

EVALUATION IN DISTANCE EDUCATION: TWO WEIGHS AND TWO MEASURES?

Goiânia - GO, 05/2015

Gilda Aquino de Araújo Mendonça - Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e
Tecnologia de Goiás gildaaquino@gmail.com e gaam@ifg.edu.br

Alzino Furtado de Mendonça – Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia de
Goiás dralzino@gmail.com

1 – Scientific Investigation

3 – College Education

D. Theories and Models

H. Educational Technology

A – Report of the Finished Study

SUMMARY

The aim of this paper is to know the Brazilian legislation for distance education, especially in what refers to the evaluation commended in the 4th Article of the Decree number 5,622 of December 19, 2005.

Keywords: Legislation. Distance Education. Evaluation.

INTRODUCTION

Distance Education, at its beginning, was only understood as a complement of presence education, thus it had no regulation. However, with the arise of new technologies and its significant advance in the society, the quest for this kind of schooling grew considerably and, in that way, some questions have been asked, as the differentiation between distance education and presence education, and the discussion about the procedures to be adopted to evaluate the students, among others. To answer these and other questions, the prescriber of public and educational politics had to elaborate, approve and implement legislative proposals for distance education, since its growth was visible.

Distance Education (D. Ed.) is the formation in which the activities of teaching and learning occur independently of students and professors being together in a same place and/or time. There are several concepts that define the distance education and most of them mention the technologies employed to help the process of education.

According to Valente (2011, p. 41) “the pedagogic accosting employed in D.Ed. have to enclose the diverse situations to attend more properly the different existing educational necessities”.

Moran (2011 p.46) states that “D.Ed. is modifying all forms of teaching and learning, including the presence ones that make use more and more of the semi presence methodologies, giving more flexibility to the need of physical presence, reorganizing spaces and time, the media, the languages and processes”.

According to Moraes (201, p. 17) the distance education redefines notions of the time of teaching and learning, the “class”, the laboratory session, and so on; the ambient, the place of these activities (classroom, laboratory); and the format of the public (the group, the class).

The distance pedagogic practices employed must notice the existing technologies and offer the most adequate education practices for the learning in this modality.

LEGAL FOCUS OF D. Ed.

The first official mention that D. Ed. Has received is in the Law number 5692/71, but it has only been officially recognized in Brazil in 1996 by the Law of Directions and Bases of National Education (LDB), Law number 9394, on December 20, 1996), published in Diário Oficial da União (DOU) on December 23, 1996, however, it is in the article 80 of the Law number 9394/96 that D. Ed. is explicitly assumed as a teaching modality.

Article 80 – The public Power will encourage the development and the divulgation of distance teaching education in all levels and modalities of teaching, and the continuous education.

1st paragraph – The distance education, organized with the especial opening and regime, will be offered by institutions specifically entitled by the Union.

2nd paragraph – The Union will regulate the requirements to the achievement of examinations and register of degrees relative to the distance education courses.

3rd paragraph – the norms for production, control and evaluation of programs of distance education and the authorization for its implementation are of the responsibility of normative agencies of the respective systems of teaching, with the possibility of cooperation between the different systems.

4th paragraph – Distance education will receive special treatment which will include:

- I. lower costs of broadcasting in commercial channels of radio and sounds and images;
- II. concession of channels with exclusive education finalities;
- III. reserve of minimal time, without cost to the Public Power, by the concessioners of commercial channels (Brazil, 2006).

According to Niskier (2000, p. 78) these legal dispositions, in fact, originated absurd misunderstandings related to the employed terms, such as “distance teaching” and “distance education”, since they are distinct terms, and the National Education Council has created an unnecessary agency originating red tape for whom would like to implant the modality in the Country. There is also, according to the author, a clear confusion between MEC and the teaching systems.

The Table 1 shows the regulation of D. Ed. in some Decrees:

Decree number 2,494, of Feb/10/98	Regulates the Article 80 of the Law number 92394/96 It the first great instrument of valorization of D. Ed., as, in spite of not having had many discussions among experts in the area, represented considerable advances, but lacked in respect to post-graduation.
-----------------------------------	---

Decree number 2,561, of Apr/27/98	Two points stand out in this regulation: the definition of distance education, which encloses all the courses that are not entirely of presence; and the delegation to the authority of State Councils of Education of the habilitation of institutions and the authorization of programs of distance education for basic teaching, in the levels of education of young and adult students and for the technical professional education
Decree number 5,622, of Dec/19/2005	Regulates the Article 80 of the Law number 9,394/96, abrogating the decrees number 2,494 and 2,561. This Decree supports the distance <i>strictu sensu</i> post graduation programs, but to initiate the course it is necessary permission from the government. It allows that not only education institutions, but also research organizations may be authorized for the D. Ed. programs. It also deals with the possibility of D. Ed. In different modalities, however it does not make any prevision for fundamental and medium education.

Table 1 – Main Decrees about D. Ed.

Laaser (1989) says that the distance education was introduced as an answer to the growing education needs that cannot be met by the conventional forms of education. In Distance Education, a greater flexibility is possible, grounded on the absence of rigidity of the requirements of space (where to study), presence to the class and time (when to study) and rhythm (in what speed to learn). Thus an efficient combination of study and work, according to personal necessities is made possible. The student may stay in his professional, cultural and family environment, getting his formation outside the context of classroom.

As the structure, it is important to have in mind that the Ordinance number 4,059 on December 10, 2004, authorized the College Institutions to introduce, in the pedagogic and curricular organization of their college accredited, courses, to make available subjects, wholly or partially, in the semi presence modality, grounded on the article 81 of the Law number 9,394/96. According to this ordinance, subjects in the total or partial semi presence modalities may be offered, since this offer is not over twenty percent (20%) of the total scheduled timetable of the course.

Table 2 shows other complimentary regulations that had been established by the central government agencies, in the course of time, attempting to keep a control on the expansion of D. Ed. in Brazil.

Decree number 5,622, of December 19, 2005	Regulates the article 80 of the Law number 9,394 of December 20, 1996 (LDB).
Decree number	Designs about the exercise of the functions of regulation, supervision and

5,773, of May 9, 2006	evaluation of the College education institutes e and graduation college courses and sequential in the federal college system.
Decree number 6.303, of December 12, 2007	Alters dispositions of the Decrees number 5,622 of December 19,2005 which establishes the directives and bases of national education, and number 5,773, of May 9, 2006, that designs the exercise of the functions of regulation, supervision and evaluation of the college education institutions and college graduation courses and sequential in the federal system of education.
Decree number. 6,320, of December 30, 2007	Defines the responsibilities for the activities of evaluation, regulation and supervision of D. Ed.
Decree number 7,480, of May 16, 2011	Redefines the responsibilities for the D. Ed. activities of evaluation regulation and supervision.
Ministerial Ordinance number 4,361, of December 29, 2004.	Establishes the procedures of accreditation and reaccreditation of College Education Institutions in the cases of D. Ed.
Ministerial Ordinance number n. 4,059, of December 10, 2005	Regulates the semi presence classes in accredited courses of college education institutions (IES).
Ordinance number, 1 of January 10, 2007	Establishes the calendar for evaluations of the Evaluative Cycle of the National System of Evaluation of High Grade Education (SINAES).
Ordinance number 2 (revoked), of January 10, 2007	Concerns the procedures of regulation and evaluation of High Grade education in the distance modality.
Ordinance number 40, of December 13, 2007	Creates the e-MEC, electronic system of work flux and management of information related to the processes of regulation, evaluation and supervision of high grade education in the federal education system.
Ordinance number 10, of July 2, 2009	Determines criteria for the exempt of <i>in loco</i> evaluation and gives other providences.
Normative Instruction number 1, of January 14, 2013	Determines the procedures of flux of the regulation processes of acknowledgement and renewal of acknowledgement of courses in the D. Ed. modality.

Table 2 – Other regulations of D. Ed.

Dias e Leite (2014) list some points of the specific legislation of D. Ed. that need our attention, critics and suggestions:

- D. Ed is still restricted to the High Grade Education;
- the o Fundamental and High School education in the regular system, have not yet been contemplated, since that only in emergencies situations of risk they may offer D. Ed.;
- the possibility of distance master and doctorate;
- the habilitation of scientific and technologic research;
- the partial respect to the principle of autonomy of state education systems, DF);

- the disrespect to the university autonomy, since there is a need of habilitation to open courses;
- the prevision of consortiums and partnerships;
- the need of acknowledgement of D. Ed. courses made abroad;
- the obligation of periodic revision of the habilitation acts;
- the need of habilitation examinations in basic education - validation of the course;
- the duration of D. Ed. Programs, it is not allowed to speed the apprenticeship;
- the requirement of presence moments;
- the national validation of certificates;
- the prevision of discredit;
- the evaluation of courses and D. Ed. poles by evaluators authorized by Inep.

We can note that the D.Ed. legislation is still in a build up process.

EVALUATION

The evaluation is, perhaps one of the most polemic points, considering the position taken by the Decree number 5,622 of December 19, 2005, that makes preponderance of the evaluations performed in presence about the results of the distance made evaluations.

The article 4th of the Decree number 5,622 says, namely:

Article 4th the evaluation of the performance of the student for the means of promotion, conclusion of studies and acquisition of diplomas or certificates will happen in the process by:

I – Fulfillment of the programmed activities; and

II – Achievement of presence examination.

§ 1st the examinations quoted at item II will be elaborated by the habilitated education institution itself, according to the procedures and criteria defined in the pedagogic project of the course or program.

§ 2nd The results of the examinations quoted in the item II must prevail over other results got in any other distance evaluation forms (BRAZIL, 2005, our underline).

If I were the Minister of Education, I would modify this regulation about the evaluation in Distance courses, keeping the article 4th and its first paragraph, and abrogating the second paragraph, bi the reasons further given.

The evaluation is fundamental and indispensable for the educational development of the student, in D. Ed. or presence courses. However, the evaluation aspects in D. Ed. are different from the aspects of presence course and to determine the form in which these distance education students will be evaluated is the great challenge for the educators of this education modality.

The evaluation in D. Ed. may be materialized in several moments, since the initial contact with the students up to a final evaluation in order to verify the results of the developed processes. To evaluate, we may use the various tools of the Virtual Apprenticeship Atmosphere and, also files, exams, collectively made activities, and so on, reminding that it is important to diversify the evaluation procedures to diagnose and perceive the advances and difficulties of each student. In this process occurs the “fulfillment of the programmed activities” foreseen in the item I of the article 4th.

Using technological instruments, as AVA-Moodle, one may evaluate the participation, collaboration and zeal in the fulfillment of the activities and, thus we need to be judicious both in the elaboration and in the correction of the activities. Group exercises are fundamental to evaluate the collaborative spirit and, also, they serve to proportionate the integration of the students, a fundamental aspect in D. Ed.

In relation to the item II, “realization of presence exams” it is worth to point out the presence moment of evaluation in which the students meet themselves and can reflect about their practices, so, the evaluation has to have in mind questions that have been discussed in the course of subject and give direction to the course. No unexpected surprises... And it is also worth to emphasize the accompaniment of the students by means of an individual file, where the professor-tutor may, in case of the student having any problems with the platform or in the sending of activities, observe and verify what is going on.

The presence moments are indispensable in measuring the apprenticeship, as it is important for us to know the students personally and, in these moments, we may perform a deep investigative process to have a better guide in the time of evaluating.

The distance activities orientate the presence evaluation and the students perceive it when they give a lecture of the material of the course and watch the development of the activities. Without this compromise and

dedication it is impossible to make the written exam... But, many students do not have computers at home and are geographically distant from the poles, making it impossible to take part in this presence evaluation, How to proceed then? And in case that the institution does not have financial, material and human resources to accomplish this task ... How does it get? I believe that, in case this is not viable, we may do this measurement by means of the tutors in the pole. It is also possible the employment of *online* tests, since there is a control, as it is necessary to know if it is really the student that is doing the exam. Isn't it so? Several are the questions that we have to observe...

Distance courses, that follow the model adopted by Universidade Aberta do Brasil (UAB), follow the official directives of the Decree number 5,622, clearly establishing the preponderance of the results of the presence evaluations, in detriment of the results of distance evaluations. Many courses have adopted differentiate weighs, as 60% for the grade resulting from presence evaluations and 40% for the grades resulting from activities evaluated from distance.

Why this difference, if the course is a distance one?!... This proposal does not only favor the presence course but also distorts the concept of distance education. Is this an educational question or a political one? In the worst hypothesis, admitting the demand of presence evaluations in distance courses, it would not be fair the attribution of different weighs, as many of the performed distance evaluations should have the same value of the presence ones performed. However, this is not what occurs, in the practice, in the zeal to conform to the legal precepts.

Considering that the evaluation is formative and continues this demand of super valorization of the presence evaluations in detriment of the distance performed evaluations shows clearly a lack of confidence of the legislator on the seriousness of the education institutions. Why does the presence grade have a greater value if it is concerned to a distance course?

The distance Evaluation is also efficient as it seeks more agility in relation to the tasks and the accomplishment of the spans is part of this process, since what we seek in D. Ed. is the integration, interaction, collaboration and cooperation and movement of all in search of knowledge.

The need to evaluate and give grade shows that we still live in a competition. I believe that punctual exams, made in presence or in the distance, do not reflect the apprenticeship, since they tell more about the product than about the process of apprenticeship, which is a constant. In this sense, the most important is to know how knowledge is going to influence the way the student to cope with the world. It is only he that is able to feel if he has learned and if what he has learned will be useful to him.

The abrogation of the second paragraph of the article 4th of the Decree 5,622 would make the D. Ed. nearer to its reality, freeing it also in a legal point of view, from the paradigms of the traditional presence education.

Concluding, in the practice of D. Ed., what is more interesting is that we can, as professors-tutors, monitor in a more efficient form the continuous evaluation, accompany the development of the apprenticeship and the fixation of the content. However, I find it curious that in a distance course, the presence evaluations have a weigh of 60%, when the much richer dynamics happen *on line*, where we can evaluate and watch better student by student. I really believe that it should be the contrary, in order to valor the technologic instruments with which we work.

There are still many doubts in relation to the conformation to norms of D. Ed. The regulation of this modality of education in Brazil is still in a process of construction. As well as the Ordinance number 40/2007.

As a Minister of Education, the evaluation in distance courses would occupy a privileged place more worthy of the specifications of this education modality.

REFERENCES

BRASIL. **Decreto n. 5.622**, de 19 de 19 de dezembro de 2005. Regulamenta o art. 80 da Lei nº 9.394, de 20 de dezembro de 1996, que estabelece as diretrizes e bases da educação nacional. Disponível em: <http://www.planalto.gov.br/Ccivil_03/_Ato2004-2006/2005/Decreto/D5622.htm>. Acesso em: 07 mai. 2015.

DIAS, Rosilânia Aparecida; LEITE, Lígia Silva. **Educação a distância**: da legislação ao pedagógico. 4. ed. Petrópolis, RJ: Vozes, 2014.

LAASER, Wolfram et al. ***Handbook for designing and writing distance education materials***. Brasília-DF. Copyright, 1989.

MORAES, Reginaldo C. **Educação a distância e ensino superior**: introdução didática a um tema polêmico. São Paulo: Editora Senac São Paulo, 2010.

MORAN, J. M. Desafios da educação a distância no Brasil. In: ARANTES, Valéria Amorim (Org.). **Educação a distância**: pontos e contrapontos. São Paulo: Summus, 2011. p. 45-86.

NISKIER, Arnaldo. **Educação a distância**: a tecnologia da esperança. 2. ed. São Paulo: Edições Loyola, 2000.

VALENTE, J. A. Educação a distância: criando abordagens educacionais que possibilitam a construção de conhecimento. In: ARANTES, Valéria Amorim (Org.). **Educação a distância**: pontos e contrapontos. São Paulo: Summus, 2011. p. 13-44.