

PAPER

Relations between Freirean Pedagogy and Historical-Critical Pedagogy based on categories of Historical-Dialectical Materialism***Pedagogía Freireana y Pedagogía Histórico-Crítica: aproximaciones a partir del Materialismo Histórico-Dialéctico*****Pedagogia freireana e pedagogia histórico-crítica: aproximações a partir do materialismo histórico-dialético**João Paulo Stadler^a 

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ABSTRACT

To weave relations between Freirean and Historical-Critical Pedagogies based on the categories: objective reality, work, contradiction/overcoming, mediation and praxis based on historical-dialectical materialism, comparative qualitative research was carried out between works by Paulo Freire and Dermeval Saviani selected to allow perception of the historical development of theories. Based on excerpts that made it possible to understand the appropriation of the categories listed in the pedagogical concepts presented by them, it was possible to understand the way in which the categories were appropriated in each case, in addition to the establishment of approximations and distances between the aspects. In this way, it was possible to highlight the relationship between Pedagogies and historical-dialectical materialism, in addition to the phenomenological basis present in Freirean theory. Approximations were noticed regarding the commitment to make possible the overcoming of the oppression experienced by the working class through the process of humanization, in the conception of reality as objective and of the possibility of knowledge from movements of analysis and in praxis as central elements of the human development process. The distances found form concerning the importance given to the subjectivity of the subject, in Paulo Freire's theory, and in the teaching method (content-form), by Saviani.

Keywords: Paulo Freire. Dermeval Saviani. Dialectical Categories. Educational Process.

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RESUMEN

Con el objetivo de tejer relaciones entre la Pedagogía Freireana y la Histórico-Crítica a partir de las categorías de realidad objetiva, trabajo, contradicción/superación, mediación y praxis derivadas del materialismo histórico-dialéctico, se realizó un estudio comparativo cualitativo entre las obras de Paulo Freire y Dermeval Saviani, seleccionadas de forma que permitieran percibir el desarrollo histórico de las teorías. A partir de extractos que permitieron comprender la apropiación de las categorías enumeradas en las concepciones pedagógicas presentadas por ellos, fue posible entender la forma en que las categorías fueron apropiadas por los autores mencionados, así como el establecimiento de aproximaciones y distancias entre las vertientes. De esta forma, se hizo evidente la relación entre las pedagogías freireanas, savianista y los elementos del materialismo histórico-dialéctico, así como la base fenomenológica presente en la teoría freireana. Hubo similitudes en cuanto al compromiso con la superación de la opresión vivida por la clase trabajadora a través del proceso de humanización, la concepción de la realidad como objetiva y la posibilidad del conocimiento a partir de movimientos de análisis y validación en la praxis como elementos centrales en el proceso de desarrollo humano. Las diferencias encontradas se refieren a la importancia dada a la subjetividad del sujeto, en la teoría de Paulo Freire, y al método de enseñanza (contenido-forma), por Saviani, como categorías centrales en la organización de la práctica pedagógica.

Palabras clave: Paulo Freire. Dermeval Saviani. Categorías Dialécticas. Proceso Educativo.

RESUMO

Com o intuito de tecer relações entre a Pedagogia Freireana e Histórico-Crítica com base nas categorias *realidade objetiva, trabalho, contradição/superação, mediação e práxis* derivados do materialismo histórico-dialéctico, foi realizada uma pesquisa qualitativa comparativa entre obras de Paulo Freire e Dermeval Saviani, selecionadas de modo a possibilitar percepção do desenvolvimento histórico das teorias. Com base em trechos que permitissem compreender a apropriação das categorias elencadas nas concepções pedagógicas por eles apresentadas, foi possível compreender a forma pela qual as categorias foram apropriadas pelos autores supracitados, além do estabelecimento de aproximações e distanciamentos entre as vertentes. Dessa forma, se evidenciou a relação das Pedagogias Freireana e Savianística com os elementos do materialismo histórico-dialéctico, além da base fenomenológica presente na teoria Freireana. Perceberam-se aproximações no que tange o compromisso em possibilitar a superação da opressão vivida pela classe trabalhadora por meio do processo de humanização, na concepção de realidade como objetiva e da possibilidade de conhecimento a partir de movimentos de análise e da validação na práxis como elementos centrais do processo desenvolvimento humano. Os distanciamentos encontrados foram concernentes à importância dada a subjetividade do sujeito, na teoria de Paulo Freire, e no método de ensino (conteúdo-forma), por Saviani, como categorias centrais da organização da prática pedagógica.

Palavras-chave: Paulo Freire. Dermeval Saviani. Categorías Dialécticas. Proceso Educativo.

Introduction

Education, and especially the educational process that takes place in formal spaces, is an essential part of human development because of its role in enabling the acquisition of cultural goods, especially those related to the scientific field. However, this process is conditioned by the historical context of which it is a part, especially regarding the determination of the infrastructure by the superstructure, which requires it to be understood as historically situated. With the French

Revolution, under the aegis of Enlightenment ideals, the educational process came to be considered a means of achieving universal equality by democratizing access to socially constructed knowledge. What was confirmed, however, was the establishment of bourgeois class domination and the need to maintain structures of inequality and domination (Maracorda, 1996; Marx, 2010).

In this context, the different pedagogical strands that have developed, especially in Brazil, are obviously related to the prevailing economic structure, although they present different ways of understanding the relationship between this dimension and education (Saviani, 2007; 2018). Within this theoretical framework, there is a group of theories that recognize capitalist society as characterized by structures of oppression directed from the bourgeois class towards the working class. And together they understand education as a way to overcome this situation through critical human formation (Saviani, 2007), that is, to promote the development of individuals so that, from a critical perception of reality, they can reflect on it based on the cultural tools needed to understand it and, from there, act to transform it (Saviani, 2013; 2021; Freire, 2021a; 2021c; 2021e). This is why such theories are characterized by the defense of the interests of the working class, the oppressed class. Among the pedagogical currents that fit into the above vision are Freirean pedagogy and historical-critical pedagogy, both of which are the focus of this study.

Freire's theory, also called liberation pedagogy or critical-liberation pedagogy, is characterized by a commitment to popular education to overcome about oppression between the oppressor and the oppressed, which leads to the massification and objectification of the latter and prevents them from humanizing themselves, from being more because they are incapable of perceiving and transforming objective reality (Freire, 2021e). Therefore, for Freire (2021a), education must enable individuals to liberate themselves so that they can promote changes in the concrete situation in which they live, through praxis (Freire, 2021a). The educational process in this theory is guided by dialogic between educator and learner, so that both move in the movement of critique and transformation of objective reality through critical reflection on it (Freire, 2021c; 2021e).

Historical-critical pedagogy, in turn, understands education as a mediating activity within global social practice (Saviani, 2018). In other words, educational practice aims to promote the humanization of subjects in a given reality through the constant reworking of thought with more elaborated determinations mediated by socially produced knowledge (Saviani, 2013; 2018). Thus, the students who have presented the scientific content organized in a syncretic way in relation to concrete reality (initial social practice), through the analysis of the essential determinations to understand it in a given context, can rework their thinking to present it in a synthetic way (final social practice), as a totality of determinations (Saviani, 2013; 2019). In this sense, the students' perception of reality changes qualitatively, bringing it closer to the synthetic view presented by the teacher.

From the outset, it is possible to see similarities and differences between the theories briefly described above, which allow for the comparative analysis intended here, since both strands are based on central categories of historical-dialectical materialism (Giovedi, 2019; Saviani, 2013; 2021; Freire, 2021e). This philosophical current structures the critique of the capitalist system that promotes the material conditions of life production based on the distinction between intellectual and practical work, which consequently led to the social division of labor and class struggle (Alves, 2010; Campos, 2017; Masson, 2012). One of the central elements of historical-dialectical materialism is

materialist dialectics, whose role is to highlight the material contradictions that condition the process of producing human life. By critically reflecting on these contradictions, the oppositions that determine them are perceived and social transformation can take place to overcome them (Marx, 2010; 2017).

The Marxian approach uses, among other things, the categories of totality, praxis and contradiction, which are necessary for the concrete apprehension of reality (Marx, 2007; 2010). Totality does not mean capturing a phenomenon in its entirety, but rather a broad set of relationships that allow the phenomenon to be explained in its entirety. These relationships occur through mediations, by making connections between different aspects of the totality. Contradictions are the driving force behind the transformation of society, which develops through the conflict between them.

Practice consists in the work of transforming concrete reality through previously reflected actions (Marx, 2010; Frigotto, 2010; Oliveira, 2019). In this sense, based on Masson (2012) and Oliveira (2019), it is understood that the Marxian categories can be taken as a method and are therefore universal. While the content categories, specific to the context studied, would be unique. These categories are related through mediations to understand the determinations of the object in relation to the totality. By universal, we mean those categories that allow us to understand the generic and abstract relations between the categories, which, in order to be validated in practice, must be articulated with singular (concrete) contexts that, although different from each other, can be analyzed through these categories.

In this way, the core categories of theories that appropriate historical dialectical materialism must be historically constructed and related to the object of study (Frigotto, 2010; Masson, 2012; Oliveira, 2019). In this sense, it is important to understand how Freire and Saviani appropriated dialectical categories in the development of the pedagogical currents they presented, to understand the totality of their theory.

In this sense, this article¹ presents, through a comparative documentary analysis (Lüdke; André, 2013), the approaches and distances between Freirean pedagogy and historical-critical pedagogy through the authors' understanding of the categories: objective reality, work, contradiction, overcoming, mediation, and praxis, in addition to recognizing other dialectical pairs through excerpts included in reference works written by Freire and Saviani (Chart 1). The aim is to show how these elements were initially appropriated, possible changes in the way they are interpreted or particularized in later works, as a movement towards understanding the historicity of the theories in focus.

For this study, the dialectical categories have been defined because of materials close to the area of the article, to be consistent with the singular context, and are presented in Chart 1.

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Chart 1 – Categories of analysis for the study

Category	Comprehension
Objective Reality	Objective reality (of a universal nature) is the synthesis of the determinations that condition it, i.e., the connection between particular aspects of a specific social context. It is also understood that a singular portion of objective reality has the characteristic of totality, which means that in this relationship of dependence, in order to understand it, we must consider it in its determinations as a contextual portion of reality, in other words, the main characteristic of this category is that it is closely related to the idea of totality. Another important point to consider is that objective reality has a material existence that is independent of the consciousness of subjects. As cognizant subjects, they can understand it by analyzing particulars in the unique context in which they find themselves.
Work	Work is understood as the intentional and planned relationship between man and the environment for the (re)production of concrete reality and the satisfaction of his needs. Particular types of work are characterized according to the characteristics of their production: concrete work is that which produces use value (allows the satisfaction of needs); abstract work, in turn, is that which has exchange value (used to obtain another object that satisfies the need); finally, alienated work is that which does not allow action in concrete reality because its product is taken from the producer.
Contradiction and overcoming	Since materialist dialectics is not based, like formal logic, on the idea of a fixed and determined identity (being/not being). On the contrary, the components of objective reality exist in constant contradiction with certain pairs according to their characteristics. In this way, reality is always being transformed by overcoming the contradiction between the pairs, which leads to a qualitatively different condition from the previous pairs. This category makes it possible to understand the movements that transform reality.
Mediation	Mediation represents the relationship between the elements that make up reality. In analytical terms, it allows us to understand objective reality through categories (particularities). Specifically, mediation is carried out through work, so we can understand that work mediates the relationship between human beings and concrete reality (the natural and social world).
Praxis	The category of praxis is quite complex and polysemic, understood as free, creative activity that transforms concrete reality and as thought that accompanies action and modifies the living conditions of men. Praxis is the unity between theory and practice that represents the social practice of men. As such, it is the element that underpins and validates what is produced by work in the context of objective reality.

Sources: Adapted from Alves (2010); Duarte (2011); Gomide and Jacomeli (2016); Martins and Lavoura (2018); Marx (2007, 2010, 2017); Masson (2012); Moretti, 2007; Rego, (2014) e Triviños (2007)

We opted for this approach because we believe that theories based on historical-dialectical materialism should be understood in their entirety, although it is always necessary to cut them out (Frigotto, 2010). For this reason, we decided to use works that have the potential to describe part of the historical development of the theories listed (Chart 1), although we recognize that both have developments that go beyond their first authors, who may present different ways of appropriating and particularizing the categories selected.

Methodological guidelines

To carry out this work, we used a qualitative research methodology of the documentary analysis type (Lüdke; André, 2013). This type of research consists of highlighting the characteristics of documents to compare them based on pre-established analysis criteria. By documents, we mean reference books by Freire and Saviani (Chart 2) which, we believe, allow us to understand the foundations and developments of the theories studied, giving the study a totality.

Chart 2 – Works that made up the corpus of analysis.

Freirean Pedagogy	Historical-Critical Pedagogy
Education as a practice of freedom (FREIRE, 2021a)	
Education and Change (FREIRE, 2021b)	School and Democracy (SAVIANI, 2018)
Pedagogy of Autonomy (FREIRE, 2021c)	Historical-Critical Pedagogy - First approaches (SAVIANI, 2013)
Pedagogy of Hope: a reunion with the Pedagogy of the Oppressed (FREIRE, 2021d)	Historical-Critical Pedagogy - 30 years (SAVIANI, 2011)
Pedagogy of the Oppressed (FREIRE, 2021e)	Historical-Critical Pedagogy - Fortieth year (SAVIANI, 2019)
Politics and Education (FREIRE, 2021f)	

Source: Author (2022).

Through the selection of documents shown in Chart 2, an attempt was made to establish a historical line for each pedagogy through the texts produced by Paulo Freire and Dermeval Saviani, in order to provide a section with characteristics of the totality, making it possible to show how the categories listed (Chart 1) were initially appropriated. However, in order to maintain the integrity of the corpus, as intended by this research, two treatments were carried out:

1. Historical-Critical Pedagogy - 30 years: since this book was not written by Dermeval Saviani, but consists of a collection of articles by various researchers in the field, only

chapter 10, written by him, was considered;

2. Historical-Critical Pedagogy - Fortieth Year: although this book was written by Dermeval Saviani, it presents various topics that have been working together to complement Historical-Critical Pedagogy. Therefore, in order to demonstrate the movement of the categories in a manner consistent with the previous texts, chapters 3, 5, 11, 14, and 15 were selected.

The pre-established criteria for comparison were the categories: objective reality, work, contradiction, overcoming, mediation, and practice, based on the definitions presented in Chart 1. These categories were chosen to show how historical-dialectical materialism is appropriated by the pedagogical strands of interest. In addition, other dialectical pairs were highlighted a posteriori, in a complementary manner, which were particularized by the authors in the elaboration of the pedagogical currents.

The research was carried out in two stages of reading the documents. In the first stage, the works were read in their entirety and the passages corresponding to the categories presented in Chart 1 were highlighted. To select the passages, the occurrence of terms related to the listed categories was noted (see Chart 3). Next, a second reading was carried out to select the passages that would allow a deeper understanding of the way in which the theory appropriates the dialectical categories and allow the discussion presented here. At this stage, passages that were direct or indirect quotations from previous texts, titles and subtitles, and other uses of the terms included in Chart 3 that did not allow the stated objective to be achieved were not considered. The result of this process is presented in summary form in the text of the article and in a systematized form in the supplementary document that contains the excerpts used.

Approximations and distancing between Freirean and historical-critical pedagogies through the lens of appropriate dialectical categories

As a result of the initial reading of the selected works (Chart 2), the passages in the books that contained references to the categories of interest (Chart 1) were highlighted. From this first movement, it was possible to construct Chart 3, which indicates the presence of fragments related to the categories studied in the documents that made up the corpus. Chart 3 also shows the keywords related to each category, given the different possible uses of the terms.

Chart 3 – Presence of dialectical categories in the selected works

Category	Key word(s)	Projects*	
		Pedagogy Freirean	Historical-Critical Pedagogy
Objective Reality	Objective Reality Concrete Reality Concrete Situation Real concrete	Freire (2021a) Freire (2021b) Freire (2021d) Freire (2021e) Freire (2021f)	Saviani (2019)
Work	Work and its particularizations	Freire (2021a) Freire (2021b) Freire (2021c) Freire (2021e) Freire (2021f)	Saviani (2013) Saviani (2018) Saviani (2019)
Contradiction and Overcoming	Contradiction Contradictory relationships	Freire (2021a) Freire (2021b) Freire (2021c) Freire (2021d) Freire (2021e) Freire (2021f)	Saviani (2011) Saviani (2013) Saviani (2019)
Mediation	Mediation Mediate Mediating activity Mediate	Freire (2021a) Freire (2021e)	Saviani (2013) Saviani (2018) Saviani (2019)
Praxis	Praxis	Freire (2021b) Freire (2021e)	Saviani (2013)

*Due to lack of space, all the clippings can be found in the selected examples below.

Source: Author (2022)

Chart 3 shows that, as expected, both theories have an intrinsic relationship with historical-dialectical materialism (Freire; 2021e; Giovedi, 2019; Saviani, 2013; 2021), which allows for coherent comparisons between them due to their belonging to the same theoretical map. Moreover, it can be seen that the authors use different terms and also particularizations of the categories in the construction of the theoretical framework of their theories, as indicated by Frigotto (2010), Masson (2012) and Oliveira (2019). Furthermore, It is evident that the categories are generally taken up in subsequent works (including those constructed to clarify certain points of the theory previously presented, reinforcing the idea of historicity and totality).

Another interesting point to note from Chart 3 is the greater recurrence of terms in Freire's works, which leads us to infer that, given that he does not base himself solely on historical-dialectical materialism, as Saviani (2013; 2021) does, Freire needs to explain more clearly the relationship between the central elements of historical materialism and existential phenomenology, another theoretical foundation of Freirean pedagogy (Giovedi, 2019; Saviani, 2021). According to the same authors, existential phenomenology presents a critique of the compression of objective reality brought about by the historical-dialectical materialism of objective reality, especially regarding its objectivity and materiality, which is strongly marked by the need to maintain the material conditions of existence of individuals. Phenomenology, on the other hand, through the category of the lived world, considers, in addition to the material conditions for the reproduction of life, the importance of the subjective dimension of subjects in relation to reality and their perception of it.

The following is a summary of the definitions that indicate the appropriation of the categories listed in the documents, together with conclusions of approximations/distances. At the end, other dialectical pairs are presented that allow us to understand the concepts that are the focus of the study. At the beginning of each subtopic, we will insert examples of quotations, with emphasis, from the works, as shown in Chart 3. It should also be noted that, for reasons of space, all the extracts can be consulted in the supplementary document.

Objective reality

There would be no human action if there weren't an **objective reality**, a world as man's "not-self" capable of challenging him, nor would there be human action if man weren't a "project," something beyond himself, capable of grasping his reality, of knowing it in order to transform it (Freire, 2021e, p. 55).

It can be said that the **concrete** point of departure is the **real concrete** and the concrete point of arrival is the **concrete thought**, that is, the appropriation of the **real-concrete** by the thought. More precisely, thought starts from the empirical, but this is supported by the **concrete real**. Thus, the real point of departure and the real point of arrival is the **real concrete**. In this way, the empirical and the abstract are moments in the process of thinking, i.e., the process of appropriation of the concrete in thinking (Saviani, 2019, p. 169).

In both Freirean Pedagogy and Historical-Critical Pedagogy, objective reality is understood to be independent of the individual, i.e., outside their consciousness, with a concrete character. Furthermore, individuals can understand it and transform it. In addition, both recognize that concrete reality is socio-historically determined and that these conditions determine human-world relations (Freire, 2021a; 2021; Saviani, 2019).

However, Saviani (2019) highlights the way in which the cognizing subject can understand reality: through the movement from the real concrete to the thought concrete, through the analysis made possible by the categories (abstract). While in Freire (2021a; 2021b; 2021e; 2021f) the focus is on understanding that concrete reality limits the process of humanization (being-more), through the concrete situation of oppression established socially, and that it is up to individuals themselves to overcome common sense and critically know reality to transform it.

Work

Men, on the other hand, as beings of what they do, "emerge" from it and, by objectifying it, can get to know it and transform it through their **work** (Freire, 2021e, p. 168).

What we felt was important to say was that the other step, the decisive one, from the dominant transitive-ingenuous consciousness to the dominant transitive-critical consciousness would not happen automatically, but only as a result of **critical educational work** with this goal (Freire, 2021a, p. 85).

Therefore, what defines the essence of human reality is work because it is through work that man acts on nature, adapting it to his needs (Saviani, 2013, p. 81).

Consequently, **educational work** is the act that directly and intentionally produces in each individual the humanity that is historically and collectively produced by all human beings (Saviani, 2013, p. 13).

Both strands understand work as the means by which objective reality can be understood and transformed. It is therefore an ontological characteristic of human beings, who are capable of distancing themselves theoretically (analytically) in order to admire the objective world in which they are immersed (Freire, 2021e; Saviani, 2013). In addition, they understand work as an intentional and mentally planned action (at the abstract level) by the individual, which is therefore not immediate and spontaneous (Freire, 2021a; Saviani, 2013; 2019). In this way, both thinkers conceive of educational work as an intentional action, and it allows the naive understanding of reality to be overcome by its critical overcoming, which, by understanding the conditioning factors of objective reality, allows actions to be established to transform it, through work (Freire, 2021a; 2021e; Saviani, 2013; 2019).

In the context of Historical-Critical Pedagogy, Saviani (2013; 2019) also presents various particularizations of the concept of work, especially when considering work as an educational principle, appropriating Gramsci. This perspective gives work, in the context of formal education, the role of determining what is meant by education, in relation to the mode of production of a given society; what conditions are necessary for individuals to reproduce the material conditions of their existence (perform productive work); and characterize education as the context of educational work, defining conditions and intentions.

Contradiction and Overcoming

As a gnosiological situation, in which the cognizant object, instead of being the end of a subject's cognizant act, is the mediator of cognizant subjects, the educator on the one hand educating on the other, problematizing education immediately requires **overcoming** the educator-educant **contradiction** (Freire, 2021e, p. 94).

This is the distinctive mark of man, who appears in the universe at the moment when a natural being stands out from nature, comes into **contradiction** with it and, in order to continue existing, needs to transform it (Saviani, 2013, p. 80).

Both theories understand the dialectical relationship between contradiction and overcoming as the movement of the development of society and the process of humanization. In this last aspect, Freire (2021c; 2021d; 2021e) understands that the chance of being more will only be possible by overcoming the contradiction between oppressor and oppressed so that everyone fears freedom when carrying out the work that allows them to be humanized, since the conditioning factors no longer oppress and objectify a large part of the individuals.

Saviani (2013), on the other hand, understands that the process of humanization stems from the possibility of transforming objective reality, which requires overcoming the initial syncretic view of individuals with a synthetic view that can understand the articulation of the various determinants

of objective reality. This movement is also considered by Freire (2021c) when he points out that naive curiosity is overcome by the critical curiosity of the subject. Based on this excerpt, it is possible to perceive the centrality of historical-critical pedagogy in the cultural elements necessary for the synthetic vision, while Freirean pedagogy focuses on the role of the individual's subjectivity, denoted by the idea of curiosity, as an essential element to guide the critical perception of reality.

Thus, it can be concluded that the generalized understanding of Saviani is content-based, while Freire is only interested in the daily life of the individual. However, the authors themselves explain the bias of these interpretations in Saviani (2019) and Freire (2021c). The former clarifies that the determinations and particularities are not about school content, but about systematized ways of understanding the objective reality perceived in the lived context, while the latter clarifies that it is not about limiting the understanding of everyday life, but from it to seek other knowledge necessary to transform it.

Mediation

Only dialogue, which implies critical thinking, is capable of producing it. Without it, there is no communication, and without it, there is no true education. Education, which operates by overcoming the contradiction between educator and learner, is established as a gnosiological situation in which subjects focus their act of cognition on the cognizable object that **mediates** them (Freire, 2021e, p. 115).

Authentic education, we repeat, is not from A to B, or from A to B, but from A to B, **mediated** by the world (Freire, 2021e, p. 116).

This is the conceptualization of education as "a **mediating activity** within global social practice" (...). [... I am simply saying that the movement from syncretism ("the chaotic vision of the whole") to synthesis ("a rich totality of numerous determinations and relations") through the **mediation** of analysis ("the simplest abstractions and determinations") constructs a secure orientation for both the process of discovering new knowledge (the scientific method) and the process of transmitting and assimilating knowledge (the teaching method) (Saviani, 2018, p. 59).

The centrality of category **mediation** derives directly from the centrality of category work, which is the process by which man, detached from nature, enters into contradiction with it and must deny it in order to affirm his humanity (Saviani, 2019, p. 176).

The two concepts constitute a category of mediation that allows us to understand the means used and/or that support human activity, work. In this sense, the world (cognizable objects) mediates the process of knowing objective reality, as evidenced by the overcoming of the naive/syncretic view by the critical/synthetic one (Freire, 2021e; Saviani, 2018). Categories (particularities) also play a mediating role, allowing us to understand extracts of objective reality (Saviani, 2018; 2019).

Regarding the context of the educational process, Freire (2021a; 2021e) emphasizes the importance of the mediating role of communication, and therefore of dialogue, in the process of understanding objective reality, mediated by cognizable goals, in order to overcome the dichotomy

of teacher (owner of knowledge) and student (receiver of knowledge), since knowledge comes from the critical perception of objective reality, which is external to the subjects and, therefore, not the possession of them.

In Saviani (2013; 2018; 2019), we understand the educational process as a mediating action within global reality that enables the critical understanding of reality through the development of synthetic thinking, a process mediated by the categories of thought. In this way, individuals incorporate the cultural tools for critical perception of reality. Here, too, it can be seen that historical-critical pedagogy appropriated the central categories of historical-dialectical materialism in a particularized way for the context of the formal educational teacher, in the school, in strong relation to the movement of critical knowledge of reality that goes from the concrete real to the concrete thinking through analysis, focusing on the universal categories to be appropriated by the subjects.

In contrast, Freire, based on existential phenomenology, understands mediation as part of the lived world and in line with the articulation between objectivity (material world) and subjectivity (individual), reinforcing the importance of the singular relationship between the individual and immediate reality as mediation for a critical understanding of the still veiled structures that maintain about oppression.

Praxis

The difference between the two, between the animal whose activity because it does not constitute "limit acts," does not lead to a production beyond itself, and the human being who, through his action in the world, creates the realm of culture and history, is that only the latter is a being of **praxis**. **Praxis** which, as reflection and action that truly transforms reality, is the source of reflective knowledge and creation. In fact, while animal activity carried out without **praxis** does not imply creation, the transformation carried out by human beings does (Freire, 2021e, p. 127).

In this sense, I have tried to elaborate the meaning of **praxis** based on the contribution of Sánchez Vázquez (...), understanding it as a synthetic concept that articulates theory and practice. In other words, I see **praxis** as practice based on theory. [...]. The philosophy of **praxis**, as Gramsci called Marxism, is precisely the theory that is committed to articulating theory and practice, uniting them in praxis (Saviani, 2013, p. 120).

Finally, in relation to the category of praxis, in Saviani (2013) we understand that it comprises the unity between theory and practice, that is, practice grounded in theory and theory validated in practice (as we see in Marx, 2010). However, the term praxis does not appear much in other works linked to this pedagogical concept. We therefore infer that social practice is always understood as praxis. In terms of social practice, Historical-Critical Pedagogy makes use of particularization by understanding educational practice as contained within global social practice, as one of its various determinations (Saviani, 2013, 2019). Moreover, in this context, at the beginning of the process, the student relates in a syncretic way to objective reality, a stage called initial social practice, through educational work, mediated by the cultural instruments necessary to understand this singularity, and begins to relate to concrete reality in a synthetic way, by understanding and being able to relate

the multiple determinations that condition it (Saviani, 2013).

Once again, in Freire (2021b; 2021e), we see the focus on the individual who can only be free, truly human, through praxis, which is only possible by overcoming the oppressor-oppressed contradiction. From this perspective, praxis is understood as the action that transforms reality through the movement of reflection-action/creation. It is thus understood that true action is based on theory, and that the possibility of knowing and transforming reality through praxis validates theory in practice. In this way, we realize that Freirean pedagogy is not limited to the educational context, but includes different social spheres that intervene in human formation.

In addition to the categories listed, dialectical pairs have been identified in the works (Chart 4), which allow us to better understand the contradiction-overcoming movements that lead to the humanization process intended by each current through education. Obviously, these pairs allow us to corroborate the reflections already made on the pedagogical currents studied and to make further comments on the approximations/distances.

Chart 4 – Other dialectical pairs found in the works studied

Freirean Pedagogy	Historical-Critical Pedagogy
Objectivity-Subjectivity Permanence-Change Cognizant object-Social context First culture-Elaborated culture	Popular knowledge - erudite culture Content-Form Educational process-Social practice

Source: Freire (2021b; 2021c; 2021e); Saviani (2011; 2013; 2019)

With the Permanence-Change pair, Freire (2021b) clarifies the characteristic of the aforementioned materialist dialectical logic of understanding reality as a movement of contradiction-overcoming contradictions, in contrast to the idea of identity in formal logic (Marx, 2010; 2017; Saviani, 2021). This, together with the objectivity-subjectivity pair, coincides with the fact that Freire also draws on existential phenomenology (Giovedi, 2019; Saviani, 2021), highlighting the relationship between the process of humanization and being more. This places the subject at the center of the process of comprehending and transforming reality, as well as the role of intersubjective communication through dialogue in order to be more (Freire, 2021e).

With regard to historical-critical pedagogy, we again see a centrality in the formal educational process, especially in the content-form pair, understanding form as a method of presenting the socially elaborated knowledge necessary for understanding reality (Saviani, 2013), and also in the educational process-social practice pair, in contrast to Freire's cognizable object-social context pair. However, it is necessary to recognize the fact that the educational process has different characteristics depending on the mode of production of the society.

It is also interesting to note that in both (Freire, 2021c; Saviani, 2013) there is a pair that dialectically relates popular knowledge (first culture, common sense, naive perception) to erudite

culture (elaborated culture). This relationship comes from the dialectical movement of the perception of reality (Marx, 2010; 2017) and, in addition to the appropriation of this theoretical framework in pedagogical currents, reinforces the understanding that, to humanize, individuals need to have access to the cultural products historically produced by human society and necessary for understanding reality and its transformation. Finally, we agree with Saviani (2021), who establishes a relationship between the elements of the educator-learner and educator-student pair from Freirean pedagogy (Freire, 2021e) with the role of teacher and student in historical-critical pedagogy. This is because in both cases individuals are understood as cognizing subjects, with the difference that the educator-student/teacher initially perceives the singular context in a more elaborated way, having already appropriated the necessary content to understand it. Nevertheless, their perception of the concrete reality is precarious in the sense that the unique relationships given in the specific context with a class are still unknown to them and will be processed in the educational process. At this point, the educator-student perceives singularity in a chaotic, syncretic way, creating a situation of inequality and contradiction. With the development of pedagogical practice, considering that it occurs from a critical perspective, through dialogue and the explicit relationship between content and context, the subjects communicate with each other in order to elaborate the perception of reality of all, thus allowing the teacher to better perceive this singular context, contributing to his professional performance, and the students to perceive reality in a more synthetic way, through the appropriation of cultural elements (Freire, 2021a; 2021e; Saviani, 2013; 2019).

Thus, we understand that the main difference between the two strands will be in the focus of the educational process: on the one hand, Freire is more concerned with the perception and transformation of the concrete reality (singularity) of individuals, without neglecting the importance of elaborated culture (Freire, 2021c). On the other hand, historical-critical pedagogy focuses more on the process of transmission-appropriation of elaborated culture (classical content), without dissociating it from the social practice in which educational practice takes place (Saviani, 2013; 2019).

Final considerations

This comparative study of Freirean pedagogy and historical-critical pedagogy has shown that there are important similarities and differences between the two. Beyond the particularities of each, we believe that the main similarity between them is their commitment to the humanization of the individual through the critical perception of reality and their commitment to overcoming about oppression that crushes most people. In addition, the basis in historical-dialectical materialism allows similarities, albeit to different degrees, in the understanding of objective reality, the dialectical materialist-historical conception, the movement of reality through contradictions and overcoming, the mediated relationship between man and the world, and praxis as man's *modus operandi* in the world. The differences, as we understand it, are centered when the particularization of praxis into praxis/educational work takes place because from then on, the two authors focus on different elements of the process. While Freire understands the individual through the objectivity-subjectivity relationship, so that the singular context is significant, Saviani is concerned with transmission-assimilation with cultural instruments, and in this way the roles of the subjects are delimited in

the context of institutionalized education and the teaching and learning process. In this way, we understand the importance given in Freirean pedagogy to the thematic investigation (Freire, 2021e) to highlight the limiting situations in the singularity that will motivate the educational process, while in historical-critical pedagogy it is concerned with the institutionalized educational process, through the content-form-recipient triad (Savani, 2019).

We understand that it is from this difference in particular that Saviani criticizes Freirean pedagogy, stressing that its emphasis on method could lead to a reduction in the role of systematized knowledge as a central element of the educational process (Saviani, 2018). However, this article does not focus on the ways in which these authors propose didactic organization in each case, which would require other categories of study.

Nevertheless, while acknowledging the limitations of this research, which used only the texts produced by the authors, we believe that it has been possible to perceive consistently the way in which both have appropriated the dialectical categories listed. In particular, it is clear that the following texts, motivated by the criticism of other researchers, reinforce and explain in detail the particularizations of the categories used. Nevertheless, there is a need to understand how the theories have been appropriated by other scholars in order to identify updates, details, readings, and understandings that better articulate the theories to current contexts.

It is hoped that this study will help to demonstrate the importance of studying theories, especially those based on historical-dialectical materialism, in light of the idea of totality. It also hopes to contribute to the dissemination and understanding of Freirean and historical-critical pedagogies.

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