"I exist": experience report on the promotion of Digital Humanities

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Abstract: The article aims to present the relationship between Digital Humanities (DH) and Digital Technologies (DT) through an experience report. The methodology used is bibliographical, which reveals the field of Digital Humanities. It is possible to understand how the use of DT with HD contributes to the promotion and development of knowledge in the discipline of Social Diversity of the Psychology course in a private Higher Education Institution (HEI) in the State of Paraná.

Keywords: Digital Technologies; Digital Humanities; Higher Education

"Eu existo": relato de experiência na promoção das Humanidades Digitais

Resumo: O artigo tem como objetivo apresentar a relação entre as Humanidades Digitais (HD) e as Tecnologias Digitais (TD) por meio de um relato de experiência. A metodologia utilizada é bibliográfica, desvelando o campo das humanidades digitais. É possível compreender como o uso das TD com as HD contribui para a promoção e o desenvolvimento de saberes na disciplina de Diversidade Social do curso de Psicologia de Instituição de Ensino Superior (IES)

privada do estado do Paraná.

Palavras-chave: Tecnologias Digitais; Humanidades Digitais; Ensino Superior.

"I exist": experience report on the promotion of Digital Humanities

"Yo existo": informe de experiencia en el impulso de las Humanidades Digitales

Resumen: El artículo pretende presentar la relación entre Humanidades Digitales (HD) y Tecnologías Digitales (TD) a través de un relato de experiencias. La metodología utilizada es bibliográfica y permite descubrir el campo de las humanidades digitales. Así, se puede comprender cómo el uso de las tecnologías de la información y la comunicación (TIC) con las humanidades digitales contribuye a la promoción y el desarrollo del conocimiento en la asignatura de Diversidad Social del grado en Psicología de una institución de enseñanza superior (IES) privada ubicada en el estado de Paraná.

Palabras clave: Tecnologías Digitales; Humanidades Digitales; Educación Superior

1 INTRODUCTION

This experience report aims to present the relationship between Digital Humanities (DH) and Digital Technologies (DT) through a bimonthly activity promoted by project-based learning entitled "I exist". This action permeated the Social Diversity discipline of the undergraduate Psychology course of a private higher education institution (HEI), located in a city in the interior of Paraná, in 2020. In the case presented here, DT and HD converged in the emergence of educational practices that demonstrate the potential of knowledge production beyond school and academic walls.

Being an experience report, the methodology used valued the understanding of the concepts highlighted here, such as social diversity (Navasconi, 2019), digital humanities (Davidson, 2008; Svensson, 2010; McPherson, 2008; among others), digital technologies (Dias-Trindade; Moreira, 2017; Kenski, 2012a, 2012b; Lévy, 2010) and other existing bibliographies that support the whole intended discussion. In addition, the proposed activity has been developed through active methodologies, specifically in project-based learning.

The use of active methodologies enables the creation of pedagogical alternatives that allow students to take a leading role in the teaching and learning process, which is developed through knowledge acquired through research or problem solving. This type of methodology encourages the creation of learning situations: "In project-based learning, students engage in tasks and challenges to solve a problem or develop a project that is also related to their lives outside the classroom" (Moran, 2019, p. 39, translated by us).

In this sense, and due to the fact that we experienced the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the project guidelines were discussed virtually. The students' understanding of what social diversity would be revealed the need for them to represent themselves in their differences. Thus, the project "I, exist" was born, permeated by the question: "How do I represent myself in the world so that I can exist?".

To portray this existence, we chose to use images and the social network Instagram as a space for the construction and dissemination of oneself beyond academic realities, emphasizing the celebration of differences.

Thus, we are observing the extent to which the educational field can rethink the relationships between teaching and learning by observing positive experiences and the

development of good practices using digital technologies (DT). It is in this context that this article takes up its discussions. We will continue with the concept of Digital Humanities (DH) in order to present in the following article the experience report based on this theoretical field.

2 THE DIGITAL HUMANITIES

According to Davidson (2008, p. 707, translated by us), "Great epochs of science are great epochs of the humanities because an epoch is not a historical period but a construction, and constructions are the work of humanists". Research based on the term "digital age" promotes understanding of the way we have acted in society and the impact that all these changes have had on human action. The author notes that the debate about the relationship between the humanities and computer technology is not a novelty of the 21st century. In fact, it has been going on since it was realized that computational capabilities have transformed the sciences in general and changed the understanding of the humanities in terms of research and teaching.

In the 1960s, some publications began to appear, with a focus on Computers and Humanities, founded by Joseh Raben, for whom the formation of a framework of conferences and associations became the source of dissemination and information on computing in the humanities (Hockey, 2004).
The 1970s and 1980s saw a greater consolidation of this relationship. Several electronic texts and projects were created. According to Hockey (2004, p. 4, translated by us):

> Knowledge of what was possible gradually spread through the normal channels of academic communication, and more and more people encountered computers in their everyday lives and began to think about what computers could do for their research and teaching. The spread of knowledge was aided not only by Computers and the Humanities, but also by a series of regular conferences. The Cambridge Symposium in 1970 was the beginning of a biennial series of conferences in the UK that became an important focal point for computing in the humanities. Meetings in Edinburgh (1972), Cardiff (1974), Birmingham (1978) and Cambridge (1980) produced high quality papers.

The 1990s lived significant changes in the combination of computing and the humanities with the advent of the personal computer and electronic mail. However, the cost of a personal computer was very high (Hockey, 2004).

The fact is that the more people had access to computers, the more discoveries and

innovations were proposed for the humanities. In addition, the spread of the Internet began to revolutionise the idea of information, communication and knowledge.

This period became known as Web 1.0, marked by the emergence of the World Wide Web (WWW), which revolutionised the issue of data collection, manipulation and storage. Then came the first generation of students who had the first source of any information on the computer through the Mosaic browser created in 1993 (Hockey, 2004).

After the WWW, the advent of the Internet gave rise to Web 2.0, identified by the dot com (.com). According to Davidson (2008):

> Web 2.0 describes not only the new set of tools, but also the new relationships between the producers and consumers of these tools. In its most idealistic manifestation, Web 2.0 is best defined by user interactivity and participation (rather than data aggregation). [...] Web 2.0 encompasses all forms of corporate or social networking (from Google to MySpace); collaborative knowledge building (sites like Wikipedia); user-generated content (including photo-sharing sites like Flickr or video-posting sites like YouTube); and blogs, wikis, virtual environments, and other sites that use a many-to-many model of participation and personalization (p. 772, emphasis added, translated by us).

Web 2.0 offers authorship, personalization, collaboration, participation, interdisciplinarity, mastery, hierarchy, rigor, excellence, standards, and status that will influence new epistemologies (Davidson, 2008). From then on, the focus was not only on using the Internet as a mechanical tool but also on extending navigation, and collaborative work through interaction between different people and resources.

In this context, the history of computing in the humanities can be divided into two moments: the first, called Humanities 1.0 - Computational Humanities - enabled the digitization of textual and multimedia files that are still used for research today (Hockey, 2004).

By making these bibliographies and other documents available online, it is possible in the 21st century to search for data and knowledge from anywhere without leaving home. For Davidson (2008), we should all be grateful that the humanities were not forgotten in the first ambitious process of synthesizing, collecting, and archiving the largest amount of available data capable of telling the story of the world.

The second moment marks the relationship between the humanities and digital technologies. It is called Humanities 2.0: "Hybridity, exchange, flow, and cultural transaction are explored in a more responsible and adventurous way with respect to the resources of many nations, in many languages [...]" (Davidson, 2008, p. 713, translated by us).

This means the creation of a new theory based on affection and intersubjectivity, which allows the interaction of different issues such as government policy, race, religion, and gender, which will be possible for debate between teachers and students in a kind of sharing society (Davidson, 2008).

The Internet offers a greater reach to the general public, and new students graduating from programs that understand the relationship between digital technologies and the humanities "[...] will be able to work not only in the academic field but also in the areas of electronic publishing, educational technologies, and multimedia development" (Hockey, 2004, p. 13, translated by us).

Humanities 2.0 differs from Humanities 1.0 precisely because it is not based solely on data collection, but because of its interactivity, and its greater openness to the participation of different social subjects who produce different theoretical premises through the decentralization of knowledge and authority.

The data collected can now be interpreted in the light of different theories and experiences, developed collaboratively, and reworked as often as necessary. Users will be able to collect, store, and produce data that can be accessed by others who will be free to comment on, add to, and correct the available content.

Davidson (2008) reflects on Wikipedia, the world's largest encyclopedia, developed collaboratively by volunteers and amateurs. Should we consult it as a source of knowledge? The author emphasizes that not everything should be discarded when it is produced outside academia and the hegemonic knowledge of the university. Those who produce content on networks are generally not subject to the approval of qualified peers at the university level. However, she notes that "peer review is not the only practice whose assumptions are at stake in this next phase of the digital humanities" (Davidson, 2008, p. 714, translated by us).

The interest in thinking about Digital Humanities (DH) stems from the emergence of a digital culture that has changed the way knowledge can be shared and acquired. This allows us to think about university education and what is understood as knowledge. This, of a hegemonic nature, changes from the moment it is understood that teaching and learning can take place in myriad ways. What has been called innovation inside and outside the classroom is nothing more than a rethinking of humanity itself, which produces and consolidates the culture experienced in the current context of the 21st century.

In the case of digital humanities research, there has been a significant increase in

discussions about the field since the 2000s. According to Kirschenbaum (2010, p. 57, translated by us), "in the space of a little over five years, digital humanities has gone from being a term of convenience used by a group of researchers who had been working together for years to something of a movement". The author emphasizes that digital humanities can be understood as a social enterprise, being part of a culture that values collaboration, openness, non-hierarchical relationships, and agility. It is also an instrument of resistance or genuine reform through the creation of departments, disciplines, and research funding.

As a growing field, different authors have contributed and continue to contribute to its formation and dissemination. From now on, we will focus on these approaches. In 2009, the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) launched the Digital Humanities 2.0 Manifesto. It defined the following:

> Digital Humanities is not a unified field but a **set of converging practices** that explore a universe in which: a) print is no longer the exclusive or normative medium in which knowledge is produced and/or disseminated: instead, print is being absorbed into new multimedia configurations; and b) digital tools, techniques, and media are transforming the production and dissemination of knowledge in the arts, humanities, and social sciences. Digital humanities seek to play a pioneering role in a world in which universities are no longer the producers, managers, and disseminators of knowledge or culture but are called upon to shape natively digital models of scholarly discourse for the newly emerging public spheres of the digital age (the www, the blogosphere, digital libraries), to model excellence and innovation in these fields, and to facilitate the formation of networks of knowledge production, exchange and dissemination that are at once global and local (Presner et al., 2009, p. 9, our translation, emphasis added, translated by us).

For Svensson (2010), the task of thinking about digital humanities must be undertaken with the understanding that there is a broad field to explore and that the idea of studying it is to promote knowledge of a panorama of initiatives and activities that reveal the important intersection between the human sciences and digital technology. In this way, each researcher will be able to collaborate for action in an interpretative way.

McPherson (2008), in his search for a possible definition of Digital Humanities, proposes a distinction between three types: Computer Humanities, whose objective is based on the construction of infrastructures and tools; Blog Humanities, based on written texts disseminated online through media; and Multimodal Humanities, where digital is an expressive and powerful means for the Human Sciences.

Our interest is based on the multimodal humanities and the transformations that their inclusion can bring to education, through a growing universe of knowledge that has begun to

be edited, re-edited, and shared on networks. In this scenario, knowledge becomes increasingly broad, open, free, and unlimited through multiple and rich channels.

As Presner et al. (2009, p. 40, translated by us) state, "Knowledge takes multiple forms: it inhabits the spaces and intersections between words, sounds, smells, maps, diagrams, installations, environments, data repositories, tables, and objects". The intertwining of knowledge traditions, computing, and the humanities recreates spaces for research that must go far beyond thinking about the cultural and social impact of new technologies.

In this context, it is necessary to provide environments that can generate technological systems, methodologies, and information and communication systems. For Presner et al. (2009):

> The revolution is not about turning literary scholars into engineers or programmers. Rather, it is about: expanding the compass and quality of humanities scholarship - expanding the reach and impact of humanities disciplines - engaging directly in the design and development processes that produce richer, more multidirectional models, genres and interactions of scholarly communication (p. 32-33, translated by us).

HD materializes in knowledge based on convergence and action. In the academic environment, it implies changes and transformations in the way humanities disciplines are still proposed, provoking the need for a new model of teaching and learning.

Knowing and understanding the process makes more sense than the product, as the use of digital technologies associated with the humanities has enabled the decentralization of the authority of knowledge and thinking about humanistic issues relevant to the future of humanity (Davidson, 2008).

This changes the role of the academic in the humanities. He or she must be understood as a curator who makes and offers the new, the discovery for the resignification of his or her training, based on the understanding that there are different ways of spatializing knowledge in physical and virtual forms. For Presner et al. (2009):

> Curation is an enhanced scholarly practice that also greatly enhances teaching and learning. It calls upon future generations of humanists to work from the ground up with the very things of culture and history: to engage directly in the collection and production of knowledge under the guidance of expert researchers in a true laboratory environment (p. 46, translated by us).

Although the presence of the virtual in our daily lives seems obvious, there is still a lot of resistance to educational practices. The promotion of knowledge that looks like an

experimental laboratory attracts many adherents as well as many rejections and prejudices based on the power of tradition. Comfort, inertia, bureaucracy, and conservatism in the ways of doing and thinking about the human sciences often make the changes demanded by the field of HD unfeasible. Academia is still slow in this process.

Presner et al. (2009) 'close' the open proposal of the Manifesto by emphasizing that it is necessary to have courage and vision to promote an increasingly rich teaching and learning environment. Be cautious and attentive to those who claim to be experts in digital technologies, but reproduce them in a traditional way as a mechanical instrument, not encouraging new creations, debates, and a proposal for knowledge. Finally, we should always be suspicious of those who use digital technology to distance themselves from the humanities.

In 2010, digital humanities writers and observers gathered in Paris for THATCamp to produce a new Digital Humanities Manifesto. This document reinforced many of the ideas already present in the UCLA proposal and widened the dissemination of a field under construction of research and action (THATCamp-Paris, 2010).

According to this manifesto, HD understands the need to know how to make and transform knowledge from the human sciences for the digital world. It calls for digital culture to be understood as a definition of general culture in the 21st century.

Finally, the document proposes the knowledge and dissemination of good practices that can serve as ideas for new disciplinary and transdisciplinary actions based on the use of the human sciences and digital technologies. It also aims to reflect and affirm the diversity of teaching and learning methods and practices (THATCamp-Paris, 2010).

By sharing these practices, we are increasingly feeding the field of Digital Humanities, which even allows us to think about the kind of research we can do based on observing the intersection between human sciences and digital technologies.

Svensson (2010), in his studies on HD, proposes a mapping of this territory and presents us with an analytical model that indicates five different possibilities for investigation. They are: information technology as a tool; an object of study - the study of the Internet and its developments; an exploratory laboratory; an expressive medium; and an activist space. In the educational context, for the author, research can be done through two biases. The first chooses to understand traditional computing in the humanities from its use in an instrumental way, as a tool, with information technology as a means. The second understands digital technology as an object of study, part of the dynamics and cultural changes that produce new knowledge. Its

focus is not only on the Internet and the Web itself but reflects on the forms of media and digital culture that are developed in networks. The so-called cyberculture critics are part of this category of researchers (Svensson, 2010).

According to Svensson (2010, p. 121, translated by us), "in this sense, the objects of study include phenomena, artifacts and cultural processes that are to some extent digitally inflected" and can be studied in an interdisciplinary field. This is the type of investigation that interests us in this research: the understanding of an object of study that arises from the changes propagated by the development of the Internet, which can be analyzed in different contexts and which currently affects educational processes marked by the global pandemic of COVID-19.

The debate around digital humanities has never been more necessary than in the historical-social context we are facing. We agree with Davidson's (2008, p. 715, emphasis added, translated by us) precise statement when he says: "In an age of **paradigm shifts, moral betrayals, historical amnesia, and psychic and spiritual turmoil**, humanistic issues are central [...]".

To understand educational policies is to understand a reality that often does not take into account the influences suffered nor the way in which texts are written. It is essential to be attentive and to question what seems unquestionable to us because we lack the knowledge to ask the necessary questions.

The importance of a humanistic education lies in the possibility of awakening historical knowledge, interpretive skills, critical analysis, and the relevance of scientific discoveries that are indispensable for every era. It also helps us to think about ourselves, the dominant ideologies, and the transformations necessary for the continuation of humanity (Davidson, 2008).

It is not just a matter of reflecting on the use of digital technology per se, but rather of understanding its power when combined with the knowledge that existed in the past and that allows for the expansion of knowledge in the present of the human sciences and other fields.

3. DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AND THE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS

Digital technologies are an empowering part of the educational process. They reflect what digital culture has defined as fundamental to the development of human knowledge, which includes historical perception, civic education, social engagement, and

digital appropriation, both by teachers and students. Digital Humanities allow us to understand the importance of DT for everyday educational life from a field of research that is constantly evolving.

They generate a perspective that helps us to think about the dissemination of knowledge based on an audience that, according to Dias-Trindade and Mill (2020, p. 9-10, translated by us), "[...] moves fluidly, through hybrid, multimodal and ubiquitous spaces, in a true digital nomadism, always connected, always in networks, building their knowledge [...]". Knowledge is produced and acquired through the convergence of innumerable connections capable of developing different cognitive perceptions of teachers and students.

The presence of digital technologies in the educational process cannot be taken for granted. We live in a context characterized by connectivity, and interaction on different mobile devices with the most diverse ways of acquiring, producing, and sharing information, content, knowledge, and expertise (Ramos; Boll, 2019).

In this way, we become subjects that are part of a network of knowledge production and dissemination. Understanding this is an important step in discussions about the meaning and significance of teaching and learning in the 21st century.

However, even in this situation, the proposed educational projects are often far from providing students and teachers with an understanding of a new cultural scenario of this experience, that is, the importance of digital technologies. This is because "the integration of technologies (especially digital ones) in the educational context is directly linked to the cultural changes that the school has yet to experience" (Dias-Trindade; Mill, 2020, p. 11, translated by us).

This awareness allows us to recognize that the changes brought about by cyberculture - by digital culture - which initially took place outside the school and academic environment, are increasingly embedded in this scenario and must be incorporated into it. Its transformation is therefore an important part of the development of learning, which is characterised by the conscious use of digital technologies and which can open up to those involved in this process the infinite possibilities of knowledge. For Lévy (2010, p. 160, translated by us):

> We need to build new models of the space of knowledge. Instead of a representation in linear and parallel scales, in pyramids structured in "levels", organized according to the notion of prerequisites and converging towards "higher" knowledge, we must now favour the image of emerging, open, continuous, fluid, non-linear spaces of knowledge, reorganising themselves according to objectives or contexts, in which each one occupies a singular and evolutionary position.

The relationship between education and digital technology is understood in terms of what Kenski (2012a, p. 43, translated by us) calls the 'socialization of innovation'. This means that this interaction has to be taught and learned. The fact that we are embedded in the digital age does not mean that this circumstance explains how we should use the resources and benefits of DT.

This lack of understanding, which would make it possible to increasingly explore the use of these resources, is reflected in everyday life in the classroom, when, although we live with connected students, often referred to as "Digital Natives", we notice that some of them are not aware of or are unable to use technological resources in a functional way as tools for discovering new knowledge.

This is also the case with teachers who, in most cases, have not received adequate training in the context of digital technologies and are therefore unable to take full advantage of the production and dissemination of lessons that can take place in different spaces and times: "We use many kinds of technologies to learn and know more, and we need training to learn and know more about technologies" (Kenski, 2012a, p. 44, translated by us).

In the field of Digital Humanities, it is essential to promote the academic training of professionals who can relate to digital technologies in favor of knowledge, exploring the infinite possibilities of their action in the construction of doing, and producing new knowledge. As Lucena (2016, p. 288, translated by us) states:

> Working with digital cultures and mobile technologies at school is not just about using a new learning methodology to deliver boring content, but about thinking about this new subject, being a cultural practitioner who thinks, produces knowledge and shares opinions, content and information on networks.

Technologies, if considered and inserted in a concrete way, can promote a significant and more realistic change in the educational environment: "It is not enough to use the television or the computer, it is necessary to know how to use the chosen technology in a pedagogically correct way" (Kenski, 2012a, p. 46, translated by us).

Thus, we repeat that digital technology, by itself, cannot be considered, as it has been by many researchers and enthusiasts, only in a utilitarian way, as the main basis of the educational revolution, of the change that will solve all existing problems.

Digital technology in itself, as an instrumental or mechanical utility, does nothing unless

it is incorporated as a dynamically enhancing part of the teaching and learning process. It is not only its incorporation that will change the way education has been developed in the country but also the way this incorporation has been facilitated.

Moreover, digital technology in the educational context tends to create a break with the continuous and systematized idea of learning. It creates a phenomenon of discontinuity, without fixed space and time, permeated by diverse texts and images presented in an immediate and topical way (Kenski, 2012b).

What we can teach and learn then begins to happen from this perspective, simultaneously with changes in society. A reflection on digital technology and education ceases to be simplistic if we try to understand that the relationship to be established is not only anchored in access, without problematizing it.

There is an old saying that "today's newspaper wraps tomorrow's fish". The speed of information today is such that there are hardly any printed newspapers, let alone the time it takes for the information they contain to be forgotten.

Nowadays, information disappears quickly, which leads to the realization that it will often be the same in the classroom. According to Dias-Trindade and Moreira (2017, p. 642, translated by us):

> [...] It is essential to be aware of the importance of helping students to learn how best to use the information they access and, in particular, to know how to select that information in order to improve both their knowledge and their skills.

What we are certain of today is that knowledge is no longer merely operational but is increasingly configured in an ephemeral way, and can be represented by a rapid interaction that stimulates educators and students in the search for knowledge.

This objective can be achieved in different formal and non-formal educational spaces. "Web tools, online learning, and the potential of mobile devices have brought new and stimulating challenges to educational systems and their professionals" (Moreira; Dias-Trindade, 2018, p. 1, translated by us).

The learning that is now possible through numerous digital channels and platforms encourages reflection on the need to constantly expand and update the educational system, which is still anchored in a traditional view of education. Restricting it to one form or formula of teaching and learning does not make sense in the society we live in. For Kenski (2012b, p.

88, translated by us): "[...] the most modern information and communication technologies require a comprehensive restructuring of the school system in general, and not just a change in objectives, procedures, and teaching methods".

It is therefore essential to ensure that students and teachers are able to approach and domesticate digital technology to their advantage, in order to ensure greater use of networks for knowledge, for the democratization of convergent knowledge in different contexts.

3.1 Experience Report: I Exist"

The two private institutions in which we were enrolled had been sharing virtual environments with students since 2019. In higher education, all courses complied with Regulation No. 2,117/2019, which limits the workload offered in distance learning to a maximum of 40% in presential courses. Courses with a workload of 80 hours per week were offered in a hybrid format. In other words, academic activities were 50% presential and 50% online, through a dedicated virtual environment that could be accessed by teachers and students. Courses with a workload of 40 hours per week also had a virtual environment where teachers were instructed to post activities and various teaching materials.

The university in question was in the process of adopting digital technologies, which since the end of 2018 have begun to appear both in the physical structure and the academic curricula. All fixed rooms were equipped with Wi-Fi, electronic projectors, and computers. In 2019, three environments were created for the development of active methodologies. These spaces were equipped with connection points in each room, movable tables and chairs, whiteboards in different formats for use with markers, another with chalk, and a third with glass for sticking stickers with notes.

In the same year, teachers and other staff were trained to understand how to use all the resources of the Moodle virtual environment. For those who could not attend in person, the whole course was available in each teacher's environment.

With the closure of institutions during the period of social isolation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, these institutions instructed their teachers and students to adopt Emergency Remote Teaching (ERE). According to Burci et al. (2020), this is a temporary teaching model adopted due to adverse situations, such as the pandemic, that make physical presence in educational environments impossible. ERE is characterized by the geographical

distance between students and teachers, who share synchronous classes that continue to take place on the same day and at the same time as previously planned activities and scheduled in the academic calendar. The content is now taught at a distance using digital technologies. Everything is recorded and available in virtual environments (Moreira; Schelemmer, 2020).

To broadcast classes, HEIs instructed students and teachers to access the meeting through Google Meet, which was already available to everyone through their institutional email. Classes and assessments were held in this format between March 2020 and August 2021.

Despite the existing support, there were numerous difficulties, starting with the lack of in-depth training for teachers and students in digital technologies. As everyone was caught off guard, the first few months were a time of great adjustment and work. Even with previous training, many teachers were unfamiliar with social networks and platforms.

Some students also reported difficulties with access and a lack of equipment for synchronous learning. Despite being a private institution, a significant proportion of the students are part of social scholarship programs. Many have lost their jobs and had to drop out of school.

Throughout 2020, the HEIs also offered a free Lato Sensu postgraduate course to teachers, entitled: " Technologies Applied to Distance Education", lasting 360 hours. The pedagogical week held online in July 2020 allowed the exchange of experiences among teachers. Many reported how they adapted their pedagogical practices for Emergency Remote Teaching.

The bimonthly activity was promoted through a project called "I Exist". According to Santos, Mendonça, and Bittencourt (2020), the initiative to create this proposal arose from the need to continue the existing activity in the curriculum in person and to use digital information and communication technologies as a tool to improve teaching and learning for students and teachers.

Before the adoption of ERE, the proposal was that students could develop an exhibition of Polaroid photographs in one of the rooms of the HEIs. The pictures were to represent their existence. This presentation was part of the Interdisciplinary Project (PIM) 2020.1 - 2020.2: "Reading and seeing reality through art and literature".

Each class of the course was guided by different disciplines in the promotion of works based on the book: "Life, illness, and suicide: racism in the production of knowledge about young black people/LGBTIs" (Navasconi, 2019). Due to the pandemic, the development of the

PIM took place at a distance. In the case of the social diversity discipline, it consists of several stages.

We highlight that the first activity was carried out through the discussion of texts read and discussed in the virtual classroom, which constituted the syllabus of the Social Diversity discipline. Throughout the first/second semester of 2020, students were presented with bibliographies that encouraged them to reflect on the issues of identity, empowerment, sociology of deviance, representation, social invisibility, religion, gender, and diversity.

The second moment was marked by the suggestion of transposing the PIM and the idea of personal images to create an Instagram profile. As the vast majority of the students were between 19 and 28 years old, the proposal to use this social network was very enthusiastically accepted.

Thus, they were instructed to present up to three of their images and a text related to them, to demarcate their existence in the midst of diversity, whether of race, gender, sexual orientation, or religious beliefs, highlighting the importance of representation, of being, of perceiving oneself and being perceived in the world, as a tool against discrimination, prejudice and racism (Santos; Mendonça; Bittencourt, 2020).

As a result, the morning students created the profile: "I_Exist", while evening students created the profile: "euexistoeresisto"[1]. Both profiles remain active. However, the night psychology class, which is currently in its sixth semester, decided to continue with it. Today, this profile is fed with pictures and videos that publicize activities developed by these students and about the course.

In this sense, we have noticed that the students have understood the power of the activity by maintaining an active profile that prioritizes the dissemination of social diversity to think about others who, being similar and at the same time different from us, need to be respected to continue to have the right to exist.

According to Svensson (2010, p. 45, translated by us), this kind of practice that combines the humanities and digital technologies in the use of digital humanities can be described as 'digital academic activism'. This is one of the models of analysis and engagement proposed by the author.

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[1] Available at: https://www.instagram.com/euexistoeresisto?igsh=NW12cG0zYTkwZmx1. Accessed on: Nov. 12, 2024.

Thus, this type of activism tends to correspond to the idea that students should be encouraged to produce practices that address personal and political issues. These, in turn, would be shaped by collaboration, aesthetics and the role of the impact of these interventions to be observed by the public both inside and outside the academy. For Svensson (2010, p. 165, translated by us):

> [...] It seems that the contemporary engagement, interventionist interest, critical stance, and creative forms of expression associated with some of the digital humanities may be related to a mode of engagement according to which the digital facilitates an activist space.

The use of literature and photography as pedagogical resources has long been present in education. Even if it is criticized - and often used only as a transposition of content - ERE, when enhanced by DICT in different scenarios, leads to the possibility of transforming what could be only a printed exhibition into a digital exchange capable of expressing sensations, feelings and different interpretations about the social world, in a network. Ramos and Boll (2019) postulate the following:

> The transversalization of contexts, that is, the openness to learning beyond formal teaching environments, and the personalization of learning place new demands on education systems. These contexts represent potential learning niches that, although ICT has historically played a role in opening up other learning spaces, are not always included in the agenda of formal schools, from basic education to higher education. This is another way of existing and communicating in the production of content, represented by the thousands of homemade videos, such as school projects, recorded on YouTube, thematic blogs, social media sites, etc. (p. 64-65, translated by us).

This type of appropriation of social networks demonstrates that they can be active/activist spaces for disseminating knowledge and content beyond entertainment. Encouraging this type of teaching and learning tends to produce more autonomous and responsible students since it is through them and their choices that this process will develop.

What once seemed to be an activity to fulfill bimonthly credits has become an educational action in which being connected to the world means being able to express oneself in it in different ways. Moreira and Dias-Trindade (2018) emphasize that the capacity for self-learning is built on the perception that learning takes place in everyday life, based on the exploration of knowledge by the main actor: the student.

For this reason, Ramos and Boll (2019) assert that in the construction of the educational process of the student of the 21st century, it is very important to promote activities in which the

development of creative capacity and self-awareness can prevail as part of learning. The meaning of knowledge in this historical period is based on humanistic principles, and one's interest; in an active, democratic, and shared way, the subject constitutes itself with and through collective and networked participation. The authors emphasize:

> It is understood that investing in the training of culturally sensitive learners, who are able to give meaning to their learning process and who recognize the space-time chronotope, from where, when and how one learns, is the challenge for the school system and for researchers in the field of psychology and education (Ramos; Boll, 2019, p. 65, translated by us).

In this way, new pedagogical scenarios are created and developed; even if public educational policies do not keep up with so many changes, it becomes appropriate to propose (re)thinking higher education in the 21st century in the face of an oasis of possibilities and transformations in which DTs have helped us to reflect and improve various educational processes in the very near future.

3 CONSIDERATIONS

During the COVID-19 pandemic, it was necessary to develop other approaches and alternative pedagogies to continue the teaching and learning process. In Brazil, Emergency Remote Education marked this transition from presential classes and activities to virtual ones. Physical distance between teachers and students had to be established to prevent the spread of the virus. As a result, educational institutions sought to reinvent ways to continue instructional activities.

In this text, we prioritize the testimony of an educational practice transformed by the pandemic so that it could be carried out using digital technologies. The field of Digital Humanities proposes that humanities and arts disciplines need to develop and expand their knowledge through theory and DT.

In the case presented here, the combination of humanistic discussions in the discipline of Social Diversity and the use of social media, such as Instagram, allowed students to develop a critical sense of themselves through the understanding that differences are ways of being in the world and need to be celebrated. Therefore, the profile created on the social network can reveal their identities, which are so diverse and unique.

This type of "digital academic activism" is part of one of the faces of the Digital Humanities, where students can contribute to current discussions that permeate society, addressed here from the debate on social diversity and respect for all.

The relationship between the humanities and digital technologies ensures that content and knowledge can be multimodal, revealing the development of broad, open, free, and unlimited knowledge through multiple and rich channels. In an increasingly networked society, it has become necessary not to reinvent the wheel, but to allow it to continue turning in different circumstances.

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