

The appropriation of the spaces of Unified Educational Center (UEC) Butantã (in the city of São Paulo, Brazil) by children from 0 to 3 years and 11 months old¹

Mônica Abud Perez de Cerqueira Luz², Maria Cristina Siqueira Naziozeno³

Flavia Abud Luz⁴, Anna Cecília K. de Magalhães Couto Simões⁵

ABSTRACT. This article aims to show how children from 0 to 3 years and 11 months old appropriate the different and multiple architectural spaces of the educational, sportive, and cultural complex through experiences and playing. While they play, discover, and appropriate the world around them, they perceive how social relationships happen and also expand their creative capacity. Spontaneous games, individual or collective, and directed games are present in the daily life of school, helping children to deal with various feelings, communicate with themselves and with others. The teacher's work aims to plan, create strategies and conditions so that children feel instigated to learn in a meaningful way and in situations on which they can play an active role, developing skills and abilities that are necessary for the later years of their lives. The teachers use the curricular references and the mediation between the teacher, content and space is done through the exchange of experiences by peers. The methodology used the research was direct observation by the researcher, descriptive, allied to narrative maps at different times of the children's routine in the Unified Educational Center (UEC), located in the city of São Paulo, Brazil.

Keywords: UEC. Children. Appropriation. Spaces. Play.

Introduction

The main objective of the research project from which this articles originate was to show how children from 0 to 3 years and 11 months of age appropriate the different and multiple architectural spaces of the educational, sportive and cultural complex of Unified Educational Center (UEC), located in the city of São Paulo, Brazil through experiences and playing. Spontaneous games, individual or collective, and directed games are present in the daily life of school, helping children to deal with various feelings, communicate with themselves and with others. The children of this

1. This article is a product of the project "Dealing with new spaces: children and adolescents in the appropriation of the architectural complex of the CEU Butantã (São Paulo, Brazil)", financed by Mack research. Linked to the Research Groups in Social Pedagogy and Studies in History of Culture, Societies, and Media, of the Graduate Program in Education, Art, and History of Culture, of Mackenzie Presbyterian University, in partnership with the Universities of Singer and Alanus, Germany, and the Municipal Secretariat of Education of São Paulo. It also counts on the collaboration of researchers from other national and international universities.

2. Ibirapuera University, São Paulo/Brazil

3. Pedagogical Coordinator of CEC Butantã (São Paulo/Brazil), CEC Butantã (São Paulo/Brazil)

4. Federal University of ABC, São Paulo / Brazil

5. School Supervisor, São Paulo/Brazil

age group are served at the Child Educational Center (CEC), receiving all the necessary infrastructure for comfort and educational development. Such infrastructure has, for example, park, refectory, library, sportive and cultural complex.

The central issues of the article are around the child, its interaction, autonomy and peer culture. In this way, we question ourselves: Does young children built a culture? How does autonomy exist in this construction of culture in CEC? What characterizes children's cultures?

In this context, as an architectural stage, we used the UEC Butantã, inspired by the educator Anísio Teixeira⁶, signatory of the Pioneer's Manifesto. After his post-graduation with the American John Dewey between 1927 and 1929, he developed and applied educational policies aimed at public school should be extended to all social classes and able to fulfill a citizen-training role, becoming a polarized center of a non-existent community.

The programmatic conception found a modern architectural form with a project carried out by Hélio Duarte and Diógenes Rebouças in the city of Salvador, in 1947, they conceived a *park school*, which proposed not only a basic curriculum, but also access to learning, besides culture, sports and citizenship; developing in the people a sense of responsibility, sociability and creativity.

São Paulo's rapid urban expansion in the 1940s had led to a monstrous shortage of educational infrastructure, including lack of space for new schools and consequently spots for all the children in scholarly age. In an attempt to solve this problem, Duarte assembled a team of young architects who explored the potentialities experienced in Salvador. The planned activities were structured in three groups: teaching (classroom, museum, and library), administration (administrative support and assistance services) and recreation (sports area and covered shed for recreation). These sets assumed the configuration of volumetric blocks arranged in the most diverse forms in large and landscape terrains, interconnected by open marquises. The emphasis on student's socializing activities with each other and with the local community was manifested in the form of the playgrounds, where the presence of stages pointed to their use as a scenic space.

Within this tradition that comes from the pioneers in an attempt to create a more democratic school, that would serve the entire population in order to have an education for all, the idea of the Unified Centers, UEC in the city of São Paulo, within the Freirian conception⁷, arises.

Darcy Ribeiro planned and implemented this new educational project, putting the children in school full time's regime, with quality teaching, offering sports, cultural and health activities. The projects ended up inspiring a little later, the construction of the UEC⁸ in the city of São Paulo.

The UEC were idealized, designed and built to be educational centers, with popular education projects; culture and sportive poles in the most vulnerable areas of the city of São Paulo, bringing to invisible citizens centers that were restricted to downtown and more privileged areas.

The proposal of the action was to give visibility to this population, bringing into the spaces of the UEC not only an advanced and innovative technology, but also the possibility of meeting the demands of formation and appropriation of local culture with the creation of interactive and collaborative spaces available to the population.

The integration of the existing centers in the UEC and their educational units, as well as those of the surroundings, is favored in the interaction with the Curriculum that propitiates the elevation of the learning indexes, of the improvement in the attendance of the local demands. It also provides the educational,

6. Anísio Teixeira conceived the school as a real space, where the children from families of lower income could access another cultural spaces and receive a quality education.

7. The thoughts of a Brazilian philosopher and educator Paulo Freire are highly influential in the field of Education and Social Science. His innovative methodology sought a different way to teach people (children, young, adults), especially for using situations and examples linked to daily life as a form to capture the people attention and at the same time changing the learning process to a more comprehensive and meaningful one.

8. The UEC were conceived as an intersectoral proposal, adding efforts from several areas: health, local culture, sports, and leisure; adding the community to the Center.

social, cultural, sports and technological development of the community, minimizing differences and giving visibility to the existing movements in the most distant places.

All units are equipped with multi-sports court, theater, playground, swimming pools, library, Telecenter and spaces for workshops, ateliers, and meetings. The spaces are open to the community, including during the weekends. With a varied program for all ages, the UEC guarantee to the residents of the most remote neighborhoods an access to public leisure, culture, technology, and sport practices, contributing to the development of local communities.

The architectural project of the UEC was conceived by the team of architects of the Department of Buildings of the City of São Paulo (EDIF, the acronym in Portuguese), from 2001 to 2004, in the management of Mayor Marta Suplicy. The UEC Butantã was inaugurated on September 27, 2003.

The area where the UEC Butantã was implemented is of 19,078 m², with a built area of 13,246 m², located at Engenheiro Heitor Eiras Garcia Avenue, 1700, which made this the largest of this implementation's phase. The architecture team developed the Implantation Feasibility Study and the Planialtimetric Executive Project.

The UEC Butantã is composed by the following needs program: the bigger block, with orthogonal grid shape, gathers the classes, cafeteria, library, informatics, bakery laboratory, exhibition area and social area; the smaller volume, the raised disk of the ground, is the nursery; and the third volume, a five-floor parallelepiped, gathers the theater, the covered court, and the music room.

The constructive system is the prefabricated concrete. There was the use of water mines for the execution of water mirrors, streams and lakes as landscape resources, in addition to a water treatment plant of the existing stream to clean it. Of the proposals made by the team, the lake and a skateboard track were also implemented.

The UEC Butantã (also known as UEC Professor Elizabeth Gaspar Tunala) is an educational complex formed by the following educational units: Child Educational Center (CEC), Municipal School for Early Childhood Education (MSECE), Municipal Elementary School (MES), Youth and Adult Education (YAE), and São Paulo's State Technical School (that currently has the Administration and Human Resources courses, each one having thirty vacancies at night).

The sports complex of UEC Butantã is composed of swimming pools, sports courts, gymnastics, dance, and multipurpose room. The cultural complex has a music studio, art and sewing workshops, a chess room, an outdoor park, a bakery school, the Carlos Zara Theater (with 450 seats), the Journalist Roberto Marinho's Library and Telecenter (a multipurpose public space) and SP Cine.

According to the Public Targets Plan⁹ by the Municipal Department of Education (MDE), the main objectives of the UEC Butantã (also known as UEC Professor Elizabeth Gaspar Tunala) are: a) to transform the spaces of UEC into laboratories of creativity, learning and innovation accessible to all interested in creating, developing and building projects, meeting the demands of the local population, for spaces that favor collaborative and shared learning process; b) to enable the user, teacher, surrounding community and students to learn how to design and produce various materials that can help in the development of their didactic activities in the classroom, for the teacher, as well as for the common user who needs specific objects for their daily lives; c) to ensure, rewrite and elaborate the memories of the UEC with the "UEC in Action"¹⁰ project, so that the history of the UEC territory is a record of the movements in the most peripheral spaces of the city with access to culture, sports and leisure, permeated by pedagogically articulated actions; d) to democratize the access to new technologies of digital manufacturing. Making available to users technological resources and experiences in group or individual in a favorable and innovative environment; e) to transform the use of educational technologies in the São Paulo's Municipal Education Network, favoring pedagogical

9. The plan of goals is the commitment of all to education, seeking together the improvement in the quality of basic education, in search for learning outcomes, based on large-scale evaluations such as the Basic Education Development Index.

10. The UEC Project in action is the idea of the UEC as a mediating device, and should privilege the previous knowledge of the Community and its surroundings.

approaches focused on problem solving, learning by projects, collaborative work and digital literacy.

The UECs were built in places where the Social Exclusion/Social Inclusion Map indicated a high concentration of poverty, social vulnerability. Little or no action by public authorities, violence, lack of public leisure facilities for children and youth. For our analysis here in this article, and dealing with childhood in an interdisciplinary perspective, we will open some categories: childhood, play, childhood cultures, interactivity.

According to Manuel Jacinto Sarmiento (2004) we understand that children produce knowledge and insights about the daily experiences in which they participate.

Promoting access to this equipment for marginalized children, investing in these “silenced” popular knowledge; within the Freirian conception of collective work, the ability to listen to others and participatory management brings residents closer to the UEC and among themselves. We understand that children are and should be studied as competent social actors in the construction of their social life and the life of those around them who act in their own intentional way in the times and spaces in which they find themselves, through the interactions they establish with their peers, with adults, and with the society in which they are inserted.

CEC at UEC Butantã

The Child Educational Center (CEC) unit at UEC Butantã, which belongs to the Regional Board of Education – Butantã, is located at Engenheiro Heitor Antônio Eiras Garcia Avenue, 1870, in the district of Jardim Esmeralda, Butantã District. It has a staff of 85 professionals among members of the support team, teachers, manager, kitchen and cleaning services, and it serves an average of 290 children aged from 0 to 3 years and 11 months. In addition, there are characters that make up its identity, the aesthetic concern and appropriation of spaces; the respect for diversity in the school team, as well as in the school community; the effective involvement in festive activities; the appreciation of the work/partnership with the families in order to interact with the school; the recognition of the action carried out with the literature involving all the groups; the availability of integration with the other units of the UEC; respect for the functions performed by readapted workers, considering not only skills but professional abilities; concern with childcare, since the adaptation period; favoring the construction of a democratic environment; recognized political mobilization among workers; a curricular discussion that treats babies and children in an integrated way; as well as the permanent search for their protagonism and valuing the multiplicity from the collective perspective. For some months we accompanied the children of the CEC, their activities and routine mediated by the teachers of the respective classes who entered in our university research project.

The CEC is organized as follows: nursery (for children from 0 to 1 year of age), tiny group I (for children from 1 year to 1 year and eleven months of age), tiny group II (for children from 2 years to 3 years and eleven months of age).

Depending on each one of the groups, children have different interests as well as desires, activities, and all of these aspects are seen very clearly because at CEC Butantã the child the social actor of their own educational process. That way, children always have the possibility of invention.

For CEC Butantã, the child of any age group is seen as a social historical subject, who produces culture and who interacts socially with the environment through different languages.

In the case of babies specifically, the educators encourage them to express their wants, preferences and fears through active listening. When singing a song or reading a story to them, they perceive how they manifested themselves in front of the activities, that is, what they perceived from these children regarding their psychological, social, cultural, emotional development. All this is taken into account when choosing a project to be developed, especially children's voices and even silence.

Children stay in a cozy environment, with varied stimuli of colors, sounds, interactive mats, rocking swings. The entire proposal in this initial phase is exclusively playful, but with the aim of caring and educating. Children exposed to welcoming environments begin to read images, produce gestures, sounds.

Conversation circles take place every day, usually when the children enter the room, where they are welcomed by the educators with warmth, affection and attention. Some children take with them a transitional object, such as a pacifier, a washcloth, or a favorite toy. This object is not taken from the child. She does it herself when she feels ready, welcomed, happy and developing other skills.

In this stage of babies and in the later one, up to 2 years and 11 months, the resource of photography is used for children to recognize themselves in the different spaces of the CEI, recognize their colleagues, educators and end up naming things, objects and people.

According to Abramovich (2011), the time of the child is the present time, because it is contemporary. It is a gift that an adult does not know. Thus, for this author the child is not only in the present, but also past, because it inhabits culturally a type of childhood recognized by the group that surrounds it.

However, it is worth mentioning the specifics of the group of children whom we observed directly in our research. They make use of subjectivity, create, recreate, reconstruct, and experiment, challenging themselves all the time.

We corroborate with Nascimento (2011), when he reiterates that “A new conception of children’s sociology considers children participating in a network of relationship that go beyond the family and the school or daycare (p.41)”.

The teachers develop their projects based on the Curricular Guidelines and Educational Parameters, within a constructive approach, having as base authors such as Piaget, Vygotsky and Corsaro (2011), who put the child intensely involved in the appropriation of information from their environment to built hypothesis that develop within a qualitative process.

For Corsaro (2011) socialization in childhood is understood no longer as a period of dependence, but as a creative process of “interpretative reproduction”. The author distances himself significantly from traditional sociology, which has seen children as “mere social burdens” (p.23).

It is worth highlighting the work of peer culture that Corsaro defines as “a stable set of activities or routines, artifacts, values and interests that children produce and share in interaction with their peers (p.32)”.

According to Barbosa (2007, p.1066) Childhood Sociology has contributed to “[...] Understanding how children live and think, understanding their cultures, their ways of seeing, feeling and acting, and listening to their tastes or preferences is one way to be able to understand them as a human group”.

In the CEC, we observed that the social interaction established between children and their peers is based on their personal and social characteristics. The observations made by children in relation to adults and their practices enable children to create, recreate, produce their own opinions and ways of understanding the world in which they live.

A relevant point for our analysis here is discuss how the CEC understands and studies children, within a sociological perspective in which the focus is not on individual issues and so little on preparing for the future, but in the present moment, where they play and active role, both in the production of knowledge and in interpersonal relationships, innovation and creativity arising the social participation of children, which for Corsaro (2011) are expressed by the term “interpretative”.

Another concept very present in this work is that of peer culture, because according to Corsaro (2011)

[...] children do not simply develop as individuals; they collectively produce cultures of peers and contribute to the reproduction of a larger society or culture [...]. The idea that children contribute to two cultures (that of children and that of adults) simultaneously is particularly important (Corsaro, 2011, p.94-95)

We reiterate that the CEC Butantã team values the role of the family routines as an important space for initiation into peer culture, while emphasizing that for the development of children’s cultures there is a need to socialize with other children. The games are marked by rituals, sharing routines and language games that are often also ways to deal with the fears and concerns of everyday life.

The bonds of friendship that arise from these interactions have variations according to the social and cultural contexts in which the children live.

The CEC Butantã is a privileged space for children to experience different experiences than those that occur in their homes. Children attach greater importance to the space and develop an intimate relationship with it if they experience meaningful practices for their learning universe. The appropriation of the CEC and UEC spaces by children given them the possibility of being a social actor and emphasize their ability to create their own cultures, through the relationships they establish with their peers through play and imaginative games, also reflecting the concept of culture.

The connection and knowledge of the space through playful activities and play, give support and possibilities of new directions, meetings, discoveries, interactions, always mediated by the teacher.

Rooms with corners and various toys, wide corridors for running, jumping, riding motorcycles, parks, sand tanks, differentiated wooden toys in the park, forest, lake, skate track, swimming pool, library, and kiosks.

In this context, all these spaces promote observation, research, experimentation, hypothesis gathering and validation. The choices of what to do and how to do are expressed in the projects and pedagogical activities of teachers, as well as in the proposals of the CEC Management with clear and cohesive intentions.

According to Benjamin (1984) about playing and toys

(...) the more attractive the toys are, the more distant they will be from their value as instruments of play; when unlimitedly the imitation is announced in them, the more they deviate from the living play. The child only remains to reproduce. The exercise of creating, recreating, assembling, disassembling, gives way to reproduction. The more the toy increases, the more it makes the child or the player a prisoner. The simpler it is, the greater is the possibility to imagine and create. The ideational content of the toy never determines, because on the contrary, it guides the use of objects (Benjamin, 1984, p.70)

About the games and toys, Figure 1. Exploring the Play Corners (at the next page), highlights this moment. Thus, the toy can trigger a play, since it allows actions consistent with the representation of children, in addition to the manifestations performed during the play, in general, transcend the toy.

The teachers develop their projects based in the Curricular Guidelines and Educational Parameters, within a constructivist approach, which puts the child intensely involved in the appropriation of information from his environment to built hypotheses that develop within a qualitative process.

The recognition of childhood as a social construction implies dialoguing with different realities, demystifying the idealized child of the last century.

The spaces of the CEC are facilitators of the appropriation of education by the child through playing; and also allows the development of urban citizenship, in which the public space ceases to be understood as nobody's space and becomes everybody's space.

Inscribed in the places and strengthened by them, children become others, citizens through the experience, the social and cultural relationships established in these spaces. In this way, citizenship, appears not as a natural fact, but as a fundamentally social learning that can become a state of mind in culture (Santos, 1996). From the analysis of the appropriation of urban space, it is possible to explore its relationship with daily life and the reconstruction of identity, as well as its possibilities for change and transformation. In the sphere of daily life, the concepts of domination and appropriation manifest themselves and can be read in their inter-relationship with the dominated and appropriated spaces. Sobarzo (2006) states that

[...] daily life summarizes and merges the global trend of the diffusion of mass consumption and the irruption of a way of life associated with values of consumption and created needs and, on the other hand, also includes the possibility of overcoming and creating the new, insurgency or subversion (Sobarzo, 2006, p.104)

The methodology used in the research was qualitative and exploratory. Its focus was on the subjective character of the object analyzed. In other words, we sought to understand how children in the CEC appropriated

the spaces, observing directly their particularities and individual experiences, among others aspects, as the relationship between child and child, child and school team, child and knowledge.

We were able to observe different groups in moments of diversified activities; we followed closely the games, the disputes for toy or space, the interactions between the children and mainly the symbolic game, and the occupation of roles in these games in the room, the park, the sand tank. We believe these were one of the richest moments.

A teacher with a sensitive and attentive listening that discover interests to proceed with a project, as well as understand the difficulties of the children, their possible traumas, and yearnings are some interesting aspects observed.

In possession of the notes made in our field journal, we began to reflect about the CEC's teachers training, the importance of an engaging, loving, and attentive teacher that is able to listen each child in the midst of many.

As a method we use narrative maps, an important tool to capture the fact that human experiences occur in a time, but also occur in a space, and that all people have a historical dimension (temporality), but also have a geographical dimension (spatiality). Thus, human experiences are always geohistorical. Babies and children have experienced the same process such as teachers, management and we, researchers. That is why we can talk about a Childhood Geography.

The Childhood Geography seeks to understand children, their childhoods, through the geographical space and the spatial expressions that unfold from it, such as landscape, territory, place, but it is also the desire to understand the geographies of children.

The children made maps in different ways: drawn, glued, scribbled, and all had their meaning.



Figure 1. Exploring the Play Corners. Source: UEC Research Group

In play, taking over spaces at a given moment of observation, a child (A), 26 months old, who was inside the sand tank playing alone, called a child who was outside the tank, but close to him and said:

“Come eat, mommy already made your food”

The child (B), 27 months old, went immediately to the sand tank, joined the child (A), took a bucket with sand inside and simulated that he was eating.

The child (A) asked the child (B):

“– Did you like the noodles?”

The child (B) responded:

“– Look, I ate everything and you’re going to give me ice cream now?”

The child (A) looked at the child (B), put her hand on his head and said:

“– Mommy doesn’t know how to do it”

The child (B) turned and said:

“– Now I’m mommy, is fine...I’ll make chocolate and strawberry ice cream”

Soon after, both children pretended they were eating ice cream, holding a stick.

This example demonstrates that the greater the appropriation of the linguistic domain, more chance the child must propose and mediate different social roles.

In this interplay of roles, we accompanied a class that was going to do a storytelling in the woods. The stories were also told in the classrooms and in the spaces of the library, as appear at *Figure 2. Library space used by a class for research* (at the next page), the children do research on themes of interest, such as the universe, the life of the insects, healthy food, among others.

The library’s essential function is to develop the habit of reading and research, encouraging and stimulating learning, creativity, and communication in children. Right at the exit it was perceptible the children’s domain of the physical space: how to walk, climb, take care of themselves and of the other.

During the walking children climbed a hill with tires, and seat near a tree where the teacher told the story of “*Sleepy House*”. But it is worth noting that during the journey the children talked to each other about various subjects.

While we were walking to get to the woods, we passed by the lake and a 27-month-old child (C) said:

“– Look, a snake”

Several children looked to see the snake.

“– No, no, that is a tree”

Another child (D), 26 months old, completed:

“–It’s a branch that fell from the with the rain”

Then we moved on. We arrived at the place of storytelling and the teacher asked the children to make a circle and seat. Everyone did. Then she resumed the arrangement of listening to the noise of the birds very still. And started the story.

The children listened attentively and when the teacher asked if they wanted to talk, several children stated talking. The teacher mediated and the children began to express themselves.

The child (E), 25 months old, said to the group:

“– Nobody at my house sleeps at Bob’s, because it hurts him”

The child (F), 26 months old, said:

“– My cat calls Mel and she sleeps with me in bed”

The child (G), 25 months old, spoke:

“– I don’t have any pets because my father won’t let me”

The child (H), 27 months old, said:

“– My little kitty farts, ha, ha, ha”

We believe that the children need to occupy their places of speech, and for this a teacher with an attentive listening, can listen to the children in calm way.

According to Vygotsky (1994), the process and formation of speech in a child who is social and cultural happens under the influence of storytelling, dialogue with others, and gradually the child appropriates more elaborate forms of living.

Among observations, activities, and games it was visible that CEC Butantá is a rich and living space of experiences for children. Children are producers and consumers of cultural events.

According to Vygotsky (1994)

It is in playing that the child learns to act in a cognitive sphere, instead of an external visual sphere, depending on internal motivations and trends, and not on the incentives provided by external objects (Vygotsky, 1994, p.126)

In play, the child manages to separate thought (the meaning of a word) from objects, and an action arises from ideas, not things. For example: a piece of wood can become a doll. This represents a great evolution in the child's maturity.



Figure 2. Library space used by a class for research. Source: UEC Research Group

The activities proposed by teachers for children are based on the normative documents of City Hall of São Paulo, have intentionality, appeal to children and aim to promote the encounter of children with the world and culture, favoring the appropriation by children of the various spaces in a healthy way.

In direct observation experiences of children playing, we noticed that many of these games were recreated; resignified.

In the round building, a group played with the motorcycles. Some children went slowly, looking and calling the colleague who was behind them. Others, more fearless, walked quickly.

At a certain moment, a child (Q), 26 months old, said:

“– Stop, you are running, and you can't”

“– May stop” – he continued

The other child stopped, turned to the child (Q) and said very quietly:

“– I was kidding...really, look, my dad says that in the real car he can't run because it hits and hurts” – child (T), 32 months old.

Then, the child (T) told to the child (Q):

“– So, let’s play to take people and ride slowly”

They both started another playing and talked to each other while they drove their carts: “– Who wants a ride?”

In general, children appropriate the spaces of the CEC through the mediation of another who presents them new spaces with possibilities to develop other experiences: child, teacher, pedagogical coordinator, technical assistants, director.



Figure 3. Children Playing. Source: UEC Research Group

Thus, the process of knowledge construction happens and always through the ludic; in a storytelling, playing with toys, making cookies in the sand tank. There is a perceptible and ambiguous movement that transforms itself dialectically when children and adults, made up of complementary and contradictory elements, re-appropriate themselves from their own activity, from play. And when is mediated by the teacher that the process becomes richer. According Fantini (1996) “In this sense of trying and understanding the relationships between children, the play, culture and education, we venture to resignify childhood, and by resignifying it, we believe the possibility of finding life itself (Fantini, 1996, p.3)”.

Considerations

During the field research, having as procedure the direct observation of children in their daily life at the CEC, we could affirm that the child is an active being in that space.

Another point to highlight is the importance of playing and that there are different ways to do this. Through this activity, the child knows himself, the other and the world, establishing relationships and developing cognitive, social, ethical and aesthetic skills.

The educational proposal of CEC Butantã is based on the principals of interaction, exchange of knowledge, cooperation, respect, within a challenging and diverse environment for children.

The teachers always mediate between the child and the culture, be it in the park, in the classroom, in the cafeteria, in the swimming pool.

The qualitative and descriptive methodology directed our work. The direct observations in the room showed us corners of various toys and coziness from the teachers. The narrative maps elaborated by the

children, brought data such as places they like more, what they like to eat, the way from their homes to the CEC.

Children are indeed social actors and contribute to the production and reproduction of childhood and society with adults, and to the creative production of peer culture.

Another highlight is that in CEC Butantã the child's body is not something given, finished. On the contrary, it is a social, cultural, historical, and biological construction, where the basis of all social experience, including the appropriation of time and space is found.

According to Fingerson (2009), the body is experienced, guided, and socially understood. The body is, thus, a direct source of power in social interaction. In the child's body there is a set of physical components in full construction. Their movements are possibilities to know themselves and the world.

The pleasure of expressions on children's face is contagious. Affections, friendship and also opposites, in fact weave a network of relationships.

The taste of doing things collectively, sharing experiences, arguments, make the body a fertile field for children's development.

Children have a turn and a voice. The activities are always observed by the teacher's look, presence, and attentive listening.

Thus, we believe that the UECs are a reference of public education, a center of production of thought, knowledge, and culture.

Acknowledgements

To the Research Groups in Social Pedagogy and Studies in History of Culture, Societies and Media, of the Graduate Program in Education, Art and History of Culture, of the Mackenzie Presbyterian University, in partnership with Universities of Singer and Alanus, Germany, and the Municipal Secretariat of Education of São Paulo. It also counts with the collaboration of researchers from other national and international universities.

This article is a byproduct of the project "Dealing with new spaces: children and teenagers in the appropriation of the architectural complex of UEC Butantã (São Paulo, Brazil)", financed by Mackpesquisa.

Reference

- Abramowicz, A. (2011). Research with children in childhood and the sociologist of childhood. In: Faria, L; Finco, D (Orgs.). *Sociology of childhood in Brazil* (pp.17-35). Campinas: Associate Authors.
- Brazil. Law 9394/96. *Law of Guidelines and Bases of Basic Education*.
- Corsaro, W. (2011). *Sociology of Childhood*. Porto Alegre: Artmed.
- Fantini, M. (1996). *Game, play and creativity in early childhood education*. Master's Dissertation, Santa Catarina Federal University.
- Fingerson, L. Children's Bodies. In: Qvortrup, J.; Corsaro, W; Honig, M. (Eds.) (2009). *The Palgrave Handbook of Childhood*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Nascimento, M. Recognition of Childhood Sociology as an area of knowledge and research field: some considerations. In: Faria, L; Finco, D (Eds.) (2011). *Sociology of childhood in Brazil* (pp. 37-52). Campinas: Associate Authors.
- Sarmiento, M; Gouvea, M. (2007). *Childhood studies: education and social practices*. Petrópolis, RJ: Vozes.
- Sobarzo, O. (2006). The production of public space: from domination to appropriation. *GEOUSP – Space and Time*, 19, 93-111.
- Vygotsky, L. The problem of the environment. In: Veer, R; Valsiner, J. (Eds.). (1994). *The Vygotsky reader*. Oxford: Blackwell.