

**POPULAR EDUCATION IN UNIVERSITY TEACHING PRACTICE:
EPISTEMOLOGY FOR ITS OWN SCIENCE**

***EDUCAÇÃO POPULAR NA PRÁTICA DOCENTE UNIVERSITÁRIA:
EPISTEMOLOGIA PARA UMA CIÊNCIA PRÓPRIA***

***LA EDUCACIÓN POPULAR EN LA PRÁCTICA DOCENTE UNIVERSITARIA:
EPISTEMOLOGÍA PARA UNA CIENCIA PROPIA***

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ABSTRACT: This article discusses how Popular Education contributes to the formation of popular educators who exercise teaching work at the university. Based on this objective, we question: how does Popular Education contribute to a differentiated teaching practice at the university, in the face of the Eurocentric paradigm centered on productivism for capital? The qualitative approach and the participatory action research underpinned the conception of the research, for the production and collection of data: documentary survey, semi-structured interviews, participant observation. The dialectical method, as part of the research process and of the social reality, allows analyzing tensions, contradictions, transformations and social relations of totality. Theoretical contributions were sought in: Borda (1981), Freire (1996), Lefebvre (1983), Santos (2013), Streck (2014), among others. The results show that Popular Education contributes to a teaching educational practice committed to the reinvention of knowledge and the university, based on a paradigm of its own science.

KEYWORDS: Popular education. Teaching practice. University. Own science.

RESUMO: Este artigo discute como a Educação Popular contribui para a formação de educadores populares que exercem o trabalho docente na universidade. A partir desse objetivo interpelamos: como a Educação Popular contribui para uma prática docente diferenciada na universidade, diante do paradigma eurocêntrico centrado no produtivismo para o capital? A abordagem qualitativa e a investigação-ação participante fundamentaram a concepção da pesquisa, para produção e coleta de dados: levantamento documental, entrevistas semiestruturadas, observação participante. O método dialético, como parte do próprio processo de pesquisa e da realidade social, permite analisar tensões, contradições, transformações e relações sociais de totalidade. Os aportes teóricos foram buscados em: Borda (1981), Freire (1996), Lefebvre (1983), Santos (2013), Streck (2014), entre outros. Os resultados apontam que a Educação Popular contribui para uma prática educativa docente comprometida com a reinvenção do conhecimento e da universidade, a partir de um paradigma de ciência própria.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Educação popular. Prática docente. Universidade. Ciência própria.

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RESUMEN: *En este artículo se analiza cómo la Educación Popular contribuye a la formación de los educadores populares que ejercen la labor docente en la universidad. En base a este objetivo nos preguntamos: ¿cómo contribuye la Educación Popular a una práctica docente diferenciada en la universidad, frente al paradigma eurocéntrico centrado en el productivismo para el capital? El enfoque cualitativo y la investigación-acción participativa sustentaron la concepción de la investigación, para la producción y recolección de datos: encuesta documental, entrevistas semiestructuradas, observación participante. El método dialéctico, como parte del proceso de investigación y de la realidad social, permite analizar tensiones, contradicciones, transformaciones y relaciones sociales de totalidad. Se buscaron aportes teóricos en: Borda (1981), Freire (1996), Lefebvre (1983), Santos (2013), Streck (2014), entre otros. Los resultados muestran que la Educación Popular contribuye a una práctica docente educativa comprometida con la reinención del conocimiento y la universidad, basada en un paradigma de la ciencia propia.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Educación popular. Práctica docente. Universidad. Propia ciencia.*

The public university and the emergence of popular education

The ideas that underlie a differentiated educational practice of teachers in the reinvention of education and in the democratization of the university have a long trajectory, but what is new in this practice, today, is popular education. Given this, it is necessary to reaffirm the main ideas of Popular Education at the University, agreeing with the principles presented by Paulo Freire (2014) when discussing the relationship of popular education in public education. This author emphasizes:

At this time of reflection, it seems important to me to make it clear that *popular education* whose implementation, in broad, deep and radical terms, in a class society, is like *swimming against the current* is exactly what, substantially democratic, never separates from the teaching of content the unveiling of reality. It is the one that encourages the organized presence of popular social classes in the struggle for the democratic transformation of society, in the sense of overcoming social injustices. [...] also criticizes the authoritarian and exploitative nature of capitalism (FREIRE, 2014, p. 118-120, author's highlights, our translation).

The self-formation of the popular classes, the self-organization in the struggle for rights, the creation and articulation of social movements, the local and global anti-capitalist struggle, the expansion of democracy through direct and indirect popular participation, in line with the struggle for access to education, based on popular education, are the marks that ensure the principles of the sociology of epistexistence in the production of knowledge situated in the concrete reality of the subjects. Therefore, the reconstruction of the conceptions of a university educational practice, based on the relationship between theory and social practice that involves

the totality of social relations, implies thinking about its own centrality, so that: Can we conceive a university in diaspora that is judged according to its overall social effects and not by physical facilities? Can we articulate, in this way and permanently, theoretical knowledge with praxis? (BORDA, 1981, p. 199, our translation). These issues have been reframed by Boaventura Santos (2010):

The university in the 21st century will certainly be less hegemonic, but no less necessary than it was in previous centuries. Its specificity as a public good is that it is the institution that links the present to the medium and long term through the knowledge and formation it produces and the privileged public space for open and critical discussion it constitutes. For these two reasons, it is a public good without strong allies (SANTOS, 2010, p. 496, our translation).

The contribution of Popular Education as an ally of the university only has an epistemological, political and social meaning if we consider it pertinent to understand this relationship from the following question: for which project of society do we want to democratize the university and science? This issue is central to our study, because the very conception of popular education is based on the perspective of building a project of society with social justice. The studies, from classical thinkers to the most recent ones, that discuss the reinvention/resignification of popular education recognize that one of the foundational principles of this educational conception is the political intentionality of building an anti-capitalist social justice project.

That said, the challenge has been to build a new conception of university and science from the Popular Education paradigm. In an attempt to overcome the waste of experiences in the South of the World, proposed by Santos (2011), and considering the methodology of systematization of experiences as a methodological contribution in the perspective of Holliday (2007) and Lola (2003) as educational and formative dimensions of research process, it is pertinent to consider that the experiences of popular educators in teaching has contributed to the construction of a democratic university educational practice. In the same sense, this practice has been committed to the transformation of the social reality of the popular classes inside and outside the university.

These questions concern us as the presence of students and professors from the popular classes advances in the public university, who are submitted to the dominant theoretical and methodological paradigms. Therefore, the need to inventory alternative epistemological contributions to the production of knowledge. In view of this academic reality, we start from the assumption that the teachers present at the university who have lived, or still experience the educational and formative processes of popular education, may present their own singularities

and dynamics in their educational practice with repercussions in teaching, research, extension in production of knowledge and an alternative science.

Projecting this discussion at the university from the pedagogical aspects of popular education means advancing in the construction of a new university project based on a new paradigm of knowledge production. For this, we emphasize about which knowledge conception we speak of when dealing with the relationship between Popular Education and a public university, starting from the understanding that both are part of the same process of building a free and quality public education.

In this sense, the educational practice of Popular Education has expanded its canon beyond the popular milieu and popular social movements, reaching the academic space as the place of its educational, epistemic and social reinvention. For this, it is necessary to question not only the character of elitist education, but, as the popular classes advance in the academic space, in the face of the struggle for the democratization of university education, it is necessary to rethink the syllabus and the rapprochement of the world university of students and teachers of the popular classes.

The construction of an educational matrix rooted in the construction of popular knowledge committed to the transformation of social reality and against the waste of educational and social experiences widespread within movements and in the process of popular class organizations in civil society. This political-pedagogical option has implied rethinking the centrality of the university as a social structure that produces knowledge in advancing the field of Popular Education in this space of knowledge and in science.

The indirect influence of the Popular Education formation processes contributes to the students and educators to resume their formal academic life. Considering the popular educators who opted for teaching at the public university, we seek to identify the marks of the educational practice of Popular Education in the process of professional and citizen formation and qualification of teachers-educators. And in view of this itinerary, how the repercussion of teaching practice influences teaching, research and extension in the production of an epistemology of alternative knowledge at the university.

Conception of popular education at the university: a dissident epistemological construction

In this sense, we show how popular education influenced the formation of teacher educators to work in the academic world, analyzing its incidence, seeking to find the marks of

Popular Education in teaching, research and extension, deepening the idea of a university project and educational practice who bet on teaching and how they conceive the inter-knowledge relationship between popular knowledge and academic knowledge.

The link with popular education is by teachers-educators as an important dimension in strengthening their university educational practice and their relationship with the popular classes. This political option has ensured methodological and epistemological elements that are different from the hegemonic paradigm of knowledge production at the university. In this regard, there is a political-pedagogical intention of Popular Education in the formation of popular educators who are in tune with the social reality of the subjects and with the construction of a project of society with social justice:

To be a popular educator is to have an educational practice based on the values, culture, and knowledge of the people. It means recognizing yourself in the world and using your diverse knowledge to practice social transformation. Thinking about the role of educators and popular educators has not been a task only for formal educational institutions, such as universities, institutes, among others, which bring systematic, scientific knowledge about the role of educators. This challenge of thinking about the role of the educator has been a concern and a need for social movements, civil organizations, diverse groups, which seek to articulate formative action with the transformation of society, through actions and practices consistent with social change projects (EQUIP, 2015, our translation).

The contribution of Popular Education to the process of formation of popular educators “[...] is the one that empowers their teachers scientifically in the light of recent findings regarding language acquisition, teaching, writing and reading. Scientific background and political clarity [...]” (FREIRE, 2014, p. 119, author's highlights, our translation). EQUIP is committed to the formation of a popular intellectual who is committed to the construction of social justice with those who most need to feel their human condition to be raised from dignity, since “We are all called to be more and we are never condemned to repeat what we already are. As unfinished beings, we are in search of new possibilities and we can achieve something that today is only a dream, but it can become reality as a possible utopia” (STRECK, 2010, p. 18, author's highlights, our translation). Therefore, an educator must maintain his epistemological curiosity in social reality, seeking new syntheses such as progress of analysis, overcoming the opposite relationship between theory and practice, university and society, popular knowledge and academic knowledge, between what is science and what is not, in building a life with dignity.

In this sense, the construction of the professional identity of teachers-educators at the university involves the affirmation of their theoretical contributions, their conception of

education and the project of society, based on the experiential testimony of these subjects with the struggles of the popular classes. So, the teaching practice is substantiated by the matrix of knowledge of the social reality that involves the university and the project of society that it strives to build, that is, “From the scientist's point of view, knowledge of local realities becomes the richer and more useful the more it relates to the understanding and authority of personal experience. Scientific authority and intuition that come from contact with real life [...]” (BORDA, 2004, p. 715, our translation). This formation base of teachers-educators guarantees the updating of their conscience for a more systematic and organizational political action in society.

In this sense, the intellectual production of teachers-educators is committed to the visibility of subjects, knowledge and their social contexts as a counter-hegemonic epistemological matrix and intervention to transform reality, articulating social life to academic life as part of relationships of totality that involve the university with the real world. The contribution of Popular Education to the understanding of a production of knowledge about social reality is one of the great legacies of EQUIP's formative processes that impact on the professional life of teachers-educators.

Thus, the role of the teacher-educator must be that of a citizen subject who belongs to a society in which social processes occur simultaneously inside and outside the university and, therefore, is situated socially and historically in front of the world, as analyzed by Fernandes (1989, p. 164, our translation), when saying that the teacher must be in tune with the political aspirations that imply social change:

The teacher must not be oblivious to the dimension. If he wants change, he has to make it at two levels - inside the school and outside it. He has to merge his role as an educator with his role as a citizen - and if he is led, out of interest and values, to be a conservative, a reformist or a revolutionary, he will always be merging the two. Today, this debate is very relevant, because civic culture is no longer a mystified and mystifying element.

Considering this thought, in Popular Education, the active participation of educators in social transformations constitutes the main element of their educational practice as a dimension of strengthening their presence in the defense of a more united society project. In this sense, the civic conception of education linked to the world of life is a concrete result of its intervention in the world of school and in the world of society. Considering this reading, we care to understand the concept of the popular educator in the university educative practice of teachers-educators and their contribution to a new conception of science outside the dominant knowledge in the university.

Table 1 – Incidence of popular education in the educational practice of popular educators at the university

Subjects	Conception of Popular Education
Social Educator	So, I would say: it was not the fact of working with popular education that took me to university, but it was at university that I discovered that I could be a different educator, that I could be a provocateur and that I could do a different pedagogical practice, a libertarian pedagogical practice, in the very freirean sense.
Gender Educator	I consider that almost all my teaching practice today, is directly influenced by the Popular Education formation process [...] And this Popular Education process, it influences a lot, more than the knowledge acquired at the university, as I always say.
Countryside Educator	We try to develop an educational practice that is more emancipatory, an educational practice that seeks to awaken students, the subjects for this political action in society. [...] I think that one of the main contributions, thus, a mark for me, it goes through the way we see the other and deal with the other, in a perspective of fraternity, of love, of respect, of humanity, I think it is something very strong in me, in my formation.
Work Educator	The axis of my pedagogy at the university is to exercise the ability to think and to exercise the ability to think critically. [...] but also, to question the <i>status quo</i>. So, it is an exercise in building critical thinking, this is what guides me in academic activity.

Source: Oral interviews for research (2016)

Understanding the educational practice committed to the critical and transformative formation of students means overcoming the logic of knowledge reproduction that induces an immersed conscience, cognitive apathy and conditions of alienation. In this way, teachers-educators understand that the development of educational practice at the university involves valuing students as subjects of attitude and producers of knowledge, as part and totality of a liberating and differentiated academic reality.

Faced with this educational practice, subjects in the teaching-learning process develop a level of epistemic curiosity that strengthens the production of knowledge, which does not end in an intellectual monologue of the teacher, whose knowledge has no reason to be for the student life, and sometimes, for the formation subject itself.

The inter-knowledge between students and teachers are two complementary worlds that, through the production of knowledge, find social relationships, making a real world emerge within the academic space and outside it. Such an encounter underlies the idea of knowledge as idealism that is restricted only to the field of abstraction, marked by the encounter between popular knowledge experienced with scientific knowledge, increasingly consolidating the educational practice that rediscovers the world of theory with the world of practice as possibility of producing an alternative thought of knowledge in its set of relations, as proposed by Lefebvre (1983, p. 235, our translation):

The theory emerges from practice and returns to it. Nature reveals itself to us through practice, through experience; and it is only through practice that we dominate effectively. Practice, therefore, is the moment of all theory: first and

last moment, initial immediate and the return to the immediate. And vice versa, the theory is the moment of the developed practice, the one that surpasses the simple satisfaction of the immediate needs.

This educational practice awakens the subjects to self-awareness, the critical awareness in which the very act of knowing meets the meanings of social relationships. This generates curiosity and a careful study of the social reality of the subject who, based on inter-knowledge, prints new meanings, new causes and ways of acting in society, overcoming the teaching relationship that imposes knowledge as power, subordinating the power of common sense in building new knowledge; an educational practice that rejects the authoritarian relationship between teacher and student, resumes the horizontality of knowledge in affirming the epistexistence of popular subjects in the production of knowledge, as proposed by Paulo Freire (2014, p. 120, our translation), when discussing the relationship of Popular Education in the Public School:

It is the one that respects the students, no matter what their class conception is. [...] It is the one that, instead of denying the importance of parents, the community, popular movements at school, approaches these forces with while learns so they can teach as well. [...] It is the one that overcomes prejudices of race, class, sex and is radicalized in the defense of democratic substantivity. That is why there is a struggle for a growing democratization in the relations that take place at school and those that are established between the school and the world outside it [...].

Putting this conception of education into practice is a challenge, raised several times in the report of popular educators who teach at public universities. They point out that the hegemony of conservative thinking still prevails, marked by closed pedagogical proposals that close knowledge in itself, with no concrete relationship with life in society, reproducing an idea of education that destitutes the cognitive being, as stated by the Social Educator (2016, our translation) : “[...] it is a banking education, which is a reproductive education, it is not an education to form subjects, it is an education for you to master the concepts and be able to reproduce concepts. I don't want that from the student!”. The other educators characterized this educational perspective at the university as an “encyclopedist view”; “A very traditional education”, or, as stated by the Political Educator (2015, our translation):

At the university it is different, so you have a class that you work with in four months and you only see the class twice a week. In an EQUIP course, you spend five days in a boarding school with the whole group for three four times a year, so at the university, in addition to the class being more dispersed, you also have content that is more programmatic and pragmatic, so, is part of a political pedagogical plan for the course, from which you cannot escape much, although there are subjects that you can work on and prepare, but you

have to work with those course menus, you cannot fail to consider the course menus and you also have to deal with the discussion that is not very concerned with the aspect of subject formation for the transformation of reality. The university field is much more focused on training professionals for the job market [...].

Another challenge is to face the strongly spread culture of student fear by the concept of colonial, authoritarian and Eurocentric education, throughout history, marked by the relationship of knowledge as power, that is, it is the teacher who has the knowledge, therefore, has the domain of speech as a relation of power. This has been one of the limits for greater student openness to innovative educational practice, as reported by the Social Educator (2015): “Because the student, he comes into the system as a domesticated, he was already domesticated, right? So, the student is afraid to speak, the student is afraid to position himself, the student is afraid to ask the truth”. When students encounter teachers who are guided by another educational perspective, especially in the field of popular education, the tension between teacher and student is recurrent.

However, this tension must be considered as part of the process of building an innovative educational practice, since the teacher-educator does not hold the absolute truth, whose teaching methodology is non-negotiable, recognizing that this means understanding that it is always possible to learn in the act of carrying out their teaching practice at the university. Lovingness and respect should perhaps be the greatest contribution of Popular Education to an educational practice at the university. Lovingness as a capacity for otherness, indignation in the face of injustice, the devaluation of life, all forms of unloving, dehumanization of being.

Popular education in teaching, research and extension at the university: differentiated teaching practice

The marks of Popular Education in the university educational practice bet on another form of education, as we can see in the reports of educators, when affirming their conception of education and the possibility of dialogue between popular knowledge and scientific knowledge in the development of new ways of knowledge production from university education:

Table 2 – The educational practice of popular educators in university education

Axis 5	
Social Educator UFPE	[...] In general, educators are afraid of their students, because they don't have that story that you don't give wings to an ant. And it is this fear that educators have that makes this approach difficult, because education has to be an approximation, it has to be loving. Paulo Freire said to this: "I love everyone. I love all beings". So, there is no education that does not transform the human being, you have to transform yourself, you have to "transform" yourself, in the sense that you have to look at that person, that person who is there as a human being who needs to be heard [...] This is what Paulo Freire called love, that love that welcomes, that listens.
Political Educator UFPI	I consider myself a critical teacher who works with a critical reality, with critical theory. I don't consider myself a teacher who works with conformism and, shall we say, traditionalism and also not very well with the right-wing currents, but I also don't consider myself a doctrinaire. I do not consider myself forming a militant within the university, I consider myself forming critical subjects and thinkers of social reality.
Gender Educator UESPI	[...] Popular Education allowed me to have this awareness and also to produce or, let's say, to elaborate a teaching practice different from what, for example, I learned in teaching, when I did the teaching course. So, the practice of Popular Education makes this difference in my teaching. [...] So, for sure we are trying to do it. And this is also expressed in the way of doing it at the university, when we propose new themes, different themes, which the university is not used to discussing. For example, when we created the Research Nucleus at the University [UESPI], my line of research is precisely this, which brings these themes of gender, of social movements, when we bring the Landless Movement to discuss within the University, when we bring women's groups to present their work. So, I think this is a way of transgressing what is already common at the University. So, when you do that, I think it is a transgression of what is common, what is normal within the University.
Work Educator UFPB	My, let's say, life experience in social movements as a popular educator, I am sure it has a strong influence on my academic activity today. It certainly guides my worldview, my choices, right? My way of guiding, my way of teaching, my way of choosing priority research topics, the way of doing research, the epistemological principles that will guide research, in short.

Source: Oral interviews for research (2016)

These reports by popular educators in the teaching exercise point to some characteristics of their educational practice at the university, such as: affirmation of **autonomy in the construction of their political-pedagogical proposal** in their teaching plans; **commitment to the critical formation of students; active participation of students in the production of knowledge; reading of social reality to work on theoretical concepts; concrete experiences as a support for grounding theory of knowledge, when proposing the development of field classes; respect for students as historical subjects** and with the reality they experience.

Still in this educational itinerary, another important commitment of teachers-educators has been **the updating of contents in dialogue with reality, due to the conjunctural or structural moments of society, in the classroom discussions; the understanding of inter-knowledge**, that they have a type of knowledge and that **students have an accumulation of knowledge about their social practice and their experiences; lovingness in the act of educating; the critical and non-doctrinal teaching** that implies the circulation of the word creating approximations in the teacher-student relationship, among others.

These characteristics reveal the marks of an educational practice acquired by educators in the popular environment, thus, “[...] popular education enables the dialogue of popular knowledge, popular culture with the knowings/knowledge produced and systematized socially [...] are knowledge of an epistemology that unites action-reflection” (STRECK *et al.*, 2014, p. 93, our translation). The university educational practice changes, as well as the teachers-educators who, committed to the citizens' education of the students, strive to make the educational act a path towards a critical and transforming awareness of these subjects.

The development of reciprocal learning between teachers and students, based on the dialogue between theory and social practice, in concrete experiences in society, points to the construction of new knowledge, new educational practices and ways of reading social reality. The popular educator, in the teaching exercise, resumes his role of enhancing the university's social character and, at the same time, provides conditions for students as historical subjects, to activate their epistemological curiosity for the production of their educational citizenship. Methodological creativity in the educational practice of teachers-educators is one of the hallmarks of Popular Education as an educational concept of unveiling the social reality.

In the same sense, it contributes to the construction of alternative political-pedagogical instruments in university education committed to a conception of teaching in line with social issues. These methodologies ensure new forms of intelligibility in social practice, that is, both students and teachers and subjects from social movements learn as they teach, located in their experiences, find their own contradictions and reinvent their experiences and their worldviews.

The locus of social practice as a contribution to concepts and contents that are transformed into new senses and meanings, which would not be possible only through studies of theoretical knowledge in the classroom. For this reason, the importance of a concept of university education that articulates popular knowledge with scientific knowledge in the dynamics of its incompleteness, which opens up to the new, the unknown, the imaginary and the sensitive. The intelligibility between the popular and the scientific are ways of experiencing science in the production of prudent knowledge for a decent life (SANTOS, 2010). In this

perspective, the university must be committed to the formation of individuals who, in their knowledge, produce for the common good and for a just life, as stated by Borda (2004, p. 720, our translation):

To support these processes, we need democratic and altruistic universities that encourage the active participation of students in the search for new knowledge and, to that extent, consider research as pedagogical tools of the greatest value, as the basis for academic autonomy. That have as a priority task the consolidation of a cultural environment that fosters creativity during all stages of formation that contribute to the process of social reconstruction and the well-being of the unprotected majorities of the population.

The contribution of educators and teachers from the experiences of popular education in the development of new methodologies can add significantly to a teaching perspective that articulates theory to practice as a possibility to transgress the teaching-learning standards of the Eurocentric education concept, since “Any and all pedagogical project, or educational proposal, and any and all educational act are, fundamentally, political actions [...]” (STRECK, 2014, p. 94, our translation). Despite the efforts of teachers-educators in the development of methodological alternatives for a contextualized educational practice, they face the institutional limits of the logic of standard education, of the resistance of students to the innovation of educational practice. They face challenges that expand in research and extension, as we can see in the following discussion.

Table 3 – Elements of the research/extension conception of teacher educators at the university

Subjects	Research and Extension at the University
Political Educator UFPI	[...] the most recent project that I worked advising was a project of a student who works with the participatory budget and that she studied the participatory budget of the city of Teresina. In fact, it is not called participatory budgeting, it is called the Popular Budget of Teresina. So, this student's work that lasted two years, she did a critical reading of the last ten years of that social practice, but she defended her dissertation, concluded this work and, currently, I am advising four projects: one works on the issue of, let's say, of the new technologies and transparencies in the school, how to make a democratic and participative management in the elementary schools based on the law of transparency and the technologies that we have today; Another project that is a project about the (social) movements of Passe Livre in Teresina in the years 2011 and 2012; these projects, they also refer to another discussion that is the much more discussion of citizenship, the issue of citizenship rights, the issue of the formation of individuals, how society is currently transforming, changing, then, a little more in this more global line, general of society.
Gender Educator UESPI	At the university, I try to maintain my line of thought, of action, based on Popular Education and articulating with teachers who also think that way. In this sense, my part of teaching, research and extension is all focused on this perspective. With regard, for example, to work at the University in relation to alternative projects, we are also working together, for example, to present projects: Pedagogy of the Land, other projects that are involved. Popular Education, for example, we offer a specialization, whose principle was to be free of charge for students who works with Popular Education,

	<p>Human Rights and Social Movements. So, it was also a perspective that characterizes a bit of people's commitment to this issue of Popular Education and to the struggle of social organizations in the popular movement.</p> <p>Extension projects, for example, are in this perspective of the gender line, specifically, and also in the line of Popular Education because they work with a group of women, with communities, these are the axes.</p>
<p>Countryside Educator</p> <p>UFPI</p>	<p>We work in the Nucleus for Research, Studies and Extension in Countryside Education (NUPECAMPO). In the Nucleus, we work with the extension project. I am coordinating a Project for the Formation of Educators in the Countryside, which we do in partnership with some social organizations, with the State Education Secretariat and with the Municipal Education Departments. And then we try, in this work, to have a whole discussion that we started and learned to do within social organizations. So, it is a questioning of reality, of this conception of the countryside, of this conception of development, which is being imposed on the countryside, trying, from that, to promote the development of a critical education, of an emancipating education, having the freirean ideals as guiding elements for this training work and also for implementing these educational practices.</p>

Source: Oral interviews for research (2016)

Research has been a fundamental instrument to scientifically increase both teaching and extension. Popular Education has been busy designing alternative ways of conducting research into social reality, in which the act of researching implies formative processes and action/intervention on the investigated practice. In this sense, it is important to consider the possibility of teaching and extension as methodological and pedagogical instruments of the research process with which the research is carried out.

In this regard, Popular Education from its way of investigating social reality, inaugurated new concepts and different contents in academic life from the social practices of collective subjects, notably from social movements, when building alternatives for social policies, reordering the logic of the State itself for the serious social problems, forcing hegemonic science to recognize and legitimize its knowledge in many areas of science. The participatory methodologies developed within the educational practices of Popular Education ensure new ways of developing research in a commitment to unveiling the social realities of oppression, with veiled forms of discrimination and fascism in society; at the same time, they inaugurate new instruments for questioning the structural inequalities imposed on the world by the capitalist system, as Santos (2013) analyzes, when discussing that these new methodologies have their own rationality as a dimension of research in university life:

Action research and the ecology of knowledge are areas of legitimacy for the university that transcend extension since they act both at the level of the university and at the level of research and formation. Action research consists in the definition and participatory execution of research projects, involving communities and popular social organizations, there are stems with problems whose solution can benefit from the results of the research (SANTOS, 2013, p. 471, our translation).

Within this perspective, the contribution of Popular Education advances in the commitment to some aspects in the way of developing research and extension, as the teachers-educators affirm, among which, we highlight: **commitment to the active participation of the subjects as protagonists of the knowledge and development research; systematic return of research in formative activities carried out in partnership with the research subjects; problematization of social reality in the study contexts; interest in research in contexts of struggle, resistance and development of new techniques and instruments for access to rights and justice; research in which the investigating subjects are from the same source as the investigated contexts, such as participant research; investigation of collective subjects such as social movements.** There are also extension projects such as those linked to the history of feminism, which **involves the procedural formation of women in the fight for rights and against forms of violence and machismo**; access to university education such as the **provision of specialization courses for popular subjects working in the social movements of the countryside and the city, etc.** The contribution of Popular Education brands in conducting research and extension in the construction of a more just society is undeniable, especially for social subjects who were historically out of university life, due to the processes of social exclusion and inequality.

In this sense, considering that the majority of teachers-educators are linked to undergraduate and postgraduate courses, advising several research themes, mostly linked to human, social and applied social sciences, we have been questioning why fragmentation in the modes of production of knowledge at the university still predominates, even by these educators. In other words, there is hardly any trade or exchange of experiences between research, even when studying similar themes and being linked to a single line of research; on the contrary, it has been an extremely lonely process. In the centers of studies and research, interdisciplinarity has been a challenge for its full implementation.

In view of this accelerated mode of academic production, another limit that we analyze is that, even the teachers-educators, who advise research in this great area of the social sciences, find limits to articulate forms of inter-knowledge between the studies and the researches they carry out, even though they belong to the same university. On the one hand, this questioning starts from the understanding that, in view of the advance of capitalism in the world and the form of academic production to consolidate this project of unequal and unjust society, we need an action of academic and social intervention more committed to the discussion of serious social issues and the levels of reach of total relations that result in the constitution of a model of society.

On the other hand, by betting on the dialogues between the research and the results they point out, we can present levels of knowledge articulation for a more systematic and qualified questioning, unveiling the social reality, such as, for example: access to improved urban mobility leads the discussion of the poor conditions of the public transport system; the forms of popular and student mobilization in the struggle for the improvement of public transport present new demands in the discussions of the popular budget, work conditions and precariousness; of social policies; of educational policies to/from the countryside, in short, we need to make the articulation of knowledge between research topics intelligible as a condition for deepening more qualified social intervention by researchers - advisors or researchers - as part of the same research process.

In this sense, it is necessary that the dialogue between popular knowledge and scientific knowledge takes place within the educational practice of research and extension within the academic space, bringing together research and researchers who work with the perspective of Popular Education and with other committed research approaches with social reality.

Conclusion

Popular education has a strong impact on the educational practice of teachers-educators and its impact on teaching, extension and research in the academic context. In the options of lines of research, there is a coherent relationship regarding the recognition of the principles of Popular Education in the educational practice of these subjects in the decolonization of knowledge of a hegemonic aspect of science at the university. Teachers-educators recognize that the participation of students in the knowledge production process has been fundamental to their performance as a teacher, since there is no teaching life without an active presence of student life.

The teachers-educators recognize the importance of the ethical dimension of the veracity of the data on the social reality, in this sense, they understand that the systematic return of the research through political-pedagogical actions of socialization of the findings with the researched subjects as a fundamental methodological aspect of knowledge production. This investigative principle ensures the search for truth as a criterion for a scientific production that is rigorous and socially committed to social issues that involve solutions from the researcher's point of view, but above all, it implies an analysis of the investigated subjects.

This subject/subject relationship inaugurates a decolonizing and instituting research of concrete knowledge for the world of life, whose solutions cannot be reproduced only by the

researcher's reading schemes, in a reproduction of intellectual colonialism that inferiorizes the reading of the investigated subjects. From the perspective of Popular Education, the researched realities have their own structure of rationality, causality and intelligibility, therefore, the knowledge results from schemes of affirmation of popular subjects and their contexts, which implies overcoming external schemes that create falsity of social reality.

Decolonizing science implies projecting a university teaching perspective that is capable of reinventing the relationship between popular knowledge and scientific knowledge inside and outside the academic space. In this sense, the contribution of Popular Education in the democratization process of the university and science, requires, on the one hand, an education project committed to an educational practice that promotes the integral formation of student subjects, breaking with individualism and productive competition for capital. On the other hand, it implies overcoming the Eurocentric schemes that separate university knowledge from the urgent and emerging issues of society. In this aspect, research, as a scientific dimension that attributes scientific criteria to knowledge, assumes a fundamental role in contextualized production, which, linked to teaching and extension, are methodological instruments for the reinvention of university life in the development of a project of society that is more just and humanly sustainable.

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