

# The question and its potential: intersections between education and philosophy<sup>1</sup>

*Pedro Henrique Mendonça Fernandes<sup>2</sup>*

*Marcos Roberto de Faria<sup>3</sup>*

## **ABSTRACT**

The question is one of the means human beings use to establish relationships with the world and with themselves. Therefore, in this work, we sought to develop a path that begins with the possibility of understanding what a question is and to analyze its epistemological, discursive, social and political, revolutionary, and hermeneutical dimensions, as multiple facets of the same questioning action. The main aim was to establish the question as a point of intersection between education and philosophy, seeking to identify the role of questions in educational processes and the contribution that philosophy and its teaching can bring to the development of a questioning education that awakens equally questioning students. This is a bibliographic and qualitative study based on Machado and Sasseron (2012), Muraro (2015), Gadamer (1997), Kohan (2011), and Cerletti (2009). The results revealed the question as an intersection point between philosophy and education since it can be more than an interrogative sentence or pedagogical resource. We concluded that the question has the potential to trigger the most diverse processes, such potential can act as a driving force in the learning process.

**KEYWORDS:** Question; Education; Philosophy.

---

<sup>1</sup> English version by Silvana Aparecida Carvalho do Prado. *E-mail:* [silprado65@yahoo.com.br](mailto:silprado65@yahoo.com.br).

<sup>2</sup> Mestre. Universidade Federal de Alfenas, Alfenas, Minas Gerais, Brasil. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-4914-6801>. *E-mail:* [pedro.mendonca@sou.unifal-mg.edu.br](mailto:pedro.mendonca@sou.unifal-mg.edu.br).

<sup>3</sup> Doutor. Universidade Federal de Alfenas, Alfenas, Minas Gerais, Brasil. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9104-7626>. *E-mail:* [marcos.faria@unifal-mg.edu.br](mailto:marcos.faria@unifal-mg.edu.br).

*A pergunta e suas potencialidades: interseções entre a educação e a filosofia*

**RESUMO**

A pergunta é um dos caminhos que o ser humano possui para estabelecer relações com o mundo e consigo mesmo. Assim sendo, neste trabalho, que é parte de uma pesquisa de mestrado, procurou-se desenvolver um percurso que parte da possibilidade de compreender o que é a pergunta e analisar as suas dimensões epistemológica, discursiva, social e política, revolucionária e hermenêutica, como múltiplas faces de uma mesma ação questionadora. Como objetivo principal, pretendeu-se estabelecer a pergunta como um ponto de interseção entre a educação e a filosofia, buscando identificar o papel das perguntas nos processos educativos e a contribuição que a filosofia e seu ensino podem trazer para o desenvolvimento de uma educação questionadora que desperte estudantes igualmente questionadores. A metodologia da pesquisa teve cunho bibliográfico e qualitativo, partindo, notadamente, dos estudos de Machado e Sasseron (2012), Muraro (2015), Gadamer (1997), Kohan (2011) e Cerletti (2009). Como resultado, foi possível vislumbrar a pergunta como um ponto de interseção entre a filosofia e a educação, uma vez que ela, a pergunta, pode ir além de uma frase interrogativa ou recurso pedagógico. Pôde-se concluir, pois, que a pergunta é, potencialmente, desencadeadora dos mais diversos processos, potência essa que pode atuar como mola propulsora da aprendizagem.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Pergunta; Educação; Filosofia.

*La pregunta y su potencial: intersecciones entre educación y filosofía*

**RESUMEN**

La cuestión es una de las formas que tiene el ser humano de establecer relaciones con el mundo y consigo mismo. Por ello, en este trabajo, que forma parte de una investigación de maestría, buscamos desarrollar un camino que parte de la posibilidad de comprender cuál es la pregunta y analizar sus dimensiones epistemológicas, discursivas, sociales y políticas, revolucionarias y hermenéuticas, como múltiples lados de la misma acción de interrogatorio. Como objetivo principal nos propusimos establecer la pregunta como punto de intersección entre educación y filosofía, buscando identificar el papel de las preguntas en los procesos educativos y el aporte que la filosofía y su enseñanza

pueden aportar al desarrollo de una educación cuestionadora que despierte estudiantes igualmente curiosos. La metodología de investigación tuvo un carácter bibliográfico y cualitativo, basándose principalmente en los estudios de Machado y Sasseron (2012), Muraro (2015), Gadamer (1997), Kohan (2011) y Cerletti (2009). Como resultado, fue posible ver la pregunta como un punto de intersección entre filosofía y educación, ya que ella, la pregunta, puede ir más allá de una oración interrogativa o un recurso pedagógico. Por lo tanto, se podría concluir que la pregunta potencialmente desencadena los más diversos procesos, un poder que puede actuar como motor del aprendizaje.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Pregunta; Educación; Filosofía.

\* \* \*

## Introduction

Philosophy and education are closely related. Both are founded on the history of humankind and their love for and pursuit of knowledge. In Ancient Greece, where the Western philosophical thought was born, the role of those called philosophers was to educate, and they sought to convey a set of answers about reality and also a way to question, interpret and understand it.

According to Severino (1990, p.19),

In the context of Western culture history, we can easily observe that education and philosophy were always close together. We can see, in fact, that since its appearance in classical Greece, philosophy was closely related to a pedagogical intention to educate human beings. It was born **paideia!**

The closeness between philosophy and education is not a simple synonym, in fact, it exposes the “pedagogical intention” found in philosophy. In other words, philosophy entails the will to educate, to lead to knowledge, provoking the person to externalize the knowledge they have, even if it is not apparent.

Considering that philosophy was born as paideia, we understand that philosophy has the potential of a holistic education and humanization, which does not occur outside the individual, but rather as a type of self-realization or realization of the self, thus revealing what is the most human in being human. Philosophy was born with this educator's view, one that seeks to notice human beings in their entirety, which understands that knowledge is the result of a constant and broad process.

Philosophy is also born as awe and admiration of reality. The philosophical spirit's restlessness is not always silenced inside individuals, it overflows. One of the ways it occurs is by asking questions.

Even asking countless questions throughout the day, we are not always aware of the strength of asking. It is not only about considering the reach of one or another question, but rather about evidencing this possibility that human beings have of submitting reality to questioning. The action of reflecting upon asking is proposed in this article considering the philosophical potential that each question has of triggering critical and investigative processes.

This is observed in the Socratic method in which a question has great relevance and works as a generator of other questions by enquiring the interlocutor, challenging opinions, and seeking knowledge. The interlocutor, in turn, instead of seeking the answers demanded by Socrates, starts looking for answers to the doubts that they then recognize that they have deep inside.

Therefore, this study aims to focus on how philosophy and education are intertwined. Going beyond philosophy as a curricular component in schools, we sought to highlight the philosophical dimension that can permeate all education processes, the educator dimension of philosophy that can enrich basic education classrooms. In this view, the question appears as a genuine and provoking expression of this philosophical-pedagogical meeting, fostering a multiplicity of possible ways.

## Methodology

This is a qualitative study addressing philosophical and educational thinking and reality. It is also a bibliographic investigation aiming to find possible ways and perspectives for the questions guiding the study and the objectives of this scientific investigation.

The work developed has a philosophical character and seeks to identify fundamental concepts in the understanding of the Socratic method and the question. Its theoretical background includes books, dissertations, theses and scientific articles analyzed in the education and philosophy perspective.

Considering the specificities of the philosophical reflection, a path is developed following the hermeneutical approach to a deeper and broader understanding of the theme.

## The question: concepts and dimensions

To better understand the role of the question in education processes, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of what is defined as question and how to ask questions.

The verb question, in Portuguese, has a variety of meanings linked to interrogating, clarifying doubts, and solving problems. The noun “question” derives from the verb “question” and also presents the same multiplicity of meanings and connotation. Its synonyms include enquiry, doubt, query, interrogation, and questioning.

From an etymological analysis, the origin of the word question (*pergunta*) is found in the Latin language. According to Nascentes, (1955), in his etymological dictionary, the Latin term *percontare* is its root word, “whose meaning question or speculate, (...) etymologically would mean to investigate to the reach of a stick.” (p. 391). This was an expression used for sailors in the Roman Empire to describe the action of measuring the

vessel vertical distance between the bottom of the keel and the fluctuation line seeking to identify places suitable for navigation. This was a necessary procedure to guarantee safe sailing.

Considering that, Souza (2012, p. 18) states that

(...) to question, in Latin, is to investigate whether the sea is deep enough to navigate. This meaning linked to navigation is similar to the process of investigating the unknown when procedures are exposed to find out something hidden. It describes a method used to investigate depth, a diagnosis that seeks to know something that is not evident, and therefore, is closer to the question as a manifestation of the epistemological nature. The question prompts knowledge that opens space to investigation.

According to this perspective, questioning is a process action that seeks to investigate what is not apparent. It is a method, an epistemological way to get to know what is deeper about a certain subject. It is a way of investigating existing possibilities to avoid getting stuck, trapped or prevented from continuing the investigation process.

This conception dialogues with Marilena Chauí's (2010) proposal which presents question as a way to act in the world, as a philosophical attitude.

Let's, therefore, imagine somebody who decided not to accept established opinions and started to ask questions that others might find strange or unexpected. For example, instead of asking "what time is it?" or "What day is it today?", they would ask "what is time?"; instead of saying "somebody is dreaming" or "somebody is crazy", they would ask "What is dream, craziness, reason?"

Let's suppose that the person substituted all their statements with questions and instead of saying "where there's smoke there's fire" or "don't go out in the rain so as not to get a cold", they asked "what is cause?" and "what is effect?"

(...)

Anybody making this decision would get distanced from everyday life and from themselves, they would start to question what the beliefs and feelings that feed our existence are. While distancing themselves, they would be questioning themselves, willing to know why they believe in what they believe, why they feel what they feel and what their beliefs and feelings are. This individual would start to act according to the Delphi oracle “know thyself” and would start to adopt a philosophical attitude. (Chauí, 2010, p. 20-21)

The educator Paulo Freire (2013) considers the question “What does question mean?” fundamental in education processes. According to him, it is not about triggering an academic investigation around this issue. It is more than that, it is about adopting questioning as common practice, an attitude.

We insist, however, that the core issue does not reside in using the question “what does question mean?” as an intellectual game, but rather live this this question, live inquire and curiosity, and give students a testimony of it. The problem presented to teachers in their practice is how to create in the students the habit of asking and of “amazing” themselves, as a virtue. (Freire; Faundez, 2013, p. 25)

The question, in Freire, is the expression of “an enquiring conception of education”. More than asking questions, it means living questions, adopting them as a way of being curious about the world. Questioning, questioning oneself, and teaching how to question promote ruptures in banking models of education. Thus, we can state that as much as questioning is a philosophical attitude, it can also be considered a humanizing and emancipating pedagogical attitude.

As emphasized by Kohan (2020, p. 15),

Paraphrasing Paulo Freire, we could say that the more we question, more we feel like questioning: questioning is a generating and self-generating force. Questions contain other questions, they enlighten other questions. Questions are pregnant, as once a girl said to me in a thought experience in the higher school “Joaquín V. González” of the Universidad Nacional de La Plata. (our translation)

A question is, therefore, force. It makes things happen, it originates investigation processes and promotes discoveries, motivating new questions. According to the metaphor, questions are pregnant, that is, they generate, feed and carry novelty in themselves. It is an always fertile search, even if there is no clarity of the answer to be reached. We can say that questioning is adopting a posture of someone who wants to advance towards the unknown, bringing it about and giving it birth.

Therefore, there is a kind of plasticity in questioning, which enables the use of this resource in different ways, arrangements and contexts, not only as a language resource, but rather as an element that has broad potential in the most diverse dimensions of human life. When a question is asked, its content, and the way it is presented or the context in which it appears, might turn it into either a healthy expression of interest or an invasive posture; inaugurating a relationship or starting a war; triggering search of knowledge or challenging some existing knowledge.

Thus, considering the etymological, philosophical and/or pedagogical views, question and questioning convey the meaning of speculating, in a horizon of mobility, thus provoking an investigative endeavor seeking new knowledge that can break the limitations imposed by the conventionality of pre-set opinions.



According to Machado and Sasseron (2012), the question can be understood considering three different dimensions, namely, the epistemological, the discursive and the social and political dimensions.

There is, in this object of our construction called “question”, three important dimensions that constitute it and shall guide us in the theoretical construction: 1) the Epistemological Dimension, in which the question reflects an intrinsic way in the search for knowledge; 2) the Discursive Dimension, in which utterances are part of the communication established in the classroom, thus playing a relevant role in the construction of meanings; and 3) the Social and Political Dimension, in which the act of questioning gains a critical role regarding the world. The question must be considered a specificity in these three dimensions at the time it is uttered. (Machado; Sasseron, 2012, p. 31)

This study analyzes each dimension as well as the question revolutionary and hermeneutical dimensions.

#### (1) Epistemological dimension

Approaching the question in an epistemological dimension is to seek to understand the question participation in the process of generating and elaborating knowledge. According to Corbisier (1983, p. 127),

Well, what is the origin of both philosophical and scientific knowledge? In the origin of such knowledge is the ability, or better, the need to question, asking what things are, what the human being is. What is the assumption, or the condition, of the possibility to question? If I question, it is because I do not know, or I behave as I do not know. The question assumes, consequently, the ignorance of what we intend or need to know, also assuming certain awareness of ignorance and knowledge, in other words, the hollow of

what we do not know and need to know. The process driving force is contradiction. I do not know, and I know that I do not know, and this awareness of ignorance, the science of not knowing is what allows us to question, we might question nature, or question other individuals.

Questioning in this sense is inherent in the human being, a being that realizes the world from their reasoning, by admiring, investigating, and seeking knowledge. The one who questions recognizes that it is possible to know and shows their interest in going beyond the opinion level, thus adopting the posture of somebody who researches. The question becomes an essential step in the knowledge construction process, starting from those that are questioned by any and all individuals in their everyday lives, out of simple curiosity to reach the formulation of problems that guide academic research. Investigating the question from an epistemological approach means to consider its role in the scientific knowledge dynamics.

## (2) Discursive dimension

The question discursive dimension is correlated to its epistemological dimension. It is possible to see the question as a discursive resource used in knowledge construction and, likewise, a desire to know that is made explicit by means of language.

As pointed out by Roca, Marquez and Sanmartí (2013, p. 97),

Questions, in addition to being protagonists in the advancement of knowledge, are also a constant in the communication process since they allow the interchange of points of view among speakers and are the basis of dialogue. (our translation)

The question is language. It is a way human beings found to interact with reality. The one who questions, asks something to somebody, even if this somebody is himself/herself. Therefore, questions are the expression of a

meeting between two realities, namely, one that questions and another that is questioned; one that wishes to know and the other from whom information is demanded to verify how much they know about it.

Discourse is understood as verbal production and, at the same time, what it produces, that is, what is seen or heard. Such verbal production is marked by historicity and is built in a specific time and space, thus carrying the cultural marks of such context.

Foucault (2008, p. 134) highlights that

The analysis of discourse operates between the twin poles of totality and plethora. One shows how the different texts with which one is dealing refer to one another, organize themselves into a single figure, converge with institutions and practices, and carry meanings that may be common to a whole period. Each element considered is taken as the expression of the totality to which it belongs and whose limits it exceeds.

For this reason, the question must be understood within the totality it is inserted and of which it is also an expression. Such perspective leads us to conclude that every question is interconnected with others and also with the sceneries where it is born and other sceneries where it is uttered; along with the actions that permeate it as well as those that permeate the individual uttering it. The question is a daughter of its time and carries its traces, however, it does not exhaust it since the time is much broader.

### (3) Social and political dimension

In the same way the epistemological and discursive dimensions of the question are intertwined, there is a close relationship between those dimensions and the social and political dimension.

When choosing this work rather than that, when thinking in the construction of an interrogative sentence so that it really expresses what the individual intends; when considering a suitable moment to publicize the

question, among other aspects, this is not a language concern only, but rather a social and political concern. Assuming or restructuring a form of speech, using the possibility of asking a question or not having such possibility are demonstrations that this is not an issue related to epistemological and discursive dimensions only.

A question mobilizes interests that might range from the desire to know to the intention to intimidate, from the exposure of one's ignorance regarding certain subject, to harsh critique of certain behavior. This indicates that to form and utter a question, certain identities, actions and practices are required, while others are rejected.

The “things said” are, therefore, radically tied to the dynamics of power and knowledge of their times. For this reason, the concept of discursive practice, according to Foucault, is not confused with the mere expression of ideas, thoughts, or the formulation of sentences. Exercising discursive practice means to speak according to certain rules and exposing the relations operating within a discourse. (Fischer, 2001, p.204)

Such social and political dimension of the question permeates the other two to the extent that there is a type of social force that monitors what is to be considered knowledge and what is not; what is in accordance with the discourse norms and what is not. It is not about an ethics code explaining laws or agreements, but rather a type of implicit force in the way human beings organize themselves in their relationships.

Questioning is an exercise of power. It is not only a means used by someone who already has power. Asking a question that is politically allowed, heard, and validated means that the individual has its social role recognized. The one fighting to ask and to have their question heard and recognized is fighting to have their power recognized.

(4) The question revolutionary dimension

Questioning might trigger revolutionary processes able to favor the subversion of those that were subjected to the dominant system, by challenging what was previously held as unquestionable.

According to Muraro (2015, p. 8),

The individual is their question. An individual is worth their question. They are worth in the sense of “what they can”, their potential, the power of their freedom. They are worth in the sense of their rights and their dignity, in the sense of life, in the sense of being worth. The question is a source of culture creation and transformation. Thus, a genuine question expresses the deepest sense of what the critique is.

The question is the human being’s power and strength.

Being a question is something that empowers human beings, that is, it is something that creates possibilities. Such empowered being who enjoys such power recognizes its value and uses these possibilities to seek meaning to their existence and to claim their rights, demanding respect to their dignity.

It is possible to recognize, according to Muraro (2015), that such force of the question resides in its creative, critical, and transforming potential. This demonstrates that it challenges the current order, displacing it, provoking it and presenting new possibilities. This is where its deep social and political connotation is latent and interrelates with its revolutionary connotation.

Questioning might act as a criterion that evaluates the posture of those that occupy leadership positions and that think they have certain authority. Such questioning might trigger critical and creative processes that seek new alternatives in relation to the demands of life. Questions can also prompt the implementation of such alternatives, by recalling the responsibility of those who have a social and political role and whose task is to implement the necessary changes. The question is, therefore, revolutionary

Considering the rigid structures of life in society, questions appear as an uncomfortable challenge of the status quo, which provokes a new look

beyond conformism. Such discomfort disturbs those who base their authority on the dogmatic atmosphere they built up around themselves and their ideas rather than on their abilities.

However, this dimension of questioning cannot be confused with a vain and sterile rebelliousness. The revolution promoted by questioning is linked to a desire of understanding: men and women ask because they want to understand and, when they understand more and better, they favor transformation and feel the desire to question even more.

(5) The question hermeneutical dimension

Hermeneutics proposes broadening awareness, that is, the recognition that there are other possible conceptions, even if they disagree or diverge, and that they can and must be considered when interpreting a text or context.

As a form of knowledge, hermeneutics uses questions as a way of promoting understanding. As pointed out by Gadamer (1997), the question structure favors hermeneutical action, while the opening required by this action is the same provoked when proposing a question. When a question is asked, something remains suspended. The question breaks the bubble of certainties, thus calling attention to the existence of other possibilities. Such rupture is essential for the understanding sought by hermeneutics.

Here, we consider Socrates' view. According to Gadamer (1997) the question logic is the logic of negativity. When questioning or being questioned, it is necessary to be willing to deny having the completeness of knowledge or the certainty about what is said, and to be open to the recognition that one does not know everything.

This is the famous Socratic *docta ignorantia* which, amid the most extreme negativity of doubt, opens up the way to the true superiority of questioning. We will have to consider the essence of the question in greater depth if we are to clarify the particular nature of hermeneutical experience. (Gadamer, 1997, 534)

If there is a desire to understand, it is first necessary to know what the question is, how to question, and whether to question. This is the perspective defended by Socrates in his philosophy. Considering oneself as a being that does not know everything allows opening to knowledge and provokes some rupture with the structures that defend a monolithic crystallization of knowledge.

Gadamer (1997) is categorical when stating “(...) there is a profound recognition of the priority of the question in all knowledge” (p. 535) and also, “deciding the question is the path to knowledge” (p. 537). Therefore, once more, the profound relationship between knowledge and question becomes evident. This relationship becomes effective when the question is posed with authentic and broad openness to all possibilities of knowledge. Assumptions are needed that allow the question to be asked, but they must be seen as starting points rather than obstacles that prevent the amplitude of new horizons.

The force of a question moves those open to the experience of asking. Such strength is the force of indignation with the limitations that opinions impose to the authentic search for understanding of the world via knowledge. For this reason, only teaching how to question considering it a mere methodological action is not enough. Questioning must be undertaken as an attitude, an authentic hermeneutical experience.

### **Question, education and philosophy**

There are many possible connections between question and education. We already clarified how the question is understood in this study. Regarding education, among the thousands of possibilities to understand it, we chose Severino's (2006) view to characterize education.

Education is a process inherent in the life of human beings. It is intrinsic to the species' condition since their reproduction does not involve a genetic memory only, but also a cultural memory, which is observed with the same intensity. For this reason, each new member of the group needs to recover it and be inserted in the culture flow. (p. 289)

Therefore, to understand the relationship between the question and education, a possible way, which we sought to follow here, is to visit different cultures and try to identify how questioning was seen in its relationship with education in each of them.

The question is found in the most diverse education processes, either formal or informal, from ancient times to these days. Socrates stood out for targeting his interlocutors with countless questions according to his method.

The Socratic method is more than a philosophical method. It is also an educational method. This means that in addition to leading his interlocutors to the exercise of philosophy, he taught them to adopt a philosophical attitude in their lives and in relation to the world.

According to Kohan (2011, p. 144)

With Socrates, philosophy is born as a way of life in an educational situation. For the Athenians, philosophy is to live questioning oneself and their peers, minding oneself and the others, making sure that each one takes care of themselves, transmitting egalitarian passion. Without this pedagogical dimension, philosophy makes no sense because if philosophy becomes a way of life that does not affect other people's lives, life in itself makes no sense.

Socratic philosophy is not born closed in itself, but rather open to the other. It is not about an introspection process, it means to look at oneself that is broadened, emerging what is inside. At this point, the maieutics idea meets



the Latin root of the word education, which expresses the idea of “leading to the outside”. The educational situation in which the Socratic philosophy is born points out a philosophical attitude that is recognized as a search rather than simple reproduction.

It is not difficult to imagine a teacher who asks to elicit and be sure the students know something. However, a teacher who asks because they really believe that the students have a type of knowledge inside them which must be exposed is a pedagogical revolution.

According to Hightet (1951, p. 125)

(...) Socrates was the first to think that teaching should not mean to deposit new ideas in a completely empty brain, but rather the extraction of those ideas from the mind, where they already were as an embryo. All his teaching was developed in conversations. He did not propose questions only. His disciples were invited to answer. Of course, they could refuse to do so. Some did it, even interrupting the debate furiously. But the youngsters were fascinated with Socrates’s kind politeness, while specialists felt threatened in their assumptions of specialist knowledge. Ignorant individuals were attracted to his classes and many times they felt disappointed, even alleging that Socrates was not more than an ignorant man that needed some instruction and for this reason questioned others, to learn...

When the roles of teacher and disciple are displaced within the Socratic pedagogical conception, the way of thinking knowledge also changes. The educator Socrates was not only somebody who thought of an education method or techniques to transfer knowledge to another individual. He formulated a different way to think the Greek man’s education process. For him, the education process was not exhausted in knowing the exterior world, to fill up a hole in human being’s existence, for example. It was necessary to go through the self-knowledge path.

Following this logic, questioning and elaborating questions is not a hurdle, it is rather an expression of an active role to be undertaken in relation to learning. The learning process becomes participant, that is, the one who seeks knowledge by means of questioning takes part in a process; this individual is not a mere object of another person's teaching practice.

On the other hand, understanding focused on seeking answers that silence questions permanently goes against a questioning education that sees question as the promoter of a permanent search for broader and deeper views of the world and, therefore, of the knowledge. The educator Paulo Freire is critical about this issue and opposes the model of education that places its focus on answers.

The 'answer education' does not help the curiosity which is indispensable to the cognitive process. Conversely, the answer education emphasizes mechanical memorization of contents. Thus, only the 'question education' promotes curiosity, stimulates and reinforces it.

However, it is necessary to clarify that the problem of an answer education is not in the answer itself, but rather in the rupture between it and the question. The error is in the fact that the answer is uttered independently from the question that would provoke it. Likewise, the question education would be wrong if the answer were not considered part of the question. Questioning and answering are paths followed by curiosity. (Freire, 2015)

The rupture with an answer education is a great challenge. This is a solidified education practice for many educators, which Paulo Freire called banking education. In that model, the question is a mechanism in the teacher's hand to measure students' knowledge. Questioning works on the activation of a device, namely, students, so that they reproduce, either in writing or orally, the extract of what was previously deposited in them, no

matter whether they know it or not. Therefore, the answer education also has space for the question, but does not educate students to question, it rather expects answers, mainly the “right answer”, the one that was deposited in them.

The educator’s role of being somebody who asks questions whose answers they have already given to students, turns the education process into mere reproduction of what has already been discovered, sought, and developed. There is no space for creativity, for provoking questioning, for unanswered questions, or for knowledge generation. It becomes clear that there are those producing knowledge and those that can only memorize and repeat it.

Teaching students to question, giving them the protagonism of being someone that can also search for answers is a revolutionary attitude in teaching and in life. Implementing a “questioning pedagogy” is something very demanding since it implies some rupture with what has been consolidated, that is, the teacher teaches, while students learn. This is not a simple inversion of roles in which students are given the questions previously suggested by the teacher so that they ask them while somebody provides them with the same repeated answers. This is a change of paradigms, in which teachers and students position themselves as educators and learners in a continuous process.

As previously mentioned, undertaking a questioning pedagogy involves a certain mobilization, that is, positional displacement, leaving the safe place, and exposing oneself. Giving up certain roles that are not only restricted to formal education institutions, but reflect the whole society, is not only a methodological change. It is something deeper, which reaches the bases of the education structures.

It is the revolutionary dimension of the question that generates restlessness and discomfort and enables transformations. Opening spaces for problematization, questioning, and doubt challenges the roles, ideas, and practices that have fossilized and create obstacles in the education process.

Such revolutionary character is a characteristic of the philosophical question. Understanding the question in this philosophical perspective is a demanding attitude since it implies some practice motivated by the broadened view that this type of question provokes. More than a language requirement, this way of seeing questioning challenges individuals in relation to themselves and the others, challenging their position, as if they were trapped in a house too small to live in. Then, a process is triggered, a movement of changes that touch their existence.

This philosophical questioning attitude considers philosophy in an action perspective, in construction, something in movement, rather than something ready to be reproduced. It undertakes the view to philosophy. It is the understanding of what philosophy means, which leads to the conception of philosophy teaching. According to Cerletti (2009, p. 20-21)

Philosophy is supported by the restlessness of creating and asking oneself questions and seeking answers (desire to know). This might be supported by the teacher's or students' questions and by their attempts to answer such questions, like a philosopher's and his/her answers. The answers philosophers gave themselves are paradigmatically their philosophical work. But it is very different to "explain" answers that, in a certain historical and cultural context, a philosopher gave himself from those attempted by teacher and students when appropriating the questions of that philosopher, so that those answers can also become answers to their own problems. Philosophical questioning is, therefore, the fundamental element of philosophy and of "philosophy teaching". Consequently, a philosophy course should develop in an environment where conditions are created for the formulation of philosophical questions, where some answers are started and entered.

Thus, it is possible to think about teaching philosophy from questions, which at the same time teach to ask questions. Teachers and students appropriate from the philosopher's questions and with them and from them and their questions, formulate their own questions. The question works as a type of engine or driving force of a philosophical process of philosophy teaching.

In a reality full of information and novelty, it is possible to question the contributions made by philosophical questions, since many times the questions raised by philosophy remain for centuries or thousands of years without a conclusive answer. An objective of philosophy teaching by means of questions, and also of teaching how to question philosophically might be 'to denaturalize and promote rupture with the trivial look, the common perspective regarding oneself, the other, and the world. Questioning philosophically involves raising certain suspicion about what is set and open ways to consider other alternatives.

Therefore, it implies looking at education in its relationship with philosophy as Socrates proposed with his philosophy, by questioning his interlocutors not only to obtain some answer but making them undertake the questions asked by their master as theirs. The question becomes the engine of the philosophical-pedagogical process.

This means that a good question does not appear ready as a magic trick or miracle. This is an artisanal construction, which has no secret recipe or a single path. In such a plural scenery as the classroom, there are countless combinations of possible questions to be asked, discussed, and answered. Either in the context of a philosophy lesson or another subject being taught, more than simply asking is possible. Knowing how to elaborate good questions allows the possibility of other broader and deeper questions.

## **Conclusion**

When looking into the question we open up for the understanding of much more than an interrogative sentence, that is, we see it as an expression of a process of search and deepening. It entails movement, it

is an action that destabilizes what is inert, one that seeks to deepen what is still superficial. More than doing something, questioning is understood as a way of being in the world.

On the one hand, the full potential of a question is recognized and valued as a characteristic that mobilizes human beings and motivates them to advance positively in their processes. Surprisingly, on the other hand, curiosity is restricted for being considered a type of snooping and judged as morally reprehensible.

When investigating the different dimensions of a question, we find a possible explanation for the undermining of curiosity. Preventing or limiting curiosity, according to Freire, is not a blow aiming at the question in its discursive dimension. It is not about silencing so that it is not heard. Such castration aims to attack the epistemological and hermeneutical dimensions of the question, thus generating obstacles to the knowledge process and limiting the possibilities of interpreting reality. Likewise, the social and political dimensions are targeted, making the right to question a privilege restricted to some and stolen from others. The same occurs with the revolutionary dimension of the question is hit aiming at preventing any type of questioning of the status quo that organizes society in its most diverse environments.

Teaching philosophy as a philosophical practice opens several paths for awe and questioning. Knowing how to ask good questions, questions that favor discussion and investigation, is a philosophical ability which does not serve philosophy only. Such practice must be adopted to undertake an integrated education to promote such philosophical learning and to legitimate it as a way of seeing and experiencing learning processes.

## References

CERLETTI, Alejandro. *O ensino de Filosofia como problema filosófico*. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica Editora, 2009.

- CHAUÍ, Marilena. *Convite à filosofia*. 14. ed. São Paulo: Ática, 2010
- CORBISIER, R. *Introdução à Filosofia*. Tomo II, Parte 1. São Paulo: Civilização Brasileira, 1983.
- FISCHER, R. M. B. Foucault e a análise do discurso em educação. *Cadernos de Pesquisa*, n. 114, p. 197–223, nov. 2001. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0100-15742001000300009>.
- FOUCAULT, Michel. *A arqueologia do saber*. 7. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Forense Universitária, 2008.
- FREIRE, Paulo. *À sombra desta mangueira* [recurso eletrônico]. 11. ed.– Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 2015.
- FREIRE, Paulo; FAUNDEZ, Antonio. *Por uma pedagogia da pergunta* [recurso eletrônico]. 1. ed., Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 2013.
- GADAMER, Hans-Georg. *Verdade e método*. Petrópolis, RJ: Vozes, 1997.
- HIGHET, Gilbert. *A arte de ensinar*. São Paulo: Edições Melhoramentos, 1951.
- KOHAN, Walter Omar. Sobre las preguntas y cómo nos relacionamos con ellas y con la infancia al practicar la filosofía. In: SUMIACHER (org.). *Prácticas filosóficas comparadas: Filosofía con/para niños*. Consultoría filosófica. Talleres filosóficos. Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires: Centro de Publicaciones Educativas y Material Didáctico, 2020.
- KOHAN, Walter Omar. *Sócrates & a educação: o enigma da filosofia*. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica Editora, 2011.
- MACHADO, V. F.; SASSERON, L. H. As perguntas em aulas investigativas de ciências: a construção teórica de categorias. *Revista Brasileira de Pesquisa em Educação em Ciências*, [S. l.], v. 12, n. 2, p. 29–44, 2012. Disponível em: <https://www.periodicos.ufmg.br/index.php/rbpec/article/view/4229>. Acesso em: 5 maio 2023.
- MURARO, Darcisio Natal. A pergunta como potência da filosofia e da educação. *Actas*, v. 3, 3er Congreso Latinoamericano de Filosofía de la Educación, 2015. Disponível em: <http://filosofiaeducacion.org/actas/index.php/act/article/view/169>. Acesso em: 30 abril 2023.
- NASCENTES, Antenor. *Dicionário etimológico da língua portuguesa*. Rio de Janeiro: [s.n.], 1955.
- ROCA, M. T.; MÁRQUEZ, C; SANMARTÍ, N. Las preguntas de los alumnos: una propuesta de análisis. *Revista de Investigación y Experiencias Didácticas*, v. 31, n. 1, maio, 2013. Disponível em: <https://www.raco.cat/index.php/Ensenanza/article/view/285706>. Acesso em 13 nov. 2023.

SEVERINO, A. J.. A busca do sentido da formação humana: tarefa da Filosofia da Educação. *Educação e Pesquisa*, v. 32, n. 3, p. 619–634, set. 2006. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1517-97022006000300013>.

SEVERINO, A. A contribuição da filosofia para a educação. *Em Aberto*, Brasília, v. 9, n. 45, 1990. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24109/2176-6673.emaberto.9i45.1764>.

SOUZA, Vitor Fabricio Machado. *A importância da pergunta na promoção da alfabetização científica dos alunos em aulas investigativas de Física*. 2012. Dissertação (Mestrado em Ensino de Física) - Ensino de Ciências (Física, Química e Biologia), Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2012. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11606/D.81.2012.tde-20042012-145959>.

Received on september 2024.

Approved on december 2024.