

Philosophy of Education in Brazil

La filosofía de la educación en Brasil

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In this short essay, I briefly explore the constitution of philosophy of education as a discipline in Brazil during recent decades. I do it from the perspective which understands a philosophy of education as a conceptual creation and as a confrontation with problems arising within the field of education.

What is philosophy of education? Philosophy of education can be taken as an activity of creating concepts in the problematic field of education. If concepts, as Deleuze and Guattari said, are created from problems, education presents us with the problems, while philosophy offers us the tools to think about them.

What is happening in the field now? Mapping the constitution of philosophy of education as a disciplinary field in Brazil, we can see that it has consolidated its position over the last decades. A consolidation in which the *Associação Nacional de Pós-Graduação e Pesquisa em Educação* (ANPEd, Research Group on Philosophy of Education of the National Association of Postgraduate Studies and Research in Education) played an important role. In the 1970's, with the increased creation of graduate programs in education (a movement that began in the previous decade), philosophy of education emerged as one of the most important and prolific areas of educational research. However it suffered from a lack of identity, since everything that could not be "classified" within the traditional areas of education was categorized as "philosophy of education". In the 1980's, there was a strong Marxist influence in the Brazilian educational thinking, especially with what that had to do with the search for a critical education, which could face the military dictatorship of the time. At the same time, two other strands in the philosophy of education

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came to prominence. On the one hand, a philosophy of education critical of domination and exploitation, heavily influenced by Gramsci, and on the other hand, a philosophy of education of the oppressed, headed by Freire, consolidated their positions. There was also at that time a strong presence of studies interested in the trends and currents of thought that had been present throughout the national history of education. Between 1990 and 2010, we have seen a huge diversification of the research topics, as a consequence of taking into consideration different philosophical perspectives to contribute in the reflection of educational problems.

Where is it going? The diversification of the research topics brought a concern about philosophy of education's identity, as well as a concern for not returning to the 1970's situation, when everything could be identified as a work of philosophy of education. One of the ways to ensure both the identity and the consolidation of the disciplinary field was to get closer to pure philosophical research. In Brazil, this type of research is closely related to the history of philosophy and the study of philosophical authors. The disciplinary field strengthened, defending much more strongly its specificity, largely based on the study of authors. Today, as heirs of this process of constitution and consolidation the field experienced in recent decades, we are living a decisive moment. It is in our hands to develop the creative potential of the concept of philosophy of education, allowing it to move forward and be productive, or if not, to attend to its progressive closure and depreciation, as a result of having been dedicated solely to the reproduction of philosophy.