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(Anti)dialogical reflection cards: politicizing design education through Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy

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Abstract: Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy can contribute to politicize design reflection and practice, promoting a praxis aimed at unveiling systems of oppression and producing transformative interventions. Freire helps us reflect on why and for whom we design and provokes us to question design processes as anti-dialogic, reinforcing oppressions; or dialogic, promoting alliances with the oppressed in the struggle to overcome oppressive situations. To help designers critically debate and appropriate these practices and concepts, we propose an educational material composed of 16 reflective cards based on Freire's critical pedagogy. Throughout this paper, we present the theoretical-practical basis that brings Freire and Design together, the content of the cards, suggestions for use and reflect on a real case of its usage.

Keywords: critical pedagogy, design and politics, dialogical action, Paulo Freire.

1. Introduction

Paulo Freire was a Brazilian educator and philosopher with recognized contributions to critical pedagogy. This pedagogy brings education and politics closer together, understanding politics not only as what is done within the representative democratic system, but mainly as the relationships we create and the decisions we make in all aspects of our lives. Politics involves power relations, which can be used to oppress or to liberate (Kohan, 2019).

Based on Freire (1970), we understand that politicizing education implies becoming aware of the power relations that surround us and, on the basis of the oppressed-oppressor contradiction¹, recognizing the oppressor that may exist within us, as well as recognizing

¹ Paulo Freire presents the oppressed and the oppressor at the same time as an individual and as a social group. The oppressor-oppressed contradiction expresses power relations in constant movement of dispute. When, throughout the text, we refer to the oppressed, we do not do so in order to stigmatize the status of the oppression suffered, we evoke this group in recognition that these subjects have the political vocation to overcome the contradiction of oppression and transform reality.



those who oppress us. Such oppressions prevent us from exercising our ontological vocation, from being free for ourselves, free to develop our full capacities and desires, to *ser mais* (being more). Far from being a dispute that occurs only in the individual sphere, the overcoming of these oppressive relations and the conquest of *ser mais* (being more) must be accomplished in the collective struggle. We defend, hand in hand with Freire, a pedagogy that is forged WITH the oppressed and not FOR them, in the incessant struggle for the recovery of their (our) humanity.

Freirean critical pedagogy, therefore, is not only inside the classroom, but can be recognized in all aspects of our lives, guiding us in the quest to unveil the world we live in and transform it into the world we want: a world free of oppressions. In the same way, bringing Freire and Design together cannot be seen only as a way to rethink the education of designers. To interweave Freirean critical pedagogy and Design implies to politicize design, to understand the oppressive or liberating power relations that are exercised, and to take sides. In a world of oppressors and oppressed, who does design serve? Why do you design?

Just as important as the "why" is the "how". How does Design perpetuate oppressions? And how can it assist the struggles for liberation? We cannot practice Design engaged in the struggle for liberation if our processes, however well intentioned, are oppressive.

From these provocations, this paper presents an educational material developed to help approximate Freire's critical pedagogy with the Design field. The material is formed by reflective cards which present concepts that are helpful to Design reflection, questioning and unveiling the "whys" and "hows" involved in this practice. Based on the theory of dialogic action (Freire, 1970), the material is composed of two groups of cards, one with dialogic concepts – focused on actions aligned with overcoming oppressions; and the other with cards that present anti-dialogic concepts – actions that reinforce oppressions.

Throughout this paper we will present in more detail the cards and possible ways of application. A real case of use will also be described. Before, however, we will deepen the understanding of possible approximations between Freirean critical pedagogy and Design.

2. Approaching Freirean Critical Pedagogy and Design

The early 1960s was a time of social, cultural, and political upheaval and also had a major impact on educational formulations. All the disputes and tensions that make up this decade are determinant for Da Silva (1999) to recognize it as the founding temporal mark of critical pedagogies. In this period, while intellectuals and educators from the Global North were "questioning the assumptions of social and educational arrangements" (Da Silva, 1999, p. 10) driven by social critiques and movements for greater rights that were taking the streets of the US and France, in Latin America the contextual urgencies moved the reflection out of institutionality and back to popular education.

In Brazil, Paulo Freire is one of the main names of critical and popular pedagogy. Born in the Northeast region of Brazil, educator and sociologist, he developed during the 1960s a methodology for adult literacy that would become one of the most respected pedagogical references in the world. His pedagogical proposal is celebrated not only for its effectiveness in teaching how to learn to read and write, but also for the critical revelation that the approach proposes. More than learning to read and write words, the goal of Freirean critical pedagogy is that people learn to read the world and write their own history.

What lies behind this pedagogy is the perception of the existence of an unjust, unequal, and oppressive world. For Freire (1970), our ontological vocation is humanization, a process that leads us to *ser mais* (being more), beings that can live for themselves and not for others, historical and autobiographical beings, free to transform and develop themselves precisely because of our incompleteness. As Leitão (2020, p. 5) states, this is also the drive that should lead us to project the world and transform it through Design:

"From this feeling of incompleteness, lack or dissatisfaction emerges the desire of change that is the trigger to design— i.e., to create things that could change, and ultimately improve, the situation. It is our yearning for completion that makes humans creative beings who create things and act upon the world to transform it."

However, this vocation to *ser mais* is historically denied by oppressions, by everything that restricts our freedom to develop ourselves, in a process of dehumanization. Instead of living freedom, we are trapped in the contradiction between oppressors – those who need to exploit others to live; and the oppressed – those who have their freedom to live for themselves denied. This contradiction dehumanizes both, in the most diverse human spheres: sexual, economic, racial-ethnic, religious, territorial, etc.

Critical pedagogy aims to support the unveiling of these oppressive relations so that we can fight for their overcoming. It is, therefore, a pedagogy of praxis, of inseparable reflection and action, in the search for the rescue of our collective humanity denied by oppressions. This pedagogical process occurs not only between the walls of schools, but in different areas of life, including our design practices. Freire poses a political decision for education: to fight against oppressions or to continue assisting in their perpetuation. The same political decision is up to us designers: why and for whom do we design?

To approach critical pedagogy and Design is to dismantle the beliefs of neutrality and depoliticized practices. In Freire's (2007) understanding, to insist on a supposedly neutral notion of education is to train people to apolitical experiences. As we understand socio-historical reality, we incorporate values, reproduce and forge culture, and orient our behavior towards this particular type of apprehension of the world. Thus, the supposed neutrality involves hidden choices, veiled by conservative cynicism. As Fry (2007) points out, Design is deeply political, so it either serves the status quo or subverts it. Rather than understanding Design as neutral, Freire calls us into a process of rising awareness in the quest to understanding what worlds Design helps create and what worlds it helps destroy. Freire's first contribution to Design is therefore of an ontological-political nature.

Fighting to overcome oppression is the driving force behind critical pedagogy. But for Freire, as important as the why is the how. Liberating education cannot use the same oppressive practices of banking education (Freire, 1970), in which the students are seen as passive and ignorant subjects who receive deposits of external knowledge. On the contrary, liberating education presupposes that both student and educator are engaged in a process of joint construction of knowledge, based on the reality that the students already know, and on the contributions that the educator can make, in a process of cultural synthesis (Freire, 1970) where everyone teaches and learns. Freire (1970) teaches us that in critical pedagogy people educate each other, mediated by the world. This educational practice must transform the world and overcome oppression in a horizontal and collaborative way with the oppressed, in order to strengthen all subjects involved. Freire's second contribution to Design is, therefore, epistemological, stating that the production of these knowledge and decisions needs to be dialogical. In relation to Design, we can say it is not enough to develop artifacts aligned with struggles against oppression, the processes that shape these artifacts also need to be liberating.

The design praxis under the influence of Freirean epistemology is always participatory, but not the current participation co-opted by the capitalist system, in which users and consumers are invited to give their ideas, which will be considered as long as they allow the design of new products that perpetuate the same logic of current consumption and profit. This is a false participation based on a selective dialogue, where only the decision-making profit-oriented stakeholder interests will be heard. Freirian participation is radical, based on a truly horizontal dialogue, open to all possibilities of change, unveiling even the contradictions in which design finds itself. In the fight to overcome such contradictions, happens the engaged praxis which is compromised with the emancipation of all people involved.

From his understanding of the oppressor-oppressed relationship, Freire (1970) develops two theoretical bases for action: one from the antidialogical matrix, which would act to maintain the oppressor-oppressed relationship, and another with a dialogical orientation, which could lead to overcoming this contradiction.

Antidialogical action is necessarily a hierarchical action. This action often succeeds because it engages in a kind of mimicry, evoking dialogue practices that are actually a series of communiqués imposed from one group on another. These statements result in a domestication of the oppressed group's desires and possibilities for awareness and agency. Any participation that occurs in these cases cannot be critical, because it does not politicize and is not emancipatory, it only seeks to validate the intentions of the oppressor group and the maintenance of the system.

On the contrary, dialogical action proposes thinking and acting with the oppressed, and this would be a path towards overcoming oppression. According to Freire (1967, 1970), it is not enough to think around the needs of the oppressed, which would be a posture of a "master"; it is necessary to undertake an effort to think with the oppressed based on the needs placed

before them, this would be a comrade practice, which is established in the struggle for the overcoming of oppression. Dialog with the oppressed is not a concessionary practice, but a pedagogical dynamic of self-transformation and an exercise of individual and collective power for the transformation of the reality of oppression. It is a practice of humility, with genuine interest in listening, which recognizes everyone as historical subjects capable of writing their own stories and, more than this, trusts in collective action.

Freire explains the political character of collective intervention in the world from the theories of cultural action. The fundamental value of education (and of every political practice, hence Design as well) is not to simply do things in order to intervene in the world, but to question in whose favor or for whose sake this action occurs.

In conclusion, Freirean critical pedagogy helps us to think and do Design from other ontological and epistemological perspectives, politicizing our actions and directing us to intervene in the world in a dialogical way seeking to overcome oppressions. The potential of the intertwining of Freirean critical pedagogy with Design is recognized, for example, in the emergence of Scandinavian Participatory Design in the Global North (Ehn, 1988; Gregory, 2003). And recently, this relationship has also been claimed as a major contribution from the Global South to decolonize Design (Smith, 2020; van Amstel and Gonzatto, 2020, Salazar and Huybrechts, 2020; Schultz et al., 2020; Serpa et al., 2020).

In this context, when Freire is once again debated and rescued in his articulations with the field of Design, we present this educational material as a proposal to discuss Freirean concepts with designers in training or engaged in practices that seek to reformulate Design as a field oriented to the emancipation of subjects.

3. Concepts selected for the educational material

In order to deal with complex issues of critical pedagogy with designers, we developed an educational material composed of cards based on the ontological, epistemological and practical precepts that inspire us in Freire's work.

These concepts rely on Freire's theory of dialogical and anti-dialogical action. The material is composed of 16 cards, 14 cards present seven pairs of antagonistic concepts and 2 cards present dialogical methods of action.

The concepts and practices selected are intended to support debates on Freire's theory. The opposite pairs (Table 1) should not be read in a hermetic sense or as cards that carry good and evil in themselves. The cards' intention is to propose a discussion about the concepts to provoke reflection and to initiate processes of awareness and politicization.

Table 1 *Concepts*

Dialogical	Antidialogical
Cultural Synthesis	Cultural Invasion
Generative Themes	The theme of Silence
Praxis	Blah Blah Blah and Activism
Unveiling	Limit Situations
Humility	Banking Education
Solidarity	Empathy
Dialogical Leadership	Antidialogical Leadership

The terms in Table 2 indicate methods for dialogic action developed by Paulo Freire that can serve as inspiration for politically engaged design practices.

Table 2 Methods

Methods for dialogical action
Coding/Decoding
Culture Circles

All these concepts, and the texts created for each card, are presented below.

3.1 Cultural synthesis x Cultural Invasion

We can think about design projects as cultural actions that will affect a certain group of people in a particular context. Every cultural action is a systematized and deliberate form of action that affects a social structure, either to overcome the contradictions that prevent people's liberation, or to mythify the world while promoting an alienating culture towards the oppressed masses. Cultural Synthesis (Freire, 1970) operates in the first intentionality, and means the incidence of subjects on a given reality to propose structural changes in the culture of that group in a dialectical and dialogical way, the result of which is the synthesis of the different voices involved. In an opposite way, Cultural Invasion (Freire, 1970) occurs when invaders penetrate a cultural environment, objectifying the invaded and uprooting their creativity and limiting their critical action, imposing the invader's culture as superior.

- **CULTURAL SYNTHESIS CARD**

It is the result of dialogue between oppressed communities and external designers.

It's not a cultural invasion, it's not about omitting yourself, it's a collective construction in the struggle against oppression.

- **CULTURAL INVASION CARD**

It is the imposition of values, techniques, and knowledge from the outside, replacing local culture and eliminating the creativity of the oppressed. Even with good intentions, the invader designer tries to impose the “correct” way to be and to transform the world.

3.2 Generative Themes x The theme of silence

For Freire, education for liberation must initiate *conscientização* (conscientization) (Freire, 1967) from the interests, knowledge, and culture of the oppressed themselves, and not from external themes with loose connections to their lives. The identification of these existential situations assists in proposing Generative Themes (Freire, 1970) for the construction of new knowledge in a critical and dialogical way. However, the oppressive situation in which the oppressed find themselves can be so overwhelming that they may consider that nothing they know or anything that is part of their lives has value, provoking silence. In this case, the Theme of Silence (Freire, 1970) and its causes must be the first matter to be overcome.

- **GENERATIVE THEMES CARD**

It is the collaborative and dialogical selection of themes for discussion and for design projects development. These are existential situations that the oppressed go through, and that are part of their reality and interest. These are not themes imposed by the designer.

- **THE THEME OF SILENCE CARD**

Daily oppression can lead to the oppressed inability to express their opinions or even choose the topics to be discussed. Silence and its causes should be the first topic to be discussed when this occurs.

3.3 Praxis x BlahBlahBlah & Activism

For Freire, the critical transformation of the world can only happen through praxis, the radical interaction between action and reflection. In his work, praxis is guided by the word that criticizes the world in order to transform it.

"When a word is deprived of its dimension of action, reflection automatically suffers as well; and the word is changed into idle chatter, into verbalism, into an alienated and alienating 'blah.' It becomes an empty word, one which cannot denounce the world, for denunciation is impossible without a commitment to transform, and there is no transformation without action." (Freire, 1970, p.87, our translation)

- **PRAXIS**

The radical interaction between reflection and action. Action alone is activism, with no dialogue and no critical thinking. Reflection alone is verbalism, just

"BlahBlahBlah", with no change in the world. Praxis is transforming the world while critically thinking about it and how to transform it.

- **BLAH BLAH BLAH & ACTIVISM**

Blah blah blah is trying to change the world with just words. Activism is trying to change it with thoughtless actions. Only through action and reflection (praxis) one can lead to critical dialogues about the transformations needed.

3.4 Unveiling x Limit Situations

In another work we noted that unveiling Design involves constantly questioning who or what Design serves, thus identifying the political dimensions of Design artifacts and concepts, and how they position themselves in the oppressor-oppressed contradiction (Serpa & Mazzarotto, 2021). Freire teaches us about social weaving as a process of unveiling and actionability, in his words, it is "the knowing of history as possibility and not as determination. The world is not. The world is being" (Freire, 2007, p.76). Without this unveiling, situations of oppression can become naturalized, appearing to be unchangeable, as if they were permanent, and not historical constructions that can be overcome.

- **UNVEILING**

Nothing is neutral, everything is political. Unveiling is the process of questioning and developing critical consciousness, identifying whether our project practices reinforce oppression or help the struggle against it.

- **LIMIT SITUATIONS**

These are concrete situations that oppress and limit us. They seem to be dead-end mazes that can lead to fatalism, demotivating participants and leading to the belief that we cannot change the world. But "the world is not, the world is being", our actions have brought us here and other choices can lead us to a different world.

3.5 Humility x Banking Education

For Freire (2001), humility expresses that no one is superior to anyone else. This is an essential condition to respect other people and their role as participants in any political-educational process so dialogue can really be horizontal. On the opposite axis, arrogance leads to banking education (Freire, 1970), which perpetuates the belief that there are people who dominate knowledge and others who know nothing. From this arrogant perspective, to educate is to deposit knowledge from one to another, in a prescribed attitude that suppresses the creativity of the oppressed.

- **HUMILITY**

Nobody knows everything, nobody is ignorant. Everyone has something to learn and something to teach. As designers, we are not saviors, and we cannot solve all problems on our own.

- **BANKING EDUCATION**

Education that understands knowledge as a donation from those who think they know it all (educators, designers) to those who think they know nothing (learners, users). It is the act of depositing, transferring, transmitting values and knowledge from one to another, without critical dialogue.

3.6 Solidarity x Empathy

In a relational practice in design projects, Serpa & Batista e Silva (2021) recognize empathy as a narrow notion linked to antialogical action and defend solidarity as a dialogical practice. In empathic processes, the designer is endowed with exclusive agency and acts as subject while the other participants, users, are reified and their historical, political, and social context is placed in the abstract to serve the goals of the design project. This prevents an understanding of oppressive situations and eliminates the agency of the subjects, concealing the structures of oppression that act upon a given situation. In contrast, the notion of solidarity is an ethical principle that should guide engaged and politicized design processes. Solidarity is an action of political responsibility towards the critical recognition of oppressions and the overcoming of the oppressor-oppressed contradiction. Solidarity is part of a dialogical Design practice because it enables an alliance between different subjects in the confrontation of oppressive situations.

- **SOLIDARITY CARD**

If empathy is "feeling the pain of others", solidarity is about recognizing that pain, being in solidarity with it, and joining forces in the struggle to overcome it. It is about helping to strengthen people in the struggle against oppression, rather than keeping them out of the process just because you are "wearing their shoes".

- **EMPATHY CARD**

It is feeling the "pain of others" before designing. Empathy can be an excuse for not actively involve people during design because designers already "know what it is like to be the other". Dialogic action does not need empathy, but solidarity.

3.7 Dialogical x Antialogical Leadership

Freire (1970) places great importance on the role of leadership in liberation processes, be it a revolutionary leader, a classroom educator, or a designer mediating collaborative processes. However, not just any leadership serves the interests of the oppressed masses. There are those who resort to oppressive methods to impose their wills, what Freire advocates for is, on the contrary, a leadership capable of creating spaces where oppressed voices are also considered.

- **DIALOGICAL LEADERSHIP**

Freire believes in leadership as a key role for transformation. He advocates for leadership that creates environments of dialogue where decisions are collectively

made. This kind of leadership does not relinquish its responsibility to coordinate, but does not confuse it with the imposition of its will.

- **ANTIDIALOGICAL LEADERSHIP**

Even with good intentions, this kind of leadership guides the group without critical and collective discussion, with no unveiling, no collaborative actions, no dialogue. Although it may fight against oppression, this leadership acts in an oppressive way.

3.8 Methods for dialogical action

In order to present actions that can help us in proposing engaged and politicized practices, we rescued two ideas from Freire (1967) who, coherently with his defense of praxis, guided his theories in articulation with new methods for critical intervention, such as the Circles of Culture and Encoding/Decoding.

- **CODING/DECODING CARD**

Coding is the representation of the Generative Themes through artistic and playful proposals that converse with multiple forms of expression, such as photographs, illustrations, plays, etc. Decoding is the process of critically investigating these representations in order to uncover the relations of oppression that exist within them.

- **CULTURE CIRCLES CARD**

It is the horizontal space where generative issues are discussed and unraveled. The leadership must coordinate and encourage the dialogue, making it increasingly problematic. To do this, the themes are coded (represented visually) and decoded (debated until they are revealed).

4. The (Anti)dialogical reflection cards

Based on the concepts presented above, and on the text defined for each of the cards, the educational material was developed. In this topic we discuss its purpose and pedagogical objectives, the visual choices for composing the cards, and some suggestions for use².

4.1 Purpose

The (anti)dialogical reflection cards are an educational material developed to help in critical thought about how we practice and reflect about Design. Based on Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy, the reflective cards seek to problematize our choices within a teaching-learning or designing situation. There is no method to be followed or frameworks ready to be used, they present concepts that help us identify when our actions are dialogical or anti-dialogical and how we can move towards an increasingly emancipatory design practice. By discussing

² The complete material and user manual are available in English and Portuguese on Design and Oppression Network website: <https://www.designeopressao.org/cartasdialogicas/>

these concepts, we can reflect on our actions in previous projects, analyze situations, and plan other ways to act in future projects.

The objectives of this educational material are:

1. To foster critical reflections on past and current Design practices, identifying oppressions and reflecting on ways to fight against them.
2. To help in the introduction to Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy concepts.
3. To encourage counter-hegemonic and decolonial forms for Design praxis.

4.2 Content

In its current version, the material has 16 cards. The cards are organized in seven opposite pairs (14 cards), referring to dialogical or anti-dialogical practices or concepts, and two cards that represent methods for dialogical action that can serve as inspiration for politically engaged and critical design practices. In the future, the material may be expanded to include other concepts and methodological proposals from Freire's work. The following are the English versions of the cards that compose the material, divided into "Dialogical Cards" (figure 1) and "Anti-dialogical Cards" (figure 2).

DIALOGICAL CARDS



Figure 1 Dialogical cards

Anti-dialogical cards

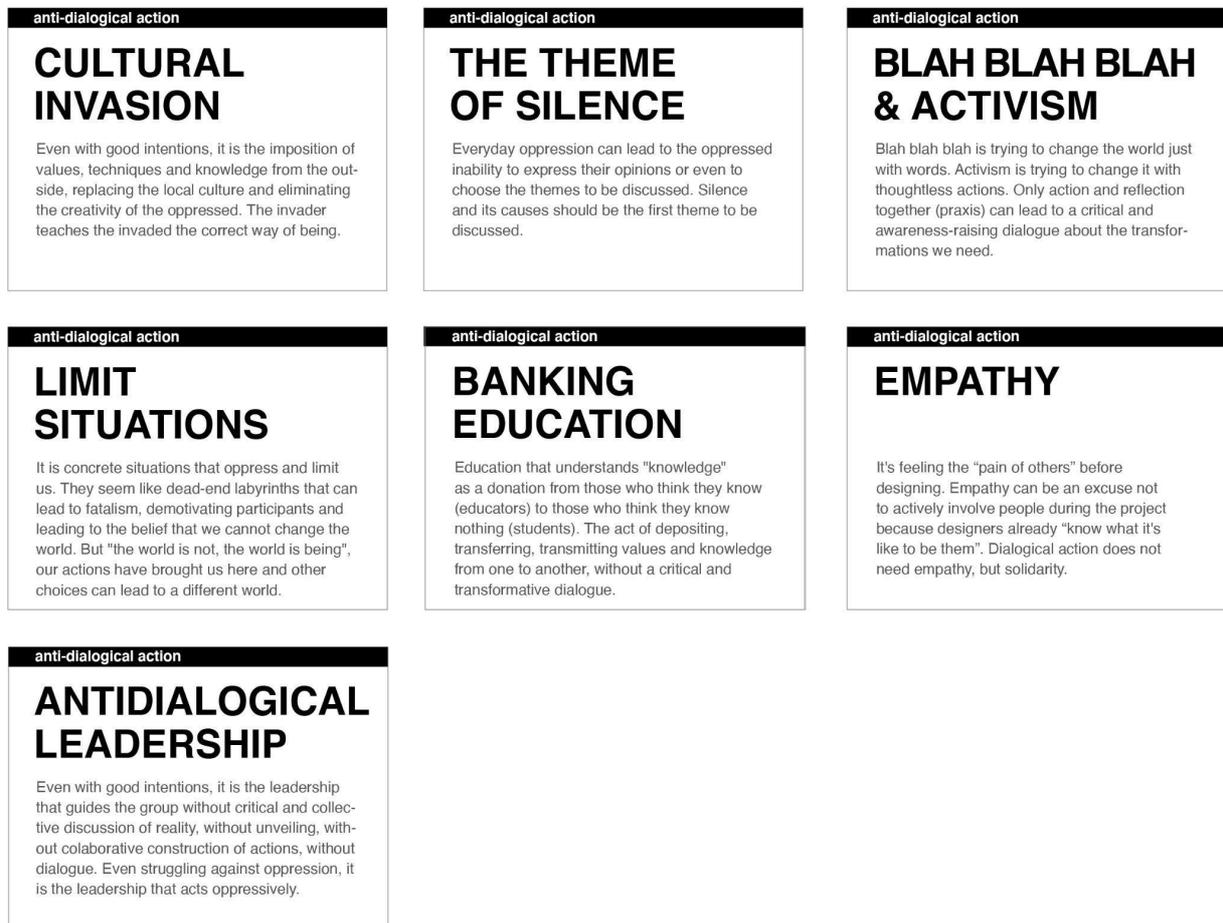


Figure 2 Antidialogical cards

4.3 Visual identity of the cards

The two groups of reflective cards have different visual identities. These choices are not innocent and are also intended to provoke reflection.

The anti-dialogic letters are composed of Helvetica typography, an icon of Modernism and the ideology of universal, minimalist, neutral, and functionalist design (Hustwit, 2007). This conception of design claims that its principles constitute a simple language, accessible to all and devoid of cultural specificities or expressions that hinder its use (Gruszynski, 2001). However, under a critical interpretation fostered by the reflexive cards of Cultural Invasion and Unveiling, these values can be questioned as Western Global North values imposed to a global audience as a way to erase and replace other forms of visual expression and communication.

Presenting an opposite visual, the dialogical letters are composed in Brasilêro typography, besides presenting a diverse color palette and backgrounds with textures and noises. This typography was created by Brazilian designer Crystian Cruz based on Brazilian popular communication artifacts (Cruz, 2021). The font presents irregularities, excesses and inconsistencies that are seen as mistakes by a conservative design paradigm. Its creation mixes hegemonic design techniques, such as digital font creation, values cultural aspects outside the hegemonic axis, and can be seen as a good example of the Cultural Synthesis card. On the other hand, there are criticisms that may arise from the Unveiling card, such as: why does a font based on oppressed populations necessarily need to be unrefined in its form? Or why turn a popular aesthetic into something replicable in digital form? Regardless of the answer to these questions, the purpose of the cards is precisely to raise those discussions.

4.4 Suggestions for use

The reflective cards are an open educational material, and can be used in a number of ways, depending on the intended objectives, the time available, the profile of the participants, or the mediator creativity. Without claiming to exhaust the possibilities, some suggestions for use are:

1. **Mediation of discussions about experiences in design projects.** In groups, the cards can be used for each participant to reflect on past or current design experiences.
2. **Glossary of critical pedagogy concepts.** For introductory classes that aim to work on the intertwining of critical pedagogy and Design, the cards can serve as a synthesis material that supports the readings of Paulo Freire's original texts, presenting the concepts in an organized and summarized format.
3. **Critical self-evaluation material.** During the course of design projects, the cards can be used by participants to critically reflect on decisions and actions that need to be taken or to face challenging situations that arise.

As for the media, the cards can be used digitally, for online activities, or printed for face-to-face activities. As for the number of cards, mediators may choose a smaller number depending on the theme of the activity or the time available.

Furthermore, it is important to point out that any change or complementation in the content of the cards, as well as the addition of others, is not only welcomed by the authors, but strongly recommended. As Freire argues, "to follow me, the fundamental thing is not to follow me" (Freire & Faundez, 1985).

5. Application and feedback

The cards were first developed for an activity of the Designs of the Oppressed Course, which was promoted by the Design & Oppression Network and offered in English by Brazilian researchers to the international community. In one of the classes about Participatory Design and oppression, the cards were used to mediate critical reflection and debate about the participants' experiences. Before the synchronous meeting, the participants were asked to share an experience in the text channels of the Discord platform, which was being used throughout the course. As an assignment, the participants were also supposed to read some chapters of Paulo Freire's book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. In the second half of the synchronous meeting, after the theoretical discussion of the text, the cards were displayed. The participants were then invited to choose a card to critically analyze their experience, either to identify oppressive practices, or to recognize aspects that strengthen liberating dialogue. During the activity, several different cards were chosen and in-depth reflections took place. We highlight some of these dialogues below.

One of the participants, a teacher working in the Middle East, identified aspects of Cultural Invasion by placing less value on local knowledge compared to hegemonic design practices in a course offered to a community of artisans in Turkey. Other participants also reported how this often occurs in projects with communities in the Brazilian Amazon region.

Noticing dialogic points of their practice, some participants chose the card Humility, pointing to the openness to really listen and learn from others: *"I tried to be open to challenge and uncertainty. It was a very interesting position for me, because my official job at the time was to advise/answer questions about 'best' practices in the mental health field. I was very uncomfortable with the authority of this occupation, so I tried to facilitate horizontal spaces in my work."*

Another point was the recognition of some concepts' importance, but the difficulty of implementing them: *"Praxis is a very important concept, and very difficult for designers to implement. It seems that sometimes we are only in action or only in reflection, having difficulty interacting with these two sides."*

As for the feedback on the use of the cards, as can be seen in Figure 3, the comments from the participants were positive. Many commented that they 'loved' the material. More in-depth responses, either in the written chat or by audio during the class, pointed to the concepts' relevance to generate critical reflection on personal experiences. Another strength was that the cards acted as synthesis and support material to the readings, as one participant stated *"I also liked the cards – reading Freire I couldn't summarize all these points for myself. Thank you."*

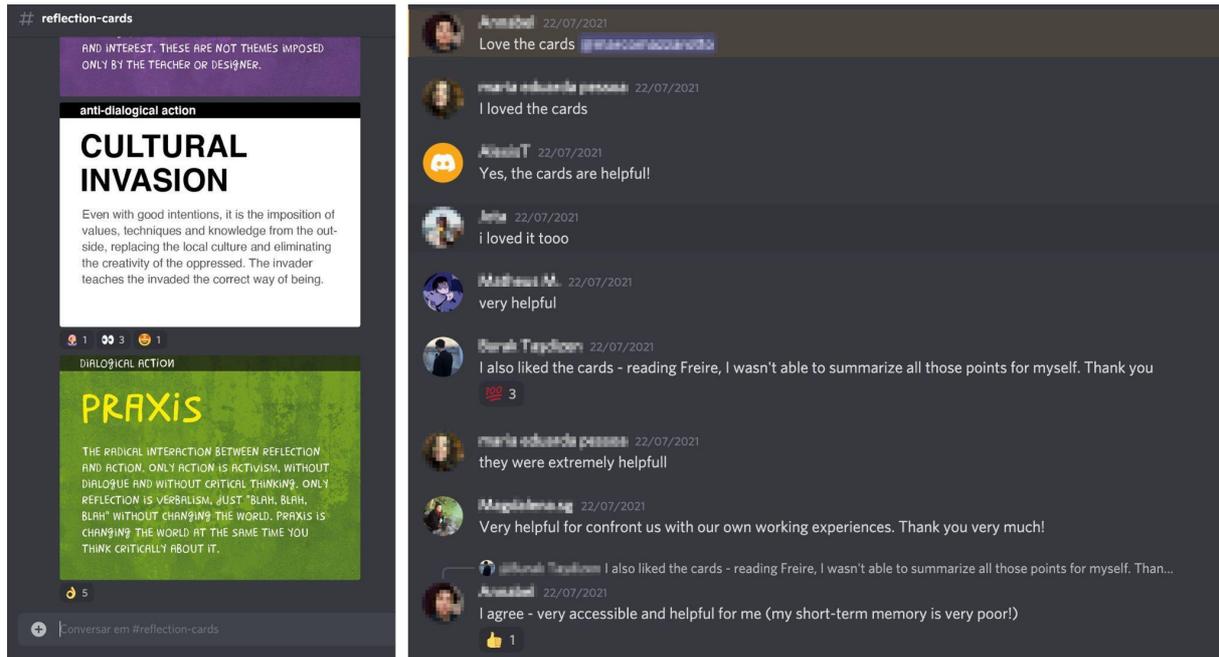


Figure 3 Screenshot of the use of the cards during the course and comments from the participants.

6. Conclusion

Political dimensions are part of Design and are evident in our projectual choices and in our theoretical bases. Design processes and products, which respond and are shaped in a dialectical relationship with different ways of life, are instruments in the maintenance of oppressions or in the struggle for their overcoming. The cards proposed in this paper are an educational material that introduces critical pedagogy concepts to the Design field and aims at the questioning of theories and practices in the search for the unveiling of its political dimensions.

The applications made so far have shown that the material has achieved its goals, promoting critical reflections among the participants and working as an approximation to the concepts of Freirean critical pedagogy. However, the cards and concepts can be expanded to encompass other reflections, and the inclusion of practical examples can improve their understanding. It is also necessary to experiment in different contexts and with broader and more diverse audiences in order to investigate other possibilities for activities and their outcomes.

It is important to reinforce that the reflective work proposed by the cards does not end in itself and should generate responses in the projectual and relational practices of the designers. Finally, we hope that these cards can mediate moments of pleasure and encouragement, because we have learned from Freire that teaching and learning cannot happen outside of search, beauty and joy.

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