

Educommunication and Journalism: an analysis of the Communication/Education relation in MT and MS from the contributions of Paulo Freire

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Abstract: The objective of this article is to identify the relevance of Educommunication for Journalism programs, with emphasis in the Paulo Freire's contributions, based on the experiences of Journalism programs in the state of Mato Grosso and Mato Grosso do Sul. The analysis starts from the applicability of Freire's thought to journalistic studies, based on the reflections of Meditsch and Faraco, Oliveira, and Ijuim, and rescues the dialogue and critical training for the exercise of Journalism capable of promoting the emancipation and liberation of protagonist subjects, who assume control and responsibility in a mediated society conciliated by communication and technology. The experiences show the appropriation of the concept of Educommunication, from Soared and Citelli, in higher education, based on the tripod "teaching, research and extension."

Keywords: journalism, educommunication; communication and education; Paulo Freire; emancipation.

Resumo: O objetivo deste artigo é identificar a pertinência da educomunicação para os cursos de jornalismo, com ênfase nas contribuições de Paulo Freire, fundamentado nas experiências realizadas em cursos de jornalismo nos estados de Mato Grosso e Mato Grosso do Sul. A análise parte da aplicabilidade do pensamento de Freire aos estudos jornalísticos, com base nas reflexões de Meditsch e Faraco, Oliveira e Ijuim, e resgata o diálogo e formação crítica para o exercício de um jornalismo capaz de promover a emancipação e libertação de sujeitos protagonistas, que assumam o controle e a responsabilidade numa sociedade midiaticizada e mediada pela comunicação e tecnologia. As experiências mostram a apropriação do conceito da Educomunicação, a partir de Soares e Citelli, no ensino superior, alicerçada no tripé "ensino, pesquisa e extensão".

Palavras-chave: jornalismo; educomunicação; comunicação e educação; Paulo Freire; emancipação.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The objective of this article is to discuss the narrowing between Educommunication and Journalism, linked by the applicability of Paulo Freire's thought to journalistic studies from the reflections of Meditsch and Faraco¹, Oliveira², and Ijuim³. Given this context, the researches in higher education have pointed out the epistemological appropriation of the concept of an inseparable tripod between teaching, research and extension.

It has been twenty years since the research performed by the Nucleus of Communication and Education of the University of São Paulo (NCE-USP) from 1997 to 1998 with 178 experts from twelve Latin American countries, which pointed the consolidation of a practice in the interrelation communication/education, titled by Soares⁴ as Educommunication. The research identified that the profile of the educommunicator was linked to the production of knowledge, showing that professionals acted similarly in terms of theoretical references and methodological practice. Based on Paulo Freire's principles, the educommunicative practice comprises educational relations established from a problematizing dialogue based on the reality of the learner, being fomented by a horizontal, democratic communication and dialogicity, since "being dialogical is to engage in the constant transformation of reality"⁵.

Throughout these two decades, researches and bibliographic production that followed the founding research brought epistemological advances to the paradigm and cemented the creation of two degree courses, both in 2009, and one national association in 2012: the degree in Educommunication, at the School of Communication and Arts of USP; the degree in Social Communication with emphasis in Educommunication, at the Federal University of Campina Grande (UFCM); and the Brazilian Association of Professionals and Researchers in Educommunication (ABPEducom).

This repercussion has become increasingly present in post-graduation academic production and in conferences in the field, as surveyed in the theses database of the Coordination of Higher Education and Graduate Training (Capes)⁶ and in the working group Communication and Education⁷ of the Brazilian Congress of Communication Sciences (Intercom) and of the National Association of Post-Graduation and Research and Education (Anped). Also, in the Directory of Research Groups of the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), it is noticeable that the term *educommunication* appears in the titles (eight), research lines (32), keywords (36) and in the repercussions (57) of the certified groups.

As researches linked to the ABPEducom, to the NCE-USP and to the Journalism courses of the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UFMS) and of the State University of Mato Grosso (Unemat), we work with extension and research projects focused on Educommunication and on Paulo Freire's ideals as a form of social emancipation and valorization of otherness in becoming a journalist.

That is why this project intends to present the didactic and extensionist practices that are being promoted in public universities of the Central-West region—the UFMS and the Unemat—with emphasis in the contribution of educommunicative premises for Journalism teaching.

From the identification of the concept to its systematization, Educommunication has been understood as

the set of actions inherent to the planning and evaluation of processes, programs and products destined to create and strength communicative ecosystems in face-to-face or virtual educational spaces, as well as to improve the communicative coefficient of educational actions, including the ones related to the use of information resources in the learning process⁸.

From the understanding of Jesus Martín-Barbero, the concept of *communicative ecosystem* was re-signified by Educommunication researchers as the locus in which interpersonal relations are given, being “built with structural rationality requiring conceptual clarity, planning, monitoring and evaluation”⁹. It is in this space, loaded of otherness¹⁰, that the educommunication process takes place, based on a dialogical and problematizing posture¹¹. It is still a set of relations, actions and conditions that involve everyone in a great communicative strength capable of transformation¹².

This process is materialized through intervention areas that lead to the exercise of citizenship, fomenting the transformation of social relationships through participation and dialogue: education for communication, of technological mediation, communicative management, epistemological reflection, communicative expression through arts, communication pedagogy and of mediated production.

It is precisely on the field of *communication management* that this article is focused, since it promotes the link of the educommunicative process, aiming to ensure conditions to everyone to participate in the decision-making process. In this context, programs, projects and actions are articulated around situations that encourage the expansion of the communicative ecosystem collaboratively built by the social agents of our institutions. As premises, Educommunication supports the dialogue and the space for critical and creative knowledge, the citizenship and solidarity present in all the teaching-learning processes, whether formal, informal or non-formal.

Soares¹³ defines Educommunication as “a paradigm in the interface communication/education”, which aims to reach at least three objectives: 1) to amplify the discussion on the influence and the relationship of the subjects and the mediated system, both for the analysis and the use of technological devices in the classroom; 2) encourage and consolidate “communicative ecosystems in educational spaces”, which presupposes a “democratic [management] of communicative processes”; and 3) to strengthen the ability to communicate of individuals and groups.

Educommunication is understood as a broader concept to think the teaching-learning phenomena under the circumstances that qualify the contemporary

8. SOARES, Ismar de Oliveira. **Caminhos da educomunicação**. São Paulo: Salesiana, 2001. p. 43.

9. SOARES, Ismar de Oliveira. *Educomunicação e terceiro entorno: diálogos com Galimberti, Echeverría e Martín-Barbero*. **Comunicação e Educação**, São Paulo, ano 15, n. 3 p. 57-66, Sep.-Dec. 2010.

10. MACHADO, Salvatierra Eliany. **Pelos caminhos de Alice: vivências na educomunicação e a dialogicidade no Educom**. TV. 2009. 123 f. Thesis (Master's Degree in Communication Sciences)—Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2002.

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12. SILVA FILHO, Genésio Zeferino. **Educomunicação e sua metodologia: um estudo a partir de práticas de ONGs no Brasil**. 2004. 268 f. Dissertation (Ph.D. in Communication Sciences)—Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2004. p. 195.

13. SOARES, Ismar de Oliveira. **Educomunicação: o conceito, o profissional, a aplicação**. São Paulo: Paulinas, 2011. p. 10.

life in its plurality of technical devices, stimuli to visuality, challenges caused by digital circuits, instigations provoked by production strategies, circulation and distribution of information and knowledge¹⁴.

The overwhelming presence of technology in contemporary society has caused many transformations in social relationships, in the symbolic productions of meaning and in the ability to see the world, changing the concepts of time and space. Within this scenario, the formal space of teaching and learning gains more comprehensive and spontaneous contours, leading to an urgent reflection on the role of the school and of the educator in the formation of individuals capable of acting in a society in transit. Medina¹⁵ mentions that the “crisis of degeneracy brings a rupture between experts and multiple wisdoms, who must find their missing links to give other answers to historical impasses.”

In Journalism teaching, the paradigm crisis becomes more alarming, since there is a need to reshape its own techniques and technologies of diffusion, through language and professional practice.

There are, indeed, social demands pressing another professional profile—much more complex than the profile of liberal journalists. The increasing organizations of formal society, the retribalization of informal society, all the reorganization of the States and of the business world, new dimensions of work and the environmental awareness are some of the challenges of the old global village. The information technologies of society are easily assimilated; the worldview and the tools of natural intelligence are already opening very slowly to the sign of the relation¹⁶.

With the consolidation of the National Curricular Guidelines (DCN) for the undergraduate Journalism program, put into practice since the second half of 2015, the training of this professional was revised according to the “context of a society in transformation process”¹⁷. “The accelerated diffusing potential of information technologies produced new social orderings, new cultural behaviors and new relations of power”¹⁸. In this scenario, as the same guidelines are used, it is necessary to rethink “ethical, technical, aesthetic [concepts] for a new understanding of journalism”¹⁹.

The state of crisis is the result of overcoming such concepts by the new reality molded in the environment created by the modern technologies of diffusion. And the most important consequence of the vertiginous technological evolution is, without doubt, the irreversible expansion of practices and structures of participative democracy, with social subjects with high capacity of intervention in the real life of nations and people²⁰.

That is why the challenge of teaching and the practice of the Journalism professional is even more scathing, strengthening the sense of urgency over the relations between teachers, students and professionals inside and outside the classroom. We are not talking about rethinking the structure that already contemplated the intensive use of communication technologies, but, in addition, what to do with the technological mediation that transforms the teacher-student, student-student and teacher-teacher relationships.

14. CITELLI, Adilson; OROFINO, Maria Isabel. Uma apresentação entre mediações. In: OROZCO GÓMEZ, Guillermo. **Educomunicação: recepção midiática, aprendizagens e cidadania**. São Paulo: Paulinas, 2014. p. 6.

15. MEDINA, Cremilda. **O signo da relação: comunicação e pedagogia dos afetos**. São Paulo: Paulus, 2006, p. 14.

16. Ibidem.

17. BRASIL. Ministério da Educação. **Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais para o curso de Jornalismo**: relatório da Comissão de Especialistas instituída pelo Ministério da Educação. Brasília, DF, 2009. p. 4. Available from: <portal.mec.gov.br/dmdocuments/documento_final_cursos_jornalismo.pdf>. Access on: March 10, 2017.

18. Ibidem.

19. Ibidem.

20. Ibidem, p. 5-6.

2. INCORPORATION OF PAULO FREIRE'S IDEALS TO JOURNALISM

Paulo Freire's ideals have been incorporated to journalistic practices by the principle of dialogical communication rooted in his writings, as well as his critical posture before a journalistic body instance that has the social responsibility of bringing authentic information to society. These reflections are intrinsic to the educommunicative premises that foment the transformation of social relationships through a journalism of emancipation that understands people as subjects who actively participate of a communication process based on dialogue.

In a research on the approximation of Paulo Freire's thought with Journalism and the Media, Meditsch and Faraco²¹ state that the results authorize the perspective of applying the educator's ideas to the journalistic practice. This is possible due to the university and the usefulness of their conceptions in relation to dialogue, rigor, reading of the world and critical perception, as well as their opinions regarding the control of information, freedom of press, censorship and media neutrality, among others.

To Freire, "Communication [is] the co-participation of Subjects in the act of thinking", which implies in "reciprocity that cannot be broken", since the dialogue "is not transference of knowledge, but and encounter of interlocutors who seek the meanings of meanings", which is a dialogical issue²². In this process, the dialogue is the raw material of communication because it will involve a critical thinking for the establishment of authentic education between the interlocutors, mediatized by the world.

Ijuim²³ demonstrates that commitment overcomes the mere use of research and writing techniques toward the ability to "feel with the world", which will lead to humanization understood as a "brave, determined and conscious [engagement], which prevents it from being neutral."

The emancipatory journalism based on Paulo Freire's ideas is engaged, committed and transforming—and dialogues with the Educommunication in its goal of effective exercise of citizenship. A journalism committed to democracy, which articulates the conditions of the participative journalism and foment the citizenship exercise and the dialogue, is also discussed by Bordenave²⁴, Rothberg²⁵, Aranha²⁶ and Peruzzo²⁷.

We are faced with the notion of empowerment²⁸ that comes close to the understanding of an autonomy that leads individuals and groups to decide on the issues that concern them in an emancipatory perspective that enables them to raise resources that allow them to have voice, visibility, influence and capacity for action and decision.

Both the notions of emancipation and empowerment extend the communicative process of journalistic actions and practice in light of the construction of narratives based on otherness, diversity and plurality.

For Lago²⁹, this plural journalism requires incorporating the look of the "other" to allow the dialogue that will be established by the narrative resulting

21. MEDITSCH, Eduardo; FARACO, Mariana Bittencourt. O pensamento de Paulo Freire sobre jornalismo e mídia. *Intercom*, v. 26, n. 1, p. 25-46, Jan.-Jun. 2003. Available from: <<http://portcom.intercom.org.br/revistas/index.php/revistaintercom/article/view/1031>>. Access on: May 5 2018.

22. FREIRE, Paulo, 1969 a p u d M E D I T S C H , Eduardo; FARACO, Mariana Bittencourt. O pensamento de Paulo Freire sobre jornalismo e mídia. *Intercom*, v. 26, n. 1, p. 25-46, Jan.-Jun. 2003. p. 27. Available from: <<http://portcom.intercom.org.br/revistas/index.php/revistaintercom/article/view/1031>>. Access on: May 5, 2018. It is worth mentioning that, in Meditsch and Faraco's article, Freire's quote is attributed to a source of 1971 that is not verified in the bibliography; therefore, this article used the source of 1969 (extension or communication), which is effectively is that list of references and contains excerpts from the author.

23. IJUIM, Jorge Kanehide. A responsabilidade social do jornalista e o pensamento de Paulo Freire. *Em Questão*, Porto Alegre, v. 15, n. 2, p. 31-43, Jul.-Dec. 2009. p. 31.

24. BORDENAVE, Juan Díaz. *O que é participação*. 8. ed. São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1994.

25. ROTHBERG, Danilo. Jornalismo, educação profissional e diretrizes curriculares. In: SOARES, Murilo Cesar et. al. (orgs.). *Mídia e cidadania: conexões emergentes*. São Paulo: Cultura Acadêmica, 2012. p. 217-232.

26. ARANHA, Angelo Sottovia. Cenário de convergência desafia a formação de jornalistas. In: BRONOSKY, Marcelo Engel; CARVALHO, Juliano Maurício (orgs.). *Jornalismo e convergência*. São Paulo: Cultura Acadêmica, 2014. p. 89-113.

from the encounter of differences, democratic participation and empowerment as a possibility of individual and collective expression.

This confirms the “most complex journalist”, as Medina demonstrates, since this professional will leave a journalism that conforms to another that transforms, conceived from plural knowledge, creative strategies and sensitive ethics³⁰. This communicator will have “an authorial responsibility to create, renew or simply manage the meanings of this reality, vocalized or not, by sources of information”, through professional competence, and to mediate the multiple meanings of things and the multiple voices expressing the conflict of versions³¹.

3. EDUCOMMUNICATIVE JOURNALISTIC PRACTICES IN THE UNEMAT AND UFMS

From 2014 and 2017, the research project *Communication management in the extension projects Focagen, Se Liga magazine and Catis* investigated how communication management took place in the referred Unemat projects. Both the magazines *Se Liga* and *Focagen* lead public school students in the region to produce citizen news for the respective publication and the Junior Agency Journalism Agency. In the end, it was found that both its discourse and practice contemplated participatory methodology, dialogical communication and cultivation of space for the expression of social actors in collective decision-making.

Focused on the training of basic education teachers beyond technological discussions, the Center of Access to Technology for Social Inclusion (Catis), created in 2013, leads the participants of workshops and short courses to the appropriation of information and communication technologies (ICT) for educommunicative pedagogical use through reflective experience. Experiences are shared through mediation based on dialogicity and on the encouragement to collaborative work, so that teachers may apply the proposal with their students.

Created in 2009 as a demand for the discipline of Digital Journalism, the Junior News Agency *Focagen* supplies the course demand of laboratory space and gives visibility to academic productions. It is also a space to provide service to the local community for the practice of citizen journalism, which provides the participation of social actors in their extensionist proposal, responsible for attending students of basic education in the region. With the DCN, the *Focagen* was no longer a space for interns since it was an internship field in which the academics were oriented by their own professors, acting as advisors. According to the document, only professional journalists can be supervisors, whether in outlets or communication advisories.

In turn, the *Se Liga* magazine, since 2011, has become an important vehicle for discussion among academics and students of basic education, as an extensionist action that leads social actors to appropriate journalistic techniques to be producers of culture. The project underwent changes, becoming, in 2014,

27. PERUZZO, Cícilia M. Krohling. *Televisão comunitária*. Rio de Janeiro: Mauad, 2007.

28. HOROCHOVSKI, Rodrigo Rossi; MEIRELLES, Giselle. Problematizando o conceito de empoderamento. In: SEMINÁRIO NACIONAL MOVIMENTOS SOCIAIS, PARTICIPAÇÃO E DEMOCRACIA, 2., 2007, Florianópolis. *Anais...* Florianópolis: Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, 2007. p. 486. Available from: <http://www.sociologia.ufsc.br/npms/rodrigo_horochovski_meirelles.pdf>. Access on: May 25, 2013.

29. LAGO, Cláudia. Educomunicação e jornalismo. In: COLÓQUIO MATO-GROSSENSE DE EDUCOMUNICAÇÃO, 2., 2016, Alto Araguaia. *Anais...* São Paulo: Associação Brasileira de Pesquisadores e Profissionais em Educomunicação, 2016. Available from: <<http://www.educomunicacao.org/educom/2016/04/26/mesa-redonda-educomunicacao-no-ensino-superior-de-jornalismo/>>. Access on: Oct. 10, 2018.

30. Ibidem, p. 22.

31. Ibidem, p. 23.

a production entirely performed by students—with advice from the academics—who came to understand the difference between the production of a journalistic magazine and an educommunicative one.

Also in Unemat, the elective discipline Information and Communication Technologies of the Journalism program, offered between the second semester of 2015 and the first of 2017, was taught from educommunicative premises, leading academics to appropriate the content in order to be producers of culture and foment social transformation. At the end of each semester, they programmed a virtual learning environment of their interest, built from the perspective of the dialogical communicative ecosystem, open and inter-discursive.

As for the UFMS, it is worth mentioning the optional discipline Media-Education and the event Journalism, Technology and Education, financed by the Science and Technology Foundation of the state of Mato Grosso do Sul (Fundect), both held in 2017.

The discipline in question, offered in the first semester, focused on the communication/education relation in educational institutions, both formal and non-formal. The academics who attended were encouraged to rethink interactions with the means of communication and technology in the Journalism course. An intervention project in an organization or community was developed as final evaluation.

As a result of this proposal, ten academics participated of a pilot project of sixteen weeks with students of the bilingual school Harmonia, in Campo Grande (MS). Once a week, the meetings provided the opportunity of understanding technological mediation, the languages of the communication vehicles and the dialogical relations in the classroom. At the end of the project, the academics of this school developed a traveling and tourism blog.

In its turn, the event Journalism, Technology and Education reflected on the dialogue mediated by technologies in the classroom, having the DCN as a starting point, promoting discussions on the impact of mobile medias in Journalism teaching and in the profession. It also discussed the strengthening of the dialogue between teachers, professionals and students, discussing the skills needed for media literacy in the perspective of Educommunication.

One of its positive points was its own conception of collective construction of the proposal with the five higher education institutions (HEIs) in the state: four from Campo Grande—UFMS, Dom Bosco Catholic University, Estácio de Sá University, and Universidade para o Desenvolvimento do Estado (Uniderp/Anhanguera)—and one from Três Lagoas—the Faculdades Integradas de Três Lagoas (Aems).

In the occasion, the professor Ismar de Oliveira Soares presented “Educommunication contribution to higher education”, emphasizing that dialogue along with democratic and participative management are keys for transforming practices, as well as the relevance of the educommunicative paradigm to balance the tripod education-communication-technology. In his speech, he showed

examples of projects that point new, more libertarian and protagonist, paths for young professionals of the 21st century.

The initiative opened possibilities for researches on Educommunication in the Communication Postgraduate Program of the UFMS. Another unfolding of the event was the research project “Educommunication contribution for higher education”—in progress—, which will continue the mapping of researches on the topic in the Capes theses database, both regional and national, as well as will deepen the relations of communication/education in the Journalism courses of the state.

5. PROCEDURAL CONSIDERATIONS

With this discussion, it was evidenced that educommunicative premises may contribute to Journalism teaching by fomenting the practice of participative methodology, dialogical communication and a space for the expression of social actors in collective decision-making.

Because they deal directly with communication, Journalism courses may evidence the idea of reciprocity, and not the tight concept of knowledge transfer, seeking to rescue Paulo Freire’s thought from the concept of communication as “a meeting of interlocutor subjects who seek the significance of meanings.”³²

Searching for a less technicalist approach, Educommunication might offer subsidies to think teaching-learning phenomena in a society deeply impacted by technological devices. “It is no use for technology to strengthen the traditional educational process. First of all, it is necessary to rethink the school. To rethink education from the learners themselves [...] and verify for what purpose technology may serve”³³.

Thus, as reinforced by Medina, we need to learn in the Journalism course the new concept of teaching-learning, which is “characterized by action, and not by the verbalization of knowledge”³⁴. The DCN, therefore, comes to this transformation, establishing as a guide the use of “methodologies that privilege the active participation of the student” for Journalism courses throughout the national territory, with the objective, among other factors, to train professionals with “theoretical, technical, technological, ethical, aesthetic competences to act critically in the profession”³⁵.

It is essential to address the reflection on the relevance of educommunicative practices in the course of Journalism, having Freire’s proposals as premises, which see the transformation and emancipation of the subject through education and communication.

We believe that it is the role of higher education to expand students’ ability to reflect, critically building arguments and thoughts, including on the ways to participate or share information on social networks. Thus, experiences with mobile devices must be part of a teacher’s concern, not only in academic research, but especially in their relationships with students in the classroom.

32. FREIRE, Paulo, 1969 apud MEDITSCH, Eduardo; FARACO, Mariana Bittencourt. O pensamento de Paulo Freire sobre jornalismo e mídia. *Intercom*, São Paulo, v.26, n.1, p.25-46, Jan.-Jun. 2003. p. 27.

33. OROZCO GÓMEZ, Guillermo. *Educomunicação: recepção midiática, aprendizagens e cidadania*. São Paulo: Paulinas, 2014.

34. MEDINA, Cremilda. *O signo da relação: comunicação e pedagogia dos afetos*. São Paulo: Paulus, 2006. p. 172.

35. BRASIL. Ministério da Educação. *Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais para o curso de Jornalismo*: relatório da Comissão de Especialistas instituída pelo Ministério da Educação. Brasília, DF, 2009. p. 15. Available from: <portal.mec.gov.br/dmdocuments/documento_final_cursos_jornalismo.pdf>. Access on: March 10, 2017.

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