

Research in Nursing: for an ethical pedagog!

There's no teaching without research and no research without teaching, *states Paulo Freire in his small, but excellent work Pedagogia da Autonomia: Saberes Necessários à Prática Educativa*^(a) (*Pedagogy of Autonomy: Knowledge Required to the Educational Practice*). This is so because, according to the author, it is part of the nature of the teaching activity inquiry, search and research, thus in [the professor's] permanent formation it is necessary that he/she perceives and assumes himself/herself as a researcher.

It is possible to make an interesting connection between teaching practices in general and nursing practice in particular in what refers to the relationship between cognoscente subject and cognoscible object. Thus we may apply to our work in Nursing Freire's phrase for the educational practice: I research in order to verify, by verifying I intervene, by intervening I educate [others] and educate myself.

And more: [the researcher, in the original the teacher]

historical like us, our knowledge of the world has historicity. When it is produced, the new knowledge overcomes the other that previously had been new and has become old and is willing to be overcome by another tomorrow. (...) [It is] essential to be familiar with the existing knowledge as well as to know that we are open and apt for producing knowledge that still does not exist.

Therefore, one deals with two moments of the gnosiologic cycle: the first, which is the moment in which one learns and teaches what is known, and the second, in which the production of knowledge that still does not exist is worked upon.

In our investigative-critical practice, research in Nursing is a form of intervention into the objective reality (in the processes of the population health/diseases, in the processes of work and production in health, in the processes of permanent formation and education, in the processes of caring, among others) and, therefore, implies not only in the effort to reproduce the dominating ideology, but also in the unmasking, assuming itself as dialectic and contradictory. Research will never be neutral, just as disclosure, both in content and form, will never be either.

Research in Nursing must build its autonomy, which means to impregnate the investigative purposes with the profession's ethos and strive for the conciliation of the adopted methodologies to the ethical competences (which are understood as being comprised of the values and virtues of doing the good while the research is being undertaken and in its final result, and not simply the mere compliance with the formalities of preserving the individuals directly involved in the investigation) in order to, in the end, with the newly generated knowledge, respond to the need for a necessary and qualified intervention.

Another sense of autonomy in scientific investigation in Nursing resides in the forms of disclosure: by limiting to the ways in which heteronomically Nursing has been choosing the means to make information public, adjusting them to unnecessary, unproductive and sterile ranking as JCR or ISI propose, it submits itself to a given ideology – which today may be called marketing – that follows the rules of the bio-medical sciences, according to which quantity means more than quality and, thus, there's no room for complex phenomena, because they take longer to be elucidated and require much more space than what's available to articles in scientific publications. And those products, even though they bring innovating knowledge capable of intervening in practices in many settings, are directed to less noble vehicles according to Capes (the Ministry of Education's Coordination for the Improvement of Upper Level Personnel): books and book chapters. A balance is required: we need both forms – and also others – in making knowledge public, not only the lasting ones but also those that innovate our practices.

So in order to change this picture, let's discuss and build the autonomy of our investigative practice in Nursing!

^(a) Freire P. *Pedagogia da autonomia: saberes necessários à prática educativa*. 30ª ed. São Paulo: Paz e Terra; 2004.