CONTEMPORARY SPHERES FOR THE TEACHING EDUCATION: FREIRE'S PRINCIPLES

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ABSTRACT

Freire's cogitation on Information Technology (IT), resources for education have been known since the decade of the 50s. And now, within the current context, this analysis outlines the literacy problem as an issue of gnosis and anthropology while existing in a virtual dimension. Based on research/experiences that also were carried out in Brazil, it can be noted that the literacy that is being discussed includes the skill in handling a mouse, selecting, dragging, cutting, pasting, CTRL C+CTRL V, writing a text and searching the internet, but although it seems "obvious", public education policy has not given sufficient thought nor assumed a pedagogical position on these issues.

This discussed cogitation considers contributions of the Freire pedagogy, in the attempt to attain, through this type of literacy, the unprecedented accomplishment of something viable—that what teachers realize as unprecedented, due to the fact that nobody has accomplished it before, however viable, because all of the conditions to make it happen are there, including a critical preparation of the educators. Within the internet context, the proposal implies a digital writing and reading ability that is based on communication and dialogue skills and, as fundamental strategies for reading the world, the real/virtual world, the knowledge of the daily speech, of writing and reading within a multi-diversification of digitally generated texts.

Keywords: Digital education; Freire's Pedagogy; Cultural circles; Education for adolescents and adults.

INTRODUCTION

The IT culture, or cyberculture, which is generated through an ever present information, as well as interactive and interconnected documents, and reciprocal and asynchronous telecommunication, is built and updated intra/between groups, and distinguished by not having a fixed center or directive.

By not being neutral in cyberspace, the interconnections refer to cultural differences, which are updated at every interchange and thus, the hereby generated correlation form webs, in the Freire sense, and by being reorganized and updated with specific purposes, they lead us to think of this act as something universally new, since it incorporates all of the contents connected to their semantic loads.

It is also worth noting that with this dynamic reality that is rich in symbolic links coexist some 15 million of illiterate people, 13% of the Brazilian population, according to the data of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). On a world-wide level, however, there remains over 875 million people with no ability to read or write, of which a high percentage of this number are women.

This illiteracy situation has worsened with the introduction of information technology, which enlarges the distance from the education/preparation of people, creating the so-called "digital gap". In this sense the UNO has recently called for "digital education" and for "technological balance". Through this call an attempt is being made to use information technology as an instrument of civil, economic and social progress through a more solitary partition of technology. We are being challenged to respond to this call with a proposal of literacy as the right to express the word, and not as a gift to be donated by rich countries that seem to think that they have to "eradicate" illiteracy as if it were a weed that has to be eradicated at the roots.

What can be done, however, to invert those problems that arise by favoring the Education of Adolescents and Adults that have been and are now being deprived of the possibility of education? In order to develop the preparation of educators by making them work in favor of the excluded population, beginning with teaching to read and write as an undeniable right of all human kind, all possible resources were used for an alternative proposal for Education, with personal presence or utilizing *online* methods, through which diverse social levels, educators and educatees could be reached during this educational process.

In view of this situation, the preparation of educators of adolescents and adults, with specific educational strategies, is being taken over through governmental or private agreements by several institutions that are traditional in this area. However, there are those who consider it insufficient in front of the growing demand and the Brazilian reality. For this reason, one of the purposes of the online Education of Educators for Adolescents and Adults would be to help overcome the illiteracy situation in Brazil or in countries with similar conditions, contributing with a public policy of teaching to read and write that includes more complex ways of reading and writing.

The concern with this work of preparing the educator through long distance education is not limited to the educator for adolescents and adults; it involves all educators and educatees.

TEACHING TO READ AND WRITE VERSUS TEACHING DIGITAL READING AND WRITING? (LITERACY VERSUS DIGITAL LITERACY?)

Would Paulo Freire, as a dialogical educator, be concerned with digital reading and writing education? Would he have thought his Method in the IT and "knowledge" era? Of one thing we can be certain: Paulo Freire loved to write letters: "Cartas a Guinée Bissau", "Quatro cartas aos animadores e às animadoras culturais", "Professora sim, tia não: Cartas para quem ousa ensinar", "Cartas a Cristina, "Carta aos amigos Cipriano, Elói, José e Neidoson", "Pedagogia da indignação: cartas pedagógicas e outros escritos". All of these letters are unfinished, as for Freire writing represented a political act where he was committed to his knowledge, his ethics, and his lovingness.

What would Paulo Freire do with e-mail? In one of his works he refers to his experience with the internet. He said that the social production of the language and technological instruments that "reduce" space and time, as well as with those where human beings interact better in the world announce what technology would be.

"A short time ago, my grandson Alejandro Dowbor called me, telling me that on his Internet connected computer "fell" a message of a German scholar asking for my address. He answered and added the number of my fax. Fifteen minutes later I was already speaking with the German teacher. Thanks to technology. If my mother, who died in 1978, would have come back to Earth and heard my dialogue with Alejandro, she would never have understood anything."(1)

Paulo Freire (1994b:155) has already raised the question of technology for the reading and writing education of adults from the first cultural circles held in Pernambuco:

These were circles formed within beneficial societies, soccer clubs, district associations, and in churches. The educators were in charge of preparing the creation of a circle, visiting the congregation club or the parochial church or the district association and talking about the idea of a pedagogical work. Once the proposal was accepted, a large promotion effort was done in the area, using popular resources (...). When two or three circles had been created, the educators made a thematic survey among the participants, which was studied by us, in a team, at the home office of the action group. Once the themes had been "treated", they were organized in a program to be discussed with the participants of the circle (...). We prepared the material for the discussions, taking into consideration the available resources (...). I wonder what we could have done with the technological resources available today...

Questions like these allow us to think and develop an educational proposal in a digital web in order to prepare educators for teaching adolescents and adults in Latin America, based on the central idea of Freire's popular education principles. While saying this it must not be forgotton, as already mentioned, the enormous differences that not only the exclusion of basic education but also the technology are causing.

This awareness comes from the responsiveness and demystification of access and usage of technology, in order to understand education as a process that begins and has to be developed through the entire life of the individual and his group. It implies a progressive incorporation of more sophisticated communication elements that are generated by a more complex reading and writing culture and behavior.

In the same way that reading and writing represented a technological and therefore cultural progress—magnified and generalized by the print media – digital education is also based on a technological and cultural action. The generalized usage of the computer network and the culture that was created around it originates relationships of an immense social, economic and political impact on both local and global levels.

Digital education or literacy, within the context of Freire's education, refers to both the recognition of basic knowledge and the learning of information technology skills, such as the operation of network connected computers and the critical understanding of reality. Thus, independent from the education or basic preparation of a person, a critical understanding of the knowledge embedded in the digital world is indispensable.

> *The skill of using, understanding and transforming information in multiple formats within an extensive range of digital texts presented by computers allows us to approach the concept of digital literacy. This concept goes far beyond the simple ability to read, it means providing a meaning to the act of reading, giving signification and understanding, and this is to give a meaning. It becomes an act of reading and writing, of knowledge of what is seen on the screen, of what is heard in the sound files, of what is perceived in the simulations and animations, of what is build along with others in the search of useful texts for daily activities.*

If we consider that the production of reading and writing is a social and historical process, contemporary man will carry out this practice creating new abilities, abilities which are necessary for obtaining and expressing knowledge vocally or by writing. One needs this knowledge for the understanding of texts and a creative usage of the computer and networks. Therefore some universal concepts and practices of the digital world, the same which show a certain homogeneity, favor, from the cultural point of view, the integration of local groups among themselves and with the virtual educational community. Certain operative systems, where the utilized symbols and icons and the manner of interchanging texts are almost standardized, may serve as an example.

It is also important to mention that the cultural values of a virtual educative community raise from the collective production of reading and writing by correctly using electronic

mail, and principally from the cultural repertoire that allows the asking of questions to others, and to participate with opinions and studies in discussion / decision groups in the internet. This proceeding provides identity to a group and in a certain way it helps to construct subjectivity.

A process of inter and transculturation is admitted to the new knowledge through allowing the socialization of an accumulation of experiences and maintaining some universal values. The production of knowledge in the sphere of internet is constructed through several visions of the world, cultures and disciplines that exceed a specific scientific reference.

To think of the transcultural construction of knowledge in the range of the internet means to assume intercultural education as a possibility in this new territory, as it allows a specific dimension of the subject, its educative achievements and paths, which, on the other hand, grant a certain identity and subjectivity. This also implies in thinking of the construction of knowledge within the socio-historical web of the cultural processes in Freire's intercultural education, during the search for an emancipating education of the human being some potentials of transculturation on the communication level, dialogue, where some alteration of the participant and others can be found.

Thus, within the virtual sphere, the preparation proposal of educators for adolescents and adults, as well as for general educators, takes advantage of the theoretical and practical nature of these dimensions, investigating the universe of students and teachers as a fundamental field of theoretical construction, which allows them to search for other realities and to obtain new theoretical constructions, or of reading and writing.

The dimension of socialization of knowledge is based on thinking "of a literacy where man, since they are not its patient [of the system], its object, are allowed to develop impatience, or vivaciousness, the characteristic of the states of search, creativeness, demand."(2)

And in the internet sphere, this could only be possible if the citizen were able to use and understand the processes of creating messages and forward them, in other words, to declare his word, "to write to the world". Once this can be achieved, the practices of digital literacy would provide the maximum benefit to the individual and the community of adolescents and adults.

By considering the gnostic question, where the attempt is made to understand the creative process of knowledge within the digital sphere in its multidimensional aspect, it has to be established what knowing means in this context, what we can get to know and in what it implies to know what is known. And all this without neglecting the particular relation subject/object, i.e., who knows and what is known, and through which real/virtual actions of the subject, and which are the actions on the three-dimensional objects that allow one to know.

This getting to know is "interweaved" to a fundamentally ethical question, which is the democratization of access to the internet and the permanence of the educators within the creative knowledge process. Thus, it turns out to be impossible to deny the methodological dimension of digital literacy within the context of education as being a political, gnostic and aesthetical act, which considers the subject in multiple relationships and in a multitude of dimensions. And by considering these elements, the pedagogical planning assumes the necessary autonomy for working with people.

FREIRE'S EDUCATIONAL PROPOSAL WITHIN THE VIRTUAL SPACE

In both the National Plan for Literacy of MEC – Ministry of Education and Culture, Brazil, 1963, and in the MOVA_SP, Brazil – Literacy Movement for Adolescents and Adults of the City of São Paulo, 1989, led by Paulo Freire, there were two principles which were fundamental for the processes to succeed: the indispensable political goodwill allowing this unprecedented viability that is critical literacy to take place, and the beginning of the

process being based on the "content" and knowledge of the students to be taught, a "content" and knowledge donated and shared during the act of learning.

Once this is established, the digital literacy hereto referred will be committed to those principles. But would it be possible to work with the Paulo Freire Method in a virtual space? In spite of the fact that there is no answer to this question, we must consider the principles of higher education and the fundamental aspects of the Method in this new cultural sphere, which are potentially liberating from human relationships through dialogic usage of the new information and communication techniques.

Some of the principles and elements of Freire's pedagogy are especially highlighted in order to deliberate just how these meetings in virtual space could become educational.

➢ The *Culture circle* would be the learning space and also the methodology. A teacher instigating ~~to~~ dialogue and inviting the students to participate in the current debate should coordinate it; this culture circle could include up to twenty-five students. The goal would be to get the participants' word and texts to circulate, and to attain the theme that gives origin to the text that will later on be queried. During the debate the intention is to disclose, investigate; expose situations, practices, dynamics and experiences that allow the collective construction of the knowledge of the debated situation. The Circle indicates a stop "in motion" for the cogitation and the action, it has not only a mirror effect.

➢ With the *Paulo Freire Method everybody learns and teaches*: as this is a proposal where the object is to share the teaching and learning, the communication and the dialogue are of fundamental importance in the relationship established in the Internet. By allowing the interpenetration of the basic elements of trust, humility, respect, lovingness, and hope, they allow a certain autonomy in the process of teaching / learning. The emphasis of this process lies in that what we learn in relation to and mediated by the world, and we can say that entering the internet implies a meeting with the others, but more than that, with oneself, by questioning our autonomy for both learning and teaching. There is no holder of wisdom, but a learning community where everybody learns / teaches and where together they get to increase knowledge. The characteristics of the *online* courses provide a distinctive relationship between teaching and learning, constituting what Moacir Gadotti recognized as a "learning society".

➢ *The relationship educator/educatee:* is established on respect, ethics and the acknowledgement of each other's knowledge. In this relationship the task of the educator and the educatee will be to perform the authorship of the reading and the writing within the means of communication. The "reading of the world" offers strategies for critical discovery, encoding/decoding, and exploring the text previously written and saved in the computer memory, (which allows evaluating the teaching ability of the educator in this century). The responsibility of the teacher will be that of mediating between the educatee and the computer, i.e. the entire complex information network, "setting queries for the educatees on the content that mediates them"(3), while maintaining the critical debate in order to avoid to creating amateurs on the web.

➢ The *political character of the teaching act:* understanding today, in a global context, that power cannot be owned, but that power is wield, making us aware of the multiple interpenetrations undergone by the educative web. On the other hand, it is this web that will allow educators to exercise the power of liberating themselves from their own practices, as long as it is generated from accomplished activities and assumed conflicts/problems, thus constituting the true practice of civic behavior.

We can say that the computer network offers the possibility of a solidary conjugation between students, community and "school" for an educational movement and this

connection allows visualizing the political character of the educational meetings on the internet sphere. Thus, what makes a network powerful is the intention, the vision, the position taken by who produces within the web. The Paulo Freire Institute, for example, having a prospect of transformation and dialogic relationship, is able to take advantage of this technology and can further an educational practice distinguished by its emancipating dimension.

It sounds like an utopia, but despite the fact that everything happens very fast nowadays, and that the world is becoming smaller, those who hold information also form a small group in this *"capitalismo mixuruca"* [insignificant capitalism], as Paulo Freire used to say. And as alternative minorities are becoming constantly larger, there may be a greater possibility on the solidary web, also in the digital world.

This principle of political character implies the preparation of the reading and writing teacher/educator for the critical usage of more sophisticated communication elements. Within the Freire context, the teaching abilities are reading and writing, as well as knowing how to face the complex daily tasks in conjunction with the human communication, using for this the writing, dialogue and communication in telematic networks. It is understood that the work favors conceptual literacy and policy, as long as it serves to disclose, to take apart and to recreate complex acts of reading and writing based on a odd feeling about what is obvious.

> The educator, *a Being of relationships and the dialogue aspect of the educational act* are elements that cannot be separed: the dialogue is "the meeting of men that have been mediated by the world in order to give the world a name."(4)

> According to Freire, man is a "being of relationships", "connective", which distinguishes his process of dialogic education. From the anthropological point of view, we can say that education is "communication, it is dialogue, and it is not the transfer of knowledge, but a meeting of interlocutor subjects searching the significance of meanings."(5)

From this prospective, of intending "to be more", the action of the educator searches for the *unprecedented viable thing*. The concept of the "unprecedented viable" was marked by Paulo Freire, "it is actually an unprecedented thing, however not clearly known or experienced, but felt, and when it becomes something "distinguishably perceived" by those who think in an utopic way, they then know that the issue is no longer a dream, that it can become a reality."(6) When we realize that in truth there are possibilities to build alternatives that we did not perceive until this moment, which have not appeared yet but are viable, in other words, that there are concrete conditions to do them, they have to be accomplished. This is an ethical and political question, if we want to build a critical education. Thus, the actions in virtual space become relevant as soon as, in this unprecedented viable accomplishment, the subjects are allowed "to be more" and therefore develop the level of awareness of reality. Paulo Freire would say that the real subject is the one who wants to be, and this concept of the "unprecedented viable" gets us also closer to the virtuality.

The inclusion in virtuality is presented as a movement of "becoming someone else" and expresses a search for homogenization. The dialectic of the real/current in a different dimension, expressing the being and staying in the new world invented by culture.

The process of understanding this reality may be enriched with the three moments proposed by Paulo Freire: a) A *semi-intransitive* consciousness, which is characterized by being centralized around the vegetative forms of life, where the subjects "adhere" to the objective reality, being "submerged" in it, dependent and submitted to it. This hinders their critical approach to reality; b) A *naive transitive consciousness*, where the subject makes a simple interpretation of the problems, widening his ability of interpreting reality, and breaks the silence in relation to his context. He is aware of the phenomena, but he

does not know how to keep a certain distance in order to analyze them, and his spoken word is manipulated by others; and c) The *critical transitive consciousness* through which the subject is enabled to understand certain reasons that explain the way man "are being" in the world. Through this awareness he understands that reality is a process under constant construction, and therefore reality is not something stated once and for all, nor can it be defined according to the categories of those who hold socioeconomic power. The educator–educatees, the social subjects with their actions and projects, contribute with creative thinking in this process, based on the epistemological curiosity that is restless, dialogic and creative.

This process of "being now" and the permanent "occurrence" introduce another concept in this educational proposal that is *education* as a *possibility*: this concept is supported by a general utopia conceived as an anticipation of a better society than we have today, of mutual respect, autonomy and solidarity. The difference to a utilitarian education aimed at total quality, efficiency, effectiveness *per se*, and a good deal in business as basis. Within this coexistence, the cooperation, sharing, communication, the dialectic relationship, cultural assets, information, technique, diversity, autonomy, solidarity, freedom and human consciousness are distinguished in Freire's proposal of a solidary education web.

We understand that social relations occur through the correlation of power, which are in permanent motion, while the subject is under a construction process. Thus, the fact of knowing that we are unfinished and under permanent development establishes that we are always becoming something, or that we are under continuous movement, that which turns into something new. The communication, the dialogue and the meeting occur between the subjects that arrive with their questions more than with their certainties, and this delineates a cultural, present/virtual space, so that education, in this sense of possibility, can happen.

The fact that we know that we are unfinished, that our humanity is ungergoing a permanent construction process, jeopardizes the *severity* and the *lovingness of the educational act* and moves us towards an *education as art.* Therefore the playfulness, the epistemological curiosity in working border situations, the simulations, the multiple languages, the history, the diversity and the graphic/formal harmony in the presentation of the digitized information is present in liberating education.

The up-to-dateness of the Paulo Freire Method, within the context of his pedagogical proposal for virtual space, offers elements and concepts, devices that allow thinking of them within the information and communication era as being a gnostic and anthropological process. The investigations done by a group of educational communicators in Latin America have also shown that the studies on education and communication in this region are weaved around Paulo Freire's pedagogy.

The dimension of the Method and the strategies used for the development of the project of preparing the educators through the internet allows for reading of the world from the web, obtaining the theme or the generating context forming the theme and the query, while the difference, otherness and updating of these educators make the transforming action of the practice itself possible.

Recognizing the moments of the Method, as they were imagined for the virtual sphere, may be of help for this cogitation:

> *Reading of the world within an actual and virtual web: "The reading of the world precedes the reading of the word, and that is the reason why the posterior reading of the second cannot dispense the continuity of the reading of the first."(7).* The available strategies of reading the world from a web, within the internet context, are based on communication and dialogue, as the daily life of each educatee has been recognized through a manner of speaking, writing and in the diversity of texts

that circulate in the web. The real/virtual acquires potentials that interpenetrate in order to give way to the "real" that we know.

➢ *Thematic investigation in the web of literacy teachers:* the educator declares himself responsible for mediating between the educatee and the web weaved by subjects, information, knowledge, skills, and orienting within the virtual space so that the practice in presence will be effective. The scheme of the text that was produced through this interactivity will be socialized in the web, allowing the creation of a hypertext space based on the theme, text, and the generating web of educators and educatees.

➢ *Forming the theme in the web:* carried out by the educators/educatees themselves, the theme is related to literacy, and is formed by daily situations; during its query process, a consciousness-raising can occur, arising from the same wish to produce changes in their reality.

➢ *Query in the web:* intends to get over that first moment of awareness where the subjects find themselves adhered to the reality of this border-situation. Knowing that the preparation of literacy teachers still has to be developed and perceiving that the digital literacy makes the situation worse, results in putting their anguishes and problems in the web, but also their knowledge and skills. A demystification process and a new construction are necessary.

➢ *Difference, otherness and updating in the web of literacy teachers:* the recognition of the social differences between educators, of the vocabulary universe, the border-situation, the observation of the real/virtual space and the reading they perform involves a syntax language and semantics, linguistic and semiotic elements that reveal aspects of the education culture of the educators, which is significant when updated to distinguished experiences of each participant. Also when the web allows admitting the otherness, generating a friendly reception to the other dialoguer

➢ *Co-participation of the subjects in the preparation of Educators:* the vision of the Brazilian Paulo Freire Institute is that a proposal for the preparation of Educators within a socioconstructivist prospective would prepare the educatees of literacy for the critical exercise of their civic behavior, be it in favor of their integration or reintegration in the job market or for their participation in professional updating programs that are offered by several governmental institutions and by the civil society. This preparation includes basically the following goals: a) reading and writing based on a dialogical and cousciousness-raising methodology; b) developing a pedagogical practice that allow the educators to offer to students the acquisition of reading, writing, calculation and complex manners of reading and writing in a digital universe; c) developing the sensitivity and creativity for other languages; d) cogitation about elements of the educational practice that allow the development of the critical and auxiliary consciousness in the preparation of a new ethic in the relationship of human beings, among themselves and with respect to nature.

In this sense it is important to develop the content through dialogical learning strategies and a continuous evaluation process. Thus, it can be attained that the relationship educator-educatees would allow a pedagogical dialectic practice between theory-praxis and a permanent movement of action-cogitation-action on the performed work. But presently the use of information technology and distinguished ways of knowing have to be made available to educatees/educators, allowing them to work with multiple languages and technologies that meet critically the requirements of the modern world, thus contributing with the complete preparation of the human being.

It may be important to recall some words from Paulo Freire, heard in some conference, which can be found in the site of the Paulo Freire Institute. Reading is not to stroll through

the words, reading is having the deep and aesthetical conviction of what is being read. If this country would take the exercise of reading seriously, of the word being associated to reading the world, with all its aesthetical implications of "beautifulness" and liberty to create, then to teach reading and writing, with such a prospective, would be part of pedagogy, of democracy.

Understanding this process of reading/writing in terms of contents to be developed, it can be considered as: a) Reference for the reading of the World; b) Theme and generating context: c) Concepts of traditional and on web Education; d) The Paulo Freire Method and its up-to-dateness in the digital context; e) Contributions of the Linguistics and semiotics to the literacy teaching through the internet; f) working with projects and generating contexts in a socioconstructivist prospective.

> *Paulo Freire's methodological principles that sustain this proposal of preparation in the web include meetings in presence and at distance, each one with a distinguished treatment. Today we can see that the online mode shows a wide response in the social, economic and political life, and therefore it is necessary to understand and critically update the conditions of life, of work of the educators. Giving a new meaning to the educational practice, the new elements, strategies and resources of the electronics and the telecommunication would allow that the educational space could be dimensioned in a new way.*

Thus, through the liberating education in the web, the proposal is that the orienting teacher, in addition to presenting queries to the educatees, also motivates them to take a position and participate as active subjects in the process of knowledge.

Some tools and specific strategies of the online universe that were made available through the internet and by a course generating program, such as: chats, forum, use of e-mail, videoconference, notebook and web-page may contribute significantly with this process, as long as these are used in a correct and critical way. They also can serve as spaces for the construction of new identities and subjectivity.

> *We confirm here that for both, the moments in presence and the virtual moments, the dialogue with the participants, the participation in workshops – real and virtual – as well as the socialization of the activities to a collective work are fundamental. The proposed activities for the evaluation should not only compromise the interactivity, but also the development in processes through the dialogue between educator and educatees, related to both the operating manner and the cogitation on practice. The evaluation implies a permanent follow-up of all the elements that, directly or indirectly, may be of influence in the development of the educational and pedagogical work. For this purpose, intra and extra school factors will be considered, as well as institutional and non-institutional factors, and the evaluation of students and teachers. During the activities, the educatees may elaborate his project with the orientation of the educator, within the interdisciplinary possibility, handing it over at the end of the meetings as an integration work.*

> *At this point the question of the traditional educational structure related to place, time schedule and environment of online education comes up. These have to be negotiated, taking into consideration the activities of the participants, the time zone and the activity of the institution, which is the home office for the activities. There is also to be considered that the legislation and ministerial dispositions are inflexible for these preparation courses online and are not exceedingly committed to the progress of the teacher and his group in this type of course.*

In case of existing official institutional agreements, the participation can be certified by educational institutions that are not concerned with the bureaucracy of the act, but with the adequate processing in the practice of the literacy teacher.

CONTEMPORARY SPHERES FOR THE PREPARATION OF TEACHERS

The software *First Class Collaborative Classroom*, version Fc5.506 (Spanish), Fc5.611 (Portuguese) and Fc5.623 Fc6.011 (English)- FCCC of the Metalink company, has been utilized as a platform for the creation of courses in the Virtual Campus of CLACSO (Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciências Sociales). In 1999/2000 the Paulo Freire Institute performed works in conjunction with CLACSO and offered a course for educators in Latin America, with the support of the Work Group on Education and Society. At this occasion, 50 scholarships were offered to teachers of Latin America that showed interest in participating in the online course: "Crossing Borders: initiation to the work of Paulo Freire".

CLACSO's Intranet and the methodology proposed by the teachers of the Paulo Freire Institute represented a democratic progress of the internet usage, because it made possible that educators from over tem countries could make studies and investigation in the web, which is Freire's educational proposal, constituting a true educational community.

The course was developed in Spanish and Portuguese, and was oriented by a dialogical methodology, taking advantage of the contribution devices of the Virtual Campus. The material (bibliography and programs) were sent to each participant in a kit in CD-ROM.[1]

The Virtual Campus exists within a registered domain of a server (CLACSO or IPF). Through software, it operates with the concept client/server, with the HyperText Transference Protocol (HTTP) for web applications and with HyperText Markup Language (HTML), which is the most utilized language for homepages.
The Virtual Campus is the real space where an educational institution is located in the virtual sphere (CLACSO or IPF, for instance), conferring its own identity through pages published in the internet. The access is granted with the identification and the password of the user, as the domain has a determined memory capacity for operation.

The organization of a Virtual Campus may be oriented to do the same as it is done in a traditional institution, or yet it can take advantage of the space, utilizing a new organizational culture through meetings, relationships, subscription, space, class times, etc.

Through the Virtual Campus the educators can connect at the same time, in an easy and effective way; only a few orientations are necessary for the installation and the usage of FirstClass, as its interface is graphic and intuitive, and utilizes Windows and Macintosh operational systems (multiplatform). The user-friendly aspects of the program favors the teacher-student relationship, the individual/ collective work, and allow the sharing of knowledge and skills through conference rooms, e-mail, files and a permanent forum.

The access of the participants is done by e-mail, through a navigator of the internet, allowing a complete visualization of the conferences, messages, and agendas. For the telework, the program offers options with specific icons, such as: favorites, selection of message types, agenda / diary, notification of messages, fax/e-mail, webradio, videoconferences and connection time (logg) to the campus.

For the first course, specific rooms have been created for each meeting: "Freire's proposal", "Paulo Freire Method", Pedagogical Praxis", "Education Legacy", Freire's Coffee Shop" (an informal meeting room), and "Freire's Coordination", this one only for teachers and administrators, in which administrative information circulated with the coordination between teachers of the Paulo Freire Institute, allowing that all the messages with observations and comments reach the students at the same time.

In 2002 the courses on Paulo Freire resulted in the production of a book in the web: "Lessons of Paulo Freire crossing borders: completing experiences":

, with works written by Latin-American educators through the internet. This book was launched at the World Social Forum. It is the result of a collective work carried out by educators and researchers from various countries, includes texts in Portuguese/Spanish and is part of the bibliography of the current course.

PREPARATION OF EDUCATORS THROUGH THE INTERNET

In this methodological proposal the preparation of educators in the web intends to improve the professional performance, allowing the creation/elaboration of specific texts and the socialization of relevant information, without withdrawing them from their activities. The information functions in favor of the literacy teaching practice and of the educational institutions, as long as updated and critical learning spheres are created. In this digital sphere, the educators reorientate critically their daily activities, giving them a new meaning.

Education through the Web is a relatively new phenomenon in the Latin-American scenario. In most of the cases, the usage of the Web continues to support a traditional model of education, or a neo-behaviorism. In order to avoid remaining with this concept, perpetrating the error of reinforcing old educational models through the internet, it is intended to articulate education and civic behavior.

Unfolding Freire's pedagogy, the proposal for education through the web establishes the following goals:

➢ amplifying the opportunities for education with "social quality";
➢ generating a dialogue and critical cogitation space on the educational practice, attempting a new theoretical construction of this practice;
➢ furthering alternative experiences of teaching/learning through the IT telecommunication;
➢ inciting a new look at the multi, inter and transculturation that is present in the different educational practices, which should lead to a solidary construction of knowledge;
➢ Propitiating means that contribute to the constitution of a new sociability, of social practices based on ethics, solidarity, collaboration, dialogue and otherness.

IN CONCLUSION:
THE EDUCATION RELATED TO A NEW ORGANIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE

We are involved in a culture that organizes the knowledge based on the IT usage, requiring a new atlas that situates man in the globalized world and allows him to circulate. Michel Authier and Pierre Levy (8) understand that this particular organization rests upon the possibility of a dynamic representation and administration of knowledge. The philosophy of implication, "Cosmopedia" as they called it, involves us in the mobile form of an image that is materialized through relative positions, proximity, colors and light. Through the navigation and in the immanent level of knowledge, people construct their object of knowledge and involve themselves in it, in order to confer existence to it. Opposed to the fixed image of the text in the encyclopedia, the Cosmopedia allows a variety of expressions in the virtual reality, taking advantage of the plurality of enunciation of discourse that arise in the internet.

Paulo Freire said: first we do, and then we give it a name. In these first years of the new century we begin to walk through this rift of information with all the risks involved.

We recognize in the internet the great narrative of this century, a space of knowledge where the educators, at an immanent level, reconstitute the beings, the signs and the things, finding again a dynamic relation of mutual participation. According to this principle, the universe has the form of a labyrinth, from where the mirror and the retracing do not

readily allow the exit for this world to be noticed, however, it is our mission to discover it. Jorge Luis Borges suggested that the reality is not only appearance, but also feeling and imagination and that the world is not chaos, but a labyrinth, a cosmos that conceals itself, and we have the task to discover it.(9) In this cultural universe the greatest oddity for the master/teacher is to maintain his epistemological curiosity integrated into a collective work, being aware of the forces that had put him near to exclusion, challenging him to fall out when his protagonism is no longer creative and original. This makes the process perverse and generates new paradox situations.

These pedagogical experiences in the virtual space forward to a dimension of the relationship educator-educatees. The external memory and the internal feeling acquire are a new value. The quickness, the transparence, the swiftness, and the capacity for circulation, transformation and reposition of information are some of the elements that incorporate into the vocabulary and cultural repertoire. The "simple" doing by liberating the own memory has turned the educators dependent on the web, but free to think for themselves in relation to the other. A new educational culture is being generated in relation to the surrounding technology, perhaps a new language and culture, where semantic and semiotic, linguistic and non-linguistic elements coexist. Activities such as selecting, classifying, interpreting, inserting, responding, reproducing, copying, pasting, representing, creating, digitizing, synthesize, encapsulating, drawing, hiding, visualizing, saving, deleting, simulating, globalizing, plastic money, magnetic card, password, login, encryption and writing in cryptography integrate this cultural universe that implies this gnostic dimension.

In the reinventing of culture there are few certainties, but the educator can free himself from ostracism by exploring and exposing himself in cyberspace, setting his production in motion and relating it to the themes of common concern, reintegrating it into a basis of knowledge that stays under permanent updating.

As with Paulo Freire, we continue to be radical in being concerned in teaching with the materials of our time, and we even then we are called obsolete, as he was, when we propose to educate to a point where technology does not present problem, i.e., to educate for human solidarity. The prospective is the preparation of educators for adolescents and adults that are beyond technology and that, despite knowing it, put it under discussion.

Therefore we can state that long distance education through the internet from Freire's prospective is supported by the principles of popular education, that is: critical proximity to reality, radicalism (there is no neutral education), announcement, political organization, text-context relation, dialogical methodology without disowning the culture of silence that operates in the internet and this what it generates.

In this prospective, the literacy and the internet are not incompatible, nor do they disturb or obstruct the preparation for the performance of skills of a more complex reading and writing in the digital sphere, by understanding the latter as a place, object and strategy of knowledge. We understand that the anthropological dimension of the occurrence takes us through paths we never had suspected of, where we remain eternal hikers searching for ourselves, the other and the world. And in this respectful opening to others and in the virtual space, where we recognize that there is no individual "I think", but as a collective act there is a "we think", which is one of the fundamental principles of this proposal that has its accomplishment in a "web" that connects already lived experiences with others that are being lived now.

Equal to our Master, we understand that education takes place in other locations than the "school". Today we can conceive that Freire's proposal contributes to a better understanding of education in the digital sphere, as long as it is considered as a device to learn well, as well as a knowledge sphere of new relationships, identities and subjectivity.

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