

Theoretical-methodological relations between Freire and Dussel and their contributions to an axiological-transformative práxis^{1 2 3 4}

As relações teórico-metodológicas entre Freire e Dussel e suas contribuições para uma práxis axiológico-transformadora

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Abstract

Studies that address the issue of the necessary values for a liberating education have been using authors such as Paulo Freire and Enrique Dussel. In this context, the present study aimed to characterize the axiological-transforming praxis of ethical-critical education. For this, a theoretical study was carried out with three points of discussion as reference: i) the theoretical-methodological relations between Freire's liberating pedagogy and the philosophy of Dusselian liberation; ii) Thematic Investigation contributions to the development of a Liberator Pedagogical Project; iii) the axiological perspectives from the relationship between pedagogy and the philosophy of liberation. This articulation allowed to understand the importance of popular culture values in the development of an ethical-critical educational process.

Keywords: Transformative praxis, Axiology, Values, Paulo Freire, Enrique Dussel.

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Resumo

Autores como Paulo Freire e Enrique Dussel têm sido utilizados em estudos que abordam a questão dos valores necessários a uma educação libertadora. Nesse contexto, o presente estudo objetivou caracterizar a práxis axiológico-transformadora da educação ético-crítica. Para isso, foi realizado um estudo teórico que tem como referência três pontos de discussão: i) as relações teórico-metodológicas entre a pedagogia libertadora freireana e a filosofia da libertação dusseliana; ii) as contribuições da Investigação Temática para o desenvolvimento de um Projeto Pedagógico Libertador; iii) as perspectivas axiológicas a partir das relações entre a pedagogia e a filosofia da libertação. Essa articulação permitiu uma compreensão sobre a importância dos valores da cultura popular no desenvolvimento de um processo educativo ético-crítico.

Palavras-chave: *Práxis transformadora, Axiologia, Valores, Paulo Freire, Enrique Dussel.*

Introduction

Studies on education evoke a series of key questions to the area, allowing the discussion on different possibilities of theoretical-methodological fundamentals to create curricula, evaluation processes, learning-teaching strategies, etc. (Saul & Silva, 2009; Furlan, 2015; Agostini, 2018; Duarte, 2019). The concern with values that guide educational practices have been highlighted by researchers investigating the importance of an axiological praxis in the school environment, as well as their contributions to overcome problems, such as indiscipline, decontextualization of subjects, learning difficulties, and their meaning to students (Patrício, 1993; Moura, 2011; Lucas, 2014; Santos et al., 2019).

The identification of values in the school educational process allows understanding how students relate with the world, overcoming the dichotomy between subject and the context where he/she is. The axiological practice consists in highlighting which values should guide the educational practices, as school is a convenient environment to promote values considered to be important for an ideal of society (Patrício, 1993).

In the scope of the discussion on values in education, authors such as Silva (2004) and Furlan (2015) stress the importance of a transforming praxis, as it allows demystifying the idea of neutral and impartial practice or educational system and stimulates an educational process committed with the development of students' consciousness, to turn them into transforming agents of reality. These authors, grounded on the theoretical-methodological contributions of Paulo Freire and Enrique Dussel, highlight that the lack of ethical, political, and social commitment with students can turn school into a space of reproduction and continuation of domination and inequality relations.

When considering that every educational practice is guided towards the enactment of epistemic, political, social, and cultural objectives, we understand that there is an intrinsic value principle to this practice (Freire, 1996). In the context of an education based on political and social commitment with students' historical-cultural reality, it is worth questioning: which values guide the development of a liberating education? In this sense, this theoretical essay aims to characterize the axiological-transforming praxis of an ethical-critical education. To do so, we investigated, through the analysis of some works by Dussel and Freire, the following aspects: i) the theoretical-methodological relations between Freire's liberating pedagogy and Dussel's liberation philosophy; ii) the contributions of Thematic Investigation to develop a Liberating Pedagogical Project; iii) the axiological perspectives from the relations between pedagogy and liberation philosophy.

We assume that the theoretical articulation between Dussel's life ethics – as a guiding principle that reveals the axiological dimension in teachers' actions– and Freire's thematic approach – grounded on dialogicity, problematization, humanization, and consciousness – can enable the identification of essential values to students' humanization process. After identifying these values, there is the possibility to establish some axiological parameters to guide teachers' practice: the formative processes, the creation of curricula, pedagogical-didactic activities, and evaluation processes coherent with ethical-critical education. This means that an education with political and social quality must consider the “different dimensions of human existence, in the sociocultural and axiological roles of knowledge as well as in the limits of the gnoseological practice of conceptually build the methodological systematization of pedagogical dialogue” (Saul & Silva, 2009, p. 233).

Educational axiology

Since its beginning, philosophy has established itself from conceptually problematic issues, what has motivated thinkers with different theoretical perspectives to try to create parameters to contribute to understanding what is good and bad, beautiful and ugly, truth and lie, valid or invalid, etc. In light of that, some sub areas emerged in the field of philosophy, each responsible for some of these questions, for example: in ethics, the aim is to reflect on what can be characterized as good or bad and in which circumstances it is possible to indicate what is good or bad; aesthetic investigates if beauty and ugliness are subjective perceptions, objective ideas, socio-historical constructions, etc.; logic establishes the criteria of validity and truth that allows the creation of arguments (Aranha, 2006).

Among these discussions, some philosophers show a different understanding of certain phenomena guided by values that emerge in the relations of subjects with the world. Therefore, philosophical studies focused on values allow the emergence of axiology that, around the 19th century, became a specific branch of philosophy, which discusses characteristics, structures, nature, and hierarchy of values (Hessen, 1974).

The axiology premise consists of understanding that human preferences and actions are guided by possibilities to fulfill the values and, when these are collectively shared, they are grounded on a culture (Frondizi, 1958). In this sense, the valuation process takes place when individuals connect with each other, with the objects, and situations in their reality. This means that the values, implicitly or explicitly voiced by subjects, have different dimensions: hermeneutics, when enabling understanding how the subject interprets aspects of reality; phenomenological, when revealing the awareness level, intentionalities, and perceptions of subjects towards a certain phenomenon; deontological, when guiding subjects' moral conduct; and praxiological, when enable actions that transform material reality (Patrício, 1993).

Praxiology of values encompasses all other dimensions, considering that praxis is a synthesis between reflection and action, in which one considers the historical-cultural reality of individuals. According to Patrício (1993), these characteristics of axiological praxis indicate that the educational process is the privileged moment to enact values, because "it is education, in its maximum generality and depth that renews humanity in man" (p. 46).

The idea of practice, in the context of educational axiology, demands considering the historical, social, and cultural aspects inherent to students' existential condition, as these aspects foment the creation of value systems in each individual, characterized by a permanent transformation (Patrício, 1993). In this perspective, the practice in educational axiology is closer to the concept of practice in Marxism, as both aim a synthesis between theory and practice, reflection and action.

The axiological praxis, as a guide to educational practice, indicates that the dialectical principle allows understanding the dynamic of human formation, in the sense of its being and value, in which social reality and, consequently, the value systems are in constant transformation, revealing that “between value and being there cannot be any deep separation and that the axiological sphere cannot be autonomous faced by the ontological sphere” (Hessen, 1974, p. 44).

This means that being and value are socially built based on individuals' historical and material conditions. In this context, the dialectical-historical materialism is an important theoretical-methodological contribution to understand how different types of social organizations work, promoting certain values, and silencing or marginalizing others, such as globalization which has enabled the dissemination of values from imperialist cultures and the suppression of values from marginalized ones (Auler, 2018).

An education that neglects axiological reflections and experiences can contribute to strengthen and perpetuate oppression relations that “are materialized in the coexistence between subjects, in school management, in the methodological organization of pedagogical programs and practices, in the selection of school content in different subjects” (Silva, 2004, p. 81).

It is important to highlight that some studies have shown that Freirean pedagogical proposal, articulated with ethical-critical Dusselian assumptions, aims an axiological and transforming praxis through a popular and critical curriculum, composed of educational practices that focus the humanization of subjects involved in the teaching-learning process, in the development of pedagogical-didactic activities based in problems that carry a sense and meaning to students (Silva, 2004; Furlan, 2014).

Freirean political-pedagogical assumptions to a liberating education

To Freire (1987), critical education is a process in which the subject participates in the construction of knowledge that allows understanding the historical, social, political, cultural, and axiological influences involved in his/her existential situation in the world. That is, this type of education allows the subject to ascend to new levels of consciousness, contributing to understanding social dynamics and to a transforming action of reality.

When Freire (1987) talks about levels of consciousness, he is referring to subjects' perception of reality which, in some cases, is limited because it does not encompass an understanding of reality in its totality. Influenced by Goldman (1970), Freire (1987) classifies the levels of consciousness in: *Effective real consciousness* in which the subject has a limited perspective of reality, by historical and social questions, i.e., lives a social contradiction that is already naturalized and became imperceptible; and the *Possible maximum consciousness*, which takes place when the subject reaches a critical awareness and his/her understanding of reality encompasses the complexities of the oppression relations historically built, allowing a transformative attitude. When broadening the discussion on levels of consciousness, Milli (2019) indicated that there is a *Possible consciousness*, that is a moment of transition from *Effective real consciousness* to *Possible maximum consciousness* grounded on “the possibilities of thinking and acting that were obscured by the class or social group” (p. 16).

Therefore, the educator needs to be a subject with *Possible maximum consciousness*, that enables students, subjects in oppressive situations, to reach other levels of consciousness, becoming more critical, reflexive, and active when building knowledge and in social participation. As highlighted by Freire (1996), students' formation is a lifelong process, as pedagogical practice is constantly under construction, due to the changes from reflections arisen from their own practice, investigation on methodologies and contents, and also due to the historical, social, political, and cultural dynamic that maintains knowledge in transformation.

This concept of incompleteness in Freire involves ontological, axiological, and historical questions, as “within history, in concrete, objective contexts, both humanization and dehumanization are possibilities for a person as an uncompleted being conscious of their incompleteness” (Freire, 1987, p. 16). That is, subjects in their relations among themselves and

the world create a consciousness of their existence, their value, and historicity as beings that are changing as they relate and aim to “be more”.

As the educator is a historical being, his/her contribution is in constant transformation during time. Hence, Freire (1987) speaks against “banking” education that prioritizes repetition, memorization, and content recollection, as if knowledge did not need to be meaningful to students, and reality could be portioned and taught through decontextualized fragments. This concept of alienated and alienating education leads students to understand themselves, their reality, and knowledge as unchangeable and mechanical things, stimulating a technical rationality of education.

Thus, we understand the reason why Freirean proposal is guided by such assumptions as dialogicity, problematization, humanization, consciousness, and emancipation. Problematization brings up students’ realities under a critical perspective that involves challenges, questions, reflections, and dialogue (Freire, 1987). Dialogicity is one of the main characteristics of the process of knowledge construction, considering that the relations established between educator and student, school and community are of interaction, cooperation, and participation.

According to Freire (1987), dialogue is established in a dialectic relation between action and reflection, as action on itself is a mere activism, and the reflection with no action is simply verbalism, both alienated and alienating. Therefore, dialogue is one of the elements that allows a liberating praxis, as it enables subjects in oppressive situations to rupture with a silencing culture, the discussion of alternatives to overcome social contradictions, the participation on building the world, aware of their values, history, and importance to humanity.

Dussel’s ethical-critical criteria for a liberating philosophy

Argentine philosopher Enrique Dussel presents, based on his Liberation Philosophy, an ethical principle that aims to give voice to the excluded victims of the hegemonic system. Dussel (2002) calls this principle ‘ethics of life’, as it brings to the center of discussion the victims of a political, economic, and social system of globalization that guides contemporary world. The parameters for the development of Dusselian ethics are the causes and the consequences of subjects’ existential condition of exclusion, oppression, denial, and political, economic, social,

cultural, and axiological domination, in which the “affirmation of ‘established system’ or the project of good life from ‘those in power’ is the denial or bad life of poor ones” (p. 314).

In this sense, life ethics is opposed to the negative ethics in which victims are dominated to live under the yoke of poverty, misery, illiteracy, resigning themselves to dominators’ values. The negative ethics, as the name indicates, is an ethics that denies a certain part of society and is grounded on the material contradiction to keep a social pyramid based on inequality, maintained by the capitalist system (Dussel, 2002). It is important to highlight that negative ethics differs from the concept of negativity in Dusselian philosophy, as the latter is a dialectic moment, opposed to the moment of positivity, which characterizes victims’ existential condition denied by a certain system (Borges, 2010). Under this perspective, negative ethics is supported and disseminated through the perpetuation of several types of negativities that subjugate marginalized subjects.

As there are differences between negative ethics and negativity, there are also between life ethics and positivity, as the later refers to the moment in which subjects’ victim condition is recognized, allowing the understanding of mutual co-responsibilities through the causes of “victimization” (Borges, 2010). Ethics of life emerges as a synthesis between negativity and positivity, characterizing itself as an Ethics of Liberation, because it enables critical awareness, that is, the historical and social understanding of oppression relations, an essential condition to the development of an attitude to overcome dehumanization. In this sense Dussel (2002) recognizes the process of humanization and dehumanization as a dialectic dynamic between positivity and negativity of victims. Dehumanize means denying the ontological, historical, and social right of “Being” of the victims, denying the value of existence from those in the margins of society, silencing, excluding, and oppressing them. While humanizing is to give voice to those excluded, show that their existence is positive, that their values are key for the history of humanity.

It is important to highlight that Dusselian dialectics, called analectic, aims to surpass dialectic, traditionally closed to alterity, which disconsiders those excluded from a hegemonic system. Analectic is a method of Dusselian philosophy that proposes to overcome the idealism of Hegelian dialectics, using the historical and material principle of Marxism to formulate an exteriority ethics. In the context referred by Dussel (1980), it is an ethics to liberate Latin American people. Thus, analectic can be understood as a dialectic that starts from the reality of

those oppressed allowing these subjects, who are not seen as the “other”, to have a voice and be heard, fostering an ethical system of mutual responsibility among all, enabling an existential understanding of Latin American historical “being”, freeing them from the ontological denial of the world.

In Dussel’s (2002) analectic perspective, the self-affirmation of the valuable of those excluded is the first indication of an ethical-critical awareness. This positive self-value emerges as a synthesis of the relation oppressor-oppressed/ dominator-dominated, in which there is an overcoming of limiting perceptions mainly caused by self-devaluation. The second indication is when the subject understands that he/she is negatively influenced by a system that works based on the exclusion of some and the inclusion of others. The third indication is based on the understanding of the subject that perceives him/herself as explored, in the sense that they are important pieces for the functioning of a system that socially excludes them. Finally, the fourth indication is the perception of their own material condition as a reflection of unfair distribution of goods, produced by those excluded and consumed by those who exclude them.

With the ethical-critical principle, Dussel (2002) points out a level of awareness that articulates critics to ethics. The ethical-critical awareness, besides contemplating a structural understanding of reality that produces oppression, also encompasses the understanding that the exclusion of oppressed victims involves a mutual social and political responsibility among all subjects in society.

The critical dimension and the ethical dimension culminate in the liberation of victims and the transformation of reality, allowing subjects to recognize themselves ontologically and axiologically from their “Being” and their “Value” to themselves and to society (Dussel, 2002). When transposing this idea to a concrete reality, the necessary assumption to enable the ethical-critical principle is valuing popular wisdom, as a way to recognize a community, strengthen the values of those excluded, the authenticity of victims’ existence, and the reaffirmation of a historically-built identity.

In the context of fights against the social injustices in Latin America, Dussel (2002) points Paulo Freire as an essential figure in many social movements that aim the liberation of Latin and African people, through the enactment of an ethical-critical plan in education. Dussel (2002) highlights that Freire’s political, pedagogical, and social perspectives are in consonance with the project to liberate excluded victims of the hegemonic system, as Freirean pedagogy is

established from limit-situations, “it is a material, analytical, economic, and political starting point” (p. 437).

This means that this type of educational project is committed with students’ reality, allowing them a revealing understanding of reality, in the sense of a structural perception of the world.

i) Theoretical-methodological relations between Freirean pedagogy and Dusselian philosophy

Based on the discussion on the political-pedagogical assumptions inherent to the Freirean concept of education, as well as the ethical-critical criteria essential to Dussel’s philosophy of liberation, we established a theoretical articulation from these two perspectives committed with Latin American historical and social reality, to characterize an educational process based in values that foment students’ process of humanization.

According to Freire (1987), students need to learn with students’ worldview, so that the social contradictions in the reality of these subjects can be identified and serve as a starting point to build knowledge, practices, and actions that aim to overcome this condition. This posture, as pointed out by Dussel (2002), is characterized as an ethical duty of the educator who helps the student to unveil his/her own reality, considering that “the *ethos* of pedagogical liberation demands the teacher to listen, in silence and respectfully, youth and the people” (Dussel, 1977, p. 101). Freire (1987) and Dussel (2013) agree that this is not enough for subjects to understand the oppression relations they experience.

Freire recognizes that the victims themselves gain critical awareness. Teachers contribute to the discovery of their condition as victims. That is, “awareness” emerges “within” victims’ consciousness, as it is unfolded by the teacher. “Consciousness” does not come from “abroad”. Teachers are important because they contribute to a deeper level of criticism. They teach students how to interpret objective reality in a critical perspective. (Dussel, 2013, p. 316, our translation).

After overcoming the limitations of *effective real consciousness*, there is the possibility of a continuous development of consciousness (Freire, 1987). Thus, students can reach an ethical-critical plan as the understanding of problems expands and finds real, historical, and concrete causes. In this level, subjects have already understood the theories that are incomprehensible to

them and start to identify the oppression of the system to which they are submitted. The process of liberation consists of this, it is communal, as the student does not reach this level alone and neither does the educator have the power to free the other by him/herself.

We understand that there is a complementarity between Freirean pedagogy and Dusselian philosophy, in which educator with a critical-ethical awareness, consider in their practice the aspects that establish the universe experienced by students, aiming for an educational system that allows overcoming the condition of oppression. This characteristic, according to Dussel (2002), consists in an essential assumption for teachers' ethical commitment that defines an anti-hegemonic system of the community of victims.

As stated by Dussel (2002), it is through the process of awareness that one reaches ethical-critical consciousness, in which subjects recognize mutual responsibilities between all individuals in society. This characterization of teachers with an ethical-critical consciousness is summarized in Figure 1, in which we highlight that the development of a transforming praxis necessarily implies an ethical commitment from the teacher with the students. Ethics is considered as the praxis foundation of an ontological and axiological affirmation of those historically and socially silenced or invisibilized.

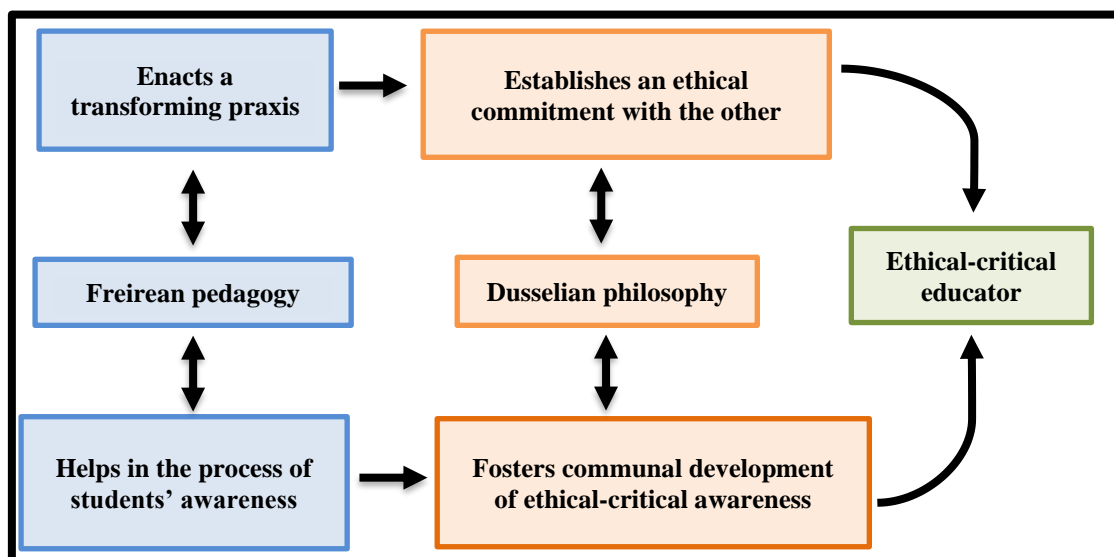


Figure 1: Synthesis of the characterization with an ethical-critical awareness based on the complementarity between Freirean pedagogy and Dusselian philosophy

Besides an ethical commitment, it is up to the ethical-critical educator to use the educational practice as a moment to develop students' awareness and their own consciousness. Thus, the ethical and critical dimensions of transforming praxis are related to moments of reflection and action of a humanizing education, which develops communally, allowing unveiling the existential condition of the other and overcoming the negativity of victims from a system that works based on social injustices (Dussel, 2002).

In the characterization of the ethical-critical education, from the communalities between Freirean pedagogy and Dusselian philosophy, we highlight the following aspects: pedagogical action that blends theoretical discussions on education and critical educational practice; identification and understanding of existing social contradictions in students' realities as a starting point for critical educational practice; enacting students' liberation process through an ethical, dialogic, problematizing relation; enable alternatives to overcome social contradictions through education. The synthesis of these characteristics, key to the ethical-critical educator, are presented in Figure 2:

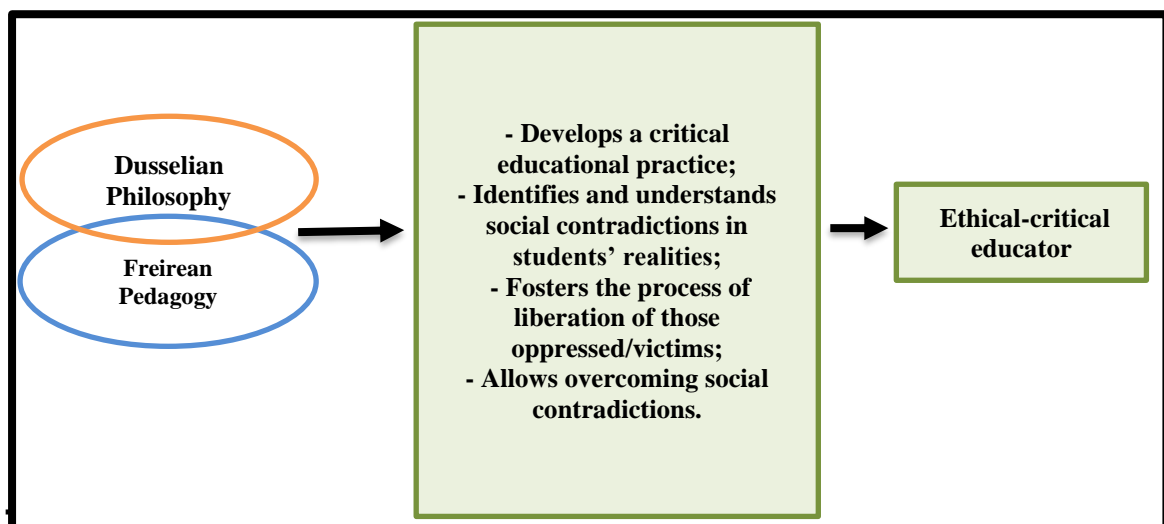


Figure 2: Synthesis of the characterization of an ethical-critical educator based on the approximation between Freirean pedagogy and Dusselian philosophy

The characterization of the ethical-critical educator and the conception of education, which result from the theoretical relation between Freirean political-pedagogical assumptions

and Dussel's ethical-critical criteria, are not limited to questions related to learning disciplinary contents, teaching and learning methodologies, or the pedagogical "know-how". This proposal for an ethical-critical methodology contemplates all this and beyond, as it carries in itself political, social, philosophical, and historical aspects that go further than the school walls.

The ethical-critical practice demands an axiological praxis to be established as an action of political and ethical commitment with students. To Dussel (2013), the transforming praxis needs to have a liberating nature, allowing to recognize the other as another, as victims of an oppressing system. That is, to understand that, besides seeing the other as a subject with whom we share the world, we also need to perceive that these same subjects are historically denied by a culture that subjugates their worldview to superimpose the view of dominating culture. Thus, it is through a historical and ideological way that subjects, though denied by the system, also deny themselves, ontologically placing them as "no-beings" in opposition to the "being" of the oppressors and, axiologically, denying their cultural, historical, and social values to adequate themselves to the values imposed to them by an hegemonic system.

The praxis of "transformation" cannot be reduced to a "pedagogical experience". It is not sought to be learned nor learned in a classroom through exercising a theoretical "consciousness"; it takes place in the praxis of "transformation" in the "real" and historic reality. It unfolds itself as a progressive "consciousness", that is, as an "action" through which ethical awareness is transformed or, summing up, as liberation. (Dussel, 2013, p. 318, our translation).

That is why the reflection on teachers' activity cannot be limited to the classroom, as the ethical-critical education process aims the formation of critical, aware, and active citizens, according to the project of society it intends to reach. It is up to the educator to have a practice that aims to "reinforce the critical ability of students, their curiosity, and their insubmission" (Freire, 1996, p. 13).

Teachers' practice, in the scope of a liberating education, needs to be thought in its social, historical, and political dimensions, overcoming the technical rationality and the mistaken attribution of a supposed neutrality and impartiality of the educational process. In this perspective of ethical-critical education, every human action and, consequently, every pedagogical action carries in itself values and directions, considering that education consists in a process of the humanization of the subject, including considering their values, beliefs, and customs in this process (Dussel, 2014).

Axiological reflection on pedagogical practice shows its importance when allowing the identification of the values of an oppressive culture that are being instilled in students, even if unconsciously. This type of reflection also contributes to plan what values to be considered in an educational praxis. The ethical-critical practice contemplates the values of students' world and promote values that foster their processes of humanization, what supposes a new relation between educators and students, aiming the "appreciation of the 'other', as an excluded alterity, from the outside of the system, that claims for liberation" (Borges, 2010, p. 172).

ii) Contributions of Thematic Investigation to the development of a Liberating Pedagogical Project

Acknowledging that enacting a liberating education demands a pedagogical project based on values from the popular culture (Dussel, 1980). We highlight that the practice which will enact this project needs to be supported by an ethical, critical, and reflexive posture. In this sense, it is important to highlight that the expression "Pedagogical Project" used by Dussel (1980) in his work *La pedagógica latino-americana*, considers the "Pedagogical" part a moment between politics and erotic in his philosophy, which proposes discussions beyond the educational scope, contemplating historical, social, and philosophical aspects in the intersubjective relations between the subjects.

When considering Freirean pedagogy and Dusselian philosophy, we understand that ethical-critical practice is characterized by: allowing the development of actions that enable social justice; enabling the appropriation of necessary knowledge to understand and overcome the emerging problems in students' reality; respecting, valuing, and learning students' non-formal knowledge; having dialogue as a parameter to develop classes; considering students' learning evaluation in a procedural way, observing students' performance as a whole, prioritizing critical reflection. The synthesis of the characterization of ethical-critical pedagogical practice is portrayed on Figure 3:

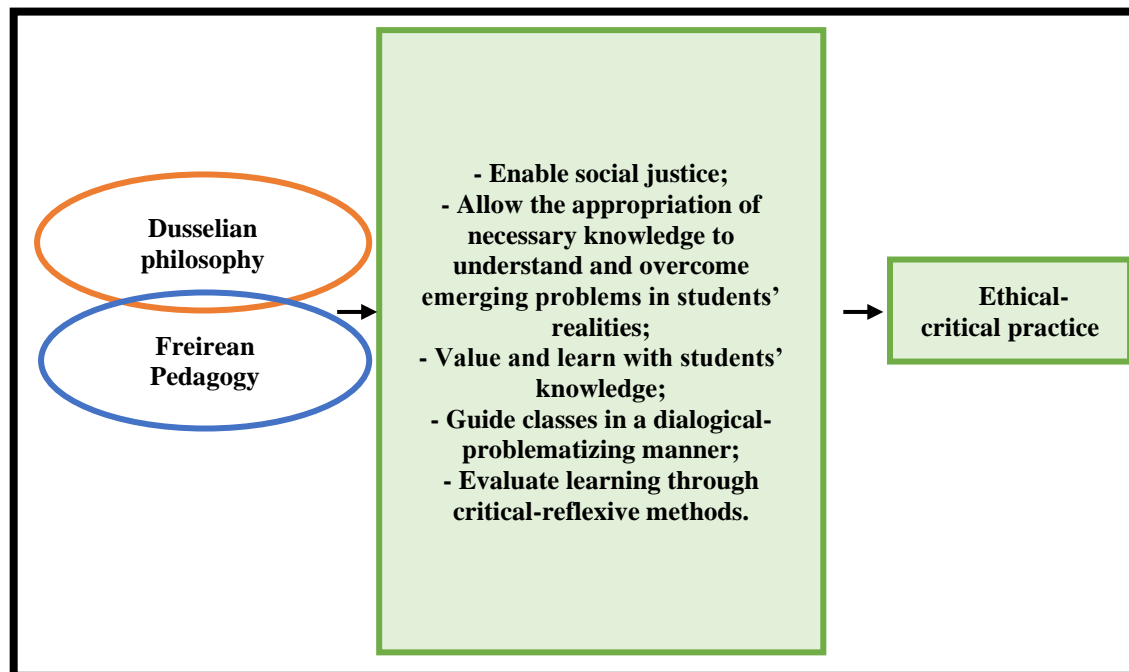


Figure 3: Synthesis of the characterization of ethical-critical practice from the articulation between Freirean pedagogy and Dusselian philosophy

The educator can only enact an ethical-critical practice when actively builds the purposes and objectives of his/her work, assuming leadership roles in school reforms, producing new knowledge from practice and other knowledge. The ethical-critical practice allows the process of liberation of subjects under a situation of social injustice through the educational praxis, which is part of a cultural action plan (Silva, 2004). In this perspective, the practice of the ethical-critical educator is enacted through a dialogic action aiming the transformation of socially oppressive structures and opposing the anti-dialogic action that foments relations of oppression.

To be ethical, critical, reflexive, and constantly researching are inherent characteristics of the educator working in a liberating perspective. Liberation, in the educational context based on Dusselian philosophy and Freirean pedagogy, refers to the creation of an original pedagogical project, in the sense of overcoming the pedagogical systems imported from colonizing countries, breaking away from the mechanisms of domination and dependence between oppressors and oppressed (Dussel, 1980).

In this process of liberation, one needs to consider important ontological, historical, social, and axiological questions to understand marginalized cultures and to organize humanizing educational practices, through a liberating pedagogical project, characterized by: its

origin in the historical-cultural reality of those oppressed; breaking away from the hegemonic system that denies the Being of those excluded; encompassing the values of cultures extenuated by imperialist cultures; strengthening the historical, cultural, social identity of victims in the “periphery” of the world (Dussel, 2002).

Therefore to build a pedagogical project that contemplates all these axiological aspects, from the curriculum until the enactment in the classroom, is a challenge considering the complexity to implement an education grounded in philosophy that diverges and combats the assumptions of the traditional educational system in action. Freirean pedagogy itself has theoretical-methodological contributions that can guide, in the school context, the planning and curriculum organization, called Thematic Investigation.

According to Freire (1987), the process of Thematic Investigation demands an effort to build a pedagogical system in which knowledge is meaningful to students. Based on this understanding, Silva (2004) highlights that school curriculum needs to start from the social contradictions present in the reality of the subjects under oppressive situations. The aim of Thematic Investigation is to enable an education that develops a critical and reflexive in those oppressed on the reality, so as to overcome their limited view on their own existential condition.

In this context, the limit-situation consists in the moment in which the subject finds him/herself with an oppressed consciousness, in a level of *effective real consciousness*, which does not allow him/her to see the world in a structural dimension (Dussel, 2002). The Freirean concept of limit-situation is used by Dussel (2002) to corroborate the idea that the domination structures between oppressors and oppressed are imperceptible to the subjects under an oppressive situation.

The understanding of what are the limit-situations in a certain reality is the assumption that guides Thematic Investigation, seeking a liberating education. This is the first indicative of Thematic Investigation as a theoretical-methodological support that allows the development of a Liberating Pedagogical Project in Dusselian perspective.

The process of Thematic Investigation, proposed by Freire (1987), later adapted by Delizoicov (1982) to the context of school education, aims to reach Generative Themes, that are characterized as a synthesis of perceptions held by the subjects of a certain community, in which there are indications of social contradictions (Silva, 2004). To reach the Generative themes, in a school context, Delizoicov (1982) systematized the following steps:

1. *Preliminary Survey*: the beginning of the Thematic Investigation demands the local recognition of the community. To do so, the research uses: primary sources, in which information is obtained through the dialogue with the inhabitants of the place; and secondary sources, such as information outlets like television, radio, newspapers, internet, etc. From the information collected, a dossier is created;
2. *Coding*: after there is the description and analysis of situations that appear in the previous step, aiming to select the most meaningful information and testimonies that indicate the possible social contradictions experienced by community subjects. Thus, it is possible to choose and code the probable social contradictions to be discussed and legitimized in the following step;
3. *Decoding*: the representatives of different community segments are presented with possible social contradictions indicated by the information on secondary sources and meaningful conversation with inhabitants, to raise a dialogue, problematize, and legitimize the problems and needs of the community. With that, limit-situations are legitimized, creating Generative Themes, that represent a concrete reality in which oppressed subjects are immersed, working out as a starting point to build a curriculum that enables the development of a critical awareness in those oppressed, and their understanding of their value and place in the world (Freire, 1987);
4. *Thematic breakdown*: in this phase there is a “rupture operation” of the themes in its entirety searching for key nuclei that establish their partialities. This way, “n breaking down the theme, the specialist looks for the fundamental nuclei which, comprising learning units and establishing a sequence, give a general view of the theme” (Freire, 1987, p. 67). Thematic breakdown refers to the organization of concepts, contents, and necessary actions to understand the Generative Theme and which compose the curricular program.

Some studies around Freirean Thematic Approach have developed mechanisms to help curriculum program in this step of Thematic Investigation, for instance: Silva (2004), who developed the Thematic Network, which favors the systematization of knowledge and practices from significant speeches from community inhabitants;; Milli, Almeida and Gehlen (2018), who, in the context of *Grupo de Estudos sobre Abordagem Temática no Ensino de Ciências* (GEATEC- Study Group on Thematic Approach in Science Education), developed the Thematic Cycle, which

helps the systematization of inhabitants' perspectives regarding the Generative Theme, indicating causes, consequences, and alternatives to overcome limit-situations, helping to transform local reality. Therefore, the Thematic Cycle is used after the creation of a Thematic Network to organize the knowledge, actions, and the systematization of Education Units.

To plan the pedagogical-didactic activities and their development in different educational contexts, the *Três Momentos Pedagógicos* (3MP- Three Pedagogical Moments) dynamic has been used, fostering problematization and dialogicity (Silva, 2004). These 3MP are structured into: *Problematização Inicial* (PI- Initial Problematization) – the moment in which questions are raised to provoke a critical reflection on the problematic aspects of students' realities; *Organização do Conhecimento* (OC- Knowledge Organization) – systematization of the necessary knowledge to understand the problems discussed in PI, present in a Generative Theme; *Aplicação do Conhecimento* (AC- Knowledge Application) – step in which the initial problematization is resumed and the knowledge built in OC is directed towards explanations and/or possible solutions of those problematic situations. Besides this, in this moment the educator analyzes the way students appropriate the contents developed in the class and the new situations that appear and need to be questioned (Delizoicov, Angotti, & Pernambuco, 2011).

5. *Development in the classroom*: moment to implement in the classroom the pedagogical-didactical activities, based in a Generative Theme and structured in the 3MP.

It is possible to analyze these steps of Thematic Investigation under the perspective of Dussel's liberating philosophy, in which the Preliminary survey, Coding, Decoding, and Thematic reduction are characterized as negative moments of denouncement, because in these phases we can see the social contradictions and limit-situations, aspects that foster the oppression mechanisms of the hegemonic system. The development in the classroom is characterized as a moment of positivity, considering that it is an announcement, in the collectivity of the subjects involved, the alternatives to overcome social contradictions and limit-situations. Thereby, the last phase of the Thematic Investigation synthesizes this analectic movement through a transforming praxis, that is, it is the moment in which there is the enactment of the actions that can lead to the transformation of the reality of oppressed subjects. On Table 1, we organize this analectic movement among the phases of Thematic Investigation:

Table 1: Phases of thematic investigation under Dussel's analectic.

Phases of thematic investigation	Dialectic moments	Analectic moments
Preliminary survey	Thesis	Denunciation
Coding	Antithesis	
Decoding		
Thematic breakdown	Synthesis	Announcement
Development in the classroom		

Based on table 1, we understand that there are relations between the denunciation and the announcement of categories of historical-dialectical materialism, especially with the dialectic moments of the thesis, antitheses, and synthesis. In the context of Thematic Investigation, based on an analectic analysis, we understand that the denunciation – which corresponds to the negative moment – is related with the thesis and the antithesis, as it is the process in which the community of victims, together with educators, scientists, intellectuals, etc., uses dialogicity and problematization to understand the world view of subjects in situations of exclusion and oppression (Dussel, 2002). From that, it is possible to understand how these subjects are negated by a dehumanizing system that silences them, devalues their historical and cultural roots, and invisibilizes them as beings in the world.

The announcement – which indicates a positive moment – is related with the synthesis, as it corresponds to the development moment of the liberation project of a community of victims, after the denouncement of the oppressive structures that limited the subjects' worldviews, expressed in the “negativities present in victims' discourses and language” (Silva, 2004, p. 129). Therefore, the discourses that denounce social contradictions are meaningful, serving as a starting point to develop critical and popular curricula, ethical-critical pedagogical practices, humanizing formative processes, etc.

Freirean proposal is a type of Thematic Approach⁵ that highlights dialogue and problematization, based on students' reality, supporting the restructuring of current educational

⁵ Considering that there are other types of thematic approaches, we highlight that Freirean Thematic Approach differs from the conceptual approach because the latter selects the content from scientific concepts, i.e., not necessarily there is a concern to establish a relation among the contents and knowledge from the everyday lives of

practices, i.e., Freire “precisely defines possibility conditions to make emerge the exercise of ethical critical reasoning as a condition to an integral educational process” (Dussel, 2002, p. 435). In this perspective, Freirean Thematic Approach has the necessary assumptions to develop and implement a Liberating Pedagogical Process, originated in the existential reality of those oppressed, in which students can ascend to more elaborate levels of consciousness, allowing an ethical-critical view of the world through a humanizing process.

iii) Axiological perspectives from the relations between pedagogy and philosophy of liberation

Ethics, considered in its critical dimension, was systematized and summarized by Dussel (2014) in a thesis that, in the context of an axiological-transforming praxis, stand out grounded on the following principles: the ethics in educational practice is characterized as a theory or reflection of concrete human actions; human action renews the being in the world, for oneself and for the other; the values have a material principle, consisting on the objectives that guide human actions, as well as a formal principle, which are ways or means used to enact human actions; the intentions, that work as parameters to enact moral actions, are always intersubjective and communitarian, as the values of a culture are collectively shared, explicitly and implicitly; the other cannot be understood as an entity or a thing, as the other is a living being with a voice, values, perceptions, awareness of its own existence, and the existence of others in the world; reality, understood in the analectic perspective, always considers the moment of negativity, when the structures that foment domination relations, marginalization, and silencing of the victims are revealed and, later, the moment of positivity, in which new structures for a system are announced, aiming to overcome oppression relations, through a praxis that emerges in the community of victims itself and is developed based on their needs and demands previously ignored.

Thus, it was possible to characterize the educator and the ethical-critical practice, considering the complementarity and the commonalities between Freirean pedagogy and Dusselian philosophy. From this theoretical approximation, we identified Freirean and

students. In Freirean Thematic Approach, the contents should necessarily come from a limit-situation identified through a process of Thematic Investigation (Delizoicov, 1982).

Dusselian concepts based on an axiological perspective⁶, enabling the analysis of values in contexts which Thematic Investigation is used as a theoretical-methodological support to enact a Liberating Pedagogical Project, as shown on Table 2:

Table 2: The relation between Freire, Dussel, and axiological concepts

Freirean Pedagogy	Dusselian Philosophy	Axiological Perspective
Oppressed	Community of victims	Axiological subjects
Oppression	Hegemonic system	Values of dominating culture
Awareness	Ethical-critical awareness	Axiological awareness
Culture of Silence	Negativity of victims	Subjugation of Popular culture values
Dialogicity	Inter-subjectivity	Culturally shared values
Denunciation and announcement	Negativity and positivity	Devaluation and valuation
Freirean thematic approach	Liberation Pedagogical Project	Axiological praxis

To Freire (1987), those oppressed are axiological subjects that are part of a community of victims, in which shared values emerge from the relations between them and the material reality. Each community is established from the inter-subjectivity among subjects, originating a culture, a history, a system of specific values of the concrete reality they live (Dussel, 2002). When a community is marginalized, silenced, and invisibilized, through a hegemonic system that subjugates the values of a culture on behalf of another, it becomes a community of victims (Dussel, 2002).

The process of humanization of the victims needs a liberation project that raises on them the awareness of the relations of domination oppressing them, enabling to rescue the values of a subjugated culture (Dussel, 2002). Freire (1987), in the educational scope, proposes a process of Thematic Investigation, grounded on dialogicity and problematization that, from the ethical-critical criteria of Dusselian philosophy, can be characterized as a theoretical-methodological support that allows the enactment of an emerging Liberating Pedagogical Practice of the concrete reality of the victims themselves.

⁶The “Axiological perspective” here refers to the synthesis of the understanding of values based on the definitions of value, valuing, and axiology from authors such as Hessen (1974), Frondizi (1958), Patrício (1993) to situate Freirean pedagogy and Dusselian philosophy in the axiological context.

This reflection on the axiological dimension, from the relations of oppression, domination, marginalization, and exclusion, favored a perception that the process of subject humanization necessarily involves the ontological, epistemological, and praxiological dimension, thus it is impossible the dissociation between them (Dussel, 2002). However, the axiological and ontological dimensions reveal themselves as a base to understand how a domination project is established, mainly via an educational system, naturalizing social contradiction, silencing, and invisibilizing the victims of this system.

Contrary to the domination project, Freirean pedagogy and Dusselian philosophy, both originated in the reality of Latin American victims, show elements and strategies to build a liberating project, grounded on a dialogical-problematizing education. In this sense, the liberation of victims starts by denouncing the domination mechanisms of a hegemonic system, through the process of mutual awareness among the victims. After, alternatives to overcome an existential condition, fated to be silenced and invisibilize the values and the being of victims, are presented, that is, the creation and implementation of an anti-hegemonic system (Dussel, 2002; Freire, 1987).

In this context, Freirean Thematic Approach is characterized as an important implementation strategy of a liberating pedagogical project, offering an alternative to resignify school curriculum, an ethical-critical pedagogical practice, and formative processes coherent with a proposal of liberating the victims (Silva, 2004; Furlan, 2015). Dusselian philosophy is integrated to Freirean Thematic Approach as a theoretical fundament that explains its proposal and liberating nature, as well as justifies the reasons for a reflection in the axiological, ontological, epistemological, and praxiological levels of the educational system in relation to the world system.

Freirean Thematic Approach reveals its importance to contribute to break away from the logic of exclusion, when it provides a way to investigate the demands of subjects in oppressive situations, considering their values, customs, beliefs, and popular wisdom, enabling the development of an ethical-critical awareness that allows them to see solutions for demands historically neglected by the hegemonic system, based on such values as respect, solidarity, cooperation, co-production, and co-learning (Dussel, 2002; Auler, 2018).

Some remarks

The reflection on teacher practice involves teachers' participation in the creation of the curriculum, as well as in classroom activities, influencing not only the dynamic of school curriculum, but also society as a whole (Dussel, 1980). Thus, the characterization of an ethical-critical practice needs to be taught during educators' formative process, so that they develop an ethical-critical consciousness, and can become transforming agents through a liberating praxis.

To do so, it is necessary to include discussions and reflection about values in all the dimensions of a liberating educational process, since values are considered important indicators of how students understand their material and existential condition. The process of unveiling local reality is enacted by a dialogical process between educator and students, in which values have an indispensable role in overcoming a culture of silence. In this context, the articulation between Freirean pedagogy and Dusselian philosophy enables a theoretical-methodological support that allows an understanding on which are the popular culture values key to the educational process, through the Thematic Investigation as a mechanism to develop a Liberating Pedagogical Project.

The Liberating Pedagogical Project can find in the Thematic Investigation the ground for an axiological-transforming praxis when including in its development ontological, historical, social, and axiological issues when unveiling reality and overcoming social contradictions. The ethical-critical education, emerged from this context, is characterized as the beginning of the end of the oppressive logic of the hegemonic system, which works based on the ontological and axiological denial of the victims in the "periphery" of the world (Dussel, 2002).

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