathologist teacher, for the care of hearing-impaired students and the precision of the current situation of this process in the context of the province of Santiago de Cuba. The historical-logical method was used to determine the stages of the historical development of the professional improvement process of the speech-language pathologist teacher, particularly with regard to the speech therapy attention to hearing impaired students in the first ages; the precedent studies registered in master's thesis, doctorates and in articles, which have approached the history of the initial training and improvement of the Special Education teaching staff in Cuba, were taken into account.

The analysis of documents was applied to the study of the regulations of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education, to verify how the orientations and guidelines related to the process of professional improvement of teachers and in particular of speech-language teachers, as well as the actions planned in the methodological documents, were specified in the methodological work strategies of the specialties of Communication Disorders and Deaf and Hard of Hearing, from 2006 to 2011; as well as the annual plans of the national, provincial and municipal levels with the specificities for the methodological work and professional improvement of Special Education professionals from 2012 to 2020 (including speech-language teachers, regardless of the level where they work).

An interview was also conducted with key actors in this process, which allowed comparing the data obtained from the document review with the experiences of the interviewees. Six speech therapist teachers graduated from different training programs and one graduate in Surdopedagogy were selected for the interview, for a total of seven interviewees; with an experience between 30 and 46 years of work in the profession. Finally, the direct participation of the authors was considered, for more than twenty years in the actions of professional improvement of speech-language pathologists in the province of Santiago de Cuba, as well as their intervention in the national meetings of the specialties of Communication Disorders and Deaf and Hard of Hearing since 2007 and in the commissions of the improvement of these specialties since 2015.

The following are established as periodization criteria: the transformations of the continuing education of the speech-language pathologist teacher, based on the changes occurred in his initial training and the relationship with the main events that distinguish his professional improvement for early childhood care for hearing impaired learners and the one referred to the characteristics of the socio-educational context for the development of the professional improvement of the speech-language pathologist teacher in Santiago de Cuba, aimed at improving the care for early childhood learners with hearing impairment. Based on these criteria, indicators are selected to characterize the different stages that emerge in the dynamics of the professional development process of the speech-language pathologist teacher for the care of hearing impaired learners in early childhood.

1. Conception of the professional development of the speech-language pathologist teacher for the care of hearing impaired learners in relation to their initial training and the changes in the socio-educational context.
2. Researches carried out, with repercussion in the professional development of the speech-language pathologist teacher for the care of hearing impaired students.

The methods applied made it possible to determine the stages and characteristics of the professional development process of the speech-language pathologist teacher and its particularities in relation to the care of early childhood learners with hearing impairment.

- (1976 - 1989): Structuring stage of the professional improvement of the speech-language pathologist teacher.
- (1990 - 2006): Specialized training stage for the performance of the speech-language pathologist teacher.
- (2007-present): Specialized training stage for the care of hearing impaired students.

In 1962, with the creation of the Department of Differentiated Teaching and the Centers for Diagnosis and Orientation (CDO), speech therapy care began to be provided through a health care network of health institutions. According to Fernandez and Rodriguez, (2012), these facts were decisive to start the training of speech therapist teachers: emerging courses, short courses and seminars to Spanish graduate teachers of all educations and to middle level teachers, of primary and special educations; middle level courses for qualification or specialization in the former Soviet Union from 1963; career Bachelor in Defectology (USSR and GDR) with selected teachers in special schools from 1973; career Bachelor in Defectology with high school graduates from 1974, at the Pedagogical Institute Vladimir I. Lenin Pedagogical Institute in Moscow.

In the early years, the initial training of these professionals was carried out simultaneously with the improvement, through actions that only contemplated within the organizational forms the courses, without legal regulation or pedagogical-methodological basis to carry them out, until the creation of the Ministry of Higher Education in 1976 and the establishment of the Postgraduate Regulation.

Structuring stage of the professional improvement of the speech therapist. (1976-1989). From 1976 to 1980, middle-level graduates undertook continuing education studies through short courses and lectures given by foreign specialists from the former Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, as well as from UNESCO. The improvement was based on a centralized

model, which obeyed to concrete needs of the educational development, using traditionalist methods with reproductive character, where the speech therapist teacher is the object of the improvement and maintains a passive position in the teaching-learning process; they were not prepared in the attention to the deaf and hypoacusic students, these were attended in the special schools of this type by the therapist teachers of that specialty.

In 1980, after the graduation of the first graduates in Speech Therapy from the Vladimir I. Lenin Pedagogical Institute in Moscow, the first graduates of the Vladimir I. Lenin Pedagogical Institute in Moscow were trained as speech therapists. Lenin Pedagogical Institute in Moscow, the Department of Defectology was created in the Faculty of Pedagogy-Psychology of the Enrique José Varona Higher Pedagogical Institute in Havana City, thus initiating university-level training in Cuba, which is an important event for this research. The curriculum is aimed at the specialization of the speech therapist teacher for the care of students with oral and written language disorders, characterized by the training of specialists with a narrow profile and a clinical psycho-pedagogical approach.

At the end of the 1980s, the improvement actions increased and were organized through updating, training, complementation, reorientation and deepening programs and courses. The courses were developed by foreign specialists and Cuban professionals of high qualification and professional scientific preparation. This moment is characterized by the tendency to decentralization in terms of the content of the training; but at the same time, activities are organized with a centralized character, combined with others established in the provinces and municipalities according to the needs. In Santiago de Cuba, the Institute of Educational Improvement, with the Provincial Department of Special Education and the pedagogical center of the territory have an important participation in the coordination, development and evaluation of the tasks. López (2002) considers that the elevation of the scientific-methodological level of the teaching staff of the then Frank País García Higher Pedagogical Institute and the opening of its Department of Defectology, allowed the incorporation in the territory of postgraduate studies to improve the preparation of speech-language teachers.

In general, the stage is characterized by the transition from the centralized model to the gradual decentralization of the process, as well as a progressive increase in the diversification of the postgraduate figures, fundamentally of the courses, the introduction of independent work and the strengthening of research tasks; however, there are still no research projects that are significantly interested in the subject under study.

Specialized training stage for the performance of speech therapists (1990-2006). The increase in the number of speech therapist teachers graduated from the university level, merits projecting, designing, executing and controlling in the territory the activities of improvement, according to the real needs and diversity of each municipality with a decentralized and personalized character. On the other hand, the creation in 1990 of the Latin American Reference Center for Special Education (CELAEE) and the Latin American Reference Center for Preschool Education (CELEP) in 1995 were important events in the stage; by this means, Cuban education opens up to the world, especially to Latin America. Santiago de Cuba becomes an important referent for the development of scientific events, which propitiated the realization of experience exchanges with territorial, national and international character by means of courses, master conferences; which favored the improvement of the training of practicing speech therapist teachers.

In the 1990-1991 school year, the career of Defectology begins to develop the C curricula, whose essential transformation was the integral formation of the Special Education teacher as a single specialty, Speech Therapy becomes a discipline. In this context, the teaching staff of the Special Education department of the Higher Pedagogical Institute Frank País García of the province, raises its teaching category, which puts them in a position to take on the challenge of diversifying the offerings and thus effectively respond to the educational needs of professionals and reverse the specific conditions of our territory. As figures of the professional improvement, fundamentally, updating, deepening, requalification and diploma courses are carried out, many of them with close interdisciplinary links, mainly with the health personnel and the Center of Applied Linguistics of the Academy of Sciences.

In 1994, a national meeting of the Cuban Association of the Deaf and representatives of the Ministry of Education (MINED-ANSOC) approved Cuban Sign Language (CSL) as a pedagogical alternative in the school context. During the first years of the 2000s, bilingual education, as a trend in the education of deaf students, was strengthened in Cuba, and the first experimental work began. These changes do not transcend in the professional improvement of the speech therapist teacher in Santiago de Cuba, because of the particularities already mentioned in his field of action, he does not intend to take part in the process.

On the other hand, there is a growing international movement in favor of early childhood care, particularly for students in any situation of vulnerability or risk. In Cuba, as of January 1993, the Community Program "Educate your Child" was implemented for early childhood care, which led to the emergence of new aspects in the training of speech-language pathologists. The Provincial Direction of Special Education in Santiago de Cuba, materializes a group of actions directed to the strengthening of the speech therapy attention to the students attended by this way; in the course 1993 -1994 the orientations for the speech therapy work in the program Educate your child (Educate your Child) are elaborated and implemented. Among its objectives are: to prepare speech therapists for the attention in the new modality, to offer procedures by way of demonstration for the correction of pronunciation disorders and to orient the preventive work from the first ages; nevertheless, it does not contain precisions that orient the attention to hearing impaired students in this context.

In the last years of the nineties, the existing social economic conditions determined an exodus of speech therapist teachers to other jobs, which brought about a slight stagnation in the process of professional improvement of the referred specialist. As of the year 2000, national, zonal and territorial meetings of the specialty are held with the joint participation of the Provincial Directorates of Education, the Higher Pedagogical Institutes and the Centers of Diagnosis and Orientation (CDO); this contributes to organize the post-graduate improvement of speech therapist teachers through methodological workshops that are developed in the methodological preparations and the provincial groups of Speech Therapy that are revitalized.

At the same time, research on the problem of professional development has emerged; professors from Santiago de Cuba and Havana, as part of their master's and doctoral studies respectively, have contributed with programs specializing in Speech Therapy (López Forés, 2002) (López Hernández, 2003), but their implementation in the territory has not materialized. A relevant fact, in the process of professional improvement of the speech therapist teacher, is the emergence of the Cuban Program of Cochlear Implants in 2002, with the caveat that, in Santiago de Cuba, it does not have a significant impact until years later.

In 2005, the Master's Degree in Educational Sciences began, which, although as a postgraduate academic figure contributed to the permanent training of speech-language teachers, it did not respond fully and uniquely to the particularities and specific training needs of these professionals in Santiago de Cuba, particularly in its first edition. There was a lack of intentionality in the territory to strengthen the professional improvement process of the speech-language pathologist teacher from its conception and design.

In the 2006-2007 academic year, Resolution 92/2006 is issued, which gives indications for the logopedic preparation of groups of students and practicing teachers of Early Childhood Education careers. This has repercussions on postgraduate training, as it demanded an active participation of tutors and assistant professors to face the task. Santiago de Cuba responded to this training, with the existing coverage of practicing speech therapist teachers in the municipality of the same name and the teaching staff of the then Frank País García University of Pedagogical Sciences.

Thus, the stage was characterized by ups and downs in the professional improvement process of the speech therapist teacher, however, the impetuous development of Special Education and the postgraduate policy of the Ministry of Higher Education made it possible to decentralize this activity and organize the process in a territorial way, expanding the spectrum of modalities, appearing figures such as the Training and the Diploma. The fundamental way of improvement used was the methodological preparation organized by the Provincial Direction of Special Education in Santiago de Cuba and the teachers of the Special Education

Department of the territorial pedagogical center. On the other hand, it includes the use of technology in the training of speech-language pathologists and the use of independent work methods that fostered the need for self-learning and research in these specialists. The undergraduate training, in spite of the cessation of Speech Therapy as a career, transitions towards approaches: preventive, social integration and educational and communicative inclusion of language in the training of professionals.

Specialized training stage for the care of hearing impaired students (2007 - Present). It is in this period when the specialized training of the speech therapist teacher for the care of hearing-impaired students is outlined and its emergence in Santiago de Cuba is framed. Cuba is immersed in a series of social events involving early childhood care and people with disabilities. In September 2007, it signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and participated in the meeting on Education for All (EFA) in Latin America and the Caribbean: assessment and challenges post-2015. In the Incheon Declaration of May 2015, UNESCO was entrusted with coordinating and leading the Education 2030 agenda. In this international social context, the Cuban Bilingual Educational Model for the care of the hearing impaired is strengthened and developed, which has promoted since its inception actions to improve the teaching staff, which at this stage involve through research, the forms of improvement developed and the initial training of speech therapists (MINED, 2022).

Undergraduate training is characterized by significant changes, among them, the reopening in the 2007-2008 academic year of the Bachelor's Degree in Education. Speech Therapy with Curriculum C, and a model of the professional from a preventive, diagnostic, developmental stimulating and compensatory corrective approach. The social transformations demanded a change in the curricula to adjust them to reality, so in 2010-2011 began to develop the Curriculum D and the new Curriculum E in 2016, currently in force. The changes have contributed to the precision of professional pedagogical skills: researching, diagnosing, communicating, modeling and directing with priority in the prevention, diagnosis and correction of language disorders in schoolchildren with special educational needs, associated or not with disability; they have also been characterized by a higher level of essentiality in

the contents of the disciplines, which requires a projection of professional improvement to ensure higher levels of specialization to meet the diversity in speech therapy practice.

The analysis of the records of the methodological work actions of the Provincial Direction of Special Education and professional improvement of the Department of Special Education - Speech Therapy of the University of Oriente, in the province of Santiago de Cuba, shows that the content has been essentially related to the didactic treatment of the different pathologies, the attention to communication and language disorders secondary to complex primary disorders. Methods that enable the development of individual work have been promoted; however, there has been a lack of support in problem teaching, not favoring cooperative and collaborative learning and consequently a more active participation of speech-language teachers. There has been a lack of analysis, reflection, group work (intentional), use of new technologies in the search for information, and reproductive dialogue has predominated over heuristic dialogue.

As forms of improvement in this stage, courses and workshops have been prioritized, training and diploma courses have been used in an isolated way, with the participation of specialists from other disciplines that complement the training with their specific contents. In Santiago de Cuba, during the 2007-2008 school year, the diploma course Speech therapy preparation was developed as part of the generalization, after its implementation at the Enrique J. Varona University of Pedagogical Sciences. It had a positive impact, however, the contents related to speech therapy for students with hearing impairment were addressed in general topics, so they did not favor the specialized training of the speech therapist teacher for the care of students with this disability.

At national level at this time, the professional improvement of speech-language pathologists for the care of students with hearing impairment in the context of general education is outlined, as a demand to the increasing number of students who receive educational care in this context. In the interviews conducted and from the personal experience of the authors, it is confirmed that professors of the Speech Therapy career of the Frank País García University

of Pedagogical Sciences of Santiago de Cuba, health specialists and representatives of the Provincial Directorate of Education; developed courses of improvement in the years 2010 - 2013, with the aim of preparing speech therapist teachers in the care of learners with cochlear implant, with this same objective was organized in the year 2016 the diploma course: Audiology. On the other hand, since the 2013 course and until 2017, the topic of attention to hearing impairment is addressed in the provincial methodological preparation. There was a lack of precision in the diagnosis of needs and potentialities; the use of collaborative and cooperative procedures was insufficient.

On the other hand, in the stage, researches that focus their object of study on the educational attention to people with disabilities and the improvement of educational agents, stand out in the interest of the topic (Chkout, 2007); (Fernández Pérez de Alejo & García Veliz, 2009); (Barreda, 2014); (Fresqued Pedroso, 2015); (Rodríguez Fleitas, Valenciaga Pérez, Fresqued Pedroso, & Simón Valdés, 2018). In these, guidelines are offered to the speech-language pathologist teacher to improve their performance in the care of implanted deaf, hearing impaired and deaf-blind schoolchildren, but there is no professional development strategy that contributes to improve the speech-language care of students with hearing impairment in early childhood. Likewise, it is known that in national exchanges the lines of work of the specialties of Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Communication Disorders are traced, contrary to what was expected, these exchanges have not been fully used to coordinate the work between both specialties, and to project cooperated actions, of professional and methodological improvement; with the objective of perfecting the speech therapy attention to hearing impaired students.

The results obtained from the applied methods indicate that the professional development process of the speech-language pathologist teacher in Cuba has gone through different stages, as confirmed in the studies conducted by different researchers (Díaz Massip, Fernández Pérez de Alejo, & Rodríguez Fleitas, 2008), (Fernández Pérez de Alejo 2015); a similar behavior has occurred in the province of Santiago de Cuba (López Forés, 2002).

In relation to the conception of the process regarding the care of early childhood learners with hearing impairment seen from the initial training of the speech-language pathologist teacher and taking into consideration the changes in the socio-educational context, the results obtained are described below.

The initial training, has had different variants until reaching the training through curricula A, C, D, E, about which Fernandez (2015), states that they comprehensively prepare the student, among other aspects, to serve learners in preschool and school institutions of Special and Regular Education and for the differentiated and specialized diagnosis that becomes individual and comprehensive care to learners, adolescents and young people, however, from this study it is deduced, that the graduates face in their professional performance limitations for the care of learners in early childhood, as noted by (Fernández & Rodríguez, 2015) when referring to some demands of the graduates, related to the deepening in the speech therapy care at these ages, in relation to the complexity of differential diagnosis and language disorders.

From the point of view of Bernaza, (2018) "While undergraduate professional training prepares the student for his future profession with a broad career profile, the postgraduate degree responds to the specific needs of that professional already formed"(p. 16) hence professional improvement should be projected personalized, in correspondence with the particularities of the labor context in which speech-language pathologists teachers perform.

With respect to the ways and methods used, it is verified that in the province of Santiago de Cuba, the process has moved from the use of traditional methods eminently reproductive, with little participation of the subjects, to methods that emphasize independent work and the partial search for knowledge; However, the use of new technologies is limited, distance education has hardly been taken as a way to guarantee the process in the concrete conditions of the territory and in correspondence with the changes required by the process, "from professional improvement programs in the face-to-face modality, to programs in different modalities, promoting the distance modality with the use of ICT and from the workplace" (Bernaza Rodríguez et al. , 2018, p. 21)

According to the Regulations of Postgraduate Education of the Republic of Cuba among the main organizational forms of this process are distinguished: the course, the training and the diploma. Other secondary ones are: seminar, workshop, specialized conference, scientific debate, self-preparation, consultation, among others (MES, 2019); however, the results confirm that in Santiago de Cuba the course is used more, to the detriment of training and diploma course. In the methodological work developed by the management structures of the Ministry of Education, methodological workshops are used more because "the transformations that have taken place in the National Education System have generated the need for continuous updating by teachers, in order to achieve high quality in the teaching-learning process" (Concepción Rodríguez & Reinoso Porra, 2018, p. 2).

Research at the national level shows a tendency to approach the professional development of the speech-language pathologist teacher from self-improvement actions; particularly, in relation to the speech therapy attention to students with hearing impairment, they are mainly oriented towards the school context, in this sense, the contributions of Rodríguez Fleitas stand out with essential instruments for the diagnosis of bilingual communication of the deaf schoolchild, as well as references to the need for improvement of the speech therapist teacher for speech therapy attention, the use of new technologies from a bilingual conception and the particularities of the treatment of linguistic skills. On the other hand, Chkout (2007), Barreda (2014), contribute with orientations for the speech therapy attention in schoolchildren with cochlear implant.

Conclusions

The professional training of the speech therapist teacher for the care of students with hearing impairment can be established in Cuba since 2007, as a result of changes in the educational context, associated with the inclusion of students with hearing impairment in regular education. Santiago de Cuba assumes similar characteristics to the rest of the country's territories. In the Cuban educational context and particularly in Santiago de Cuba, the professional development strategy for speech therapist teachers does not fully favor the attention to students with hearing impairment in early childhood.

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