


PAULO FREIRE'S APPROACHES AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION: CHALLENGES AND POSSIBILITIES IN PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to analyze the approximations of Paulo Freire and Physical Education, based on the challenges and possibilities in the pedagogical practice of this curricular component. It is a qualitative study, using bibliographic research in journals in the field of education and physical education, in the period from 2019 to 2024, using the technique of categorical content analysis by theme for data analysis. It is concluded that there are challenges to bring Paulo Freire and Physical Education closer together, due to the initial training of teachers, small production of research that reflects and treats these themes in their centrality, however, there is the possibility of approaching this knowledge in an organic, systematized and intentional way, with experiences that evidence these approximations from reflections guided by dialogue, problematization and criticality in basic education and higher education.

Keywords: Paulo Freire. Physical education. Challenges and Possibilities.

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INTRODUCTION

This text aims to analyze the approximations of Paulo Freire and Physical Education: challenges and possibilities in the pedagogical practice of this curricular component and its interfaces, bringing to light a debate about the elements of this theorist articulated in an organic and systematized way the experiences in physical education, providing an opportunity for a debate fruitful in view of the contributions that the author brings in the field of education, human and social sciences, philosophy and sociology.

In this sense, this research is an excerpt from the doctoral study in education that is in progress, which aims to bring together the discussions about the theory of social representations that seeks to understand the representations of Paulo Freire in the initial training in Physical Education of the public Higher Education Institutions – HEIs in the city of Recife - PE, having as interlocution with the subjects: teachers and students of the Physical Education Degree course.

Paulo Freire is the patron of Brazilian education with productions translated into more than 180 countries, with 35 Honorary Doctorates from universities in Europe and America, and hundreds of other mentions and awards, such as Education for Peace, from UNESCO, which Freire received in 1986 (REIS, 2021), being considered the third author with the highest number of citations on google scholar (GREEN, 2016) .

Despite Paulo Freire's density and contributions to education and the development of science in various areas of knowledge, the aforementioned author is still not widespread in productions that bring his centrality in line with physical education, given recent productions (BOSSLE, 2019; DUARTE, NEIRA, 2021), weakening initial training and the development of organic and systematized work.

Aiming to contribute to the debate about Paulo Freire and Physical Education, the study emerged, through a dialogue with the specialized literature from searches in journals in the year 2019 to the present date, making it possible to understand the production scenario on the themes in a connected way, providing possibilities for discussion about physical education and its theory in a critical and reflective perspective.

There is the possibility of approximating Paulo Freire and Physical Education, based on organized and systematized actions that value dialogue, autonomy and problematization as primordial elements for the development of pedagogical practice in the light of Freire's theory, which is treated in its centrality, respecting the knowledge of the students and the

local reality articulating the specificity that the referred curricular component materializes in the various formative spaces.

However, bringing these references together is a great challenge in view of the initial training of teachers, a tradition in this area of knowledge that privileges sports and physical fitness aspects to the detriment of emergent and humanistic perspectives. In addition, there is a discrete production that evidences the elements of Freire's theory in an articulated way to the pedagogical practice of physical education in a systematized way.

METHODOLOGICAL DECISIONS

We adopted qualitative research to carry out this study, as it keeps in its specificity the understanding of related aspects, motivations, aspirations, beliefs and values that cannot be reduced to the operationalization of variables (MINAYO, DESLANDES and GOMES, 2016), as well as subsidizing the bibliographic research (GIL, 2008), to understand in the light of the theory of social representations (MOSCOVICI, 2003) the approximations of Paulo Freire and Physical Education: challenges and possibilities.

To do so, we used the technique of categorical content analysis by theme (BARDIN, 2011) to understand the data of this production, in addition to providing inference about the research findings. This technique allows structuring the analyses based on empirical and analytical categories³, the latter being the object of analysis and reflection of this study.

The analytical category in our work dealt with Paulo Freire and Physical Education, which evidenced from the bibliographic research that comprised through a cut of the period from 2019 to 2024 in journals with qualitative strata A1 to B2 in National Journals in the field of education and especially in physical education, which bring in their core and specificity significant contributions to the debate in vogue, in addition to the rigor and legitimacy that they represent for the scientific community, generating greater trustworthiness among peers.

As for our cut, the search was based on the use of keywords: Paulo Freire and physical education; liberating physical education; Paulo Freire our physical education, in addition to the floating reading to identify from the abstracts of the productions whether the

³ "The first are those that historically retain the fundamental social relations and can be considered beacons for the knowledge of the object in its general aspects. They themselves involve various degrees of abstraction, generalization and approximation. The second are those built for operational purposes, aiming at fieldwork (the empirical phase) or from fieldwork. They have the property of being able to apprehend the determinations and specificities that are expressed in empirical reality" (MINAYO, 1998, p. 94).

theme Paulo Freire and physical education and/or unfolding of his theory, such as revolutionary praxis.

It is possible to establish a dialogue between Paulo Freire and physical education in a fruitful, dialogical and humanistic way about its elements articulated with the pedagogical practice of this curricular component, although there are challenges for its materialization that goes from initial training, systematization of knowledge and fragility that, many times, can make theoretical-methodological contributions unfeasible.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Paulo Freire is the patron of Brazilian education with productions translated into more than 180 countries, being notably recognized for his work and intervention in education and social movements, with 35 honorary doctorates from universities in Europe and America, and hundreds of other mentions and awards, such as Education for Peace, from UNESCO, that Freire received in 1986 (REIS, 2021).

According to the study developed by researcher Green (2016), professor at the London School of Economics, in partnership with the google scholar platform identified that Paulo Freire is the third largest author with the most citations in the world in the area of human sciences, accounting for 72,359 citations, behind only the American philosopher Thomas Kuhn (81,311) and the sociologist, also American, Everett Rogers (72,780).

Such elements reveal the relevance and scope of Freire's thought has been assuming in a global way, and it is essential to read, reflect and contextualize, given that his teachings reflect in a critical and reflective way, covering a range of information related to education, human rights, social sciences, philosophy, school, curriculum and teacher training.

Despite this, Paulo Freire during his production and intervention in the various social spaces that he traveled throughout his life (social movements, university, church and before, during and after exile) physical education was not the object of reflection and analysis, due first to his initial training that did not deal with this area of knowledge, making it difficult to approximate his theory with the pedagogical practice of this curricular component, although its founding elements and understanding of reality and human formation could serve as a reference for the construction of proposals that would bring this dialogue closer.

In the field of physical education, the presence of Paulo Freire is not something so recent, as his ideas and influences have been present since the 1980s (Medina, 1983) and, in the 1990s, from the studies of Kunz (1991, 1994), who deepened in their references elements based on the levels of consciousness – intransitive consciousness, naïve transitive awareness and critical transitive awareness, in addition to communication, dialogue, problematization, freedom, transformation, envisioning practices that would make it possible to think didactic-pedagogical about moving and learning in the field of bodily practices (FURTADO, 2023).

However, despite these initial attempts to discuss the approximations between Paulo Freire and physical education, they had a small adhesion of works that dealt with these objects of study in an articulated way, making it impossible to have a fruitful dialogue in a critical and reflective perspective, with a great challenge for the development of proposals that bring this centrality into vogue.

Bossle (2019) identified, from a search in the CAPES dissertation and thesis database, through a refined search, uniting terms such as school physical education and Paulo Freire, only six productions on the subject were found (VENTORIM, 2000; LIRA NETO, 2008; FRANCO SO, NEIRA, 2014; PERTUZATTI, DICKMAN, 2016; FERNANDES *et al.*, 2017, NOGUEIRA *et al.*, 2018).

Corroborating this thought, Nogueira et al. (2018) based on a search in national and international databases in the period from 1990 to 2017, using the terms Paulo Freire, Physical Education and Body Practices, identifying only nineteen works that use Freirean concepts as central. In addition, according to the authors, with regard to school physical education, only two productions dealt specifically with the theme in vogue.

Such arguments reveal the incipience, until that moment, of research that articulated Paulo Freire and Physical Education in an organic and systematized way, weakening the training of teachers and pedagogical practice of this curricular component, because the aforementioned thinker and his theory and praxis can contribute in a critical, reflective and humanistic way articulated with this curricular component.

The absence of an articulation of physical education in the light of Freire's theory makes practices and reflections in the initial and continuing training of teachers unfeasible, in the context of basic education and higher education, due to the pedagogical practice decontextualized from reality, uncritical, given the fragility of the training process and the systematization of knowledge that has historically been incorporated into physical education

(FENSTERSEIFER; GONZÁLEZ, 2007; GONZÁLEZ; FENSTERSEIFER, 2009a; ROCK; NASCIMENTO, 2017; BAGNARA; FENSTERSEIFER, 2019b).

Such studies reveal the importance of elaborating an organic and systematic work in physical education training, from a critical and reflective bias that understands the teaching and learning process in a structured and hierarchical way, with an intentional and organized approximation of the theoretical-practical elements, contributing to a human formation and quality of teaching of the referred curricular component.

There is, in fact, a fragility in initial training in physical education, either because of the very tradition of the area, which still has a focus on anatomical-physical aspects, often favoring technical and instrumental knowledge to the detriment of its articulation with theoretical-practical competencies (AZEVEDO, PEREIRA, SÁ, 2011), with a fragmentation of knowledge in the teaching and learning process.

This fragmentation hinders training in physical education, with a dichotomy between technical and pedagogical knowledge, generating a mismatch and decontextualization of knowledge in the training process, given that this knowledge is essential for the initial training of the subjects, having its articulation something consubstantial for professional development and intervention in the pedagogical practice in the school.

In this sense, the challenges about initial training in physical education denote the fragility of the articulation of theoretical-practical knowledge, in addition to the lack of systematization of knowledge, hindering the teaching and learning process within schools and discussions about Paulo Freire and Physical Education, as this theme is something emerging in the discussions within the scope of this curricular component.

However, there are works that have been presenting an approximation of Paulo Freire and physical education, based on experiences that show an articulation in the pedagogical practice of school physical education and productions in the light of Freirean theory

The studies of (NOGUEIRA *et al.*, 2019; DUARTE, NEIRA, 2021; SOUSA, NOGUEIRA and MALDONADO, 2019), bring significant contributions to the approximation of Paulo Freire and Physical Education, deepening reflections in the light of Freire's theory on the organization of the curriculum in a Brazilian learning community, weaving important elements for the materialization of physical education and Paulo Freire in a curricular discussion, providing a rich debate for discussions of the elements of this author's theory and the specificity of the curricular component of education In addition, there was the

elaboration of a book about Paulo Freire and Physical Education, bringing to light reflections on the use of its elements articulated with physical education.

From the year 2019, a movement of researchers, productions and construction of literary work emerges in the field of physical education aiming to bring Paulo Freire and this curricular component closer together in an organic, systematized and dialogued way, weaving reflections on the centrality of this author articulated with physical education, enabling his intervention in different formative spaces in formal and non-formal education, there was an expansion of works and proposals that addressed these themes in an articulated way.

Souza, Freire and Miranda, 2023; Maldonado, 2024, converge in their studies that there has been an advance in the field of research at the graduate level (dissertations and theses), as a result of productions in congresses, in the publication of articles, book chapters, showing more and more, that fundamental research and experience in the light of Freirean theory has been incorporated into physical education, considering the local reality, being incorporated into the daily practice in a critical and dialogical perspective.

Maldonado (2024), identified a production of 111 productions resulting from these sections mentioned above, adding up to an important advance if we consider the period before 2018, highlighting the pertinent advance that physical education and its researchers have been adding efforts to in the search for evidence and their practices articulated in the light of Freire's theory.

The author categorized the productions into four categories, namely: legacy of Freire's thought for School Physical Education; epistemological bases of liberating education in School Physical Education; critical-liberating curriculum of Physical Education; and political-pedagogical experiences of Physical Education inspired by Freire's thought (MALDONADO, 2024, p.5).

This study reveals relevant contributions to the organic approximation of Paulo Freire and Physical Education, evidencing theoretical-methodological subsidies through the systematization of knowledge and research, from a dialogue with the critical-liberating pedagogy in School Physical Education classes, in addition to gathering productions organized through the scientific works available in the Paulo Freire room, organized by the Brazilian College of Sports Sciences in 2021, and publications carried out between 2022 and 2023.

In our research, from the cut in journals in the field of education and physical education with qualis A1 to B2, we identified a universe of 19 productions, 12 of which are related to education, while 07 works in the field of physical education, showing a recent advance in research that brings Paulo Freire and physical education in its centrality.

Research in the field of education, we found 9 productions in journals of qualis A strata, being distributed in A1 (1 work), A2 (2 works), A3 (2 works); A4(05 papers), while in journals with qualis strata b1 to b2, we specifically identified 2 productions in a B1 journal.

In the field of physical education, we inferred 07 productions in the journals, with 1 work in an A2 journal; 02 papers in the A4 journal, while 03 researches in the B2 journals; 1 work on the web qualis B1, bringing to light diverse contributions on Freire's approaches to physical education from a critical and reflective perspective.

The studies dealt with the categories praxis, dialogue, autonomy, humanization, popular education, problematization and pedagogical practice (emphasis added), providing theoretical-methodological elements for conscious and humanistic decision-making in the various contexts and interfaces that encompasses physical education, committed to social transformation and improvement of teaching.

This improvement takes place through organic, systematized, and qualitative work that contributes to pedagogical practice, in favor of a counter-hegemonic pedagogy of work and research (Nogueira et al 2021), which recognizes the need for a change in the perspective of sports, biological, and elitist practices in Physical Education, in favor of practices that value the selection and democratic organization of manifestations of body culture (Monteiro, 2020), envisioning pedagogical practices that highlight dialogue (Bonfietti; Prodócimo, 2021; SPOLAOR, et al, 2023; Farias et al.), as a founding category for professional development and social practice.

Such research reveals the importance of these categories imbricated in the pedagogical practice of physical education, recognizing the need for attitudinal, conceptual and procedural changes in the different formative spaces, privileging dialogue as a sinequanon human condition for the construction and development of knowledge, valuing the identity and uniqueness of the subjects, which they express in life in society and professional activity.

As for professional intervention, the studies dealt with the articulation of Freirean thought and the teaching of physical education in basic education, linked to experiences in federal professional education at the secondary level (MONTEIL *et al*, 2021; ARAÚJO and

MALDONADO, 2021, 2023); in addition to experiences related to higher education (LOPES, MALDONADO and PRODÓCIMO, 2023; SAMPAIO and SURDI), bringing to light essential elements for pedagogical praxis in a critical, reflective and ethical bias (LEITÃO, ESPOLOAR and PRODÓCIMO, 2022)

These researches brought significant contributions to the approximation of Paulo Freire and physical education, proposing a fruitful dialogue at the different levels of education, with a systematization of knowledge based on the specificity of the knowledge inherent to this curricular component, in addition to providing opportunities for practices that favor human development and universal ethics in an ontological perspective.

There are possibilities for the development of the pedagogical practice of physical education articulated with Freire's thought and perspectives, and there is a need for a structuring that provides opportunities for the selection, organization, selection and systematization of knowledge in an organic and intentional way, providing theoretical-methodological elements for the formation of subjects in the different formative spaces, going beyond the walls of the school and in favor of a popular bias.

In this regard, studies (FURTADO, 2021; PALAFOX and LACERDA, 2022; MARTINS, R. M.; NOGUEIRA, 2021; NOGUEIRA, MALDONADO and Freire, 2023; SHAH C. A.; COSTA, T. B.; EHRENBERG, 2021), which has been weaving important reflections on the legitimacy of the curricular component, identification of the dialectical conception of corporeality from the concept of being-more, in addition, the thematization of the conscious body in school physical education, political-pedagogical and epistemological principles of School Physical Education in the light of Liberating Pedagogy and decolonial dialogue through the approximation of Paulo Freire and Frantz Fanon.

Such research presents a diversity of approximation of Freire's theory and physical education, from the struggle for its legitimacy within the school, as well as its specificity through issues related to the use and thematization of the body and its multiplicity of expressions to the issues of an epistemic and political nature that they express from the approximation of this pedagogical against hegemonic, which provides opportunities for decolonial and anti-racist dialogues in the various training spaces.

It is important to establish a decolonial proposal in physical education, which recognizes the potentialities and contributions of the subjects in the construction and materialization of the pedagogical practice, incorporating elements from the Freirean perspective and dialogue with other authors, favoring the valorization of black identity and

its articulation in society, in order to contribute to the emancipation of the subjects and overcoming the colonial education system.

The overcoming of this system occurs through practices that value subaltern people, the use of counter-hegemonic methodologies and practices in school, valuing dialogue as a founding category and adopting a more collaborative, participatory and plural mode of production, having in people and their daily practices essential tools.

In summary, the works on the approximations of Paulo Freire and physical education revealed a multiplicity of paths for the adoption of pedagogical practices in a critical and reflective way, in the various formative spaces (school, social movement and social praxis), at the different levels and modality of teaching, from basic education to higher education.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The approximations of Paulo Freire and Physical Education is a great challenge in the pedagogical practice of this curricular component, given the absence of reflections and practices that materialize this knowledge in an organic and systematized way in the process of initial and continuing training of teachers and their interfaces, having their praxis reflected and materialized in a centrality and specificity of this curricular component, lacking research that deepens the theme in vogue.

The low production of knowledge about Paulo Freire and physical education carried out until 2018, shows a fragility at that time, of research and systematization of knowledge that brought Freire's discussions closer to the pedagogical practice of the aforementioned curricular component.

From 2019 onwards, there was an important increase in the production of knowledge about Paulo Freire and Physical Education in journals specialized in education and in the specific area, weaving reflections in a critical, dialogical and humanistic way, with an organic and consubstantial articulation, through experiences present in basic education and higher education

There are countless possibilities for approximation of physical education and Paulo Freire, from actions linked to the founding categories of this theorist in a critical, dialogical and humanistic perspective, providing theoretical-practical elements for its materialization of physical education and its specificity, from a conscious, organized and systematized work, contributing to counter-hegemonic and liberating practices in the different formative spaces,

which values and recognizes the potential of subjects and their multiplicities for the construction and development of collaborative practices and social interventions.

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