

Freirean works in Pedagogy undergraduate degrees in Rio Grande do Sul: an exploratory glance ^{1 2 3 4}

A presença de obras freireanas nos cursos de Pedagogia do Rio Grande do Sul: um olhar exploratório

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Abstract

The present study investigates and discusses the presence of Freirean books in the Pedagogy curricula of public in-person undergraduate degrees in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. From the development of the quantitative exploratory research, we identified a total of 28 works by Paulo Freire distributed in 92 subjects in the Pedagogy courses of seven public institutions. The subjects were mainly focused on Youth and Adult Education and Popular Education. The main works used are *Pedagogia da Autonomia* and *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, indicated as basic readings in compulsory subjects. Therefore, we can state that Paulo Freire's works have been strongly recommended in the subjects of Pedagogy undergraduate degrees.

Keywords: curriculum, Freirean works, Paulo Freire, Pedagogy

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³ Funding: Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior – CAPES.

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Resumo

O presente estudo busca investigar e discutir a presença das obras freireanas nos currículos dos cursos de Pedagogia, públicos e presenciais, do Rio Grande do Sul. Esta pesquisa, de caráter quantitativo e de cunho exploratório, identificou um total de 28 obras de autoria de Paulo Freire, distribuídas em 92 disciplinas de cursos de Pedagogia presenciais de 7 instituições públicas. As disciplinas observadas são voltadas, especialmente, a discussões da Educação de Jovens e Adultos e da Educação Popular. Dentre elas, constatou-se que as obras mais utilizadas pelos cursos investigados são a Pedagogia da autonomia e a Pedagogia do oprimido, presentes, principalmente, como indicações básicas em disciplinas obrigatórias. Portanto, considera-se que as obras de autoria de Paulo Freire vêm sendo bastante indicadas pelas disciplinas dos cursos de Pedagogia analisados.

Palavras-chave: currículo, obras freireanas, Paulo Freire, Pedagogia

Introduction

The life trajectory and the innumerable fights of Brazilian educator Paulo Reglus Neves Freire or simply, Paulo Freire, as he became known, were extremely meaningful. The author became a world reference in education from the context in which he produced and systematized his ideas. Between the 1960s and 1990s – when he wrote several works – the country lived through a scenario of deep inequalities and social disturbances⁵. Thus, it is possible to understand the political and pedagogical positions of the author and his work in the different popular movements (Pereira, 2018).

Throughout his life, he wrote important works expressing the desire for a new education. He sought to culturally value the subjects and fought for the inclusion of socially-marginalized and oppressed groups (Paiva, 1987). Hence, Paulo Freire firmly denounced and criticized what became known as banking education. In this educational model, the educator would “fill” students with contents decontextualized from pupils’ realities (Freire, 2018).

Consequently, Freire proposed to rethink education that presented itself– and still presents – as banking, aiming to overcome it through a freeing education that has a means – and an end – social transformation. Freirean thought has been contributing with emancipatory

⁵ Nowadays, there are also several social tensions mainly marked by inequality, exclusion, and oppression. Thus, Paulo Freire is still needed to rethink education.

educational practices for teachers' education. His works are an important reference to develop educational practices guided by critical-reflexive principles (Freitas & Forster, 2016).

From this emerges Freire's greatest legacy: to dialogically present a new perspective for education, indubitably more loving, ethical, and committed, without renouncing its political and learning essence. Therefore, it is extremely relevant to approach such Freirean assumptions during teachers' pre-service education, including pedagogues, considering an educational praxis coherent with these ideals from the early years of Elementary Education.

Considering the importance of approaching these assumptions during pre-service education, in this study we aim to investigate Freirean presence in the curricula of Pedagogy undergraduate degrees. Therefore, the research intends: i) to map in-person Pedagogy courses in public institutions in Rio Grande do Sul (RS), Brazil, which had Freirean elements in their curricula; ii) to analyze the presence of Freirean works in the courses; iii) to discuss some implications of using Freirean assumptions during the pre-service education of pedagogues regarding the overcoming of banking education paradigm.

Trajectories, fights, and another educational perspective: Freirean thought beyond the paradigm of banking education

In the 1960s, Freire engaged himself in educational movements, being one of the founders of *Movimento de Cultura Popular* (Popular Culture Movement), in Recife, the capital of Pernambuco, in the Brazilian northeast (Freire, A.M, 1996). The movement started in 1962, when the region was characterized as one of the poorest and with the highest indexes of illiteracy (Freire, 1980). From this movement emerged a literacy project for young people and adults in Recife, which grew to other Brazilian regions, as was the case of Angicos, Mossoró, and João Pessoa (Brandão, 1985). In Angicos, Freire proposed a literacy process, based on the life experiences of sugar-cane cutters. Afterwards, he was invited to develop a national literacy campaign that has contributed to his worldwide recognition.

The literacy process, in Freirean perspective, consists in apprehending the word to comprehend the world, raising awareness to situations of injustice, oppression, and exclusion.

Besides this, in this concept of literacy, “reading the word is not preceded merely by reading the world, but by a certain form of *writing* it or *re-writing* it, that is, of transforming it by means of conscious practical work [original highlight]” (Freire, 1989, p.13). The author firmly criticized literacy processes in which educators taught mechanically through the repetition of words that, normally, were far from the subjects’ realities. He considered it an authoritarian process because it was centered on the “magic” understanding of random words and this, instead of favoring the critical unveiling of reality, would hide it even more.

In 1964, the military dictatorship was established in Brazil, marked by the violation of human rights, including civil and political ones (Sousa Junior & Carneiro, 2019) and by several social tensions, which emerged from oppression, censorship, and persecution. All as an attempt to silence who was not convenient to the antidemocratic politics of the Military Regime. Because of this, in this period, Paulo Freire had to seek political exile in Bolivia and, soon after, in Chile. In the later, he continued his projects, worked, and wrote important works. When he was abroad – due to the military dictatorship–, Freire “wandered” through the world, developing important actions (Freire, A.M., 1996).

In 1980, he returned to Brazil. Some years later became the Secretary of Education of the city of São Paulo. He was one of the people responsible for the development of *Projeto Interdisciplinar* (Interdisciplinary project), called “*Interdisciplinaridade via Tema Gerador*”(Intersdisciplinarity through a Generating theme), implemented in the city (Movimento de reorientação curricular do município de São Paulo, 1992). The project aimed to reformulate school curriculum and overcome the paradigm of banking education, through permanent educational/training processes (Torres et al., 2002).

Even after 20 years of his death, Freire is still a recognized name around the world (Freitas & Forster, 2016), due to his important contributions to education. In life, Freire wrote many works, such as the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 2018), *Pedagogia da autonomia* (Freire, 1996), *Pedagogy of Hope* (Freire, 1992), *Education, the Practice of Freedom* (Freire, 1967), *Politics and Education* (Freire, 2001) etc.

Among his writings, the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* stands out in the educational field. In it, Paulo Freire criticizes the inequality that leads to the dehumanization and exclusion of many. This work allows rethinking education and society itself, from the point of view of the oppressed, encompassing the relations between oppressors and oppressed, colonizers and colonized, globalizers and globalized (Freire, A.M., 1996).

One of the most important contributions of Freire's perspective is the idea of education as a practice of freedom, which presupposes the awareness of human beings regarding their own existence and the world around them. To (2014, p.70), awareness "is the propelling spring of social reality, of the reality of teaching-learning, and exchange knowledge from and for life". To all discussions raised, we can perceive the relevance of Freirean discourse in the building of a new education.

There are many possibilities of intervention that can be used in school context, grounded on Freirean assumptions. An example is the use of dialogic classes, problematizing and interdisciplinary, or even, the adoption of loving principles, of awareness, and emancipation.

When entering Elementary School, children already have different experiences, have a variety of curiosities, and concerns, and thus, the learning of scientific knowledge contributes to understanding the surrounding natural, social, and political environment (Souza et al. 2011). Freirean reference can favor not only the construction of a critical perspective towards reality, but also the learning of scientific knowledge, as it uses life experiences as teaching objects. To do so, it is up to educators to know Freire's works and references as possibilities to ground their teaching practices. To Martins Filho (2019), reflecting about teaching in the early years, through Freirean assumptions, is an exercise of autonomy, which pervades educators, students, and school management. But would this reference be present in teacher-education courses, such as those in Pedagogy? After all, why use Freirean references in K-12 education: Which possible educational interventions can be used? We wrote this article aiming to explore such questions, mainly the first one.

Methodology

This quantitative and exploratory study (Gil, 2002) aims to investigate the presence of Paulo Freire's works in in-person public courses of Pedagogy in the state of Rio Grande do Sul (RS), Brazil. First, we surveyed all the public Higher Education Institutions (HEI) in RS. We identified 11 institutions, as can be seen on Table 1:

Table 1

List of public institutions in RS, number of campi, and number of Pedagogy courses offered

Number	Institution	Acronym	Campi	Degrees
1	<i>Universidade Estadual do Rio Grande do Sul</i>	UERGS	6	9
2	<i>Instituto Federal Sul Rio-Grandense</i>	IFSul	0	0
3	<i>Instituto Federal do Rio Grande do Sul</i>	IFRS	5	5
4	<i>Instituto Federal Farroupilha</i>	IFFar	0	0
5	<i>Universidade Federal de Santa Maria</i>	UFSM	1	2
6	<i>Universidade Federal do Pampa</i>	UNIPAMPA	1	1
7	<i>Universidade Federal de Pelotas</i>	UFPel	1	2
8	<i>Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul</i>	UFRGS	1	1
9	<i>Universidade Federal de Ciências da Saúde de Porto Alegre</i>	UFCSPA	0	0
10	<i>Universidade Federal da Fronteira Sul</i>	UFFS	1	1
11	<i>Universidade Federal do Rio Grande</i>	FURG	1	2
Total	11	-	17	23

Afterwards, we identified which institutions offered in-person Pedagogy degrees. For this phase, we consulted the site of *Cadastro Nacional de Cursos e Instituições de Educação Superior* (e-MEC)⁶. We found a total of 8 institutions with this type of course, among them, some offered the degree in more than one campus, also in the day-time and/or night-time shifts, as can be seen on Table 2:

⁶ "Regulated by *Portaria Normativa* n.º 21, from December 21, 2017, official data base of the courses and Higher Education Institutions (HEI), regardless of the Educational System.

Table 2

List of public institutions in RS, campus, and shifts offering Pedagogy degrees

Number	Institution	<i>Campus</i>	Shift
1	UERGS	Alegrete	Day time
2	UERGS	Alegrete	Night time
3	UERGS	Bagé	Night time
4	UERGS	Cruz Alta	Night time
5	UERGS	Osório	Day time
6	UERGS	Osório	Night time
7	UERGS	São Francisco de Paula	Night time
8	UERGS	São Luiz Gonzaga	Day time
9	UERGS	São Luiz Gonzaga	Night time
10	UFRGS	Porto Alegre	Night time
11	IFRS	Alvorada	Night time
12	IFRS	Bento Gonçalves	Night time
13	IFRS	Porto Alegre	Night time
14	IFRS	Vacaria	Night time
15	IFRS	Farroupilha	Night time
16	FURG	Rio Grande	Day time
17	FURG	Rio Grande	Night time
18	UFPEL	Pelotas	Day time
19	UFPEL	Pelotas	Night time
20	UFSM	Santa Maria	Day time
21	UFSM	Santa Maria	Night time
22	UNIPAMPA	Jaguarão	Night time
23	UFFS	Erechim	Night time

Later, we searched for the courses' syllabuses, through the command CTRL + F, using the term "Freire". Most referenced the term, except FURG, which had no mention, thus it was left out of the analysis. We created a record for each institution, in which we noted the subjects that referenced Freirean works. Next, we counted the number of subjects and works, as well as the frequency in each institution. The syllabuses that referenced twice or more the same work (in the same subject) were disregarded, counting them just once.

All UERGS Pedagogy degrees shared the same Course Pedagogical Project (CPP) and, therefore, the same subjects and syllabuses, as was the case of the day-time and night-time courses at UFPEL. At IFRS, each *campus* had its own CPP, as well as the day-time and night-time course of UFSM and, so, were analyzed in isolation.

Next, we will present the results of this study, some reflections and discussions arising from them.

Results and discussions

From the analyses of the syllabuses and CPP of Pedagogy courses, we have identified several of Freire's works. Figure 1 presents a graphic, representing the works most indicated in the references of the documents, as well as their frequency.

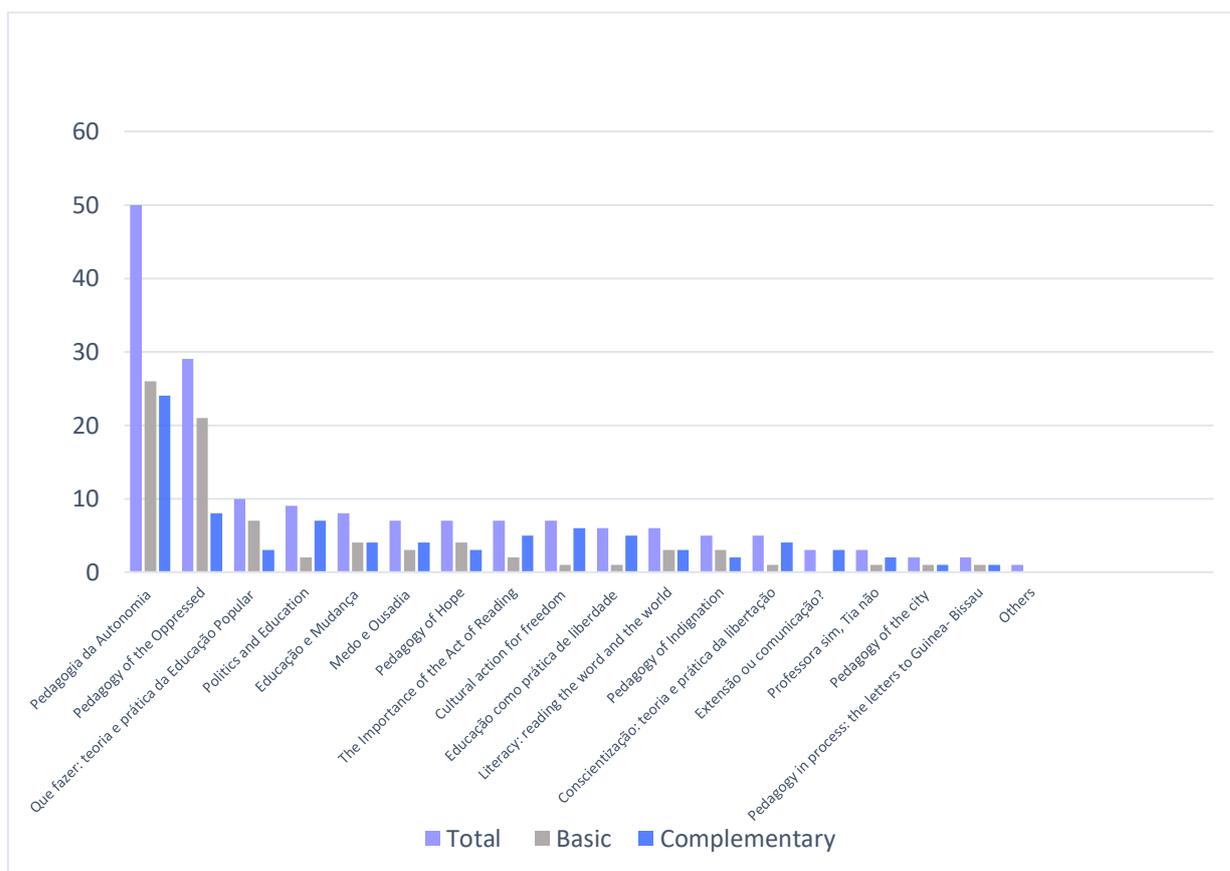


Figure 1

Frequency of Freirean works distributed on the subjects of in-person public of RS⁷

⁷ Translation note (T.N.): On the figure, the titles in English are those who had been officially translated and published in this language. We choose to keep in Portuguese the titles of those which are not yet translated and/nor published in English.

We identified 28 works in the syllabuses of these subjects. From those, 11 were recommended only once and, therefore, we classified them as “others”, as seen on Figure 1.

Our analyses indicate that the most referenced work in the syllabuses was *Pedagogia da autonomia*, present in 50 different subjects from a total of 92⁸ with Freirean works (considering all institutions). The discussions related to teacher education were present in several works of Paulo Freire, but, more explicitly, in *Pedagogia da autonomia* (Freitas & Forster, 2016). From this publication, Paulo Freire dove deeper in the field of teacher education, challenging readers – educators- to recreate their educational practices (Freitas & Forster, 2016), thus contributing to a critical-reflexive education. As the Pedagogy degree focuses on teacher education, this work has much to offer, exactly because it discusses the necessary knowledge for the educational practice.

The second most recommended work was the Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 29 in total. Though in second place, it mostly appeared as a basic reference, 21 mentions as basic and only 8 as complementary. Though *Pedagogia da autonomia* has a higher indication frequency than *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, they are still similar in the number of indications as basic and as complementary (26B / 24C)⁹. That is, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is predominantly a basic reading recommendation. This work is greatly relevant in the academic world – and beyond it –, being the third most cited publication in the area of humanities worldwide, according to a research conducted by Green (2016).

The book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is, first of all, a humanizing project (Santana & Souza, 2019), which denounces the existence of realities denied, masked, and exploited by colonizers – oppressors. Unveils the world – condition – of oppression and intends to overcome inequalities and the dependence oppressed-oppressor (Santana & Souza, 2019), through a rebellious and revolutionary act of freedom. It denounces a banking educational system, permeated by reproduction, and considers key issues to assume (make) a problematizing and dialogical education. However, even if the work encompasses important discussions to produce changes towards a less unequal society, it was seen by part of the population – oppressors- as

⁸ From this total, we discarded the subjects of the day time and night time courses of UFSM common to both courses, considering that they had the same syllabus.

⁹ Relation of the frequency of works, “26B” is the number of times the work was recommended as basic and “24C” the number of times it was recommended as complementary.

unnecessary and updated, which shows the ignorance of many people about his work (Pereira, 2018).

Freirean discourse provoked, and still provokes, the anger of his opponents who started to see him as a threat to the societal model they defended. For this and other reasons, in the 1970s and 1980s, a movement contrary to the author started to take shape, whose aim was to banish his works, especially *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, from curricula and free worldwide circulation (Santana & Souza, 2019). Again, in the last years, there is a new wave of opposition against Paulo Freire marked, mainly, by a social-political rupture between the left and right movements. A hypothesis for this resistance can be the result of the author's political-partisan position, as Freire defended a combat to the unfair and unequal social structures, in synch with the "left and center-left parties, popular social movements in rural and city areas, unions, and other organizations from the so-called democratic and popular field" (Pereira, 2018, p. 32). The groups contrary to Freirean ideas are closer to the right wing in the political spectrum.

Maybe this explains why, amidst a scenario of social turmoil, the figure of Paulo Freire was the object of distortion, some subjects even wrongly considered that he was responsible to create an antipatriotic movement (Lima, 2014). As a result of the polarization in the country, hegemonic movements illegitimately take responsibility for education, as a result of a indoctrination influenced by Freire (Macedo & Carvalho, 2017). A consequence of those allegations was the attempt to repeal law n. ° 12 612/2012 (which declares Paulo Freire the patron of Brazilian education), through a Proposal of Constitutional Amendment (Macedo, 2017). Similarly, the movement *Escola sem Partido* (Partyless School) goes against Freirean pedagogical thought (Pereira, 2018).

In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (2018) defended the trajectory/history of the subjects and believed in the power of education to create a fairer society. In this work, he also showed ways to think of a new education, suggested proposals, and defended its reinvention. The analysis we present here has shown that the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is the second most present work in the syllabuses of the courses, corroborating its importance and the relevance of the discussions brought in one of Freire's most daring works. Even after 20 years of his death, his legacy (thought) continues alive, current, and necessary because his ideas have foreseen countless horizons related to the educational processes, not only as answers/solutions for the educational problems (Pereira, 2018).

Pereira (2018) highlights that, when considering the Brazilian scenario emerged in a deep inequality of social classes, different possibilities of understanding coexist in the world. Therefore, so that Paulo Freire could be effectively overcome, the social, political, and economic structures that influenced his reflections would have to be suppressed in a given time. However, for the author, instead of minimizing inequalities, there has been an increase.

The analysis has also shown that the third most referenced work was *Que fazer: teoria e prática em Educação Popular*, written by Paulo Freire and Adriano Nogueira (1993), appearing in 10 subjects, as shown in Figure 1. It is a dialogue between the authors in which they discuss the political essence of education. To think Popular Education in Freire includes reflecting on awareness, the world, the word, power, knowledge, politics, theory, and practice, as written by Boff (Freire & Nogueira, 1993) in the foreword of the book.

Most Freire's books directly or indirectly approach the theme but this one especially highlights how the author perceived Popular Education. Even though the work does not aim to be a manual on Popular Education, it indicates possible horizons to "enact it", problematizes historical, social, and political questions, and reflects on the reason for a truly inclusive education. Maybe, because of this, the work was an important reference in Pedagogy degrees, considering that part of the subjects of the courses aims to discuss issues regarding Popular Education. The work is so important as a reference to discuss the movements of Popular Education that it is predominantly recommended as a basic indication in a 7B/ 3C relation.

The fourth most referenced work was *Politics and Education*, present in 9 different subjects. Though, predominantly as a complementary work (2B/7C). The other works also present a lower frequency of recommendations as basic, except the *Pedagogy of Hope* (4B / 3C) and the *Pedagogy of Indignation* (3B / 2C).

Some of the works with lower frequency of recommendations as basic readings in comparison to complementary ones were: a) *Medo e ousadia* (3B / 4C); b) *The Importance of the Act of Reading* (2B / 5C); c) *Cultural action for freedom* (1B / 6C); d) *Education: The practice of freedom* (1B / 5C); e) *Conscientização: teoria e prática da libertação* (1 B / 4 C); f) *Extensão ou comunicação?* (0B / 3C) e g) *Professora sim, tia não!* (1B / 2C), etc.

Other works present the same frequency of recommendations as basic and complementary: i) *Educação e mudança* (4B / 4C); ii) *Literacy: reading the word and the world* (3B /

3C); iii) *Pedagogy of the city* (1B / 1C), and vi) *Pedagogy in process: the letters to Guinea- Bissau* (1B / 1C).

Summing up, this study has seen that Freire's works are frequently present in the references, basic and complementary, in the subjects of the Pedagogy degrees in Rio Grande do Sul, as can be seen on Figure 2. Furthermore, we could see the recommendation, as basic literature, of less known Freire's works (28).

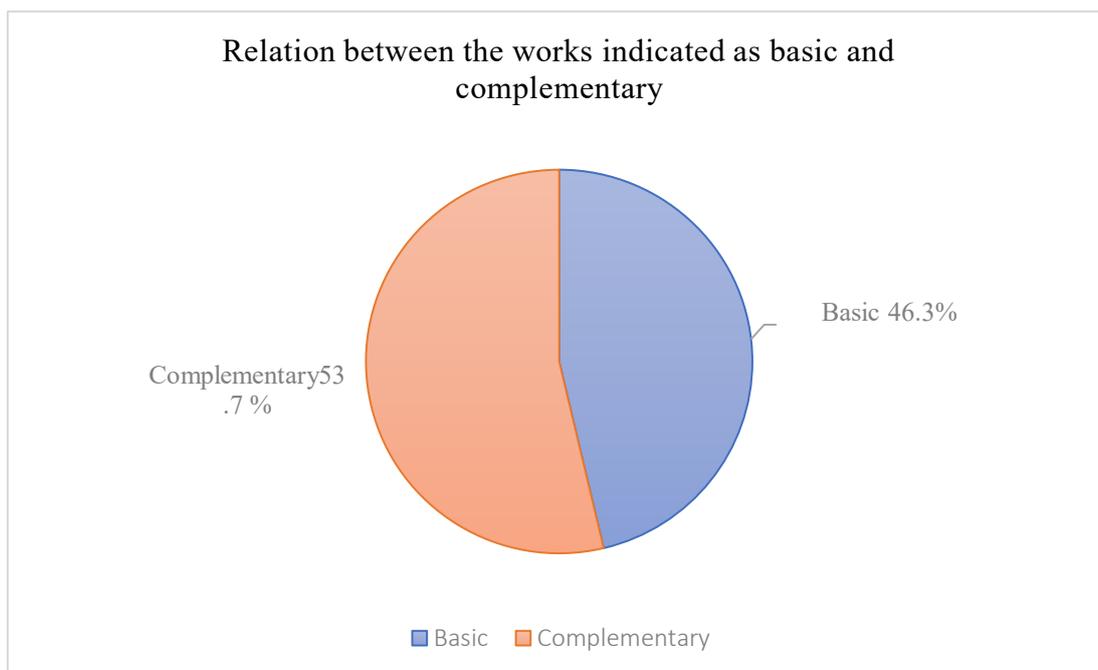


Figure 2

Graphic on the relation between the works indicated as basic and complementary in the in-person and public Pedagogy course of RS

Despite the supremacy of works indicated as complementary, as seen on Figure 2, this difference is not expressive. Besides this, many other works were also related to Freire, however, as they were not written by him, they were not counted. Summing up, we have found out that Paulo Freire is strongly recommended, from which we can conclude that his ideas are broadly studied in the Pedagogy degrees of RS.

Gatti (2010) analyzed the curriculum structure of the Pedagogy courses and classified the subjects into the following categories: i) theoretical fundamentals of education; ii) knowledge related to educational systems; iii) knowledge related to specific professional education; iv) knowledge related to educational modalities and levels. Considering such an analysis, this study focused on items iii and iv to observe which topics ground the subjects which have Freirean works as a reference.

In the research led by (Gatti, 2010), she subdivided, for example, item iii – knowledge related to specific professional education- was divided into: a) curriculum contents of K-12 education (childhood and elementary); b) specific didactics, methodologies, and teaching practices; c) technologies. Item iv- knowledge related to educational modalities and levels- was divided into: a) Special Education; b) Youth and Adult Education (YAE); c) Childhood Education; d) Non-formal spaces. This study analyzed, on item iii, only the curriculum content of K-12 education (childhood and elementary) and on item iv we analyzed the occurrence of all subdivisions, that is, Special Education; Youth and Adult Education; Childhood Education; and Non-formal spaces.

We have identified that from the 92 different subjects that encompassed Freirean references, only 6 were related to the specific knowledge of the areas (Portuguese, Physical Education, Sciences, etc.). While the subjects on educational modalities were considered in 43. The rest, i.e., the 43 other subjects comprehended the other categories, grounding aspects on the theoretical fundamentals of education, knowledge related to educational system and some, even, on internships/school placement, and Undergraduate thesis. As mentioned, we will only analyze part of the items iii and iv, the others will not be studied in this research, considering the need to deepen the knowledge to classify the subjects according to the respective categories.

To better show the results obtained in the analysis, Figure 3 defines the percentage of the subjects, dealing with subject areas, which Gatti (2010) called “curriculum contents of K-12 education (Childhood Education and early years of elementary school)”.

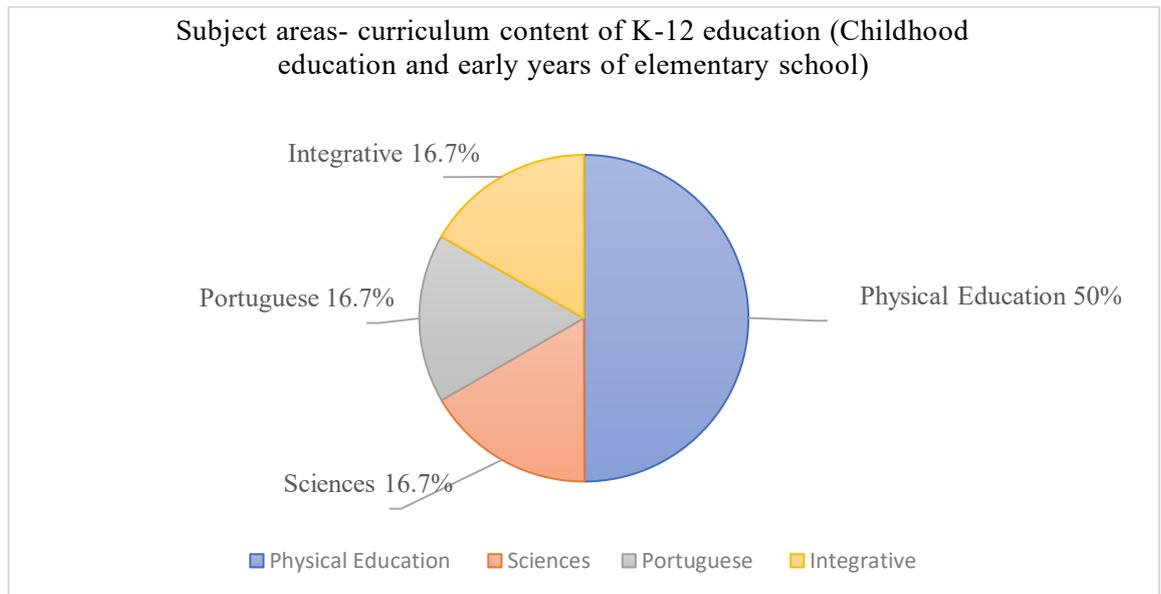


Figure 3

Graphic with the subjects that deal with the curriculum content of K-12 education (subject areas)

The graphic indicates that within the analyzed subjects, a small number (6 in total) encompass K-12 curriculum content— from the category knowledge related to specific professional education (Gatti, 2010). The subject that mostly indicated Freire’s work is Physical Education (50%). There were also indications of Freirean works in the subjects of Sciences, Portuguese, and those called “integrative”, which involved more than one subject at once.

Gatti (2010) identified 28.9% of subjects in the analyzed courses that belonged to category iii (knowledge related to specific professional education). However, in the sub-item of the category – K-12 curriculum content (childhood and elementary) – the percentage was only 7.5% of the subjects. Thus, we can see that Freire was not strongly present in the subjects referring to subject areas. At any rate, Freirean presence in these subjects is relevant because it favors educators’ use of practices based on such a reference.

Libâneo (2010), when making the same observations, points out a flaw in the curriculum structure of Pedagogy degrees, regarding the specific professional education, considering that, according to studies, less than a third of the study load targeted this category. Another criticism raised by the author is that the syllabuses of these subjects do not show an articulation with the

fundamentals, the contents, and the teaching methodologies. It is important to point out that Libâneo (2010) does not defend the predominance of these subjects opposing to the theoretical fundamentals of education, for example, but that professionals should be theoretically and methodologically prepared to answer the demands of real educational contents, which permeates the different categories and their better distribution.

On Figure 4, we analyze the subjects, delimiting which modalities are contemplated by them.

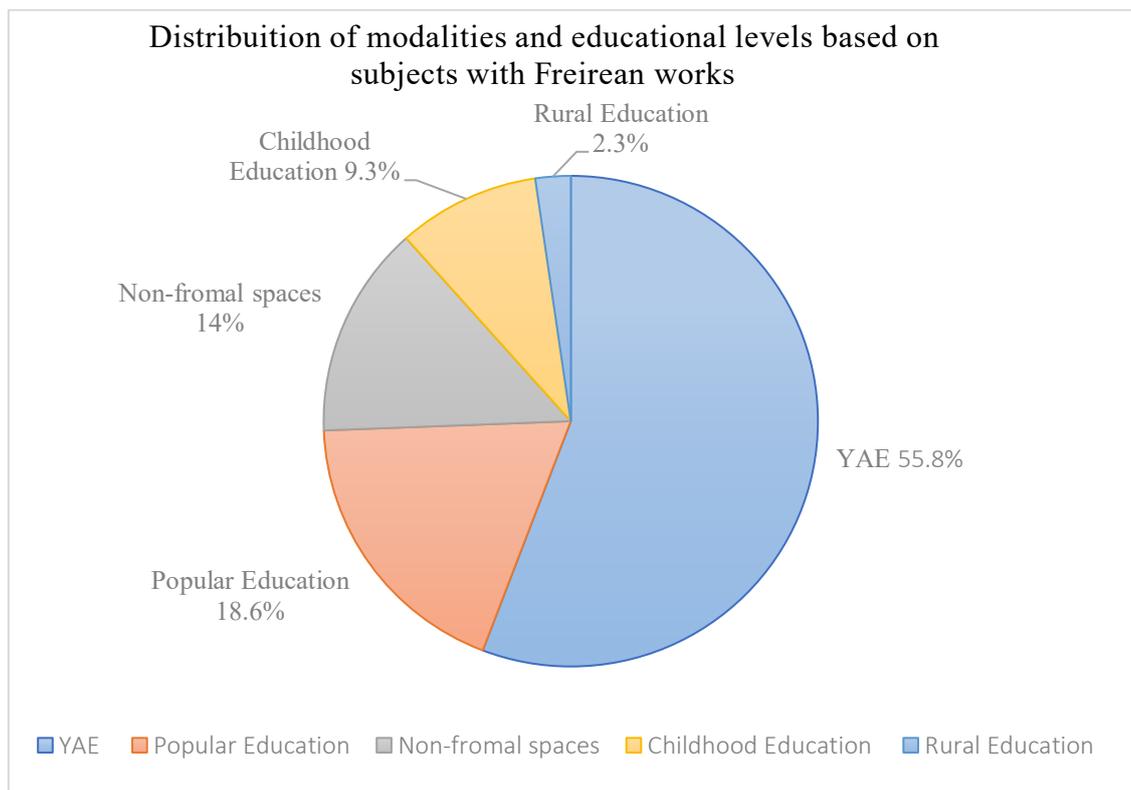


Figure 4

Graphic on the relation of the modalities addressed by the subjects with Freirean works

Out of the 92 subjects that recommended Freirean works, 43 were related to the modalities and/or educational levels, that is, almost half the subjects. Thus, this result indicates that, in the Pedagogy degrees, there is a significant predominance of this category of subjects. The present hypothesis is even more evident, and maybe better grounded, when compared to Gatti's (2010) study which, when analyzing 71 Pedagogy degrees, found that only 11.2% of the

subjects approached educational modalities and levels. This means that subjects focused on the different educational modalities and levels were not the majority in the courses. However, in this analysis, the recommendations of Freirean works are mainly present in this category, portraying the important role played by the author to ground these modalities and levels.

The graphic of Figure 4 indicates that, out of 43 subjects, those on YAE (55.8%) prevail, that is, more than half of the subjects classified in this category refer to this modality. The second most frequent modality was Popular Education with an 18.6% percentage, followed by non-formal spaces with 14%. The subjects classified in this category that recommended Freirean works the least in their syllabuses were Childhood Education (9.3%) and Rural Education (2.3%).

The predominance of subjects on YAE and Popular Education was expected, considering that, in the Brazilian scenario, these modalities got stronger thanks to the social movements led by Paulo Freire. These modalities are close because referring to YAE is, mainly, referring to Popular Education, which prioritizes non-schooled young people and adults or that, for some reason, have dropped out of school.

The unity and commitment with the literacy of underprivileged groups are materialized in these movements of Popular Education. The proposals are grounded on Freirean ideals and mainly aimed to serve as an instrument of emancipation and freedom of marginalized, excluded, subjects, whose human dignity was denied (Freitas, 2007). Literacy practices also aim to denounce the “reproductive and classist character of dominant ideology, present in the official educational guidelines and that sought the continuity of the conditions of exploitation and peaceful submission of popular sectors to this *status quo*” (p. 50).

For all this, we can perceive that, when referring to Popular Education and YAE, Paulo Freire is one of the most important names, considering his countless contributions to these modalities throughout history, to “kick start” it, as well as to give the necessary visibility to these groups. Not by chance, the Pedagogy degrees analyzed were theoretically based on the author, considering the importance of his references to these discussions.

Another question that can be seen on Figure 4 refers to the fact that Childhood Education has one of the lowest percentages (when compared to the other modality). Though the focus of Freire’s discussions was Popular Education, the educator has certainly triggered a movement of reflection in different learning spaces-times, such as in Childhood Education. To

Saul and Silva (2011), Freire is present in Childhood Education, through the articulation of its fundamental matrix– dialogue – as a guiding element of young children’s educational practices. In the scope of this discussion, Angelo (2006) also indicates the importance of dialogue in the educational processes, based on Paulo Freire’s contributions.

In sync with the discussions on Childhood Education, Angelo (2006) researched, in Freirean works, the frequency and the moments in which children, childhood, and Childhood Education are referenced. This study helps us to understand the relationship of Paulo Freire with children, be it in formal education or those which crossed their pathways. The author identified two crucial moments in the works– true meetings with realities– which influenced the consolidation of what later became known as Popular Education. The first of them, reported by Freire, refers to his memories as a teenager, with other boys, workers’ sons, who lived on the banks of the rivers and the slums. Another important moment was when Freire managed the education sector of SESI¹⁰, working as a coordinator of children educators. Besides this, Freire could experience possibilities, practices, and methodologies. To Angelo (2006), these moments of Paulo Freire’s life were encounters with the childhood universe that influenced his trajectory, preparing himself to be the great educator he was.

Therefore, regardless of the age range, school level, if they are “kids, young, or adults” (Freire, M., 2002), education should act as a permanent process of seeking to be more. Freire’s perspective on education has contributed to think of it as a problematizing act in a perspective of freeing education (Angelo, 2006). Considering this, there must be a work that reaches all levels and types of education, including young children, anchored on Freirean assumptions.

Final remarks

As a general remark on the findings, we highlight the diversity of Freirean works indicated by the subjects, many of them unknown by most people. However, though diverse, there is an expressive prevalence of the works *Pedagogia da autonomia* and *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

Besides this, we have seen that Freirean works have been recommended, mainly, in subjects that approached areas in which Paulo Freire focused his perspective. The root of

¹⁰ T.N.: SESI (*Serviço Social da Indústria, SESI* in Portuguese or Industry Social Service, in English) is a private not-for-profit Brazilian institution that offers educational and cultural activities for industry workers and their families.

Freirean thought is supported in the idea that education should critically read reality. Freire defended an education for the praxis, in which processes of action-reflection-action constantly and mutually take place, as constitutive elements of dialogue by educators. Therefore, it is important that educators' education focus on the articulation between the theoretical and practical knowledge of the concrete reality where teachers work.

This way, educators' professional education for the early years of K-12 needs curriculum changes to guarantee a density of theoretical and methodological knowledge indispensable to teach children, including the specific knowledge of the subjects they will teach. Thus the relevance of Freire's references in the different subjects of Pedagogy to ground teachers' processes of education, in their theoretical and practical aspects.

This study did not intend to measure the reach or the impact of the incorporation of Freirean assumptions in the Pedagogy courses, but to check the recommendation of Freirean works as a theoretical reference in their subjects. We concluded that Freirean references are strongly present in the curricular structure of the courses. However, it would be interesting to investigate if such works are, in fact, approached and debated and how they can contribute to the teaching-learning processes of children in the early years of Elementary education. Thus, our perspective of analysis aimed, mostly, to present a panorama that can contribute to new reflections.

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Submission data:

Submitted for evaluation September 25, 2020; revised January 23, 2021; accepted for publication on May 8, 2021

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