

New Technologies, New Settings of old Habits

Isabel Cafezeiro^{1,a}, Rosângela Lopes Lima^{2,b}

^{1,2}Instituto de Computação,
Departamento de Ciências da Computação,
Universidade Federal Fluminense
Av Passo da Pátria, 156, Niterói, RJ Brazil
^aisabel@dcc.ic.uff.br, ^blima@dcc.ic.uff.br

Keywords: Education in Brazil, University Education, New technologies of information and communication.

Abstract. This article considers the landscape of education in Brazil and shows that an inflexible educational structure, not dialogic and based on uncreative reproduction implies the persistence of old habits. Adopting the methodological strategy of starting from comprehension of illegal spaces in order to better understand new configurations of legality, this text considers the practice of glue and plagiarism as part of a network that conforms and refeeds them, and that remarks a power asymmetry manifested in Brazilian education. Considering Bourdieu (1975) analysis that the (French) educational system reproduces internally the domination relations by means of a symbolic violence, we attest in Brazil the reproduction of old habits in an environment dominated by new technologies.

1. Introduction

'Everybody knows the story of the Three Little Pigs. Or at least they think they do. But I'll let you in on a little secret. Nobody knows the real story, because nobody has ever heard my side of the story. I'm the Wolf. [...] No one knows just how this whole Big Bad Wolf thing got started, but it's all wrong [...] they jazzed up the story with all that "Huff and puff and blow your house down" and they made me the Big Bad Wolf. That's it. The real story.'(Scieszka,2009)

There are several versions of the three little pigs story. In the one we quote above [1] the wolf justifies in his 'way of being' the crime of eat two little pigs: 'Maybe it's because of our diet. Hey, it's not my fault wolves eat cute little animals like bunnies and sheep and pigs. That's just the way we are. If cheeseburgers were cute, folks would probably think you were Big and Bad too.'

'It seems that something is out of order, outside of the new order world-wide'¹ says the Brazilian musician Caetano Veloso. The wolf is not that bad and the three little pigs are not that innocent.

2. A diagnosis

As well as in this three pigs story, it seems that something is out of order at the class rooms in Brazil, either in schools or in universities: the glue in the classroom and the plagiarism, which have

¹ In *Fora de ordem* (Circuladô, PolyGram, 1991), Caetano Veloso points contradictions of a brazilian city, contrasting the intense beauty of the city with social violence.

always seen as a problem to be tackled severely, took a new dimension with the advent of new technologies. Among others petty crimes, portable technologies enables the silent communication in situations where debate is forbidden; wide access to documents and information sources by the Internet combined with editing facilities foment the culture of cut and paste. As a result, we are witnessing a proliferation of proposals for mechanisms to prevent, detect, combat and punish the glue and plagiarism. A great deal of effort has been deflected from knowledge construction to the repressive work of glue-combat measures. The backdrop is a diffusionist model, that is, knowledge is supposed to be concentrated in the figure of the teacher who is then responsible for convey to students. These latter are supposed to passively absorb this knowledge by listening to the lessons and reproducing what they have 'learned'. This diffusionist model starts at early education and goes along the whole formal education; in opposition of the dialogic practice that Paulo Freire, one of the greatest thinkers of education in Brazil, used to say [2]:

'Educate and being educated, in the practice of freedom, is not to extend anything from the 'source of knowledge' to the 'source of ignorance' to 'save' with this knowledge, those who dwell on this latter. Instead, educate and being educated in the practice of freedom, is the task of those who know they know little - so know that they know something and can thus come to know more - in dialog with those who almost always think they know nothing so that, turning their thinking that they know nothing into knowledge that knows little, they can also know more.'

From these words, we see that Paulo Freire makes an opposition between the dialogic practice and a model which is fundamentally attached to the idea of *knowledge transfer*, where knowledge is assumed to flow from the 'source of knowledge' to the 'source of ignorance'. Bypassing the various transformations that happens in this passage, knowledge is supposed to reach its target faithful to its origins, which means, at best, an idealized situation, far from reality. As a consequence, *knowledge transfer* is close to cultural invasion and far from education.

The narrative that follows [2] is an account of Paulo Freire on a community that when exposed to an act of cultural invasion, reacted at first, disguising their beliefs under the image of the representative of the invading culture. The attempt to crackdown on community action provoked a violent reaction.

'In certain region of the Peruvian highlands, heavily subjected to lightning, told us an American nun, the peasants went every Sunday to the Catholic chapel to "attend mass". Several times, the nun went on talking, she saw groups of peasants on their knees in front of a wooden sculpture (a horse, and sitting lordly in him, San Thiago) saying words whose meaning she could not understand. It seemed to me, said the nun, that they spoke not only with San Thiago, but also with his horse. Once, a priest newcomer to town, assuming that such behavior of peasants was a superstition detrimental to the Catholic faith, took off the chapel what he considered subject of profanity. He put San Thiago and his horse in the courtyard outside the chapel. When the peasants saw what happened, they made a kind of advice, invading then the chapel, and destroying almost everything that was in it. They recovered San Thiago and his horse and returned them to their former post, performing before a large procession through the main square of the village. Thiago was, for them, a kind of 'absolute manager of lightning' ... Any offense to him (and what would be even worse, make it disappear) without defend, could mean the anger of the saint, which would fall on them the curse of lightning ... The priest, by little, did not pay dearly for their sectarianism and their ignorance in the field anthropological ...'

Besides, when assuming that one knows and other must know, the idea of *knowledge transfer* configures a situation of authoritarianism which is incompatible with education because

underestimates who, supposedly, must learn: '[...] the act of knowing, of learning, requires of man an impatient, restless, indocile, attitude. A search that, as being a search, can not be reconciled with the static attitude of those who simply behaves as a depository of knowledge.' [2] In the above narrative, the authoritarianism is detached from physical violence. It is based in the argument of authority, where the strongest side imposes its logic assuming that *it is* the right way. But the violence embodied in this action can be noted by the violent response of the . This is a symbolic violence, a term that Bourdieu (1970) [3] adopted to describe something that is not even perceived as violence, since, once legitimized by the authoritarian practices of the dominant, has the consent (not explicitly stated) of the dominated. However the violence embodied in this action is outsourced in aggressive reaction of the peasants.

3. A work strategy

In order to consider the illegal space of glue and plagiarism in the context of the new technologies we adopt here a strategy similar to what does Kavita Phillip, in [4]: 'In the same way that mental hospitals, brothels and prisons help us to track the conditions of enunciation of discourses on civilization, law, sexuality and science, the clearly illegal spaces that are emerging help us to understand the new configurations of techno legality.'

That is, the comprehension of illegal space of glue and plagiarism help us to better understand the new configurations of legality in education. What we see is that despite the fifty years passed, Paulo Freire's analysis still holds on the Brazilian education: the strong nuisance caused by the glue and plagiarism in classrooms denounces the triad anti-dialogicist, authoritarianism and knowledge transfer that gives support to the whole Brazilian education and whose genealogy can be found in the colonial structure and latifundary economy, with its rigid social hierarchy, highly repressive, based in conquest and domestication and disguised under . Thus, either the glue and plagiarism, as well as the mechanisms to repress them are part of a deep-rooted system, that conforms and refeeds them. When gluing, students are, unconsciously, applying what has been taught them, once more, trying to reproducing (transferring knowledge from one side to another). At the same time it is also a reaction to the oppressive practices of 'education' and an attempt to revert power relations. As a consequence, it is impossible to conceive a policy to prevent or repress the glue and plagiarism that gives the expected result.

4. The glue, the tip of the iceberg

Isaia (2003) found in his studies of the pedagogical practice of teachers in higher education [5] that, in exercising this function coexists: a) lack of understanding of specific training to work in higher education, b) a paradoxical condition in its operations - training of professionals and training of teachers for the school network - without the professional development, since the progression refers to the titration and the scientific production without ensuring quality education, c) a school climate not involved in sharing experiences and knowledge, augmented by departmental structure, whose main function is related to the administrative management courses and teachers; d) emptying of academic freedom by the solitary exercise of teaching and pedagogical sense of loneliness, to the extent that the shared spaces questions, experiences and mutual assistance are not valued in higher education institutions. As points the Brazilian professor and economist Ladislav Dowbor (2007), 'It is impressive the loneliness of the teacher in front of his class with his fifty minutes and a piece of knowledge transmitting default.' [6]

In context of the university of the Middle Ages, the student was taken to meet multiple activities and to master sets of disciplines through classes, discussions, considered the most important tasks, in which the student put into practice the principles of dialectical and experience the vivacity of his spirit and accuracy of his reasoning [7].

The educational relationship based, in general terms, only in the transmission of teacher's knowledge, reinforces a typical behavior of a teacher in the traditional university education, which

presupposes the learning capacity of students by scientificity, underestimating the pedagogical aspects of teaching. The student in this teaching situation, in turn, does not know another way than the traditional passive receiver position, and feels threatened, when placed in situations that encourage their active participation in the learning process. In this way, what effectively establishes the relation student/teacher is the maintenance of a practice of power and submission - which is far from what is meant by critical pedagogical relationship.

'The democratic educator can not deny that the obligation to, in their teaching practice, strengthen the critical skills of the educatees, his curiosity, his insubordination. One of his primary tasks is to work with the educatees with a methodical thoroughness which must be 'close' the knowable objects.' [8]

In this way it is settled how much will be needed to discover below the waterline which conceals most of the iceberg. An educational culture that needs to be de-constructed to make room for educational processes that encompass the full complexity of knowledge construction required for the formation of individuals. Those being able of escaping of the realism typical of the rational/empirical/logical thinking, and thus face and recognize the limits, the uncertainties, the blindness and misery of knowledge. [9]

4. New technologies, new piracy

Social Studies of Science and Technology help us to understand the problem of glue and plagiarism in education in several ways. One important point is concerned with questions of the kind: how can we define what is the original and what is the copy? Why the original is the 'true' and the copy is the 'false'? When is the copy acceptable?

Following [10] the precise identification of the copy and the original presupposes the existence of natural stable frontiers and the notion of *discovery*, which set up a precise moment in time of recognition or creation of the stable thing. These two presuppositions are related to *the rule of origin* which is used to give the right to whom done first:

'In cultural terms and more general, the rule of origin is equivalent to precedence, priority, dominance, preference, prerogative, privilege, right of way, supremacy of the original over the copy of the model over the imitated. Through the rights of intellectual property, rule of origin is more or less surreptitiously evoked and translated to ensure the primacy of the center on the outskirts, of the colonizer over the colonized, of the first over the third world.'

To address possibilities of technological innovations of a third world country, in an unequal global economy, Marques works with the asymmetry colonizer/colonized which, as he says, can be found in every instance of the macro or micro process of construction of the global modern world. In Brazilian education this asymmetry is manifested, since the copy is associated with the oppressed (those who follow the rhythm of the construction process of education) while the accusation of illegality comes from the oppressor (those who set the rhythm).

Kavita Phillip, in [4] analyses the piracy case in China which has been severely criticized by the unlawful reproduction of Microsoft products and designed as a primitive, immature country, where the law is not recognized. Considering the discourse against piracy in magazines as New York Times and Forbes, she notes: 'article constantly associates the words "falsified" and "false" to the illegal reproduction of uniformity made by Chinese companies, while emphasizes the "true" nature of the uniformity of trademarked product produced by the circle of legitimate global production.'

But when Microsoft installs in Beijing the first joint venture, Chinese production gains the status of licit, the immature economy becomes more adult, and what was labeled 'false' becomes 'true' under the approval of 'technology transfer'.

From these two analysis we see that the rule of origin is not enough to identify the copy and the original, since under some particular situations, what was classified by 'false' is acceptable. The

rigid frontiers of what should be the copy and what should be the original are undermined, when are considered 'the networks linking heterogeneous entities such as technological policies, professions, education, computers, economic competition, personal alliances, finance, law, ethics, Brazil [, China] and the United States' [10]. In addition, these categories (the true and the false, the original and the copy) determine a set of procedures/privileges/actions that work for the maintenance of hegemonic relationships of power.

4. Conclusion

Concerning the Brazilian education, 'what is out of the new order world-wide?' In the 'true' story of the three little pigs, the references for good and bad, right and wrong were undermined because the story is told under the view point of the wolf. Then we have two ways of viewing the same story, two different logics – *dialogic*. The term dialogic means that 'two logics, two principles, are united, without the duality being lost in this unit' [11] As sings the Brazilian musician: 'I do not expect the day when all men agree. I only know of several beautiful harmonies possible without judgment ...'²

What is out of order in the Brazilian education is the absence of communication. Still prevails the diffusionistic model where someone “teaches” and other ones “learn”. This model, paradoxically, welcomes the glue that says fight. Brazil must change the daily practices in education to make possible the activity, the investigation and the curiosity in both sides. The diffusionistic model must give place to a translation model, where '[...] knowledge is constituted in relation man-world, relations of transformations, and is perfected in the critical questioning of these relations'[2], a dialogic non-oppressive practice. In this way, the roles of the teacher and learner are mixed, placing all actors involved in the learning process at the same level of curious researchers and emphasizing the *collective nature* of the educational process. The unquestionable status of the scholar content is also abandoned, turning to an education conception where knowledge is built on the experience of each actor and on the enrichment of relationships among them, the world they live in, highlighting the *local* nature of the educational process. Since learning depends crucially on a quest for the one who wants to learn, the *individual nature* of the educational process is also observed, respecting individual rhythm, individual time and individual life story. Thus, the actors involved in education need to deal with different views, different experiences, different logic and reasoning, which characterize the dialogical process. This *diversity* deviates from universal formulas and 'well-behaved stories' that, in most cases, reaffirm the vision of the hegemonic class. These four components (collectively, the location, the individual, and diversity) mentioned above put the educational process in conflict with the traditional evaluation model, whose apex is the time of test, where the learner reproduces the 'acquired knowledge'. Is in line, however, with the evaluation that accompanies the learning being measured through participation, individual and collective action, or the generation of products. In this new scenario, where the diffusion gives way to translation, and teachers and students become partners in the construction of knowledge, the glue loses its meaning and no longer needs to be tackled.

References

- 1] Jon Scieszka, *A verdadeira História dos Três Porquinhos*. Rio de Janeiro Companhia das Letrinhas. 3a edição, 2009.
- 2] Paulo Freire, *Extensão ou Comunicação?* Rio de Janeiro, Editora Paz e Terra, 8a edição, 1983.
- 3] P. Bourdieu, J. C. Passeron, *A reprodução*. Elementos para uma teoria do sistema de ensino. Rio de Janeiro: Francisco Alves, 1975.
- 4] Kavita Phillip, Qué es la autoría tecnológica? La piratería y la propiedad intelectual. *Nómadas*,

2 “Eu não espero pelo dia em que todos os homens concordem. Apenas sei de diversas harmonias bonitas possíveis sem juízo final...” *Fora de ordem (Circuladô, PolyGram, 1991)* Caetano Veloso.

no 28, pp 66-81, 2008.

- 5] S. M. A. Isaia, Formação do professor do ensino superior: tramas na tessitura, *Enciclopédia de Pedagogia Universitária*. ORG: MOROSINI M. C. et all. FAPERGS/RIES, Porto Alegre, 2003.
- 6] Ladislaw Dowbor, Educação e apropriação da realidade local, *Estudos Avançados* vol.21 no.60 São Paulo May/Aug. 2007.
- 7] Ernâni Lamper, Universidade, docência e globalização. Porto Alegre: Sulina In: Grupo de Estudos Sociedade. Available at <<http://www.urisan.tche.br/~gesociedade/texto0003.htm>>, in june,2010.
- 8] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogia da Autonomia: saberes necessários à prática educativa*. Editora Paz e Terra. Rio de Janeiro, 1999.
- 9] Edgar Morin, *O método 3: O conhecimento do conhecimento*, Editora Sulina. Porto Alegre. Rio Grande do Sul, 1999.
- 10] Ivan da Costa Marques, O caso da Unitron e condições de inovação tecnológica no Brasil. In: Armando Dalla Costa; Adriana Sbicca Fernandes; Tamás Szmrecsányi. (Org.). *Empresas, empresários e desenvolvimento econômico no Brasil*. São Paulo: Hucitec, pp 156-177, 2008.
- 11] Edgar Morin, *Ciência com consciência*. Portugal, Publicações Europa-América, 1982.