Virtualization in Higher Education: reflections on public policies and Blended Learning[1]

A virtualização do Ensino Superior: reflexões sobre políticas públicas e Educação Híbrida

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ABSTRACT

We live in an increasingly connected society, in which life seems to reveal itself through a mere click. Given this reality, we are inserted in a cyberculture, which is established through a digital culture and the virtualization of human relations. This new way of understanding society leads us to think about education and how public education policies are being constructed and applied as well, in relation to the Distance Education for Higher Education modality. Therefore, through legal documents from Brazilian education, we carry out a critical analysis involvingcyberculture, virtualization, cyberspace, public policies for Distance Education (DE) and blended learning. This aimed to understand how this virtualized society could ensure the insertion of digital technologies in daily life through the actions of the State, being propagated by innovative pedagogical methods and practices, such as the use of blended learning. In this work, we have found out that the use of this type of methodology is already being implemented in some higher education institutions, especially in private Higher Education

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Institution, which, through the structural and financial apparatus they have, quickly appropriate educational legislation, inserting a type of teaching and learning in their environment, which could be analyzed both by its innovative character as well as a possible instrument for a greater commodification of national Higher Education.

Keywords: Cyberculture and virtualization. Distance education. Cyberspace. Public Policies. Blended learning.

RESUMO

Vivemos em uma sociedade cada vez mais conectada, na qual a vida parece se revelar apenas por meio de um click. Diante dessa realidade, estamos inseridos em uma cibercultura, que se estabelece por meio de uma cultura digital e da virtualização das relações humanas. Essa nova maneira de compreender a sociedade nos leva a pensar, também, sobre a educação e como as políticas públicas de educação estão sendo construídas e aplicadas em relação à modalidade de Educação a Distância para o Ensino Superior. Diante disso, por meio dos documentos legais da educação brasileira, realizamos uma análise crítica entre cibercultura, virtualização, ciberespaço, políticas públicas de Educação a Distância (EaD) e ensino híbrido. Tal intento, teve o objetivo de entender de que maneira essa sociedade virtualizada pode assegurar, por meio das ações do Estado, a inserção das tecnologias digitais em seu cotidiano, podendo ser propagadas por métodos e prática pedagógicas inovadoras, como é o caso do uso do ensino híbrido. No trabalho, averiguamos, que o uso desse tipo de metodologia já está sendo implementada em algumas Instituições de Ensino Superior (IES), em especial em IES privadas, que mediante ao aparato estrutural e financeiro que possuem, se apropriam rapidamente das legislações educacionais, inserindo em seu ambiente um tipo ensino e de aprendizagem que pode ser refletido tanto pelo seu caráter inovador quanto por um possível instrumento para uma maior mercadorização da Educação Superior nacional.

Palavras-chave: Cibercultura e virtualização. EaD. Ciberespaço. Políticas públicas. Ensino híbrido.

Introduction

The term virtualization, in Higher Education, has been mistakenly associated with the provision of distance courses by public and private Higher Education Institutions in Brazil. It seems to be difficult to conceive the possibility

of using Digital Technologies in classroom courses, as there is still a very present dichotomy among the teaching modalities recommended by the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education – LDBNE (*Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional*, in Portuguese) – Law No. 9.394/96 (BRASIL, 1996).

We live in an increasingly connected society, in which life seems to reveal itself only through a click. Given this reality, we are part of a cyberculture, which is established through a digital culture and the virtualization of human relations. This new way of understanding society leads us to think about education and how public education policies are being constructed and applied in relation to the Distance Education for Higher Education modality.

Therefore, through legal documents from Brazilian education, we carry out a critical analysis between cyberculture, virtualization, cyberspace, public policies of Distance Education (DE) and blended learning. This attempt aimed to understand how this virtualized society can ensure, through the actions of the State, the insertion of digital technologies in daily life, being able to be propagated by innovative pedagogical methods and practices, such as the use of blended learning.

With this, the main purpose of the present study is to promote a reflection around the virtualization of society, considering the effects are also revealed in significant changes in education and which demand thinking and rethinking of/in the insertion of resources, tools and instruments, starting from digital technologies that enable teaching and learning in innovative ways.

To achieve the proposed objectives, we present, initially, a theoretical discussion about the concepts of virtualization that permeate the approach of other terms commonly used in the Brazilian scenario, such as cyberculture, coined by Pierre Lèvy and other authors, which will be discussed in this text.

Following this subject, we reflected on the public policies of Distance Education, decrees and ordinances implemented in the last years, which allowed face-to-face courses to offer up to 40% of their entire workload for the use of digital technologies, innovative pedagogical methods through networks, social media, active methodologies, flipped classroom and so many other resources to be explored with the use of Digital Information and Communication Technologies (DICT).

Finally, we debate the relevance of blended learning for an education increasingly connected to the reality of digital culture, pointing out that the use of this type of pedagogical resource must follow the proposed legislation for distance education and not serve as an instrument for the commodification of Higher Education in Brazil.

Cyberculture or digital culture: virtualization of higher education

The Internet originated from the exchange of encrypted information between four computers in the Cold War period. However, in the first decades of the 21st century, the World Wide Web reached unimaginable spaces and dimensions, in terms of its original idea. In 2017, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) issued a report indicating that Brazil has approximately 120 million users, ranking fourth in the world ranking of accesses, losing to the United States (242 million), India (333 million) and China (705 million), and these are related to possible effects of globalization in the global context (RELATÓRIO..., 2017).

Such global transformations have repercussions on forms of communication and social relations between people, in spaces and times of interactions and interactivity, through virtual means – the cyberspace – and result in digital culture, characterized by cyberculture, from which the concepts and contextualizations will be willing to follow.

Cyberspace is a space of virtual communicability, in which the forms of interaction between people are changing, constituting new means of connection and interconnection, hyperconnectivity and blending in the uses and appropriations of digital technologies, which results in a virtual culture – that is, cyberculture.

According to Lèvy (2000b), the space of global connectivity between people makes the concept of intelligence technologies spread in techno-digital media, allowing the circulation of messages and representations in various formats, ways and virtual channels, resulting in opening up certain fields of possibilities in digital culture.

In this sense, Lèvy (2000b, p. 187) points out that "[...] designates intellectual technologies as a fundamental political terrain" in collective thinking based on new possibilities, considering it

> as a place and issue of conflicts, of divergent interpretations. Because it is around the collective equipment of perception, thought and communication that the daily life of the city is largely organized and that the subjectivities of groups are organized (LÈVY, 2000b, p. 187).

moving from the idea of autonomous (individual) technoscience to intellectual technology. This technology provides permanent mobility to people and things, being a reabsorption of flexible social space-time with a continuous flow of data conducted over the network.

Thus, the concept of "virtual" becomes an issue to be discussed in the educational context, as it represents not being present, new spaces, new perceptions speeds, and socio-digital reconstructions. Therefore,

> The virtual is not opposed to the real, but to the current one. Contrary to what is possible, static and already constituted, the virtual is like the problematic complex, the knot of trends or forces that accompanies a situation, an event, an objective or any entity, and which is called a resolution process: the present (LÈVY, 2001, p. 16).

Virtualization is dynamic, therefore, considered as "transition from the current to the virtual, in an elevation to the power of the considered entity" (LÈVY, 2001, p. 17). It is not a de-realization (the transformation of a reality into a set of possible ones), but a mutation of identity, a displacement of the ontological center of gravity from the considered objective: instead of being defined mainly by timelinesness (a solution), the entity starts to find its essential consciousness in a problematic field. Virtualizing any higher education entity consists of discovering a general question, to which it relates, of mutating the entity towards this question and of redefining the present of departure as an answer to a particular question.

For Lèvy (2000b), cyberspace was the condition for the unification of humanity; each node belongs to the great world web of computers, forming a large brain, of non-territorial space-time in which communication takes place from everyone to everyone, expanding connectivity and hypertextuality in the uses of network resources.

Cyberspace, in Britto's conception (2009, p. 166), leverages social "re-linking" and should not merely copy the traditional media, which "manipulates these impulses and needs", but it should be a path for the regeneration of public discussions spaces, of being together virtually, helping to build social bonds and strengthening human relationships in today's society.

In view of this, Britto (2009) explains that cyberspace does not aim to impose a single rhythm and connection time, as in traditional media, but to enhance "diversity and temporal plurality, despite having in itself the potential and to operate essentially for the instantaneous" (BRITO, 2009, p. 183).

Therefore, cyberspace projects human consciousness at a higher level, allowing connectivity on the world network, and such communication is constituted by the transmission and reception of culture, going through convergences, interactions and media spatialities of aspects related to sociability.

According to Lèvy (1999), cyberculture is a reconfiguration of the current culture on the planet that occurs through the interaction permeated by cyberspace, which consists of changes and alterations of culture from the internet, in a movement to generalize specific drivers for the configuration of the whole – in other words, social renewal. Therefore, "The universal of cyberculture has neither a center nor a guideline. It is emptiness, without particular content" (LÈVY, 1999, p. 111), and this universality without totality seems to be the paradoxical essence of cyberculture.

According to Britto (2009, p. 183), cyberculture "is, first of all, a space for expression of this reality, of these contradictions and tensions in which we are submerged [...]. Moreover, time is seen in a "plural way, which allows from the online operation, which moves trillions of dollars in the global financial market, to the philosophical and quiet chat among friends" (BRITTO, 2009, p. 183).

Cyberculture has three principles: Interconnection, virtual communities and collective intelligence (LÈVY, 1999). Interconnection refers specifically to the connection, being a good in itself, changing the notions of channels and network. The proposed virtual communities are a social renewal, enhancing the connections between people, regardless of their location or any other human characteristic. The interaction occurs from the man with the machine, in a hybrid way, connecting the human being with the computer, creating a collective symbiosis, to what Lèvy defends as Collective Intelligence (CI). In addition to this being the distribution "everywhere, incessantly valued, coordinated in real time, which results in a mobilization of competences" (LÈVY, 2000a, p. 28), CI starts with culture, and grows with it, in addition to being carried out by people in the virtual space, making the network have different ways of accessing information, connecting people from all parts of the world, with navigability from everyone to everyone. Thus, cyberspace becomes a mobility space for the interactions between "knowledge and knowledgeable of intelligent, deterritorialized collectives" (LÈVY, 2000a, p. 29).

Cyberculture "would not only be a culture specifically produced in terms of cyberspace, but of a dimension of contemporary culture that finds cyberspace its place of manifestation" (BRITTO, 2009, p. 172). This dialogues with the "concrete and real practices of the groups in their daily lives that we characterize as real everyday, and also with the whole culture circulating in traditional media, which is still an exceptional force, and which we call the media reality" (BRITTO, 2009, p. 172).

Therefore, the use of the internet has led to transformations "in the scope of work, study, leisure and personal relationships, as well as the intensification" of changes that have occurred in traditional media (BRITTO, 2009, p. 172). The term presence has become relativized: before, seen as indispensable to give credit to social processes and, with access to cyberspace, it took on another dimension, such as spatiality and systemic connections, reconstructing the concept differently, as a virtual presence.

Virtualization does not mischaracterize the individual, nor does it neglect human actions, but it destabilizes and makes the subject understand the space in which he/she lives, as well as the characteristics and needs of survival, and the discernment of the role of the virtual, and not "the way of existence from which both truth and lie arise" (LÈVY, 1999, p. 148). Moreover, the human-machine interface "designates the set of programs and material devices that allow communication between a system and its human users" (LÈVY, 2000b, p. 176).

Virtualization, for Lèvy (2001, p. 148), "and the very dynamics of the common world, is that through which we share a reality. Far from circumscribing the realm of lies, the virtual is precisely the way in which both truth and lies arise". However, the

> Digital mediation reshapes certain fundamental cognitive activities that involve language, sensitivity, knowledge and inventive imagination. Writing, reading, listening, playing and musical composition, vision and elaboration of images, conception, expertise, teaching and learning, restructured by new technical devices, are entering new social configurations (LÈVY, 1998, p. 17).

The form of virtual communicability has become, with the spread of the Internet, a way of disseminating information quickly, given the way of disposing of data from virtual environments that provide and promote access for anyone and everyone, in addition to of any and all information.

Lucena (2016, p. 283), reports that, in addition to the digital culture from the 1970s and cyberculture, the culture of mobility is also experienced, characterized by the use of mobile devices, connected in wireless networks. These technologies can be loaded anywhere, creating "mobile networks of people and nomadic technologies located in different geographical areas of the planet", for example: tablets, smartphones, netbooks and other devices that fit in the palm of someone's hand.

The current discussions on the educational context point to the possibilities of knowledge relations based on the uses and appropriations of digital technologies, issues that involve the social aspects that permeate the relationships between people, because, above all, according to Lèvy

> The knowledge space begins to live as long as human relationships are experienced, based on these ethical principles of valuing individuals for their skills, of the effective transmutation of differences in collective wealth, of integration into a dynamic social process of knowledge exchange, which each one is recognized as a whole person, not being blocked in this learning path by programs, prerequisites, a priori classifications or prejudices in relation to noble and ignoble knowledge (LÈVY,2000a, p. 28).

From the new reality permeated by digital technologies, Quintanilha (2017) states that it is important to understand that Higher Education is also being affected by all these social and cultural changes. Therefore, the subjects that are part of it, in the great majority, already come from a generation that has an extension of their own body in the connection. For this reason, teachers needed to adapt the content to innovative pedagogical strategies and resources that allow students access to knowledge in different ways, resulting in an increasingly significant teaching-learning process for those who are immersed in this new digital culture.

The understanding that we live in a connected reality reveals that the insertion of ICT in the classroom tends to further enhance the production of knowledge, which can be developed in a collective and collaborative way, through networks that enable communication, interaction and more varied types of relationships in multiple virtual environments surrounded by internet access (LUCENA, 2016).

Thus, we must always be attentive to producing knowledge in these **new times** with a look turned to the understanding that cyberculture and digital culture present us with a reality in which we are responsible, as educators, for rethinking innovations in the field of education and the need to look at the State as a guide for public education policies that can accompany all social and cultural changes.

In this sense, and from the discussions presented so far, we understand that cyberculture has the outline of contemporary social configurations, generated from access to cyberspace. Such issues are enhanced by the process of virtualization of knowledge, originating from the current social context, and

reflect in a complex way in the educational processes in Higher Education, which is immersed in contradictions that need to be accompanied by public education policies, acting on the cultural and educational scenario that we experience today.

Legal and political aspects for the provision of distance courses in in-person classroom

The growth of Distance Education in Brazil is notorious. According to data from the DE Census (2017), enrollments for distance learning courses reached 1,073,497 students (ASSOCIAÇÃO..., 2018). This is a reality that affects, substantially, private higher education institutions, which often end up absorbing, in a more practical and quick way, the decisions and modifications of public education policies aimed at this modality.

According to Azevedo (2003, p. 38), "public policy is everything that a government does and fails to do, with all the impacts of its actions and omissions". In other words, it implies government actions designed and implemented through the common good that can benefit everyone in need, a collective interest expressed by civil society. Redistributive, distributive and regulatory, they are responsible for organizing, offering, financing and executing governmental activities and projects based on their direct relationship with the people.

In the case of Distance Education Public Policies – DEPP (*Políticas Públicas de Educação a Distância*, in Portuguese)[2] – they are the result, first, of public education policies that tend to regulate and guide education systems. In addition, they regulate, in a specific way, actions in the distance modality, recognizing the need to understand the uses of digital technologies, their adoption in the creation of courses that implies the normative decisions for the accreditation and re-accreditation of Higher Education institutions (PIMENTEL, 2018).

The fact is that DEPP depend on continuous and long-term action by the government, which takes into account three fundamental aspects for its permanence: pedagogical planning / implementation, execution, and evaluation of courses. This must occur from a government action that implies "[...] pedagogical, financial and technological support that guarantees education for all" (PIMENTEL, 2016, p. 134).

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2 Acronym presented by the author Nara Pimentel, in the entry on Public Policies of Distance Education, from the Critical Dictionary of Education and Technologies and Distance Education (2018).

Article no. 80 of LDBNE, which imputed to the public authorities the incentive and development, regulates public distance education policies in Brazil and placement of Distance Education programs for all levels of teaching modality, including continued education. Still, in this article, it was defined that distance education: §1) would be offered by educational institutions linked to the union; §2) would have regulation of exams and diploma records of courses inserted in the distance modality; §3) instituted responsibility for the education systems on the standards for production, control and evaluation, as well as authorization for their implementation, and, finally, §4) would receive a different look at what is up to the commercial channels for the dissemination and promotion of information regarding the modality (BRASIL, 1996).

When reflecting on the PPDE, we try to pay attention, at this moment, to some important decrees and ordinance for the exponential growth of Distance Education in recent years, especially regarding the dichotomy between classroom and distance education in university courses. The proposed cut does not diminish the value of the other regulatory frameworks, but it helps us understand how, currently, digital technologies are being implemented in the daily life of higher education institutions in the country, relying on didactic-pedagogical resources such as blended learning.

LDBNE's Article no. 80 became regulated with the publication of Decree nº 2,494 / 98, which defines in its Art. 1 that Distance Education can be understood as a form of teaching that provides self-learning through systematically organized didactic resources, present in various information media that could, or not, make use of different means of communication (BRASIL, 1998).

The document had 13 articles, which initially defined the procedures for the development of Distance Education in Brazil. It was revoked in 2005, by decree nº 5.622 / 05, which determined, in Art. 1, that Distance Education should be understood as an educational modality permeated by information and communication technologies, which should be used as didactic-pedagogical resources by teachers and students, enabling the development of educational activities in the most diverse time-spaces. This decree also determined all the actions that should be implemented or carried out so that DE was, in fact, a modality present throughout the national territory (BRASIL, 2005).

In 2017, the decree was revoked, being completely rewritten and replaced by Decree No. 9,057, with new directions for distance education in Brazil, very similar to the specifics of the previous article. The new wording for this new document inserted some requirements, such as the concern with qualified staff, access policies, monitoring, and evaluations necessary for the development of the sport. Another change occurred in the specificity attributed to academic centers, which are now understood only as decentralized spaces for action and no longer

an academic unit (BRASIL, 2017). It is also noteworthy the support for the implementation of the modality in both elementary and secondary education, as already provided for by LDBNE / 96. However, under new contours, especially before Michel Temer's government and the education policy implemented by the then Minister of Education, José Mendonça Filho.

It is important to highlight the context in which this policy was being developed, as it signals the governmental proposals inserted there. Michel Temer's government came to power after a coup, as stated by Braz (2017). The author points out that the *impeachment* of President Dilma Rousself occurred because she failed to meet the demands of the existing capital, being overthrown by a parliamentary-judicial farce described as "*pedalada fiscal*", which means a crime for tax rides.

Mainardes (2006) describes that understanding an educational policy from the perspective of the policy cycle, by sociologists Ball and Bowe (1992), tends to differentiate how we can analyze the determinations by decrees, ordinances, laws sanctioned in certain governments. For these researchers, in their first stage of investigating educational policies, it is very important to understand three contexts in which they are inserted: influence, text production, and practice. In the case presented here, we will stick to the context of the production of the text and a first reflection.

The fact is that the procedures on education during Temer's government greatly benefited the expansion of distance education, in particular, the growth of private centers, which multiplied after decree no. 9.057 / 17. According to Ministry of Education and Science data, in 2018, it was estimated that there were 15,394 hubs, between public and private ones throughout Brazil, an increase of 133% after the enactment of the decree (MARQUES, 2018).

Another important document for the expansion of Distance Education, in the same period, was Ordinance No. 1,428 of 2018, which emphasized the insertion of disciplines in the distance modality in colleges and university centers across the country. Art. 2 determined that educational institutions, which had at least one undergraduate course recognized by Ministry of Education and Science, could offer up to 20% of the total load of subjects in the distance education modality, in the curricular matrix of their courses,

In this determination, Art. 3 also stands out, stressing that this limit could be increased by up to 40%, provided that the Higher Education Institution follows the following recommendations: be accredited both in person and in distance; have at least one undergraduate course with score 4 and the Higher Education Institution needs to be up to date with all documentation required by Ministry of Education and Science (BRASIL, 2018).

The ordinance determines the place of information and communication technologies in what concerns the realization of their use as a didactic-pedagogical resource. In Article 7 it was defined that teaching-learning methods and practices should be included through Information and Communication Technologies - ICT, with the pedagogical purpose, appropriate and specific didactic material, qualified professors for the activities, which should be included in the course load (BRASIL, 2018).

The aforementioned ordinance was revoked in 2019. In its place, decree No. 2,117 was established, determined by Minister Abraham Weintraub, responsible for the education portfolio in the government of President Jair Messias Bolsonaro. The proposed new ordinance further accentuated the possibility that the total workload of classroom courses could be offered with disciplines in the distance modality reaching 40%. In its Art. 2, it defined that the HEI could offer the workload in the distance education model up to this percentage, which should be well specified in the pedagogical project of the course – PPC. Also, it should be explained, mentioned in the curricular matrix, what will be the percentage of the course offered in distance education, as well as which methodologies would be used in each course, and should be presented, both in the authorization process, as in the recognition or renewal of the course in the institutions (BRASIL, 2019). It is also worth mentioning that any change promoted in the courses should undergo an on-site assessment by the Ministry of Education and Science, being subject to approval.

With regard to the use of ICT, they are again presented, in Art. 4 of the document, as indispensable for the inclusion of subjects in distance education in HEIs. This means that, in addition to being included in the courses' PPC, it was necessary that the pedagogical objectives, didactic material and qualified mediation by education professionals were described and carried out in a coherent way for the implementation of the disciplines in this modality.

In view of this scenario, many private higher education institutions began to modify the subjects of their courses, dividing them into face-to-face and distance education; one of the proposals adopted is the so-called blended learning, in which several resources are used for the student's training.

Scenario of disputes between two teaching modalities: blending teaching

According to Moran (2015, p. 27) the concept of blended "means mixed, togetherness, blended. [...] we can teach and learn in countless ways, at all times, in multiple spaces". This means that we can teach and learn all the time with different tools and social contacts, the use of media and networks that permeate a digital culture has revealed to us the need for an increasingly open, flexible education that allows students to produce their own way to know.

In his work, "*Pedagogy of Autonomy: knowledge necessary for educational practice*", Freire (2017, p. 47) explains that "[...] teaching is not transferring knowledge, but creating possibilities for your own production or construction". In this sense, the use of blended learning helps us think about the Distance Education modality as a possibility of the increasing circulation of knowledge, either in person or through digital technologies. A mix of search, knowledge, deconstructions and constructions combined with several areas of knowledge, which implies a greater circulation of information that needs to be properly understood by teachers and students as a way of association between personal culture and society.

Moran (2015) points out that educational institutions may adopt a milder or more radical way for the insertion of the so-called active methodologies, those that choose a milder addition will maintain the disciplinary curriculum and prioritize the teaching of the student in integrative projects, of a multidisciplinary character, the use of flipped classrooms and hybrid or blended teaching. The Higher Education Institution that innovate in their curricula will dismiss the subjects and adopt methods that will privilege what each student can learn at their own pace through activities, challenges, projects, which encourage thinking both individually and in groups through exchanges of information and knowledge with teachers.

The most innovative blended learning project emphasizes three important aspects for students' teaching and learning. It is represented, respectively, in the life project of each one, recognized and determined together with the help of a mentor; in valuing and developing skills through new knowledge and understanding of socio-emotional issues; and, finally, in the harmony between personal and group learning: "Our biggest challenge is to learn to transform ourselves into increasingly human people, sensitive, affective and fulfilled, living simply, walking against many materialistic views, selfish and dazzled by appearances"(MORAN, 2015, p. 30).

Opting for a radical blended learning is a way of modifying the form of education that we have today, recognizing that there are multiple paths for learning. However, these changes cannot be made without knowledge and reflection on public education policies. In this case, those regarding Distance Education, as we can see today, that many higher education institutions have used decrees and ordinances to make the insertion of blended learning. Nevertheless, are they producing, in fact, a mixed / blend education, or just appropriating these laws for a greater commodification of Higher Education?

Therefore, thinking about the commodification of Brazilian Higher Education, mainly, the increasing expansion of private Higher Education Institution in the country with the character of distance education or hybrid education allows us to reflect on public policies on Distance Education, and how they have enabled this increase. The idea of commodification can be understood:

> [...] as a way of liberalizing the supply of education that can occur in several ways: expansion of private-mercantile higher education, direct privatization, State's lack of responsibility, creation of a quasi-market, establishment of Public-Private Partnerships (PPP), stimulating competition, performance, rankings, indicators, etc. (AZEVEDO, 2015, p. 87).

In this sense, the Brazilian Association of Higher Education Maintainers (BAHEM, *Associação Brasileira de Mantenedores de Ensino Superior*, *AMBES*, in Portuguese), published an article in 2018, emphasizing the importance of understanding the use that Higher Education Institution were making of Ordinance No. 1428/17, by propagating, in a market way, the existence of "blended learning" (FAGUNDES, 2019). BAHEM makes a very punctual criticism, pointing out that the use of this typology can cause a wrong induction in the search and enrollment for higher education courses. It is a form of marketing that aims to show the market an innovative and modern offer for education. However, many times, it does not follow what is required by law. It also reaffirms that there are only two regular modalities of existing Higher Education, in-person and distance, so the offering of "blended learning" is illegal. For this reason, it is not the form of blended education that is wrong, but the lack of respect for its insertion through what Brazilian educational legislation has determined in recent years (FAGUNDES, 2019).

When reflecting on Ordinance No. 2117/19, it is possible to realize that, although the 40% proposal allows a greater incision of digital technological resources in the way of rethinking the teaching and learning process in on-site

courses at Brazilian Higher Education institutions, Riveira (2019) draws our attention to the negative sides of it, pointing out that the measure can be seen as a determinant for the increase in the offer of subjects and courses in distance education in educational institutions, especially in private ones. This would not only lead to a greater emptying of in-person courses, but also a greater market propagation of the modality, covered with an innovative idea of education that may not meet the demands applied to hybrid education.

The author also emphasizes the growth of hubs and distance education courses, and points to a decrease in teaching staff, since now the face-to-face classes would only be on three days a week and the blended learning in two days. The ordinance still affects the reality of some courses / areas not previously covered, such as Law, Dentistry and Psychology, which now have in their workloads the possibility of classes of up to 40% at a distance, except only for the Medicine course.

The fact is that, in face of a society increasingly involved with digital technologies, thinking about education, in this case higher education and distance learning, is an exercise to be done daily by professionals in the educational field, as this implies the way they should act through these new dynamics.

Today, distance education is a reality and very widespread, in particular, by private HEI that have faster and financial means to adapt to new resource proposals for the teaching and learning process, in order to provide the digital subject with a greater autonomy for the acquisition of knowledge. In this sense, the blended learning proposal stands out for the significant incentive to search for knowledge through different tools, which we can find in just one click. However, it is healthy to emphasize that the inappropriate and marketing use of the proposal makes the teaching and learning process become incoherent and uncritical, in addition to the fact that information alone does not establish the construction of knowledge, only the passing of data without due reflection.

Considering cyberculture, it is also up to education to modify the ways of thinking and access to knowledge, however, without losing its meaning and relevance to academics and teachers. Therefore, the use of digital technologies permeates a new view on education, physical and temporal spaces, and from the moment that we are able to understand that there are infinite ways to learn, we become critical. This criticism is in relation to the insertion of virtuality in our day-to-day, interpreting it through the actions of the State, when reflecting on the DEPP that value the modality as an alternative of learning and not only as an answer to the needs of an educational market.

Therefore, based on the aforementioned reflections, we sought to promote a critical analysis between cyberculture and virtualization in Higher Education, cyberspace, public policies on DE and blended learning. Given the proportions in

the uses and appropriations of knowledge become important for the construction of knowledge, recognizing the need for usability of virtualization in a qualitative approach, and not commercialized for only the view on profit and trivializing the teaching and learning process.

Conclusion

As we reflect on today's society, we are increasingly faced with a digital culture that promotes a different way of understanding the world, the notion of time and space. Therefore, life seems to be made up of quick accesses, diverse connections and multiple possibilities of knowledge. From this cyberculture emerges a social subject, that interacts in a virtualized way with reality, this does not mean that this person is alone or individualized, as opposed to the idea of virtual is their reality, which they feel, experience and move around the world. The meaning now is not to be fixed, linear, stopped, but to be mobile, changeable, and fluid.

Thus, everything is changing in society and it could not be different in relation to education. Therefore, it is pertinent to understand that the virtualization process can also be used as a pedagogical contribution to an emancipatory, autonomous, critical, collaborative, and cooperative, non-massive and corporatist education that is revealed through different methodologies and practices that are now anchored in the use of digital technologies. Cyberspace becomes a place where the exchange of information, the dissemination of data takes place in an agile and flexible way.

When it comes to education, especially for Higher Education, understanding the insertion of students and teachers in this digital culture is necessary, as it helps us comprehend how the public education policies created by the Brazilian State are in line with the new way that social subjects face the world and its knowledge process. For this reason, the analysis of the legal documents of the so-called DEPP in particular, the reflection on Ordinance No. 1428/17, allowed us to think about how many higher education institutions, especially private ones, have been used in this resolution to expand the supply of technological resources such as innovative pedagogical methods and practices, as is the case with hybrid education.

The fact is that the use of blended learning means that, on the one hand, there is a flexibility in the processes of construction of knowledge, promoting the virtualization of Higher Education in order to contribute to the transformations

of thought, corroborating the connection seen in society current qualitatively. On the other hand, if this virtualization and the hybridization of education is used in a commercialized way, teaching becomes economically evident, not aiming at the emancipation of people, but at the profit of Higher Education institutions in which this is the [main] objective.

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