

INTERFACES BETWEEN THE LANCASTER METHOD AND DISTANCE EDUCATION IN BRAZIL: HISTORY, CONCEPTIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

The present work covers the fields of Information and Communication Technology and History of Education, aiming to present the interfaces between the mutual/Lancastrian method instituted in the Brazilian Imperial period, with the Distance Education (DE) model adopted today in Brazil. The methodology, with a qualitative basis, was structured from a systematic review of the literature and legal documents that were fundamental to weave the interfaces and reveal the approximations and differences between the two models of education. The analyses were structured in the light of the Vygotskian historical-cultural conception and sought to present new subsidies for the deepening in the field of studies on technologies and the history of Brazilian education. Based on the systematization of the documents, it was possible to describe, evidence and justify, in a critical way, the evolution and arrival of the Lancastrian method in Brazil, its main characteristics and the reasons why the Crown instituted it as mandatory in its provinces. It was also found that the historical and sociological motivations that impacted the growth of distance education in the country. Based on the surveys carried out, similar points were found between the foundations of both teaching modalities and the justifications for their implementation.

Keywords: Lancaster Method. Distance Education. História da Educação. Educational Perspectives.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this text is to foster the debate among education researchers about the similarities and similarities of the mutual method or Lancaster method – widespread in Brazil in the first half of the nineteenth century – with the reality of current distance learning (DE) practices in the country.

In this sense, the nineteenth to twenty-first centuries are considered as a scenario of temporal analysis, more specifically, and between them, the similarities and differences in the applications of the two forms of education in Brazil. It is important to mention that such educational applications do not appear out of nowhere, but in the midst of needs demanded by society at different times.

Lancaster (1778-1838) considered the development and propagation of his method effective for the economy, just as today, many entrepreneurs in the educational field do so in relation to distance education. He adopted a system of education monitoring and his ideas, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, were echoed in an applied way in new schools, more specifically, in industrial centers.

It is noteworthy that the Industrial Revolution initiated a significant transformation in the architecture of the world of work in the eighteenth century, however, it was only in the nineteenth century that these changes could be perceived more clearly. The relations of production and consumption were totally resignified with machines and with the development of the factory system. New sources of energy were unveiled and new means of transport created, accentuating the rural exodus and the demand for technical training in that society to adapt to the new needs of the work context. As a consequence of these transformations, capitalism expanded in the Western world and the so-called colonialist imperialism began (ARANHA, 2012). Also, according to the author, the nineteenth century consolidated the power of the bourgeoisie who, until then, had only opposed the aristocratic and feudal regimes. The workers' movement also gained prominence in this period, in view of the precarious working conditions, the long shifts and the large number of women and children in positions not compatible with their physical structure. The movements that gained the most prominence at that time were those of the utopian socialism of Proudhon (1809-1865), the anarchism of Bakunin (1814-1876) and the scientific socialism of Marx (1818-1883) and Engels (1820-1895), all critical of the bourgeois liberalism on the rise at the time.

On the other hand, the origins of distance education raise some controversies, according to Bastos (1999), as some authors consider that the invention of the printing press, in the fifteenth century, was the first experience of distance education. According to the author, before it, teaching was artisanal and the formation of classes was made up of a few students, in which only the teacher had a rare manuscript that was read to the class. Thus, with the Gutenberg press (1400-1468), it was possible to invest in the production of books, promoting mass education, in classes with many students. Other researchers consider that correspondence courses, at the end of the eighteenth century, were the precursors of distance learning, as they made use of the great invention of the time, which was the postal system. Thus, through it, it was possible to send material consisting of books, booklets and handouts to students, regardless of distance. From then on, other experiences arose with the creation of radio, television, computers and the internet (BASTOS; CARDOSO; SABBATINI, 2000).

It is noteworthy that World War II boosted the creation of new technologies that were essential in the rapid training of soldiers, and also, after the war, in the social integration and in the development of skills of people who came from the countryside to the city (NUNES, 1993). Among the technologies, the invention of a set of computers used to decipher transmitted messages, the invention of a radio interference device that later served as the basis for the creation of cell phones, among others, were highlighted.

In industrial England, education was considered more a function of society than of the state. Educational activities, then, remained concentrated in the hands of churches or charitable or humanitarian foundations that dictated the format, method and organization of the instructions (LUZURIAGA, 1984). The author mentions the educational institutions in charge of English education:

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, there were two large religious and charitable societies in England that performed educational functions, the "National Society for Promoting the Education", of conservative and orthodox Anglican orientation, and the "British and Foreign School Society", of a liberal and dissident type (LUZURIAGA, 1984, p. 185).

The aforementioned institutions were responsible for the emergence of the so-called mutual teaching or Lancaster method, as it is better known in Brazil, created by Andrew Bell and Joseph Lancaster, at the beginning of the nineteenth century (LUZURIAGA, 1984).

The Lancastrian method aimed to reduce the costs and expenses related to the instruction of young people and children, and also to reduce the teacher's workload, while accelerating student learning, with the purpose of popularizing instruction among the poorer classes (MANACORDA, 2004). According to Eby (1978), in the Lancasterian proposal, the teacher taught the lesson to a group of more mature and intelligent students, who shared the learning with their peers, in small groups, under the supervision of the teacher. It is worth noting that Bell and Lancaster aimed to solve the problem of the lack of teachers in London society to educate children from the periphery. In this case, the method made it possible for hundreds of children to be instructed by a single teacher.

In Brazil, the intention to implement the Lancaster method took place in 1820, when the government sent a teacher to England to receive this training. Then, in 1823 and 1824, other initiatives were adopted by the emperor: first by sending more teachers to the training and then by decreeing that the students who received the training and who were sufficiently qualified would be employed as teachers in their provinces, according to Castanha (2012).

I will order the creation of a School of First Letters in this Court, in which it will be taught by the method of mutual teaching, being for the benefit, not only of the military of the Army, but of all classes of my subjects who wish to take advantage of such an advantageous establishment (BRASIL. Decree of March 1, 1823).

Thus, the mutual method was disseminated and introduced by the first National Public Instruction Law of the Empire, a Law of October 15, 1827, which "Orders the creation of schools of first letters in all cities, towns and most populous places of the Empire." In its Article 4 it was established that "The schools shall be of mutual education in the capitals of the provinces; and they shall also be in the cities, towns, and places of their populous place, where it is possible for them to settle." (BRAZIL, 1827). The Law also determines that "Teachers who do not have the necessary instruction in this teaching, will be instructed in the short term and at the expense of their salaries in schools in the capitals."

When we analyze contemporary reality and capitalist interests, we observe certain similarities between the Lancaster method and the format adopted today by institutions that offer distance courses. From its creation until the 1990s, there was no legislation for the regulation of distance education in Brazil, although Laws 4.024/61 and 5.692/71 signaled a small opening for its offer, in the form of supplementary or complementary education. However, from the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education, Law 9.394/96, the

publication of a series of government decrees, resolutions and ordinances began (Decree n. 2.494/98; Ordinance No. 301/98; Ordinance No. 2,297/99; Ministerial Ordinance No. 1,466/2001; Resolution CES/CNE No. 10/2002; Decree n. 6.303/2007) and, thus, Distance Education in Brazil was developed by government and private initiatives, following the evolution of technologies in the country. This format of education then accumulated contradictions and inconsistencies in its structure, which was to be expected, given the Brazilian socio-spatial dimensions and the various problems affecting the country's educational field (GOMES, 2013).

Gomes (2013) states that distance education has been considered a relevant partner of successive governments that have been at the head of the Brazilian executive. They have used it, aiming to overcome the significant educational gap, perceived in several regions of the country, since this format of education presents itself as the most economically viable educational project to achieve this objective, similar to the initial proposal of the Lancaster method.

The discourse of the democratization of education has sometimes transformed it into a fetish for the almost magical solution of educational problems and, lately, distance education has also played an important role in the expansion of private higher education, as it has been used to considerably increase the number of students, lower costs and maximize profits. (Gomes, 2013, p. 14, emphasis added).

What the author means is that if, on the one hand, distance education could magically solve the problem of Brazilian education and its rulers, on the other hand, it could encourage the private sector to invest in this modality and make profits. In this case, the cheapening of the courses offered would be essential.

Given this scenario, this text aims to problematize the interface of the Lancaster method with the characteristics, format and objectives of distance education in Brazil. To this end, recent research and publications on the subject are explored and the historical-cultural perspective is considered for the analysis and discussions.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology, with a qualitative basis, was structured from a systematic review of the literature and legal documents that were fundamental to weave the interfaces and reveal the approximations and differences between the two models of education.

For the development of this article, bibliographic research was also used with the use of primary and secondary sources for the discussion of the subjects proposed here. Thus, it was mainly based on the studies of Luzuriaga (1984), Eby (1978), Manacorda (2004), Saviani (2019), Bastos (1997), Aranha (2012), Castanha (2012), Bastos and Faria Filho (1999), Neves (2003), Gomes (2009; 2013), Niskier (1989) and Litto (2009).

The analyses were structured in the light of the Vygotskian historical-cultural conception and sought to present new subsidies for the deepening in the field of studies on technologies and the history of Brazilian education. Based on the systematization of the documents, it was possible to describe, evidence and justify, in a critical way, the evolution and arrival of the Lancastrian method in Brazil, its main characteristics and the reasons why the Imperial Crown instituted it as mandatory in its provinces. It was also found what were the historical and sociological motivations that impacted the growth of distance education in the country. From the analysis of the surveys carried out, similar points were found between the foundations of both teaching modalities and the justifications for their implementation.

The article is organized into three topics, namely, the imperial period and the Lancaster method in Brazil, distance education in Brazil and the similarities between the Lancaster method and distance education in Brazil.

THE IMPERIAL PERIOD AND THE LANCASTER METHOD IN BRAZIL

When Brazil became the seat of the Portuguese Crown, in 1808, several measures and changes were made in the cultural and educational scenarios in the country. The Crown's objective with such updates was to qualify part of society to work with the administration of the empire (BASTOS, 1997).

According to Bastos (1997), Antônio de Araújo, the Count of Barca, was the one who assigned D. João VI the task of studying a method, capable of giving the necessary unity, to Brazilian society at the time. The author states that

The Count of Barca was concerned with education as a problem of the State and shared the interest of the political spheres in the Lancastrian system of education, having read the works *Travail sur l'éducation publique*, by Mirabeau the Elder and *Improvements in education as it respects the industrious classes of the community*, by J. Lancaster (BASTOS, 1997, p. 121-122).

In 1812, General Francisco de Borja Garção Stockler presented a plan for the organization of public education, in which he was concerned with the dissemination of the teaching of the first letters and recommended the sharing of basic knowledge to farmers, workers and merchants in the so-called "Institutes", thus portraying the first official proposal for the organization of a popular education system in Brazil. Stockler's project was not accepted at the time; however, in 1826, Canon Januário da Cunha Barbosa rescued this plan, which was transformed into the law that dealt with elementary education (BASTOS, 1997; PAIVA, 1987).

The studies of Bastos (1997) showed that the *Correio Brasiliense*, from April to October 1816, presented a series of articles that dealt with the Lancaster Method and used as an argumentative strategy, the positive results obtained in the educational systems of England. It is worth noting that the mutual method was introduced in 1815 in Portugal, indicating that the members of the Portuguese Crown were not only already aware of the method, but also applied it.

Lins (1996), cited by Bastos (1997, p. 122-123), states that the method was considered

It is of great use to the whole society, since, as in England, a good elementary education has been obtained, without great expense of the government, and without taking away from the labouring classes the time which it is necessary for them to employ in the different branches of their respective occupations. He recommends the method, above all, for its economic advantages: a single teacher can take charge of nine hundred or a thousand disciples; In addition to the master's salary, there is nothing but the expense of the house for the school, stone, pencil, ink, paper and elementary books.

It is noteworthy that all of Europe and its colonies were being stimulated, through publications in periodicals, to adopt the method of mutual teaching in their provinces through the Society for Elementary Instruction, responsible for the introduction of this method in France. In that same country, there was a pedagogical magazine, "*Journal d'Éducation*", which published correspondence between Brazilians and French and brought references about mutual education in Brazil, during the years 1819 to 1827.

According to Bastos (1997, p. 123), the first appearance of Brazil in that periodical occurred in April 1817, which reported that "[...] the government asked for a teacher, [then]

the young M. Cournand, son of a teacher with the same name [...] was sent to this mission [to implement mutual teaching]". Two years later, the magazine published the letter from the Comte de Scey to the President of the Society for Elementary Education of Paris, which reinforced the aforementioned information. This letter demonstrated the Count's intentions to apply the Lancastrian method in Brazil, and his great interest in teaching the poor population, especially the blacks.

According to Bastos (1997), Count Scey is considered to have been the first to implement the Lancastrian method in Brazil. By reading the letter, it was realized that many aspects of the teaching format adopted by the Count resembled the model originally proposed by Bell and Lancaster (FERREIRA, 2015).

According to Bastos (1997) and Ferreira (2015), the exchange of correspondence between the Count and the Society for Elementary Education in France continued for some time, always evidencing the intentions of inserting mutual education in Brazil, including with Count Scey requesting materials similar to those used by Lancaster.

In 1820, the Journal D'Éducation published another letter from Earl Scey, this time to the Society's Board of Directors. The letter was sent on June 4 and published in August. In this letter, it is worth noting that the Count shows that a French nobleman, landowner, who settled in Rio de Janeiro, following his example, allowed the slaves to receive elementary instructions about the Portuguese language, French and religious education.

The Count of Gestas followed my example in his lands, and all his slaves received elementary knowledge about the French language, Portuguese, religious education. [The Count] gained a lot from this, and the neighboring planters, observing the good conduct of these blacks, in which the degree of civilization has increased, will certainly hasten to employ the same means, when they can be well advised and seek instructors (Journal D'Éducation, 1820 *apud* BASTOS, 1997, p. 125).

Bastos (1997) and Ferreira (2015) state that the aforementioned letter points out that the mutual method was widely disseminated among the French living in Brazil and indicated the contents taught to slaves at that time. These publications also demonstrate that the Lancastrian method was already being implemented in the country, even before 1827, the year of the Law of October 15, 1827, which determined the creation of schools of first letters in Brazil and referred to the mandatory adoption of the method and form of organization of mutual teaching (Saviani, 2021).

It is noteworthy that the individual initiatives to adopt the Lancastrian method in Brazil were accompanied by government measures that indicated the Crown's interest in knowing more, and even applying the method in its colonies. On July 3, 1820, a Decree was published that granted João Batista de Queiroz an annual pension so that he could go to England to learn about the Lancastrian system of education (BASTOS, 1997).

Bastos (1997, p. 126) points out that "this measure shows both the official interest in the implementation of the mutual method, as well as the search in England for the necessary reference for the training of teachers". Ferreira (2015, p. 111) adds that

The decree also highlights that although John the Baptist was not a career public servant (which meant at that time a public office linked to the Kingdom), his profession was linked to education. And that, therefore, he should learn Lancaster's teachings in England, funded by the State [...].

Thus, from 1820 onwards, the State began the gradual implementation of the mutual method, in an official way in the legislation of the provinces. To elucidate this fact, we have Decision No. 83, of the Kingdom, of July 24, 1822, which makes the War Affairs Department responsible for the School of Mutual Education of Rio de Janeiro. It is also important to mention Decision No. 143, of the Secretariat of War Affairs, of November 25, 1822, which created a school of first letters in the Army Arsenal that would teach the workers by mutual method (BASTOS, 1997).

Another interesting aspect occurred in 1823, at the inauguration of the National Constituent Assembly, when D. Pedro I stressed, among other issues, about improvements to national education and reported that "[...] the number of schools was increased and the salary of their teachers was somewhat increased, allowing for a number of them, private: knowing the advantage of mutual teaching, I also opened a school by the Lancastrian method" (MOACYR, 1936, p. 71).

On January 29, 1823, through Decision No. 11, a mutual teaching class was established in the Court. The Decree of March 1, 1823, created a School of First Letters of Mutual Education for the Instruction of Military Corporations. It is noteworthy that such a school would not be exclusive to military personnel, "[...] but of all classes of my subjects who want to take advantage of such an advantageous establishment" (BASTOS, 1997, p. 127).

Complementing this argument, Ferreira (2015, p. 112) states that:

[...] the embryo of the Mutual Education school can be considered the document "Memory" in 1816, whose archiving was due to political differences between the author and the Emperor. Neves (2004) points out that, in 1823, with the dissolution of the Assembly, the author of the *Memória* was exiled to France, and his document was shelved.³

It is noteworthy here that these first institutions, which adopted mutual teaching, were linked to the army. Ferreira (2015) explains that this choice of the Empire was linked to the intention of advocating education, always aligned with the criteria of citizenship and morality, the same as the military ideology. According to Bastos (1997), the military were considered the most appropriate to act as lecturers in the schools of first letters, due to the fact that there is an approximation between the discipline and the order required by the Lancastrian method, recommended by the two institutions: military and school. Thus, Saviani (2005), cited by Ferreira (2015), states that these ideas would serve the teacher to reject the ideas of revolt against the homeland and the Crown.

Bastos (1997) states that in Portugal, in 1815, there was already a decree of the Regency that created the schools of mutual education in Lisbon within the Army and the Navy and that a year later, on March 1, 1816, a Normal School was also created in the Belém Guard Corps. What these data demonstrate is that the link between the schools of mutual education and the division of the war in Brazil has its official origin in the governmental directives of the metropolis.

The creation and orientation of the schools of mutual education also seems to have been the responsibility of the War Affairs Division, as we can see from Decisions: No. 203, of September 27, 1824, which "*orders the opening of a school of Mutual Education for individuals of the garrison corps of this Court...*"; No. 150, of July 13, 1825, and No. 153, of July 18, 1825, which, respectively, ordered the creation of mutual education schools in the Provinces of Ceará and Pernambuco (BASTOS, 1997 p. 128-129, emphasis added).

³ The document "Memory" (1815 or 1816) was prepared by Martim Francisco Ribeiro d'Andrada Machado, a Brazilian, son of Bonifácio José de Andrada, and became a politician who intended to structure the system of public education, initially in the captaincy of the Portuguese Kingdom in America, under his administration, and later, in 1823, for the entire new empire. His document dialogues especially with Condorcet's pedagogical thought, expressed in the *Five Memoirs on Public Instruction*, published in 1791, and in the *Rapport et projet de décret sur l'organisation générale de l'Instruction publique*, prepared by the Commission of Public Instruction of the Legislative Assembly of revolutionary France and presented in 1792. (BONTEMPI JR.; BOTO, 2014).

It can be seen, then, that even with the dissolution of the National Constituent Assembly, several other formats of legislation were disseminated throughout the country, always confirming the option for the Lancastrian method in Brazil. The legislation that instituted the creation of schools, whether for military corporations or not, showed that this was the initial moment of the structuring of the Imperial State and, therefore, the first initiatives to legislate on the subject were unveiled. It can be said that the legislation strengthened the ties between Education and the State and thus consolidated Mutual Education in Brazil (FERREIRA, 2015).

The year 1825 was of great relevance for the maintenance of the Lancasterian method in Brazil. Starting with the publication of the report of the "*Société pour l'enseignement élémentaire*", in November 1825, which informed that the school in Rio de Janeiro would open a new room to serve 500 students and that the teacher in charge of this mission was a Frenchman who had prepared in Paris. This report also discussed the number of masters who were sent to Brazil, aiming to serve the different regions of the country. With regard to legislation, we highlight Decision No. 182, of August 22, 1825, which promoted the establishment of schools in the Provinces by the mutual method, Decision No. 232, of October 8 of the same year, which ordered the creation of schools in the capital, in the Province of São Paulo and in the city of Santos, and Decision No. 258, of November 9, 1825, which authorized the introduction of the method in schools in the Province of Rio Grande do Sul (BASTOS, 1997).

In 1826, the members of the Public Instruction Commission of the Chamber of Deputies presented a project for comprehensive public education, in which they highlighted the need for teachers to act, in line with the precepts of the Lancastrian method.

the masters will try to get as close as possible to the Lancastrian method, dividing the teaching by decurias, so that the more advanced disciples will exercise themselves in teaching the less advanced, in half the time of the class, and then receive the master's instructions themselves the rest of the time (MOACYR, 1936, p. 150).

After this period, the following year, more precisely on October 15, 1827, the Chamber of Deputies approved the Law that determined the creation of "Schools of First Letters" in all cities, towns and most populous places in Brazil (BRASIL, 1827). In this law,

articles 4 and 5 were intended to present the method and form of organization that should be adopted in these schools: the Lancastrian method (SAVIANI, 2021).

The adoption of the mutual method, at that time, in independent Brazil, was in line with the spirit of the time, since it made it possible to reduce costs in line with the diffusion of teaching to a large number of students. The method, which was already widely disseminated and used by Brazil, since before independence, then became the official method, which had its generalization throughout the country (SAVIANI, 2021).

It is worth noting that during the discussions related to the draft Law of October 15, 1827, approaches were recorded that questioned the Lancastrian method and its obligation throughout the national territory. Moacyr (1936, p. 182) states that "the debate was one of the liveliest in the Chamber". The following excerpt gives an idea of the tone of the discussions:

that "the master should be given the discretion to teach by the system he deems best and should not be forced to follow the Lancaster method; Is the Mutual Teaching School different from the others? asks Mr. Hollanda Cavalcanti"; as they make their defense: "From everything I have read, I have not found a method like Lancaster's, it may be bad but there is no better; he drank this great doctrine in India and it is from there that he got this great method of teaching, he does not know how it can be said that the method of mutual teaching is not good, and that there can be arguments that show the contrary; says Mr. Cunha Mattos". These statements will be recurrent from 1827 onwards, in the period of implementation and generalization of the method in the provinces (BASTOS, 1997, p. 132).

The history of public education and the school of first letters in Brazil, singularly after the institution of the Law of October 15, 1827, evidenced the process of embodiment of the references of modernity and industrialization present in the central countries. Such adaptations intended to disseminate elementary instruction to the classes of workers, requiring the rationalization of the pedagogical act, as already present in the structure of the monitorial method: fast and low-cost teaching, using few teachers, serving many students and striving for discipline and order (BASTOS, 1997).

However, as mentioned in the discussions held in the Chamber, before the publication of the Law of October 15, 1827, the Lancastrian method was not fully accepted by critics at the time. It was noticed, in different discourses, that, in addition to the problems related to pedagogical practice, difficulties were found in the implementation of the method

in Brazil: "in the absence of adequate school buildings or the active principle of the method: a machine, without any principle of life" (BASTOS, 2012, p. 88).

However, the results of the Lancastrian system do not correspond to public expectation either in time or in perfection. And it is not only in our country that this is observed: in Europe, where there is an abundance of highly qualified teachers and it is easy to meet all the requisites for the rigorous execution of this system, it is the same as can be seen from the recent publications of Mr. Cousin, who has examined the educational establishments of Prussia and Holland. It is well known that the Lancastrian method is limited to a crude instruction, so to speak, suitable for the last classes of society, and does not extend to the refinement and delicacy, the correctness, the calculation that, in grammar, religion, and other knowledge, today's civilization requires in the primary education of all classes superior to those which, contrary to what happens in Europe, comprise the same population (BASTOS, 2012, p. 88, emphasis added).

It is noteworthy that in 1835, the first Normal School of Brazil was created, in Niterói, which aimed to prepare future teachers to work in the schools of first letters in the provinces. Thus, teachers should master, in theory and practice, the Lancastrian method (RÁTIVA, 2013).

According to Bastos (2012), it is not possible to precisely delimit the period in which Brazil adopted mutual teaching in its elementary schools or when it was abolished. However, legally, it is recognized that the Couto Ferraz Reform (Decree n. 1331-A, of February 17, 1854), regulated primary and secondary education in the Court and established a new teaching method to be adopted in schools. In article 73 of this decree, it is stated:

The method of teaching in schools will generally be simultaneous: however, the Inspector General, after hearing the Board of Directors, may determine, when he deems it convenient, that another one be adopted in any parish, according to his resources and needs (BRASIL, 1854).

It is observed that the simultaneous method was instituted as official, although the adoption of another method was admitted. Xavier, Ribeiro and Noronha (1994, p. 65) mention that in Brazil, the mutual method "expressed exactly the lack of motivation of the agro-exporting and slave-owning State to guarantee the minimum conditions for the

functioning of public schools", which is why public elementary education became even more fragile, in relation to its quality.

Finally, it is noted that the implementation of the Lancaster method in Brazil resulted in the slow and gradual expansion of elementary schooling of the popular classes, in the systematization and seriation of disciplines, in the adoption of various didactic materials such as blackboards, murals, books, notebooks, etc., in addition to the school calendar, order and discipline (Bastos, 2012), but that over time, it proved to be inefficient for teaching in Brazil, considering the lack of qualified teachers, inadequate buildings, lack of didactic-pedagogical materials and financial resources, as pointed out by Castanha (2012). Analyzing this scenario at the time, it is clear that there was an interest in making up for the educational deficiencies of lack of access to public schools.

With the use of the Lancaster method, it was sought to overcome some educational deficiencies that Brazil was facing at the time, such as the lack of access to public schools and education. However, over time, this method proved to be inadequate for teaching in Brazil, due to a series of factors, of which, Castanha (2012, p. 12), highlights: "lack of qualified teachers, appropriate teaching materials, adequate buildings, financial resources".

DISTANCE EDUCATION IN BRAZIL

The discussions around the conceptions and origin of Distance Education – EaD are widely debated around the world, occupying the investigations of professionals and researchers from the most diverse areas of knowledge.

In Brazil, Article 80 of the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education – LDBEN), Law No. 9,394/1996, was regulated by Decree No. 2,494/1998, establishing an official concept for Distance Education:

Distance education is a form of teaching that enables self-learning, with the mediation of didactic resources, systematically organized, presented in different information supports, used in isolation or combined and conveyed by the various means of communication (BRASIL, 1998).

Ribeiro (2020, p. 10) states that "Distance education is not a totally new teaching-learning modality. In fact, what is observed is the renewal of the concept by the use of technologies and the advancement of information technology in education", considering that

since the 1900s, there were advertisements in newspapers of large circulation in Rio de Janeiro, offering correspondence courses.

Based on this conception, in the Brazilian scenario, the first occurrences of Distance Education took place through the so-called "correspondence teaching", initially intended for professional training, in which the Post Office sent printed materials and *Kits* of experimentation for students. Two institutes stood out at the beginning of the twentieth century, in their work with correspondence education. They are: the Monitor Institute (1928-1929) and the Brazilian Universal Institute (1941) (RIBEIRO, 2020).

Subsequently, following the evolution of the new technologies of the time, distance education in Brazil began to develop through radio, which had been broadcasting education projects since the 1920s. In this new proposal, apprentices received printed handouts and listened to classes through radio sets. The emphasis of this project was, once again, on professional education and also on the literacy of young people and adults, an attempt to minimize the number of illiterates in Brazil (RIBEIRO, 2020).

In the following decades, the Radio Society of Rio de Janeiro Roquette-Pinto (1930), the Rio de Janeiro Municipal Radio School (1934), the Technical Radio Monitor Institute (1939) in São Paulo and the University of Air (1954) emerged, which trained merchants and employees in the Social Service of Commerce (SESC) and the National Learning Service (SENAC). In 1957, the National Educational Radio System (SIRENA) was created and, in 1958, the Archdiocese of Natal, in Rio Grande do Norte, started a broadcasting system that inspired the creation of the National Movement for Basic Education (MEB), in 1958 (HERMIDA; BONFIM, 2006).

The new education initiatives that took place between 1940 and 1960 had as their main objective the commercialization of new forms of learning. Courses were sold to the general public and there was an appeal for rapid professionalization and employability after the end of the course. In view of the acceptance of these practices by the population, the Catholic Church also bet on the creation of Radio Schools, which began to operate in several Brazilian states. The Church's programming emphasized rural popular education (RIBEIRO, 2020, p. 4).

The arrival of television gave new meaning to the way distance education was done. First, educational programs aimed at children were presented to the population. According to Ribeiro (2020), at the end of the 1960s, there were several mobilizations that sought an

interface between education and TV and then, in 1969, TV Cultura began to operate in the city of São Paulo.

It is important to mention that in 1968, three engineers created the Advanced System in Interdisciplinary Communication Project, known as the SACI Project, which aimed to develop an educational telecommunications system, which began the test of the use of radio and television in education, with the purpose of improving the quality of teaching (PAIVA, 2013). The Project provided

a massive injection of television education into all educational areas, i.e. primary, secondary, vocational schools and universities, including the training and improvement of teachers and instructors in the new techniques. Existing technology is certainly capable of fulfilling the prerequisites, however, the crux of the scheme is its content; Learning will be much more effective if the quality of the program, the texts, the printed materials, the audio-visual teaching aids, and the communication between planners and instructors in the classrooms is properly established on a functional basis. (LAFE-75, 1968, p. 8-9).

Right at the beginning of the project, its authors mention that the educational situation in the country at that time was the worst and that the system proposed in the SACI Project was "almost the only educational solution in undeveloped countries in continental areas such as Brazil" and that the system proposed in this project "did not apply to developed nations" (LAFE-75, 1968, p. 4). For Paiva (2013, p. 290) this project was put into practice in 1973 and, in 1975, when the "economic miracle" began to lose strength, the SACI went into decline and was replaced by the Teleeducation System of Rio Grande do Norte (EXERN).

It is worth noting that the 1970s changed the daily lives of Brazilians with the creation of the National Educational Time and the Minerva Project, during the dictatorial period. The Minerva project was an initiative that complied with Interministerial Ordinance No. 408/1970 and aimed at distance adult education. This Ordinance of the National Telecommunications Council made it mandatory to broadcast educational programs on all radio stations in the country, between 7 am and 5 pm and up to five hours a week (PINHEIRO, 2016). Ribeiro (2020), states that this project served approximately 17,200 students.

Alves (2009) highlights the creation of the National Teleeducation Program (PRONTEL) in 1972, which remained active for only one month and was revoked, due to

the emergence of the Brazilian Center for Educational TV (Funtevê), an agency linked to the Department of Technological Applications of the Ministry of Education and Culture. A few years later, in 1978, the Roberto Marinho Foundation launched the Telecurso Project, which became very well known throughout Brazil and, for this reason, even gained a new version in 1980, known as Novo Telecurso 2º Grau (RIBEIRO, 2020).

With the end of the Brazilian dictatorial period (1985), TV and Radio stations were freed from the obligation to assign, on a daily basis, times for the transmission of educational programs; This occurred specifically in the early 1990s. It was in 1994 that the National Educational Broadcasting System was reformulated, transformed into the Roquete Pinto Foundation, responsible for coordinating the actions linked to this system (ALVES, 2009).

From the second half of the 1990s to the year 2003, the starting point for the evolution of distance education in the national scenario became the Higher Education Institutions. Universities began to make use of educational programs for microcomputers, videos and K-7 tapes, usually in the form of self-learning. Educational *software*, at that time, presented what pedagogically used to be called programmed instruction (RIBEIRO, 2020, p. 5).

It is important to note that, according to Alves (2009), there were no concrete results with the transmission of educational programs on open television channels. This was due to the fact that the programs were not broadcast at times when students would be available. The author explains that with the emergence of the closed TV system (1989), new broadcasters appeared, with the objective of delivering educational content in the correct and systematized way, such as University TVs, Canal Futura, among others.

According to Ribeiro (2020), in the 1990s, there was also an important process of autonomy of public schools, with regard to the management of their resources and infrastructure, leading them to install satellite dishes, TV sets and computers. Also during this period, the Leap to the Future program (1991) was launched, which aimed to update teachers in the initial grades of the 1st grade. This program was broadcast on television, with reception centers organized in schools and universities. In 1995, the Ministry of Education (MEC) created the Department of Distance Education and the TV Escola program.

We need to make it clear that, in the 1990s, the initiatives of educational institutions reflected the initial practices and studies on the use of the network in the teaching and learning processes in person and at a distance. These projects were characterized by the production of websites and learning situations, emphasizing the publication of interactive content via electronic mail, which made it possible to publish content over the internet (RIBEIRO, 2020, p. 5).

It is noteworthy that the Open University of Brasília was created in 1993, four years before the first records of the development of educational systems for distance education appeared, named Virtual Learning Environments (VLE). At the same time, the Ministry of Education presented the National Program for Informatics in Education (PROINFO), which intended to distribute computers to Brazilian public schools (RIBEIRO, 2020).

Brazilian higher education institutions promote the institutionalization of distance education, with the approval of Ordinance No. 2,253 of October 18, 2001, which made it optional to offer up to 20% of the workload of recognized undergraduate courses, through the use of non-face-to-face methods (BRASIL-MEC, 2001).

From then on, computers began to be incorporated into educational institutions in many ways and used by teachers in various pedagogical practices. The second half of the 1990s marked the so-called digital revolution and with the emergence of the world wide web, distance education gained great momentum in the country and multiplied in teaching activities, educational projects and courses in all modalities of education (RIBEIRO, 2020).

In the 2000s, the Distance Higher Education Network (UniRede) consortium was created with the objective of democratizing access to quality education through Distance Education. Four years later, the Ministry of Education implemented several training programs for public school teachers through distance education, among the most famous are Proletramento and Mídia na Educação. These programs enhanced the creation, in 2005, of the Open University of Brazil (ALVES, 2011).

As of 2006, several guidelines have been sanctioned, at the national and state levels, which impact the growth of the distance education scenario in Brazil, such as Decree No. 5,773/2006, which provides for the exercise of the functions of regulation, supervision and evaluation of higher education institutions and undergraduate and sequential higher education courses in the federal education system. including those of the distance modality and Ordinance No. 10, of July 2, 2009, which established the criteria for the exemption from

on-site evaluation and provided other provisions for Distance Education in Higher Education in Brazil (BRASIL, 2006; BRAZIL, 2009).

It is important to mention that between the 1970s and 1980s, private foundations and non-governmental organizations began to offer supplementary distance courses, in the teleeducation model, with satellite classes, complemented by printed material kits, marking the arrival of the second generation of Distance Education in the country. It was only in the 1990s that most Brazilian Higher Education Institutions mobilized for Distance Education with the use of new information and communication technologies (ALVES, 2011, p. 90).

In 2011, the Department of Distance Education was extinguished from the Ministry of Education and its programs and actions are now linked to new administrations within the ministry.

The current period is known as the 5th Generation of Distance Education, a time when the internet is the main means of interaction, creation and dissemination of knowledge among the agents of the teaching-learning process.

It is noteworthy that until the 1980s, the offer of distance learning courses was concentrated in the hands of private institutions and non-governmental organizations, and it was only in the 1990s that other Brazilian higher education institutions mobilized to incorporate distance education into their curricular structures, allowing for a quantitative and qualitative improvement in the offer of courses in these institutions (COSTA, 2017). According to the author, it is only from the 5th Generation of Distance Education that this format of education becomes the center of Brazilian educational policies and, with this, it was sought to establish the legal bases to subsidize practices and institute prerogatives for the offer and execution of projects in Distance Education.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE LANCASTER METHOD AND DISTANCE EDUCATION IN BRAZIL

Based on the historical survey presented above, the aim of this last topic is to discuss the common points identified between the extinct Lancasterian method and the Distance Education model, adopted today in Brazil.

This analysis begins by rescuing the main attraction for the implementation, by the Crown, of the mutual method in its provinces: the low cost. Considering the evolution of distance education in Brazil, it can be seen that several measures have been taken to

adapt the model to the Brazilian reality, which intend to achieve the same end. According to Gomes (2013), in Brazil there is a multiplication of private institutions, courses and distance learning methodologies that objectively seek to make courses cheaper, simplify the didactic-pedagogical process and provide rapid training, especially in undergraduate courses. One can also mention the number of university centers in places without adequate infrastructure and the large number of students in the classes of the courses, monitored by few professors and tutors, aiming at easy profit through the offer on a large scale.

Another topic that deserves to be highlighted in this analysis is the one that refers to the large number of students served by a single teacher. This is the main premise of the Lancaster method; which can also be clearly perceived in the practices of distance education in Brazil. What in the mutual method the most advanced students did, in distance education the tutors assume this role, distinguishing only because they are not students, but graduates in different areas. In the case of distance education, the teacher prepares the material, activities and assessments and directs the tutors to serve the groups of students. In many situations, a single tutor can take on ten classes or more. Gomes (2013, p. 19) states that there is a "very disproportionate relationship between the number of teachers and tutors per student".

In this sense, the distance modality provides economies of scale and a significant advance in teacher productivity – efficiency – through the intensification of the division and objectification of labor. Although we do not deny that the distance modality allows for a cheapening in the composition of the costs of such a service, we consider that it is important to consider how such democratization has taken place and the possible contradictions engendered (BENINI *et al*, 2020, p. 12).

With regard to teaching methodologies, Gomes (2013) says that a continuation of the model inaugurated by the Open University of Brazil prevails. Even though such a model presents, in some cases, good results, no innovation is perceived, only an adaptation of the face-to-face pedagogical practice to virtual reality. In this way, there is a continuity of homogenizing pedagogical practices that aim at discipline and order, just as it was recommended in the nineteenth century, with the mutual method.

It is worth mentioning a criticism published by Patto (2013, p. 308) who states that official publications and debates around distance education in Brazil "often remain on the level of common sense or, at best, of instrumental rationality" the author also complements

with themes that, according to her, cannot be disregarded by the State when thinking about the democratization of education, but that seem not to have been reflected during the discussions around distance education. They are:

history, society and power relations; about science and technology as ideology; on educational policy in a class society; on culture and the mass media in administered societies; on the concept of educational training; about the teacher-student relationship. (PATTO, 2013, p. 308).

The author also argues that in the Virtual University, classes recorded in a few minutes disguise the teacher-student relationship, making intelligent and sensitive training unfeasible. In this case, she is incisive about the criticism of an education that omits reflection and moves towards teaching through the productivist logic, going in the opposite direction of the critical theories proposed by modern society, since the "loss of temporality implies the loss of depth and vision of totality" (PATTO, 2013, p. 308).

Considering the technological evolution of the present day, unlike the Lancaster method, a quick end to Distance Education is not foreseen, but on the contrary, they bet on it more and more, the initial and continuing training of several people around the world. However, it is noteworthy that the objectives of both pedagogical proposals are similar, in view of cost reduction, easy profit and the possibility of serving many students at the same time. In the case of distance education, the academic community and educators show concerns about the formats offered by this modality in Brazil, investing in investigations that aim to resignify the proposals and contribute to the democratization of education in the country.

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