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Innovative pedagogies

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Abstract

This article describes a pedagogical experience with a video to explore the school patrimony. The experience was held with university students from the History course and reflects the pedagogical possibilities of the Proposed Virtual School Museum. This experience intended to show the cultural heritage present in the school. Having the TIC as mediators, data was collected and materials produced in order to be used both in the classroom and as distant learning. The methodology adopted promoted the work with media, the local History, the school History, its spaces and objects. With this experience it was possible to discuss the teacher's training processes, to rethink pedagogical practices and to produce a flexible working environment for the teacher trainees either in basic or higher schools. Using videos, blogs and photographs it constituted an enriched learning environment and contributed for debates about curricula involving blended teaching and learning. The creativity of the teacher trainees was evident in the way they surpassed the more routine stances and constituted good practices of transitions to open and flexible learning. In conclusion, the experience showed that educational practices can and should focus more on the learning beyond the classroom. Furthermore, the use of informational technologies was an important tool in the process of mobilizing school communities.

Keywords: Innovative pedagogical practices; virtual museum; school patrimony.

1 INTRODUCTION

The article originates from a methodological proposal by the Supervised Internship II module, developed with students of the History course, within a Brazilian public university. It lends itself to a reflection of the obtained results from the guidance of that pedagogical training practice, starting with the emancipatory elements deemed significant for teacher education.

The methodological proposal, as structured for the Supervised Internship II module, intends to be an innovative view of the pedagogical practice, by the way that it was accomplished and, specifically, by the way that the cultural heritages of schools were incorporated. The use of media was thought of as

an interventional way to preserve the memory and the history of an institution within the scope of the History teacher education. To the student interns, it was proposed that they would learn the history of the school, its objects and spaces, in order to use that knowledge in their own classes, during the practical training by adopting a local History perspective.

The proposal was characterized by the need to re-think the traditional practices of the student interns, as well as the changes to be implemented. By following Kortagen, Loughran and Russel (2006, p. 1022), it tried to “(arrive) at a pedagogy of teacher education that is both empirically based and practically oriented”. Therefore, we gathered the students on a collective discussion over some of the issues referring to the school collections already menaced in three of the oldest schools of São João del Rei, and over some of the themes to be explored on the completion of their works with such concepts as: school equipment culture, school patrimony, school objects, spaces and educational times. The student interns chose the following topics as their initial proposals: a) The school time and space — the past and present of characters, environments and materials; b) Bullying — the violence of students on those who “deviate from the pattern” in the everyday history of the school; c) The spaces and the memories of the primary school.

The aim of these proposals was to reach the teachers and technicians of those schools. All would end up participating in the video “school virtual museum” — this required some training in the domain of communication technologies. We invited a media student⁹ and designed a workshop to provide them with — Video-Museum, composed by four online oriented modules: 1) Introduction to video-museum (and presenting the workshop), 2) Planning the screenplay, 3) Techniques and subsidies to the recording, and 4) Editing — the pacing of the video (and a tutorial of Movie-Maker).

The development of these proposals was differentiated depending on the techniques and approaches used. Not only the knowledge as well as the affections and feelings of the student interns were set into play. In all cases videos were made, some combined it with photography and others complemented their work by the creation of a blog. Different approaches were used: from the material culture embodied in the school objects and buildings; to wall writing graffiti in walls, courtyards, toilets and classrooms of a public middle school; and to the memories experienced by a former student with African descent.

This didactic proposal originated by the necessity to revise the already crystalized pedagogical discourses and was embodied by the execution of the practical dimension of the student interns at their assigned schools. This approach was not intended as a modernization of History classes but as an articulation of the historical knowledge with new languages, by reflecting on the process. (Jesus, 2007, p.97). As Nalme Jesus states, “video is an instrument of memory and documental registry, transmitter and maintainer of facts happened”. (Ibidem). It was also necessary because of the unsatisfactory and troublesome conditions that occurred after the alteration of the academic calendar of a Brazilian federal public institution, where the Supervised Internship II module was taking place. This situation would be seen as problematic because of the change of beginning and ending of the academic year of 2012¹⁰. Such a change would disrupt the completion of the curricular

⁹ The online workshop was oriented by Eduardo Gaio, a student finalist of the Communication course of the UFSJ, in four sessions in the span of four weeks.

¹⁰ Those activities were planned for the months of December, January and February, usually school holiday.

proposal, both pertaining to the guidelines as to the implementation of projects within the scope of the public school.

With the new didactic and pedagogical proposal the guidance of the Supervised Internship II module was developed through the months of November 2012 to February 2013, accordingly to the adapted calendar to suppress the academic months occupied by the university teachers strike. The aim of the project was to develop a pedagogical action close to primary and middle school students within the context of the discussion for a new teacher education model.

The Licenciateship and the Bachelor's Degree are understood as two different teaching platforms within the educational institution, articulated but enjoying a relative autonomy. A Bachelor's Degree will train a student at the level of the acquisition of specific knowledge, of the discipline of thought and skills, by the way in which a question is made and a problem is addressed, always in view of a certain range of professional occupations. Nevertheless, in Social Sciences, one of the most immediate occupations is teaching, to all levels of education each with its own specificities. Education, as a main field of action within contemporary societies, faces specific issues and constitutes a complex and precise empirical field. The search for solutions will necessarily lead to complex approaches and research methodologies, as well as multi-referential interventions that characterize the Education Sciences.

To erect the field of knowledge as the sole variable of the teaching activity is to ignore not only a vast field of scientific knowledge, but also the reality of the student as a person and its insertion within the social context. Although the changes can represent processes that generate insecurity, anxiety and opposition, they are necessary so that new teaching attitudes are implemented — taking into account that to reflect on their own practices it may point to new pedagogical possibilities. The quality of pedagogical practices is, mostly, the responsibility of teachers and the organizational climate of every department. These will sometimes become hermetic structures, keepers of lore necessary only as knowledge in their own professional field of action and their own political options.

2. Overcoming issues and work planning

It is worth of mention that there was an initial opposition towards the proposal set in place by the course students, who consider themselves historians at the end of their training, as well by the insecurity of the teaching staff (of the same course) towards the pedagogical discourse. The fear of the new, the unknown or of a subject that is not mastered, appeared as the focus of opposition within this context — particularly the classroom space and the familiarity with a given school.

On the first focus of opposition, the students, we can say that the students have a difficulty in placing themselves as future teachers in the discussion of teacher education. Being within a History

The removal of a teacher for postdoctoral studies, made the monitoring and the establishment of guidelines for the Supervised Internship II module even more troublesome.

licentiate ship, structured by historians, they build their own identity as historians and will not recognize themselves as future teachers. Teaching is seen as something to which they have to recur in order to work but will appear devalued to their eyes as a field of practice, not to produce knowledge. In addition, the seats of power, coordination and academic legitimacy in their course are occupied by historians. With this predispositions and the symbolic devaluation of the teaching profession, they are not in a position that allows them to understand the most pressing pedagogical necessities for the intern, which needs to be trained in the conception of practical activities, so that he can act in a public school.

The classroom, in a licentiate ship, can be understood by many as a doubly neglected space, since both the teaching practical activities and the activities on specific knowledge theories — History, in this case — do not attend to the necessities of teacher training. If, on the one hand, the classroom space can be used to create a chronogram of directed readings, most often made by the historian (according to information given by the students themselves), on the other hand it will not be used as a laboratory to question the issues referring to the teaching practice in satisfactory conditions. The discussion with prior readings, referring to the school and the subjects involved therein, would enable those interested in teacher training with a different perception of the classroom, hailing from either the specific or the pedagogical training.

The premise for training at Brazilian universities is a three year course, pertaining to a specific scientific domain (Philosophy, History, Math, Sociology, etc.), followed by one year of pedagogical modules. At the end of the third year the student will obtain a Bachelor's degree and, at the end of the fourth year, it is designated by a Licentiate ship. The perception that the student has of his role consists of his identification with the teachers of the Bachelor's degree and ignores his condition as a future teacher of primary and middle school. The scientific domains structured into courses has been understood by students and teachers as the "arena of power", which opposes the conservation of a classical Bachelor's degree model against the integration of specific and pedagogical training in view of the professional — the teacher. This is explained, to Oliveira (2007), with the heritage of standardized training within the curricular structure.

"We are heirs to a Napoleonic model of university training, where we have the initial training at the substantiation disciplines; those specific to the field and, at the final years, we approach ourselves from the theoretic field of pedagogy and education, through the study of disciplines such as Didactics, Methodology and, finally, Internship." (Idem, p. 33)

To believe that a disarticulated approach of the Bachelor's degree with Education through a short list of modules can provide the discourse and, above all, can create dispositions to alter the pedagogical practice is to ignore that the education sciences represent a pursuit to elucidate the problems existing within the teaching strategies. To maintain the belief in that way of approach can be the fertile condition for the negation of the pedagogical knowledge. Such belief will be incapable of training subjects to reflect on their own teaching condition or to make them involved with education (teaching/learning) strategies, to which they are destined as future teachers.

In the proposal to work with media, the local History, the school History, of its objects and spaces, everything is offering the conditions to discuss over teacher training strategies, to rethink the

pedagogical practice and to make the work of the student intern more flexible. The option to work with the students with the use of modern media created an enriched learning environment, into a pedagogical condition where it is permitted to meditate and debate critically over its pedagogical practice. Therefore, "[...] such a course must establish the minimum of skills to be obtained, and function in such a way that combines the demands set forth today by the initial training with the requirements discussed by those who work on continuous training" Abras (1998, p.116)

Other agents responsible for the teacher training are remembered by Sacristam (2002), as they carry ideas for the practice contributing for the educational experience, therefore participating in the construction of the practice. These agents can be the educational policy, those who legitimize it, parliamentarians, teacher unions or other organizations, individual teachers, opinion makers, parents associations, technicians, specialists, the students. To conclude, he states that "If the operability or authorship over the practice is split, the knowledge and the practice connection will have as many agents as those who share it". (Idem).

Before this, how can we not think of the teacher as an opinion maker, including towards his own praxis? In a practice that offers the possibility to create new elements to respond to the challenges of distance accessibility, that the media technologies make available today, we can think that such a reflection can help towards the change of student practices by including the role of mediator. The accomplished work allowed for the collection of data and the production of materials susceptible of being used in both the classroom education as well as distance education. The script structure was specific for each school, so that by knowing it better we could overcome some deficiencies in the debate over the training of the pedagogical practice.

3. The school cultural heritage as a work proposal for Supervised Internship II

The aim of the proposal presented to the students of the Supervised Internship II module was for them to work with communication media in education, while testing at the same time the pedagogical possibilities of these new tools. It was defined as the main goal to select activities of the pedagogical practice, organize them and develop them in the scope of the primary and middle school teaching, while considering the viability of the same process in other educational spaces as well.

It was also considered the necessity of facing the student interns against challenges that would make them to position themselves as education professionals, in training. It was intended that they should analyse the possibilities, the limitations, the rights and wrongs of uniting the compromised pedagogical practiced with the humane training of the interns and their students, targets of their educational action. Simultaneously, it was predicted that the work to be developed would mobilize each school, in its institutional entirety and in its learning context.

The proposal contained, as a way of evaluation, the elaboration of a final written text that would respect three stages and respective items: 1. pre-project with the stages to accomplish — collection of data, organization and discussion, presentation to the teachers and to the pedagogical team; 2. structure of the project — proposal goals, proposition/theme, specific conceptual elements, methodological elements conducive of the relation between the educational heritage and the didactic transposition; 3. production of a "virtual museum" video to be used in the classes by the student interns in their appointed schools; 4. exhibition and reflection over the "virtual museum"

and results obtained; 5. presentation and analysis of the different experiences of the University — one session with all the student interns involved; 6. self-evaluation, which demanded that the student interns would describe in their final report the way by which they completed the proposal, and systematize the achieved results with their students in the relation teaching/learning and other impacts of their work.

The school, understood here both as the physical and the social space, would be mobilized as a resource and as an element for the co-participation in the teaching/learning process — following the propositions of Gramsci, in the establishment of a unitary school, capable of reacting to privatization, so fashionable in our culture. A public school which would develop a general and humanist culture, beyond the simple specialized technical training. Nevertheless, this current tendency seems to be losing ground towards a more utilitarian view, if we consider the participation of the parents and the students, evermore demanding of education and the reception of a specialized knowledge to respond to market demands. Meanwhile, the school rebuild in its History and the use of information technologies proved to be an important instrument for the mobilization of school communities.

It is impossible not to observe this critique of Gramsci (1989) to the way of distributing work within the school and its consequences on the learning of students — namely, in the sense of analysing a school where the organization of time-space does not respect the rhythm of psychological and behavioural development of the students. By evaluating the complete disarticulation, existent in the Italy of his time, between the school and the university, he observed:

“This is why, in the unitary school, the last stage should be *conceived and organized* as the decisive stage, in which one learns to create the fundamental values of ‘humanism’, the intellectual self-discipline and the moral autonomy necessary for a late specialization, be it of a scientific character (university studies), be it of a immediate productive practice (industry, bureaucracy, market, etc.)”. (Idem, p. 124).

The pedagogical proposal elaborated by us contains in its process the restructuring of the work of future teachers beginning with the introduction of new technologies for the production of materials and in the communication, the easing of the creative production process, the mobilization for the cooperative work and the alterations in the usual system to guide a student intern.

The proposal, while an instrument of training, was not structured with basis on a methodological option admittedly different from the ‘classical’ patterns. Its conducting wire was to propose “situations that would put into conflict the knowledge, the beliefs and the feelings, in a way adjusted to the level of development” of the student interns. (Nolasco, 2013, p.40). The criterion was to start from the reality of the training experience in a given school to then introduce a critical reflection and a process of changing of attitude. More than immediate results, we were trying to test the possibilities of the implemented training instrument, to follow the process and analyse its impact in the training. The proposal aimed to contribute towards the production of knowledge that would help to think and install alternatives to train teachers.

For the guidance role we have tried to create new pedagogical possibilities in order to go further than a simple challenge: the courage to face already crystalized groups, to question one’s own practices, to be coherent with the demands of the curricular plan and the pedagogical discourse.

This set forth the obligation to evaluate the institutional conditions so that it would be possible to develop this instrument successfully. Therefore, the resort to a basic ethical demand was taken into account — the freedom of choice to participate from the person in training. As their mentor, I proposed myself to develop an accompaniment practice that would satisfy the undertaken collective commitment with the students and the schools. A coherent commitment with the academic project of promotion for a conscious society, that wants for a better life and work conditions.

“It is in that troubled reality that the teacher will have to develop his own pedagogical practice, and the great challenge that presents itself is how to deal with such a diversity of situations and singular problems for which one does not have an answer or a solution *a priori*.” (Cerezer, 2007, p. 23).

4. The practice of educational work on school cultural heritage by the use of a virtual museum

As a requirement of today's world, the great majority of students and teachers use the computer to acquire the benefits of quick and updated information, for organization and communication. Through the use of PowerPoint, they find support in methodological resources by its use as an illustrative information carrier, so it is often used as a didactic tool. However, its use as a requirement to react to new behaviour, as an interventional tool, has been quite restricted. The student intern faces a new situation when acting in the classroom and brings a new look to the teaching/learning process as well as proposals of new connections to knowledge.

The pedagogical proposal presented to the student interns in the context of this module was to work over a theme about the very own school where the internship would be taken part by using the possibilities of media. With it, our intent was to valorise the History, memory and patrimony of the centenary São João del-Rei schools. Like in “distance education the institution teaches”(Lentell, 2012, p. 25)-These concepts use elements of the school material culture (Felgueiras, 2010), that aggregate knowledge and can be pertinently used in the study of educational and cultural (general and particular) heritage.

The school patrimony will I considered as a cultural instrument in very different senses: as diffuser of ideas, as generator of new concepts, memorialistic or aggregator of new knowledge. Through its various approaches, the patrimony is a flexible pedagogical medium that allows us to come closer to History: local History, school History, of teacher training, of teaching strategies, of organization models, of ideas and pedagogical utopias. The school virtual museum originated from the aforementioned experiences.

By studying the school it becomes a cultural object that can be explored in several ways, by the use of different medium: video, photography, paintings, magazines, etc. The school patrimony as a theme becomes museum material when you exhibit its reality, physically or virtually. The option was to mediate the relation between the student interns and their teaching training through the virtual museum. The goal of the proposal was to **present and reflect** over the several pedagogical possibilities that could be explored by this new look on the school. It contemplates historiographical research practices, collections preservation, school material culture studies, History safeguard and institutional memory. The student interns had all the liberty to define criteria and select objects and spaces, based in their History training.

These practices enabled different experiences, as well as the enlargement of the school vision

(previously restricted to the universe of the classroom), by underlining its importance to other educational and training dimensions, and to cultural actions within museological spaces. These spaces contemplate within themselves the idea of being the trustees of material patrimony, meanings and immaterial and educational values. The school space has been valued in History of Education as the public patrimony that sets forth behaviours, meanings and *cultural habitus* to the new generations of researchers (Viñao Frago, 1998, Escolano Benito, 2000, Felgueiras, 2004, 2010, Lawn, 2009). The proposal of a pedagogical work starting within that same school space with patrimonial value and, in a way, turned into a museum, allows for new readings according to the roles of the subjects involved: students, teachers and student interns. This practical training seems to give answer to the necessity of the educational system to train teachers with a differentiated cultural view. This can be characterized as a historical view, attentive towards an ample and multicultural educational horizon, which brings possibilities of connexions with other knowledge acquired by their students. This kind of training brings new elements to the scientific debate in its pedagogical and historical dimensions; it enlarges the reading of the world and the very quality in the writing of the final report. Accordingly to Felgueiras (2011, p. 67):

“In Portugal, the preservation of educational patrimony and its collections emerges almost simultaneously amongst teachers and education historians. The school memories, the search and guard of collections of teachers were introduced in Portuguese and Brazilian historiography in the 1990s”.

The conscience of a national identity, which appears as a legacy to be passed on, demands an education for the preservation and respect of both public and private patrimony. These contain practices and knowledge that intervene in the historical reality of the subjects involved in the pedagogical process. Given that the everyday school also involves the intervention of that same reality, it becomes imperative to consider it as an essential element in the construction of educational strategies and training processes of student interns and the very students with whom they work. It becomes clearer in the case of the proposal b), in which a current theme (bullying) relates with the preservation of the school space today and the public space that is the school.

5. A contribution for the pedagogical training

The content of the didactic proposal “Pedagogical innovation with the school virtual museum within the school” (at the final stage of their training) provided, in a complex space of articulation of theoretical and practical knowledge and plural disciplinary knowledge, the mediation between student interns and elementary and middle school students, from the spaces where the schooling takes place. It allowed for the development of teaching/learning activities and for the debate on the teaching practice. The student interns saw this special moment in their training as a unique stage of autonomous creation, which involved everyday school experiences, shared with the teaching of History of knowledge. The final report considerations of one of my students corroborate this statement:

“Without any doubt, the presence of the educational dimension in the school space, in view of the fact that not only in the classroom but outside, in the courtyard, the refectory, the library and in other environments, the relations between people take place naturally, revealing the everyday school life and its schooling function. (...) This spatial and educational dimension of school, analysed

as a fruit of the internship experience, allowed for the enlargement of our perception of the school in all its dimensions. In this way, the innovative internship proposal revealed to us, as future teachers, the understanding that the teaching practices can be revealed in the multiple functions and uses of the school space.” (Nolasco, 2013, p. 48).

Still accordingly to the aforementioned student, not only the spaces, but also the objects found within possess a representative and symbolic meaning, as:

“They serve as effective tools in the training of the human being, pertaining to the behaviour both inside and outside the school. Therefore, a new interpretation can be developed from material elements that constitute the school space, which is dealt with naturally and daily. Such an interpretation carries different aspects: social, economic, cultural and political, and it focuses in its structure the historical dimension of education. The fact is that all the school environments can be used as teaching instruments, a behaviour appropriation tool that define the human being, therefore its complexity.” (Ibidem).

This student intern, in this stage, had the opportunity to address the sociocultural reality of the school, understanding it as the generating source of the work produced to educational and cultural levels. The school where this student undertook his internship as a teacher in training no longer was the devaluated place for the teaching profession but it acquired the status of complex sociocultural reality that becomes an object of cultural heritage in their curricula. For the primary and middle school students it is a new content that makes accessible the social historical time, be it national or communitarian. For the university student, as a teacher trainee, it becomes a curriculum content that articulates academic knowledge of a varied nature.

The experiences quoted here extrapolate the proposal of the conventional internship, as the student interns could involve the necessary observation, with the teaching activities in the classroom and the overview of their students’ works (identifying sources, critical analysis, deepening of national History contents and patrimonial education).

The way suggested for the use of media in the internship permitted the creation of blogs and the production of videos with the school cultural patrimony, which provided the school communities with the organization of guided virtual trips within their own schools. The products of their research (debates on films, theatre plays and other cultural products) were used at the final presentation of the internship at the university space, allowing the systematization of those experiences in different school contexts.

The presentation of this work as made visible that the cultural reality in the schools, proposed by the models of a historical memory exploration where the student intern is capable of intervene with new theoretical elements, is an innovative contribute for the teaching/learning relation. It turns the school, an everyday place, into a place of patrimony. It also makes the school community to participate in the symbolic construction of the experienced reality, changing the student intern from a stranger to a collaborator by mediating his students learning with his own training.

As a training strategy, it demanded of the student interns the knowledge of the usual languages for the communication with new technologies. It constituted an enriched learning environment for the training possibilities of producing a video, writing a blog or taking pictures. The produced material

shows the potentiality of being used in distance education. It contributes for the debate of curricula involving blended teaching and learning, which is a current concern of the University.

The creativity of the student interns while overcoming workaday routines established good practices of transitions to open and flexible learning. These products can be used at the online presentation of schools, as well as be used as suggestions for the creation of cultural products, such as films or theatre plays. This very process can be replicated in other schools or distance education environments.

In the case of distance education, this proposal can also be developed by the recurrence of video conference, be it in full, as a start or at the final stages only, or even as a tutoring option.

5.1 Training elements with emancipatory potential

The freedom of the student interns to accept or reject this new proposal idea generated an attitude of autonomy and responsibility in the pedagogical practice. This autonomy was translated in audacity to face their challenges and in creativity in the use of media, both pedagogically and transdisciplinary.

In the training process, as mediators between the university and the schools, the student interns had to assume different roles. Between themselves they had to submit all the material in first instance to the board of their assigned school and its teacher group, whilst showing historic and education knowledge. Presenting the **virtual school museum** proposal to their middle school students, in such a way that would involve them in a teaching/learning situation, awoke the curiosity to research, establish connections, and raise questions. By proposing a differentiated intervention in spaces outside the classroom, without hurting the pedagogical project and the regulatory demands of the licentiateship, they have shown capability for critical reflection and moral autonomy.

It is by strengthening these principles and its practical expression that, we believe, we can achieve a change in the attitudes and behaviours in the education acting.

The guidance of the internship work in such a manner as made possible for the student interns to recognize their professional role by discovering themselves as teachers. A teacher that is conscious of the material conditions of his own existence and believes in his own creative potential as a man or a woman by living the plurality of the social and cultural relationships.

The insight, the scientific accuracy, the systematicity of the knowledge produced on the school reality demanded for the serious acceptance of his training: as future teachers, as autonomous subjects in continuous training, where the new technologies represent a vast field of possibilities for the production of knowledge and communication.

“Information technologies (ITs) are, nowadays, one of the main pillars of the transformation in knowledge and in culture. As educators working with the issues of cultural heritage, we are driven to think of ways to use these instruments to promote a polyphonic world, integrative of human diversity, as a basis to a culture of Peace” (Felgueiras, 2009,p.43).

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