

Freirean pedagogy implications for the teaching of phenomenology in nursing: an experience report

Contribuições da pedagogia freireana para o ensino da fenomenologia em enfermagem: relato de experiência

Contribuciones de la pedagogía freireana en la enseñanza de la fenomenología en enfermería: relato de experiencia

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To report the learning experience of students in the discipline “Phenomenology, Formation and Research”, and to analyze the pedagogic planning of its problematization in the process of construction of knowledge, in a strict sensu program in Nursing and Health.

Method: Descriptive-analytic report of the learning plan offered and of the theoretical framework of the data, from a Freirean perspective.

Results: The discipline was offered in the form of distance-education classes to six students and organized in three units: the first included five synchronous meetings and one asynchronous meeting; the second, three synchronous meetings; and the third, seven synchronous meetings and one asynchronous meeting. The methodologies applied included: presentations from guest lecturers, inverted classroom, and conceptual map. Husserl’s and Heidegger’s lines of thought were discussed.

Conclusion: The construction of knowledge in phenomenology by postgraduates took place according with Freire’s pedagogical structure, highlighting the concept of problematization.

Keywords: Philosophy, nursing, Hermeneutics. Education, nursing, graduate.

ABSTRACT

Objetivo: Relatar a experiência de aprendizagem discente na disciplina “Fenomenologia, Formação e Pesquisa”, e analisar o planejamento pedagógico de sua problematização no processo de construção do conhecimento, em programa stricto sensu em Enfermagem e Saúde.

Método: Relato descritivo-analítico do plano de ensino ofertado com enquadramento teórico dos dados sob a perspectiva freireana.

Resultados: A disciplina foi ofertada a seis discentes na modalidade remota e organizada em três unidades: a primeira composta por cinco encontros síncronos e um assíncrono; a segunda por três encontros síncronos e a terceira com sete síncronos e um assíncrono. Destacaram-se como metodologias aplicadas: aula expositiva de convidados externos, sala de aula invertida e mapa conceitual. Foram abordadas as linhas de pensamento husserliana e heideggeriana.

Conclusão: A construção do conhecimento da fenomenologia por pós-graduandos ocorreu de acordo com a estrutura pedagógica de Freire, tendo como destaque, o constructo da problematização.

Palavras-chave: Filosofia em enfermagem. Hermenêutica. Educação de pós-graduação em enfermagem.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: Relatar la experiencia de aprendizaje de los estudiantes en la disciplina “Fenomenología, Formación e Investigación”, y analizar la planificación pedagógica de su problematización en el proceso de construcción del conocimiento en un programa stricto sensu en Enfermería y Salud.

Método: Informe descriptivo-analítico del plan de enseñanza ofrecido y marco teórico de los datos desde la perspectiva freireana.

Resultados: La disciplina se ofreció a seis estudiantes en la modalidad a distancia y se organizó en tres unidades: la primera consta de cinco encuentros sincrónicos y uno asincrónico; la segunda, de tres encuentros sincrónicos; y la tercera, de siete encuentros sincrónicos y un asincrónico. Se destacaron las siguientes metodologías: clase expositiva de participantes externos invitados, aula invertida y mapa conceptual. Se abordaron las líneas de pensamiento husserliana y heideggeriana.

Conclusión: La construcción del conocimiento de la fenomenología por parte de los estudiantes en el postgrado ocurrió según la estructura pedagógica de Freire, con énfasis en el constructo “problematización”.

Palabras clave: Filosofía en enfermería. Hermenêutica. Educación de postgrado en enfermería.

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■ INTRODUCTION

The study of phenomenology is an approach and a method in qualitative researches that emerges from the field of philosophy. It is a descriptive, rigorous, and concrete science, using a discourse to clarify the existence of the human being. It uses, as a resource, this being's subjectivity, in order to reach their essence in the world⁽¹⁾. The goal is to unveil that which is hidden in regard to the meaning of being in the world through qualitative pathways, giving meaning to the being and its subject-object-world relations in an indissociable way⁽²⁾.

The phenomenological approach is involved with many lines of thought. Historians such as Martin Heidegger, Edmund Gustav Albrecht Husserl, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty stood out due to the phenomenological research they developed throughout the world, which also contributed for the synthesis of knowledge in nursing⁽³⁾. A first relationship between nursing and phenomenology was observed in the 80s, as attempts were made to understand the perspective of the subject who was receiving care. Since then, an interpretive line formed by intersubjective aspects has been followed. These can lead to new knowledge about entities that have experienced pain, suffering, loss, empathetic relations, rejections, and conflicts⁽²⁾.

In this regard, the phenomenological study becomes essential for researcher nurses to use auxiliary tools to interpret the subjectivity of their patients⁽⁴⁾ in an existential and hermeneutic dimension, thus including constructs of intentionality. As a result, it becomes possible to unveil ontic and ontological dimensions of the entity and of the being of the entity, leading to public policies of human development and social protection⁽⁵⁾. Evidences⁽²⁾ have shown that from 2003 to 2013 there was a decrease in the number of phenomenological studies, reiterating the need for researcher nurses to develop more investigations in this philosophical line of thought, thus leading to an increased offer of the discipline "phenomenology" in postgraduation programs. This content favors the acquisition of technical and scientific abilities in learning processes that traverse structured pedagogical pathways, provided by professors who have the role of mediators of knowledge, as some recommended by more contemporaneous pedagogical theories that are focused on problematization, such as the "Pedagogy of Autonomy", proposed by Paulo Freire^(6,7).

Therefore, the object investigated is targeted at the study of the modality in which the discipline "Phenomenology, Formation, and Research" was offered and of how the responsible

designed its development, focused on the construction of knowledge in different lines of thought and phenomenological tendencies, which, considering the pandemic, was accessible to interested students via remote classes, in addition to in-person meetings and individual free studies.

This connected learning model⁽⁷⁾ tries to make professors more acceptant of certain innovative educational and methodological paradigms of a decentralized and autonomous character. It also means that the students must understand the relevance of assuming a main role and become co-responsible for the construction of their own knowledge through problematization, which has led to rethinking the applicability and ideals of Pedagogy of Autonomy in a setting of hybridization of education. It stands out that postgraduation programs have reflected aptitudes regarding connected classes, such as creativity, partnership, empathy, and leadership, all in order to carry out the change that demand readaptation⁽⁸⁾.

In this context, the study at hand seeks to answer the following question: How do postgraduate students in MS and PhD courses construct phenomenology knowledge? Our goal was to report the experience of learning of the students in the discipline "Phenomenology, Formation, and Research", part of a *strictosensu* postgraduation program in Nursing and Health, and analyze the pedagogical planning of its problematization in the process of construction of knowledge.

■ METHOD

Descriptive-analytical experience report focused on the analysis of the pedagogical planning of problematization in the process of constructing knowledge from the perspective of a student and advisory of two professors from the PhD in Nursing and Health, from August to December, 2021. Experience reports are scientific narrative creations that can be generalized, since they encompass the results of experiencing subjective processes and productions that have a certain impact on the one who reports⁽⁹⁾.

The experience analyzed here took part in a postgraduation program in Nursing and Health in the northeast of Brazil, in the discipline "Phenomenology, Formation, and Research". In 2021, teaching was adapted to a remote modality due to the pandemic of COVID-19.

The material was organized in Google Spreadsheets for analysis, which allowed for monitoring the professors in real time and processing manual data from an academic diary⁽¹⁰⁾. It also allowed to measure the percentage of phenomenological lines and thought and the topics that were more or

less prevalent in remote discussions, as well as their diversity. During this process, the content proposed in the syllabus in two stages, including the columns of the spreadsheets, information on the base and structure of phenomenological studies, authors, lines of thought, theoretical constructs, and specialties of nursing that use this method in scientific research. This content is present in the syllabus and was developed during the classes. This led to the construction of two charts in the form of conceptual maps⁽¹¹⁾. Their theoretical framework was the content proposed and the scientific works recommended as introductory and fundamental readings in phenomenology^(12,13).

The process of analysis of the syllabus planning followed a script in the form of a checklist, with items based on pedagogy and elaborated by the authors themselves, including the following: Which pedagogical approaches were used? Did the discipline use any active methodologies? Did the discipline merge the reality of regional, national, and international researchers?

After data processing, ontological issues of the being-that-is-taught were used for an interpretive and analytical structuring of the discipline, considering the theoretical framework of Paulo Freire in Pedagogy of Autonomy^(6,7). This allowed us to understand the pedagogical concepts of the process of constructing knowledge.

Since this is an experience report performed by students and professors with pedagogical and educational goals, it was not necessary for the Research Ethics Committee to approve this research. Nonetheless, the anonymity and confidentiality of data, which were only used to reach the goals of this research, were guaranteed through the signing of an assent form, as prescribed by Resolutions 466/12 and 510/16 by the National Council of Health.

■ RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In 2021, the discipline "Phenomenology, Formation, and Research" was offered as a distance education class by two PhD professors who had experience and were specialists on the topic. It was offered to regular MS or PhD students and for special students, those who study separate subjects. Both groups needed to be approved in a selection process to enroll. Six students participated: four PhD special students, and two regular students from the MS in Nursing and Health. In the group, there were students from the states of Bahia (BA), Espírito Santo (ES), Rio Grande do Norte (RN), and Pará (PR). The discipline had an hour load of 51 hours, divided in weekly meetings that lasted three hours per class, both

synchronous and asynchronous. The discipline was offered in three units: 1 (UN1), including 5 synchronous meetings and 1 asynchronous one; 2 (UN2), with three synchronous; and 3 (UN3), with seven synchronous meetings and 1 asynchronous one. In the synchronous modality, activities were proposed to the group: lectures from the professors and national and international guests, who presented the outcomes of the productions which emerged from their theses; expositions with dialog, in the form of inverted classrooms; and presentation of a conceptual map that encompassed the first part of the content of the discipline. This content is detailed in Figure 1.

In the asynchronous modality, some pre-class activities were suggested, such as movie recommendations, previous reading of the works to be presented in the next meeting by the PhD professors invited, elaboration of activities such as the conceptual map - individually - and of seminars in pairs.

Among the topics presented by the external guests, Heidegger's existential and hermeneutic approach was the most common, with five topics: elders in long-permanence institutions; pregnancies at risk due to heart diseases; experiences in the extension program of massage and baby stimulation; experiences of serodiscordant couples in reproduction; life experiences that favor the completeness and transcendence of the elder. There were also works regarding Merleau-Ponty's existential and intercorporeity approaches, with two works on the same topic: the caregiver relatives of hospitalized elders.

The strategies of evaluation were based on the activities guided by the professors (construction and presentation of the conceptual map and the seminar), on the assiduous participation in synchronous meetings, and on the production of scientific knowledge encouraging the construction of abstracts to be presented in a phenomenology congress. Figure 2 synthesizes the content provided in the first and second stages of the discipline, according with the descriptive analysis of the curricular component.

A quantitative analysis of the studies by nurse researchers who were guest lecturers in the discipline showed that Martin Heidegger's line of thought was predominant, followed by Merleau-Ponty's constructs. The Heideggerian and Merleau-Pontynian thought is more useful in the topics regarding health care, and in women's, adult's, elder's, and adolescent's health, as well as in mental and collective health⁽²⁾. Among the topics presented by the guests of the discipline, women's health stood out, with a higher number of phenomenological studies in both lines of thought. Although the socioexistential thought of Alfred Schütz is the

most commonly used in post-graduation production, none of the works presented in unit two (UN2) followed this line of thought. The topic of adolescent health is also present, albeit in lower numbers. Regarding the number of productions from 2003 to 2013 from MS and PhD courses, Alfred Schütz stands out (MS:30, PhD: 15), followed by Heidegger (MS:18; PhD: 11), and Merleau-Ponty (MS:6; PhD: 5)⁽²⁾.

Teaching care, according with Heideggerian philosophy, should be done based on the provision of nursing assistance highlighting the existential meaning of the experience of mental or physical disease, in accordance with a broader understanding of health. In Husserl's line of thought, on the other hand, care should be considered from a perspective of human consciousness, in such a way that the researcher must eschew their own essences and truths, avoiding stereotypes and presuppositions regarding the phenomenon⁽¹⁴⁾. As a result, the authors have the need of teaching about the Epochè⁽¹³⁾ in the stage of data collection, since it is important to describe this practice in the research project.

The data found in this research are similar to the constructs in Paulo Freire's problematization^(6,15), thus being in

accordance with a series of demands regarding the methodological rigor for the teaching of scientific research development, including their aspects of criticism and reflection about the practice, since teaching is not only an act of transferring content with an unidirectional logic^(6,7). In this regard, the student experience, throughout the discipline, planning as something irrigated fertilized by a diversity of pedagogical activities that focused on teaching phenomenology considering problematization.

The fact that the discipline was offered as a distance learning opportunity allowed for knowledge to be shared and for Brazilian post-graduation to have an international interface⁽⁹⁾, with the participation of a team of phenomenology researchers from many regions of Brazil and from Central American countries, to consolidate and improve the quality of the teaching provided considering the universality of the meanings. Parallel to that, the importance of aligning current university pedagogical paradigm to the profile of digital-era students stands out, including the conscious application of active methodologies that can aid them in the process of absorbing new knowledge.

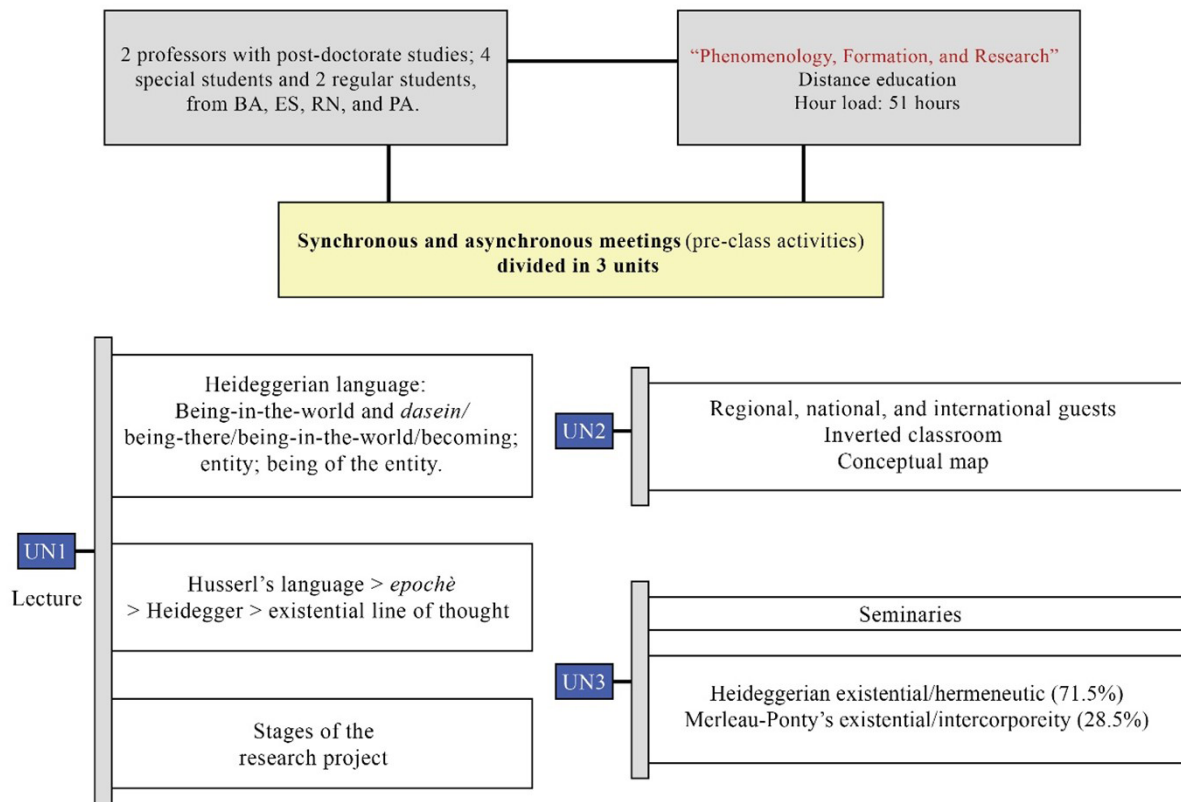


Figure 1 – Pictogram of the structure and pedagogical organization of the discipline Phenomenology, Education, and Health. Vitória, Espírito Santo, Brazil, 2021

Source: The authors, 2021.

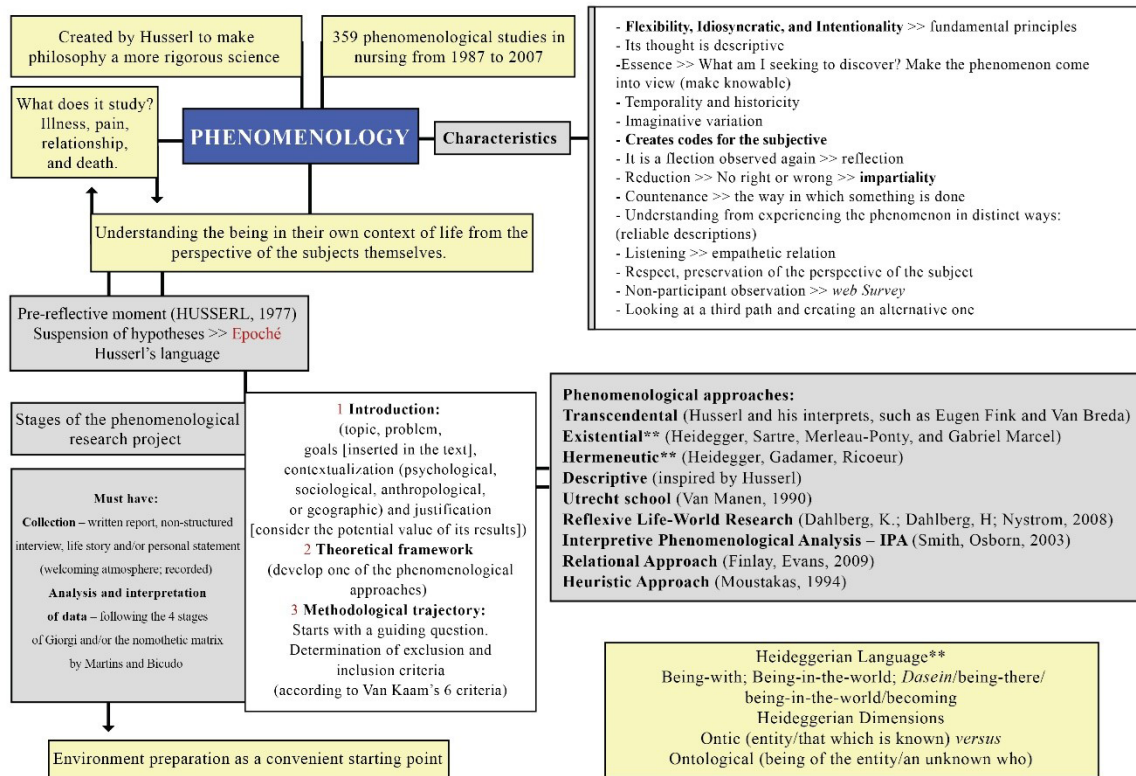


Figure 2 - Pictogram of the syllabus of the discipline Phenomenology, Education, and Health. Vitória, Espírito Santo, Brazil, 2021
 Source: The authors, 2021.

Active methodologies, therefore, can be understood as a resignification of traditional pedagogical approaches through the customization of education that results from the development of dialogical, gamified, and digital self-communication practices, that can generate a highly interactive student-protagonist-being⁽⁷⁾. In this study, the use of the inverted classroom should be highlighted, as it is considered to be an active methodology with a hybrid approach for learning, which is redesigned in an interactive classroom, allied with traditional pedagogical experiences guided by the professor in a sequence of pre-class, classroom, and post-class⁽¹⁶⁾.

Regarding innovative forms of teaching, it is necessary to constantly discuss new alternatives for the pedagogical construction of a discipline, also considering the speed with which science has brought forth approaches that can be applied in classrooms, not only in phenomenology. As a result, the work developed by professors and students should be based on evaluative dynamics regarding the construction of the practice of teaching and of the process of learning, seeking the autonomy of student being, seen as a unique being, a being-with-people-and-with-things,

reflective, temporal, who coexists in the world of the school and the classrooms, in this case in distance classes, with the pedagogical aid of the professor-being. This context, it should be noted, makes it feasible to operationalize the transformation of a reality^(15,16).

An interpretive reading of the constructs of the pedagogy of autonomy^(6,7) shows that these historical aspects of Freire can be applied to this report, for example, in the didactics used to construct the conceptual map, which presented a synthesis of all the content addressed in the three teaching units. It should be noted that ontology addresses an unknown who⁽⁵⁾, and the student-being, at this point, can be considered, from the perspective of the professor-being, as an ontological being immersed in their process of learning, who will need to uncover their existential peculiarities.

Thus, there was an attempt to maintain ideas about what is already known about the individual practical-educational process, requiring the student-being to be an active participant in the formative process, thus generating systematized knowledge⁽⁷⁾. The fact that the professor-beings proposed previous readings of the works of guests, so a collective discussion involving the student-beings could be carried

out, as well as the construction of seminars in pairs, shows that a pedagogy of autonomy^(6,7) continues to be ingrained in their pedagogical-evaluative plans.

Considering the above, the structure proposed for the discipline “Phenomenology, Formation, and Health” was permeated by the concept of consciousness of the unfinished established by Paulo Freire⁽⁶⁾ and addressed ethics and humanization in the process of knowledge. This presented a consonance with the theoretical constructs of Husserlian phenomenology, due to the subjectivity of the interpretations considered as we analyze data and processes that enable an increased proximity of relations in the path of a dialectic construction of knowledge⁽⁵⁾.

Therefore, the strengths of this report are the robust descriptive analysis of the pedagogical structure of the teaching of phenomenology in nursing, in such a way that different programs will be able to use it as a work guide to provide similar disciplines in the past. Its limitations are related with the difficulty of reproducing the method employed in the experience report. The method is difficult to generalize as it is a particular experience in the production of phenomenology content by nurses, in an academic and pedagogic context experienced in a specific way by those who lived the experience. Furthermore, there are few specific descriptors in phenomenology in the DeCS/MeSH platform.

■ CONCLUSION

The construction of knowledge in phenomenology by postgraduate nurses took place according with the pedagogical structure by Freire, highlighting the construct of problematization. A suggestion to professors would be inserting the line of thought of Alfred Schütz in their syllabus, since his work was found to be prevalent in dissertations and theses. This report, finally, contributes for the construction of a discipline guided by phenomenological principles in nursing, also conducting to a structure to construct projects of phenomenological research.

A noteworthy contribution of the study is the opportunity for nursing professionals to participate in post-graduation disciplines about the scientific method of phenomenology, which can guide them to develop phenomenological researches that can interpret aspects with a high degree of subjectivity from the beings-there-in-the-world, in their several social, historical, and existential contexts. These aspects can contribute for a broader understanding of the relationship “Phenomenology-Nursing-Care”, in such a way as to favor the improvement of the quality of assistance in several contexts.

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Writing – review and editing: Vinícius de Oliveira Muniz, Gilberto Tadeu Reis da Silva, Larissa Chaves Pedreira, Tânia Maria de Oliveira Menezes, Raúl Fernando Guerrero-Castañeda.

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