

Possibilities of human emancipation: Teacher training courses in the department of human sciences at UFF



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ABSTRACT

This article aims to reflect on the original curricula of the pedagogy and field education courses of the Department of Human Sciences of the Fluminense Federal University, regarding the possibilities of

social transformation and human emancipation that training can provide. Based on categories such as Critical multiculturalism (Mc Laren, 2000) and human formation (Freire, 2005), we seek to understand initial training in teacher training courses (pedagogy and rural education) as an instrument that contributes to the denaturalization of social representations linked to whiteness and the hegemony of scientific knowledge and as an instrument for the transformation of social reality.

Keywords: Teacher education, Curriculum, Licentiates.

1 INTRODUCTION

This article aims to reflect on the curricula of the pedagogy and field education courses of the Department of Human Sciences of the Fluminense Federal University, regarding the possibilities of social transformation and human emancipation that training can provide.

From categories such as Critical Multiculturalism (Mc Laren, 2000) and human formation (Freire, 2005) we seek to understand initial training in teacher training courses (pedagogy and rural education) as an instrument that contributes to the denaturalization of social representations linked to whiteness and the hegemony of scientific knowledge and as an instrument for the transformation of social reality.

For Mc Laren (2000), Critical Multiculturalism and Resistance (Critical Interculturalism) understands class, gender and ethnicity as elements that must be considered in a broader struggle for the rights of oppressed groups, discussing the power relations existing between the various cultural, ethnic and social groups, using the broadest means of cultural diffusion. especially those who are committed to educational functions, especially those with more connection to school institutions.

Thus, the multiculturally oriented curriculum enables a pedagogical practice that seeks to overcome an imperialist model, which imposes a monocultural vision, presented as the only possible one.

In this way, to think about pedagogical practice from the point of view of multiculturalism is to develop a dialectical praxis that allows us to make a relationship between the daily life of students



and the social world, which occurs from an awareness of their social role in the world of culture and work. Thus, the pedagogical political project of the school and the school curriculum would be based on the real world, on the students' life experiences and on cultural and ethnic diversity.

Freire (2005) points out and defends a pedagogy for all who can emancipate themselves through a liberating struggle, which "only makes sense if the oppressed seek the reconstruction of their humanity and carry out the great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed – to liberate themselves and the oppressors" (Freire, 2005, p. 30).

To this end, emancipation in thought from Freire's perspective has a dialectical relationship between politics and education, stating that the educational potential comes from the possible articulation with the real world, tensioned by practice and permeated by the social engagement of the individual. Thus, there is an intrinsic relationship between politics and education, if the objective is to clarify that the tension between these concepts will demonstrate that there is no political practice emptied of educational meaning, just as there is no neutral education.

In addition, continuing a struggle for social transformation, aiming at emancipation, has connections with multiculturalism, clarifying that the right to be different means a democratic society.

Regarding the methodological aspects, we sought to analyze the projects of the courses of the Department of Human Sciences through the technique of document analysis. For May (2004, p.214),

Documents can be interesting for what they leave out, as well as for what they contain. They do not simply reflect, but also construct social reality and versions of events. The search for the "meaning" of the documents continues, but with researchers "suspicious" as well. So, it is not supposed that documents are neutral artifacts that record social reality independently (positivism), or that the analysis must be rooted in the nebulous concept of common sense reasoning.

We analyzed the original PPCs (Course Pedagogical Projects) of the pedagogy and rural education courses as a source of information about the proposal of teacher training to work in the area of human sciences and as an instrument of emancipation and social transformation of the professional trained in the institution.

It is important to highlight that the PPCs were changed in 2018 at the Fluminense Federal University through Resolution CNE/CP No. 2 of 2015 (which defines the National Curriculum Guidelines for initial training at a higher level (undergraduate courses, pedagogical training courses for graduates and second degree courses) and for continuing education) within the scope of the Federal Government and Resolution No. 131 of 2018 (Establishes the Institutional Policy for Initial Training and Continued Instruction of Basic Education Teachers, amends CEP Resolution No. 76 of 16/05/2007 and makes other provisions) and, PROGRAD Service Instruction No. 04/2018, of February 22, 2018 (Establishes the deadline, the documents necessary for the instruction of the administrative processes of Curricular Adjustment of the Undergraduate Degree Courses at UFF, based on the terms of



Resolution No. 02/2015, of the CNE and Resolution No. 616/2017, of CEPEX, and makes other provisions) within the scope of the University.

2 GETTING TO KNOW THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES (PCH):

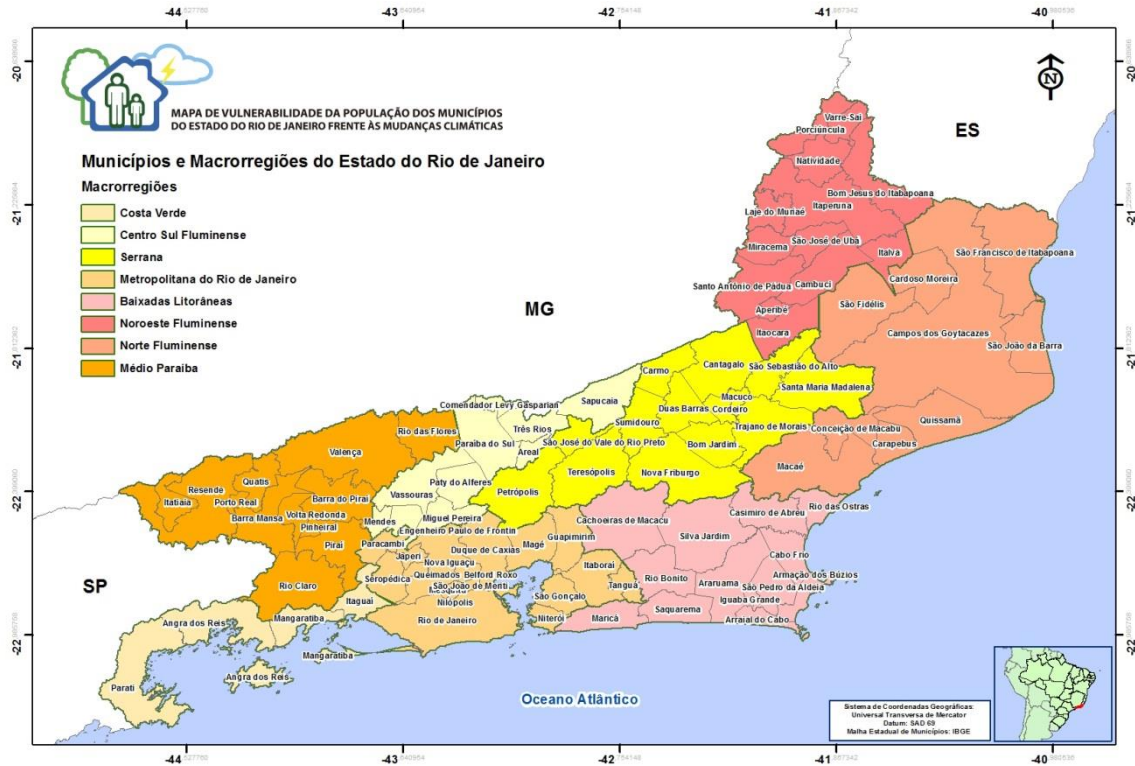
2.1 SOCIOECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE REGION

Santo Antônio de Pádua, where the Northwest Fluminense Institute of Higher Education of UFF is located, is located in the valley of the Pomba River – a tributary of the Paraíba do Sul, in the northwest of the State of Rio de Janeiro, 274 kilometers from the capital. Bordered by the municipalities of Miracema, Itaocara and Cambuci and with Minas Gerais on the western border, Santo Antônio de Pádua extends along the banks of the river, surrounded by small hills.

The Northwest Fluminense Mesoregion of the State of Rio de Janeiro is the one with the lowest GDP (Gross Domestic Product) in the State, accounting for only 1.02% of the total GDP of the State of Rio de Janeiro.¹ The municipalities that make up the Mesoregion are: Aperibé, Bom Jesus do Itabapoana, Cambuci, Itaocara, Itaperuna, Italva, Laje do Muriaé, Miracema, Natividade, Porciúncula, Santo Antônio de Pádua, São José de Ubá and Varre-Sai. These 13 municipalities are subdivided into two micro-regions: Itaperuna Microregion (Itaperuna, Italva, Porciúncula, Varre-Sai, São José de Ubá and Bom Jesus do Itabapoana) and Santo Antônio de Pádua Microregion (Aperibé, Cambuci, Itaocara, Laje do Muriaé, Miracema, Santo Antônio de Pádua). According to Santos and Lima (2016):

The microregion of Santo Antônio de Pádua has a lower GDP (compared to the microregion of Itaperuna), average HDI and higher educational indicators than those of the microregion of Itaperuna, but they are still generally below the state average (p. 101).

¹ Source: Gross Domestic Product of the Municipality of Rio de Janeiro – 2011. Center for Statistical Studies and Research of Rio de Janeiro (CEPERJ). Available at : <http://www.ceperj.rj.gov.br>



Source: http://www.fiocruz.br/ioc/media/mapa_muncs_macrorregioes_6.jpg

Despite an enormous effort to minimize social and educational inequalities and the enormous development experienced in the last two decades with government actions such as the PDE (Education Development Plan) and the PAR (Articulated Action Plan) (BRASIL, 2007a), the northwest region of Rio de Janeiro has indicators analogous to the Jequitinhonha Valley² in the interior of the State of Minas Gerais and the so-called "Drought Polygon"³, which consists of a region of the Brazilian territory integrated by the most arid part of the municipalities of Alagoas, Bahia, Ceará, Minas Gerais, Paraíba, Pernambuco, Piauí, Rio Grande do Norte and Sergipe. Both regions make up "pockets of poverty" that contrast sharply with the municipalities located in states less affected by extreme weather configurations, such as Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Such inequality is undoubtedly reflected in the educational indicators of this region (such as high illiteracy rates and precariousness in learning basic knowledge about the mother tongue and mathematical operations, for example).

Although it does not face climatic problems similar to the Drought Polygon, there is a region in the State of Rio de Janeiro whose educational, demographic, and economic indicators are very close to those observed in that region, it is the part of the State (Mesoregion) called Northwest Fluminense (Santos, Lima, 2016, p. 88).

² To learn more about the Jequitinhonha Valley, see: <https://www2.ufmg.br/polojequitinhonha/O-Vale/Sobre-o-Vale>

³ To learn more about the region, see the document: http://www.mi.gov.br/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=090e3f78-bde3-4a1b-a46c-da4b1a0d78fa&groupId=10157



Given the scenario and the objective conditions, the training of teachers in the northwest of Rio de Janeiro provides a double challenge: a) to ensure the access and permanence of students in the university; b) work with the perspective of overcoming this economic condition, with the acquisition of basic skills and competencies derived from the scientific knowledge of the university.

2.2 THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SCIENCES

The Fluminense Federal University, headquartered in Niterói, is a cultural and geographical mark of the city, as its various *campuses* are intertwined with the geography of the city. According to data obtained, UFF has 94 undergraduate courses (90 face-to-face and 4 distance learning), 76 *stricto sensu* graduate programs, 45 master's and 31 doctorates, 161 *lato sensu graduate courses*, 115 extension courses and five professional master's degrees, spread throughout Niterói and 13 municipalities in the interior of the State of Rio de Janeiro. The university also has an experimental center in Iguaba Grande and a farm-school in Cachoeiras de Macacu. There are 32 teaching units, four centers in the countryside, 27 distance education centers (EAD) and one advanced unit in Oriximiná, in the state of Pará. The University has an institutional grade of 5 (five), the highest possible to be obtained and only achieved by three federal universities.

UFF's adhesion to REUNI⁴ enabled the Northwest Fluminense region to emerge a new academic unit: The Northwest Fluminense Institute of Higher Education (INFES). This expansionist policy made it possible for young Brazilians from the lower classes to go to university, a space traditionally marked by exclusivism and selectivity. Thus, the measure (belonging to a set of actions within the scope of expanding access and quality of education in Brazil) sought to increase the completion rates of face-to-face undergraduate courses in the country, increase human resources and make better use of the physical structures of universities.

As a result of the expansion of an effort to move inland (which began in 1985 with the mathematics course), the unit houses the Department of Human Sciences (PCH) and the Department of Exact, Biological and Earth Sciences (PEB). These departments offer courses for degrees in Pedagogy, Rural Education, Natural Sciences, Mathematics (also in bachelor's degrees), Physics and Computing.

INFES has a strong extensionist brand, particularly in the continuing education of teachers, in inclusive education and in training to work in the field of cultural, ethnic, religious and sexual diversity in different projects and theoretical orientations. Over the years, the public of university extension has been teachers from municipal schools, community leaders and non-formal education agents⁵.

⁴ Program for the Restructuring and Expansion of Brazilian Federal Universities. It was instituted through Decree No. 6,096 of April 24, 2007, as part of the actions of the Education Development Plan.

⁵ To learn more about the Institute and its actions, its Departments, projects, and faculty, go to: <http://www.infes.uff.br>



The Department of Human Sciences has a number of approximately 30 professors, with the most varied areas of training and adherence to research themes. The integrated work of these professors in the courses of pedagogy and education in the field enables the exchange of knowledge and an integration in the area of human sciences that favor a human formation of the student in a broader way. We understand that the social function of education (and higher education) in this context, briefly presented in the previous items, is an instrument of human emancipation, human autonomy and social transformation through the training of qualified teachers for basic education and/or traditional communities that are culturally integrated into the social dynamics of the region. Pedagogical praxis⁶ is an important conceptual instrument in this process, as it allows the professional to break with practices and customs crystallized in society and reproduced as a way of maintaining the established *status quo*.

3 TRAINING TEACHERS FOR DIFFERENT CONTEXTS: PEDAGOGY AND RURAL EDUCATION DEGREES

The degree in Pedagogy began its processing at the University to settle in INFES in 2007, when the university's expansion policy was taking shape and new courses were designed to integrate the new units built mainly in the interior of the state. The latent need of the region for teacher training is an important factor for the unit to be characterized as a center of teaching degrees and radiator of "a training of a broad nature, which guarantees the graduate mastery and understanding of the reality of his time, with critical awareness, being able to act as a transforming agent of the context in which he is inserted" (UFF, 2008, p.04).

The Rural Education course was an initiative that, through a public notice of wide competition from the Federal Universities of the country, had its proposal selected (Ordinance No. 72, of December 21, 2012), added to INFES another degree with a multidisciplinary proposal for teacher training. The PPC of the course seeks to train teachers in human sciences who can work in the early grades of elementary and high school and who can have the "understanding of the work processes in the field and their relationship with each other and with the world in which they are inserted" (UFF, 2012).

The objectives of the courses have a great potential for transformation and emancipation, mainly because it understands that the northwest of Rio de Janeiro lacks quality teachers and the integration with research and studies at the university is a factor that can contribute to the development of the region.

⁶ Paulo Freire deepens the concept of praxis in the pedagogical universe, as the subject's ability to act and reflect, that is, to transform reality according to the purposes outlined by the human being himself. It conceives a pedagogical theory based on praxis, on the dialectic consideration between the experience of the identity conditions of the human being and his disposition to educability. The reflection on the concepts of the human and education in Paulo Freire's thought comprises a fundamental action in the process of understanding his pedagogical-liberating theory (FREIRE, 2010).



In this way, the Pedagogical Project of the Course (PPC) of the pedagogy course understands that training teachers for this context means

To work, in teacher training, with an expanded conception of teaching activity, which includes, in addition to teaching, participation in the organization and management of educational systems and institutions, encompassing: I - planning, execution, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of tasks specific to the Education sector; II - planning, execution, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of non-school educational projects and experiences; III - production and dissemination of scientific and technological knowledge in the educational field, in school and non-school contexts (UFF, 2008)

For the PPC of the Rural Education course, the course has among its objectives:

[...]

- To train teachers for multidisciplinary teaching in rural schools in the major areas of knowledge: Human Sciences, Natural Sciences and Mathematics;
- To train educators to work in Basic Education in rural schools whose pedagogical intervention contributes to the development of social relations in the countryside with a view to the construction of autonomous human beings with sustainable relationships with nature and other human beings.
- Prepare educators for the implementation of public schools of basic education at the secondary level and professional education in peasant communities.
- To train teachers for a pedagogical performance from a multi and interdisciplinary perspective with a view to human formation in its totality; [...] (UFF, 2012, p.10)

It is clear that the proposals for the training of teachers of pedagogy and rural education are based on the expansion of teaching activity to other contexts, as well as the expansion of the educational potential of the region to foster a geographical area that is socially and economically deprived, with the possibility of integrating scientific knowledge into local culture.

According to Freire, the political and scientific formation of the human being is a key element in this process because:

[...] more than a being in the world, the human being has become a Presence in the world, with the world and with others. Presence that, recognizing the other presence as a "not-self," recognizes itself as "itself." A presence that thinks of itself, that speaks of what it does, but also that dreams, that observes, compares, evaluates, values, decides, that breaks. And it is in the realm of decision-making, of evaluation, of freedom, of rupture, of choice, that the need for ethics is established and responsibility is imposed. Ethics becomes inevitable and its possible transgression is a disvalue, never a virtue (1996, p.20)

The objectives of the courses point us to the urgent task of changing the educational and social profile of the region, the need to train young teachers to work in the final grades of elementary school and high school, settling them in the region, promoting the increase of the income level, as well as the integration with small cultural groups in the region and social movements that, as in the words of Paulo Freire they can break with the established reality.

In view of the above, the professional profile of the courses allows us to think about the strong integration with the themes of ethics, diversity, inclusion, ethnic-racial relations, etc.



For the Pedagogy course, among its 16 items, the graduate must:

- [...] VIII - promote and facilitate cooperative relations between the educational institution, the family and the community;
- IX - identify socio-cultural and educational problems with an investigative, integrative and purposeful posture in the face of complex realities, with a view to contributing to the overcoming of social, ethnic, racial, economic, cultural, religious, political and other exclusions;
- X - demonstrate awareness of diversity, respecting differences of an environmental-ecological, ethnic, racial, gender, generational group, social class, religion, special needs, sexual choices, among others; [...] (UFF, 2008, p.6).

The professional profile of the graduate in Rural Education, "the preparation of the teacher will include the understanding and appropriation of educational, cultural and information equipment and technologies that allow an action that integrates the various dimensions of the student's life in the countryside, being able to expand the possibilities of insertion of the high school youth in their community both through work and through the cultural dimension, social and ethical-political" (p. 8). In this way, the intervention aims at both the theoretical and practical dimensions and does not dissociate life from school and work, from a multidisciplinary perspective⁷. Like this

[...] pedagogical work that does not dissociate education in general from training. In this sense, the preparation of the teacher will include the understanding and appropriation of educational, cultural and information equipment and technologies that allow an action that integrates the various dimensions of the student's life in the field, being able to expand the possibilities of insertion of the high school youth in their community both through work and through the cultural dimension. social and ethical-political (UFF, 2012, p.8).

Thus, the courses seek to expand the educational concept, to provide their students with praxis as a possibility to break with the established educational model. Action and reflection of pedagogical practice as a link between human formation and the overcoming of the existing condition.

From a practical point of view, look for elements for reflection in concrete reality. From a theoretical point of view, theory-driven reflection that breaks with the dichotomy between these possibilities and "returns" to reality solutions that promote human emancipation.

To think about human formation without taking into account the historical context is a mistake. It is not an ideal to be pursued, but a process permeated by praxis.

4 FINAL THOUGHTS

After a brief analysis of the PPC of the Pedagogy and Rural Education courses, we can affirm that the integrating element between the proposals is the idea that teacher training has a potential to

⁷According to the PPC of the Rural Education course, multidisciplinary, *that is, the study of an object of the same and unique discipline by several different disciplines and* interdisciplinarity, in turn, is characterized as a strategy of methodological integration, whether for technological, epistemological, or pedagogical purposes, which can generate new fields of knowledge, or innovative procedures to respond to new social needs.



transform the objective reality of people and the region. According to Paulo Freire (2005), it is necessary to transform the educational space into a humanizing ethos, that is, education needs to be an instrument that enhances in the human being the development of critical-reflective thinking and the knowledge of the realities where it is inserted, which makes it develop the function of educating people as leaders for the world and life.

In the same way, the awareness of cultural diversity no longer allows the naturalization of certain attitudes and practices that are considered to be inscribed in some way in human nature. Topics such as Human Rights, Cultural and Religious Diversity, Ethnic-Racial Relations, Gender and Sexuality are part of the content of the courses, appearing as mandatory and optional subjects. Thinking about the educational process with plural bases and respect for diversity promotes the expansion of the concept of education for human emancipation to the students of the courses. In urban and rural contexts of need for economic and social development, these discussions are present and are necessary for the best training of teachers who will work in these realities. For Chabalgoity, the discussion of the intertwining between education and politics presents itself as a viable option in Freire's thought:

In his decolonial, humanist, phenomenological and Marxist tradition, the struggle for dialectical coherence between critical reflection on concrete reality and critical action on reality itself is clear to scholars of his thought. Assuming the political character of education, Freire demonstrates in the ideological field the importance of ontological reflection in the imperative transformation (2015, p.238).

A challenge, then, is to repose the question of what it means to be human in this meeting of times, of the size we grant to the human being. From the challenge of keeping this question in mind in educational practice arises another, that is, to transform each educational space into an ethos that promotes humanization (Streck, 2006)

An education that wants to be an education of its time today needs to radically pose the question of what social transformation means in these times of change in so many segments of human life. It is necessary to understand that just as reality is dynamic and changes, so too does the idea of social transformation. This means rediscovering the reading of the world with a first and fundamental task. In this sense, one of the challenges of education is to inspire interest in the search. Understand utopia as something open, dynamic, under construction.

Many other aspects could be addressed, many questions arise from reflection on the social role that training plays in a context of shortages. I conclude this article with the hope of a transformative pedagogy, combining a strong insertion with the ability to imagine new scenarios.



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