
Theoretical and methodological aspects of Paulo Freire's Pedagogy: a pedagogical and dialogic possibility in the teaching and learning process

Aspectos teóricos e metodológicos da Pedagogia de Paulo Freire: uma possibilidade pedagógica e dialógica no processo de ensino e aprendizagem

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ABSTRACT

This research seeks to expand and strengthen the theoretical and methodological subsidies of Paulo Freire's Pedagogy in its application to education. In this way, we will bring to reflection three concepts that are interrelated in Paulo Freire's Pedagogy, especially in the Pedagogy of Autonomy: epistemological curiosity, methodical rigor and right thinking. Methodological is a qualitative study with bibliographic research on Paulo Freire's pedagogy. Paulo Freire warns that by recognizing ourselves as human beings, we must also contribute to the humanization of other human beings. For this, it is necessary to face contradictions in order to combat the disqualification of life and the acts of injustice that aggravate cultural and social inequalities. Paulo Freire's research on Pedagogy is revealed as a political, ethical-critical call: it is education that must be constituted as a way of life, as social praxis, synthesizing reflection, the action of deciding, and transforming action. It cannot be left for later or for certain formal moments; it has to be made vital experience every day, at all times.

Keywords: Paulo Freire's pedagogy, epistemology, epistemological curiosity, methodical rigor, right thinking.

RESUMO

Esta investigação procura expandir e reforçar os subsídios teóricos e metodológicos da Pedagogia de Paulo Freire na sua aplicação à educação. Desta forma, vamos trazer à reflexão três conceitos que estão inter-relacionados na Pedagogia de Paulo Freire, especialmente na Pedagogia de Autonomia: curiosidade epistemológica, rigor metódico e pensamento correto. Metodológico é um estudo qualitativo com pesquisa bibliográfica sobre a Pedagogia de Paulo Freire. Paulo Freire adverte que, reconhecendo-nos como seres humanos, devemos também contribuir para a humanização de outros seres humanos. Para isso, é necessário enfrentar contradições a fim de combater a desqualificação da vida e os atos de injustiça que agravam as desigualdades culturais e sociais. A investigação de Paulo Freire sobre Pedagogia revela-se como um apelo político, ético-crítico: é a educação que deve ser constituída como um modo de vida, como prática social, sintetizando a reflexão, a ação de decidir, e a ação transformadora. Não pode ser deixada para mais tarde ou para certos momentos formais; tem de se tornar uma experiência vital todos os dias, em todos os momentos.

Palavras-chave: A pedagogia de Paulo Freire, epistemologia, curiosidade epistemológica, rigor metódico, pensamento correto.

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INTRODUCTION

This essay seeks to expand and strengthen the theoretical and methodological subsidies of Paulo Freire's Pedagogy in its application to education. In this way, we will bring to reflection three concepts that are interrelated in Paulo Freire's Pedagogy, especially in the Pedagogy of Autonomy: epistemological curiosity, methodical rigor and right thinking. These concepts, in a dialogical process based on Paulo Freire's ideas, are amplified and made more consistent by epistemological curiosity, since they are based on respect, love, faith, solidarity, science, and, above all, hope in the humanization of all human subjects. For Paulo Freire, epistemological curiosity is that which moves the search to understand the origins of knowledge.

Let's remember what epistemology is. This term is of Greek origin; composed of two words: episteme (science) + + logos (theory). Basic Philosophy Dictionary defines epistemology as a "discipline which takes sciences as an object of investigation, trying to group: a) the criticism of scientific knowledge [...]; b) the philosophy of sciences [...]; and c) the history of sciences [...]" (JAPIASSU; MARCONDES, 1990, p. 82-83). For Paulo Freire, epistemological curiosity is that which drives the search to understand the origins of knowledge: how were the curricular contents constructed? Why are some contents accepted and others silenced? What are the cultural, social, and economic contexts in which common sense and scientific knowledge are woven? Which stories enter school and which are left out? Why are they left out?

We will learn from Paulo Freire to understand the fundamentals of our educational practices. For example, we will reflect on the issue of ideology and how it is present in our lives and in everyday school life. We will differentiate between naive curiosity and epistemological curiosity and demonstrate that there is no right thinking without practicing methodical rigor. We will try to answer the following questions: How to make the passage from naive consciousness to critical consciousness? To what extent do we need to build educational practices that stimulate epistemological curiosity, opening paths of critical appropriation and production of new knowledge in school? What makes teachers and their students distinguish wrong thinking from right thinking? Who defines these truths?

In his classic book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, published here in Brazil in 1974, Paulo Freire differentiates education as a practice of freedom - critical, dialogical, loving, emancipatory - from banking education - which is characterized as antialogical,

authoritarian, excluding, discriminatory and segregationist. In banking education, the teacher is a transmitter of knowledge; he/she is not an autonomous subject; he/she teaches for, and not with, the students; nor does he/she recognize him/herself as an educator. The anti-dialogic action marks the whole teaching process; there is the predominance of a conservative and meritocratic hierarchy, reaffirming a supposed power relation of those who know and dictate the rules over those who don't know and, therefore, are submissive and obey. The teacher is the holder of unquestionable knowledge; teaching is the transmission of knowledge; and the student is a repository of information that will be charged in dissertative and/or multiple-choice exams to accurately assess the reproduction of knowledge. The curricular contents, their origins, history, that is, their epistemological matrix, nor the game of power and the contradictions in which they are generated and disseminated, are not problematized.

In dialogical, emancipatory education as a practice of freedom, action, reflection and action imbricated in the transforming praxis are inseparable (FREIRE, 1987). Education is a political and historical act, a synthesis of multiple social relations, in a perspective of dialectical totality (FREIRE, 2000a; FREIRE, 2000b). The problematization is necessary to unveil the oppressive relations that take place inside and outside the classroom.

"Teaching is not transmitting knowledge." It is a process of (re)elaboration and/or new constructions of knowledge in communion; a "co-laborative" process (FREIRE, 1987). Teaching and learning, in the Freirian sense, is an integrative relationship, inseparable acts in the processes of critical apprehension and construction of new knowledge. Thus, in different works by Paulo Freire, we can see the use of the words teacher and educator as synonyms, when the teacher recognizes and assumes himself/herself as responsible for the full education of his/her pupils or students, working for a substantively democratic education.

When we begin to know, to problematize, to unravel the mysteries of knowledge, of reality, something transforms in us. We are driven to search, bringing from the past that which can illuminate the present, as Eduardo Galeano teaches us, to build a new history (ALBUQUERQUE, 2013). According to Freire, "As a critical teacher, I am a responsible 'adventurer', predisposed to change, to the acceptance of what is different.

Understand that education is a political act wet with ideology

Paulo Freire, when reflecting on the processes of educators' training and the full training of students, reaffirms that both processes demand methodical rigor, directly related to the issue of universal ethics of the human being, and not to the lesser ethics, which is defended by the market. In his different works, he offers significant elements for the critical analysis of market globalization and also brings solid contributions to demystify neoliberal policies, unveiling their deep contradictions. Thus, he calls on educators to analyze the role and social function of education and school, taking as a basis an extremely relevant issue: ideology.

Freire reaffirms that education is wet with ideology. It is not neutral, it is ideological; therefore, every educator needs to be clear about his or her place in the world, in the school and in the community, in the family and in other educational spaces. Human beings are moved by ideology or ideologies. He is always making choices and needs to take responsibility for his positions and his cultural and social practices. Ideology, as a set of knowledge, feelings, and actions, creates a sense of cohesion; certain worldviews can either mask the true reality and produce a false consciousness, which underlies the processes of oppression, or favor critical knowledge of reality and the production of new emancipatory knowledge.

"In the critical exercise of my resistance to the sly power of hegemonic ideology, I generate certain qualities that become wisdom indispensable to my teaching practice" (FREIRE, 2000a, p. 151). Critical and loving dialog is one of these knowledges/wisdom that strengthens the group and opens possibilities for the construction of a new paradigm: knowledge-emancipation, which, in its historicity, says no to determinisms and fatalisms, opening paths for the elaboration of a "counter hegemony" (SANTOS, 2000). To be available for dialogue is to be open to the reality of the students and to work with them, and not for them. Teaching and learning are constituted in the dynamics of sociocultural relations that take place inside and outside the school. We should radically criticize positions that say: "Teachers need to leave their problems at the classroom door and go into class with their heads and bodies free. This is misleading, not to say perverse. The school is included in a given social context; it suffers the conditions of this reality and interferes in different ways in the concreteness of this reality. The educators, as well as their students, are real humans and should be respected as such.

Transitivity from naive consciousness to critical consciousness

Learning to criticize and being willing to dive into reality and discover oneself and the world are complex and challenging actions. This is an educational practice that requires trust, because only through it is there the possibility of sharing visions, expressing feelings, and the most intense and profound exposures of human beings. The awareness that we are incomplete, unfinished, and unfinished beings, and that in the relationship with others we can be-more, opens paths for us to learn humility and generosity. This is a special moment of this transitivity from naive to critical consciousness. Conscientization is the movement of human nature that makes it possible to perceive its "inconclusion," but that necessarily implies provoking the permanent movement in search of being-plus. "Like language that animates curiosity and with it, it is also knowledge, and not only the expression of it" (FREIRE, 2000a, p. 61).

There are teachers who make mistakes in their daily routine in the classroom, and they will only see this in the experience of an open, critical and loving dialogical educational practice. Sometimes, under the aegis of an oppressive culture in their training and/or life history, they tend to repeat this authoritarianism in the classroom: not allowing questions from the students or from their own peers. They consider that what they have learned and the way they received the knowledge is right. Many times they disregard views or positions different from their own and try, in this way, to experience processes of convincing, appealing to their hierarchical position of authority in the classroom. This can be subtle and go unnoticed by most, but, in fact, it is capable of undermining the pleasure of studying, the interest in the subject, the desire to research, and the will of the students to be in school. The classroom is a space of social relations and of construction of beautiful learning experiences. It needs, therefore, to be cultivated with the presence and the protagonism of the students and their teachers in order to materialize in and for the authentic dialog of the school's curriculum with the cultural, scientific, and technological knowledge, among other dimensions of the knowledge of the life of human and non-human subjects, of the whole of nature.

In the book the path is made by walking, Paulo Freire dialogues with Myles Horton and focuses on the need to cross from "naive consciousness to critical consciousness". We need to understand what transitivity is; this continuous movement that instigates the search and makes it possible to overcome, keeping us alive. "Without

it, we would die in life. Which means that maintaining curiosity is absolutely indispensable if we are to continue to be or become" (FREIRE; HORTON, 2009, p. 43).

Because we are incomplete, we are moving toward being-plus. We need to take every care on this journey so that we don't paralyze ourselves by fear in its most diverse faces. The danger of stagnation is the bureaucratization of the mind. In this sense, Paulo Freire highlights the importance of careful observation in the various processes of reading the world and words. The act of reading and the critical analysis of the content of what we read and study can transform us and change the course of events. Through reading, we gradually rediscover ourselves to assume our place as subjects in and of history. He states that "Reading is an act of love, a feeling full of happiness" (FREIRE; HORTON, 2009, p. 55).

For Freire, reading; understanding; dialoguing with the author; penetrating each scenario in its time, taking into consideration the relationships woven into the work; dialoguing with other authors who deal with the same subject and go further; rewriting the text; discovering mistakes; placing oneself as a subject also in that work; all this is an act of love. Sometimes, Paulo Freire, at the age of nineteen, would stay up until two in the morning reading. This bothered his mother, however, as he himself describes: "I had an almost physical connection with the text. It was this experience that began to teach me how reading is also an act of beauty, because it has to do with the reader rewriting the text. It is an aesthetic event" (FREIRE; HORTON, 2009, p. 54).

We learned from Paulo Freire and Horton that one of the relevant learnings for this process of transitivity from naive to critical consciousness is reading; reading-study; reading-poetry; reading-stories; reading-dreams; readings imbued with life, that move desires, that move dreams, and transform realities. Reading needs reflection, debate, and notes.

Naive curiosity and epistemological curiosity: building right thinking on the basis of universal human ethics

For Paulo Freire, the learning process is creative and creative. It starts from the observation of the world and of each being in the world. At first, we can look at the world through "models", "forms", and the oppressive circumstances themselves, without realizing it. However, the emancipatory educational work makes it possible to open up

new visions and possibilities. When we get close to our students or work group, we can challenge them, instigate them to think beyond the obvious. This can "trigger" in the learner a growing curiosity that can make him/her increasingly creative. Naive curiosity is natural. The child wants to find out everything: what? Why? How? What for? Many times, this curiosity is stifled. We pronounce the word no more, trying to silence it, instead of stimulating it to ask, problematize, research and tell its discoveries, doubts and new questions (ALBUQUERQUE, 2013).

We must not forget that naive curiosity is a step towards epistemological curiosity. This is what will lead us to think right. Paulo Freire calls attention to the fact that many of us may think wrong, thinking we are thinking right. But humility invites us to problematize our thinking, feeling, and doing, and to open the way to overcome naive curiosity, to practice methodical rigor, nurtured by epistemological curiosity, which helps in thinking right.

As social learnings of men and women, teaching and learning are historical - they make history. They are a process of "creation and re-creation" in their political-pedagogical nature. The relationship that is established between the educator and his/her students from the perspective of Paulo Freire's Pedagogy is a radically democratic and creative relationship. For this, we need to teach our students to think right, overcoming conditionings and superficialities.

Freire reinforces the idea of the need to invest in problematization, in the use of questioning, of investigative and challenging questions. He defends spontaneity, saying no to "spontaneity". "In the true conditions of learning, the students become real subjects of the construction and reconstruction of the knowledge taught, together with the educator, equally subject of the process." Paulo Freire points out that the teacher who makes it clear to the students that one of the beauties of our way of being in the world and with the world is the ability to intervene in the world, to intervene in the world.

From this perspective, teaching requires research. It is integrated into the process of teaching and learning, and the teacher must perceive himself as a researcher. Paulo Freire calls attention to the fact that research is not a quality or an adjective to the teacher's work. It is in the nature of his work as a teacher-educator to be a researcher. It is necessary "to discuss with the students [...] the origin of certain knowledge in relation to the teaching of the contents" (2000a, p. 33).

Research is not meant to give us certainties, but to make it possible to question already established "truths" and to open up new search alternatives. "I research to verify, by verifying I intervene, by intervening I educate and educate myself. I research to know what I do not yet know and communicate or announce the new" (FREIRE, 2000, p. 32).

In this context, the teacher becomes an "eternal apprentice" and recognizes the need to research, to keep up to date, to guarantee his or her students access to new scientific and technological discoveries. And this is very complex considering the often precarious conditions of the school and the teacher's training.

But dream and daring can encourage us to change the face of our school and transform it into an emancipatory space of production of an emancipatory knowledge; a prudent knowledge for a decent life; the basis of the project of education for social quality, substantively democratic in favor of the production of human existence, worthy, fraternal and fair (DUSSEL, 2000; SANTOS, 2000). In this way, Paulo Freire defends that in true learning conditions, the students become real subjects of the construction and reconstruction of the knowledge taught.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Paulo Freire's Pedagogy is a political, ethical-critical call: it is education that must be constituted as a way of life, as social praxis, synthesizing reflection, the action of deciding, and transforming action. It cannot be left for later or for certain formal moments; it has to become a vital experience every day, every hour.

The beauty of the educational practice is the possibility of turning it into a communicative, dialogical act that produces being-plus, full life. For this very reason, Paulo Freire invites us to take the risk of "thinking right", of exercising the criticality that allows us to vigorously reject any form of discrimination, any prejudiced practice of race, class, gender, which offends the substantivity of the human being and radically denies democracy. The substantivity of every learning stimulates us to broaden our vision of the world and to fight for human dignity and social justice. Paulo Freire makes one more demand: the embodiment of words by example; deep coherence between being, thinking, saying, doing or redoing, and re-signifying, being, each word, gesture, action, an announcement of his critical-ethical doing; all this will make the difference between conservative and progressive educational practice. In this context, the beauty of the

educational practice is the possibility of turning it into a communicative, dialogical act that produces being-plus, full life.

Each educator, as a social subject in the process of critical reflection on their practice, becomes capable of feeling immense joy in realizing and recognizing themselves as human beings, of contributing to the humanization of other human beings. For this, it is necessary to face the contradictions in order to combat the disqualification of life and the acts of injustice that aggravate cultural and social inequalities. An education that does not recognize righteous anger, that does not protest and is not outraged by injustices, disloyalty, lack of love, exploitation, and violence, is wrong. Paulo Freire is not referring to the anger founded on hatred, but to the anger that arises from right thinking, that denounces, resists, and commits itself to liberation. The good fight is fundamental to hope.

Paulo Freire in school can be the announcement of the beginning of a journey towards a substantively democratic education with educators and their students, in which research is the mediator of this passage between naive consciousness and critical consciousness. We can, together, think right. The simplest gesture of a teacher has a formative force. It is in the profound experience of encounter that each human being has the possibility of recognizing himself/herself and acting as co-author in the construction of a school full of joy, love, and faith. We dare to dream of building a school in which each one of us, regardless of the position we occupy, is, in fact and in law, part of the same educational corpus. As subjects, we also need to exercise our duty of ethical vigilance, to know and understand, with the students, the school space, the ideologies present, and the curriculum itself, and to analyze the possibilities of the elaboration of an emancipatory knowledge.

We reaffirm with Paulo Freire that dreams activate the vital energy of every human being and strengthen a pedagogical collective that recognizes its differences, but assures each one's place as a fellow worker for a common cause: a democratic education/school as a fundamental part of a project for a decent, fraternal, and fair society. Dreams are possible realities. But dreaming is not enough. It is necessary to act, to intervene to change. That is hope!

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Recebido em: 15/10/2022

Aprovado em: 18/11/2022

Publicado em: 22/11/2022