

Dossier: Theories and pedagogical, formative and deliberative practices in support of emancipatory and democratic expression?

Dossiê: Teorias e práticas pedagógicas, formativas e deliberativas em prol da expressão emancipatória e democrática?

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In the context of reforms to the Brazilian education system, the link between education and democracy appears tenuous, despite ministerial guidelines aimed at promoting the democratic management of public educational institutions by encouraging the initiation and development of democratic practices. This is all the more significant since, at the same time, it should be emphasized that the quality of education and training, both for pupils and learners, requires equity of treatment, while access to educational spaces should not depend on generational factors.

This special issue of the journal *Revista Educação* seeks to explore questions relating to theories, formative and deliberative pedagogical practices in the field of education, in order to assess their effects on learners' emancipatory and democratic expression. To this end, contributions from seven academics from Brazil, Spain, Belgium, Italy and France provide responses to the questions raised by the development of democratic education. What can education and citizenship training contribute within spaces such as schools, universities and local authorities, as well as through teaching

practices dedicated to democracy and to the emancipation of the various actors concerned, namely teachers, pupils and learners?

The ambition is to engage with questions relating to pedagogical, formative and deliberative practices in the field of education, in order to assess their effects in terms of learners' emancipatory and democratic expression.

Emancipatory pedagogy is closely linked to education for democracy, as both aim to educate individuals who are capable of thinking autonomously, participating actively in collective life within society, and contributing to the transformation of social relations.

Freinet's Emancipatory pedagogy (1946 & 1969) aims to free learners from forms of social, cultural and political domination. It is rooted in Paulo Freire's (2023) critical approach to the "banking" model of education, in which the learner remains passive in relation to the knowledge received. The aim is therefore to develop learners' critical thinking by connecting knowledge with experience, to foster expression and exchange, and to transform learners into active agents of their own learning. In a certain sense, it constitutes a tool for social transformation.

Educating and training for democracy cannot be reduced to teaching about representative institutions, whatever the level concerned. Rather, it is a matter of making democracy part of everyday life, in the sense understood by John Dewey (1990), for whom the school, like any other educational organisation, is a democratic community within which what matters is learning to debate, to argue, to listen, to understand citizens' rights and duties, to experience collective decision-making, and to develop a sense of the common good.

The link between emancipatory pedagogy and democracy is strong, since in both cases the aim is to foster autonomy and democratic participation in order to educate an emancipated individual who is therefore better able to engage in public life. Both draw on

dialogue as a foundation of democracy, as well as on the capacity to act with a view to promoting active citizenship.

However, a number of challenges and limitations remain, such as the difficulty of transforming hierarchical education systems, the risk of symbolic or merely apparent participation, and the need to train teachers and trainers in these pedagogical practices.

Finally, while the aim of emancipatory pedagogy is to educate free and critical individuals, that of education for democracy is to foster the emergence of conscious, active and responsible citizens. Both therefore contribute to the same ambition : that of building a more just, participatory and aware society. In this respect, Cynthia Fleury (2023), in her recent book *La clinique de la dignité*, highlights, in the context of societal developments and transformations, the risk of “becoming unworthy” and, consequently, the urgent need to restore substance to the social State and to reinvent a more participatory democracy.

In order to address questions relating to pedagogical, formative and deliberative theories and practices that foster emancipatory and democratic expression, it appeared relevant to bring together contributions from academic colleagues from Brazil, Spain, Italy, Belgium and France, with a view to providing elements of analysis, reflection and response to the questions underlying the development of democratic education.

The contribution by **Pascal Lafont** and **Fatima Anani** (France), entitled “*Formative Experience and the Student Citizens’ Convention (CCE)*”, aims to examine the hypothesis that the creation of pedagogical spaces such as the Student Citizens’ Convention (CCE), despite certain limitations, gives rise to a form of political education that is consubstantial with participatory democracy within the university. Examining students’ participatory and deliberative experience in the life of the institution makes it possible to determine whether such experience constitutes a source of knowledge, practical skills and behavioural competencies relating to a form of democratic citizenship.

The contribution entitled *“Collective Work Dynamics within Socially Contrasted Groups of Students: The Inaccessible Quest for Emancipation”* by **Azzedine Hajji**, **Chaïmae Chouaa** and **Michel Sylin** (Belgium) analyses the practice of group work as a factor likely to influence inequalities among students from different social backgrounds and to affect their opportunities for social and intellectual emancipation. The aim is to understand the effect of the group on students’ participation in a process of acculturation to the norms of academic work that may lead to a form of emancipation.

The contribution by **Luanna Ferreira da Silva** and **Rodrigo Matos-de-Souza** (Brazil) focuses more specifically on the perspectives opened up by a theoretical and methodological approach grounded in participants’ narratives. It assumes different forms of positioning depending on the research subjects, on the grounds that the individuals interviewed contribute to the production of a theory of the world.

The contribution by **Alexandre Anselmo Guilherme**, **Cibele Cheron**, **Reenato de Oliveira Brito** and **Maria Cristina Mesquita da Silva** (Brazil) focuses on the initial training of primary education teachers in light of the National Education Plan for the period 2014–2024. It shows, on the one hand, how concern for citizenship education is confronted with the need to provide training in response to scientific and technological advances and, on the other hand, highlights the need to address both the vulnerabilities of trainee teachers and the precariousness of training processes.

The contribution by **José Gonzalez-Monteagudo**, **Olga Moreno-Fernandez** and **Mario Leon-Sanchez** (Spain) examines the prospects for citizenship education in the Spanish context, drawing on a model of critical and participatory democracy. Emphasis is placed on the development of democratic and participatory approaches in classrooms and secondary education institutions. Particular attention is given to teacher training, integration into the school curriculum, and its impact on educational policies.

The contribution by **Margherita Ghetti** and **Ira Vannini** (Italy) addresses the full exercise of young people's right to citizenship through the acquisition of language skills. The wording of the title, "*Basic Skills, Formative Assessment and Experimental Pedagogical Approaches*," invites us to rethink traditional language pedagogy in favour of effective and democratic language teaching, with the aim of creating a learning community as a genuine pillar of a profoundly democratic conception of school education.

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