

Culture industry, digital media, and education

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Abstract

Based on the critiques of the culture industry and mass culture developed by Theodor Adorno, we problematize the way in which images disseminated by contemporary digital media, aligned with the logic of capitalism, produce hegemonic visualities that influence behaviors and establish standardized ways of life in contemporary times. In this scenario, we argue that education must assume responsibility for an emancipatory formation, enabling subjects to question and re-signify the effects of these visualities in their lives. In dialogue with Guattari, Walter Benjamin, and Foucault, we present points of convergence and divergence in relation to Adorno's incisive approach. We maintain that the emancipation of the gaze should take place within learning contexts, and we highlight the Pedagogy of Multiliteracies as an educational practice that allows for seeing and interpreting the world beyond what is visible to an uncritical eye. Considering that visualities, according to Mirzoeff, carry within them techniques of control that strip us of the "right to look," we advocate for this right, understanding that it can be restored through education.

Keywords: Contemporary media. Education. Right to look. Multiliteracies.

Indústria cultural, mídias digitais e educação

Resumo

Com base nas críticas à indústria cultural e à cultura de massa tecidas por Theodor Adorno, problematizamos a forma pela qual as imagens veiculadas nas mídias digitais contemporâneas, alinhadas à lógica do capitalismo, produzem visualidades hegemônicas que influenciam comportamentos instituindo modos de vida padronizados na contemporaneidade. Diante desse cenário, defendemos que a educação assuma a responsabilidade por uma formação

emancipadora, que possibilite aos sujeitos questionar e ressignificar os efeitos dessas visualidades em suas vidas. No diálogo com Guattari, Benjamin e Foucault, apresentamos pontos comuns e contrapontos para a abordagem contundente de Adorno. Sustentamos que a emancipação do olhar aconteça nos contextos de aprendizagem e apontamos a pedagogia dos multiletramentos como prática educativa que permite ver e interpretar o mundo para além do que está visível ao olhar desavisado. Considerando que as visualidades, segundo Mirzoeff, carregam em si técnicas de controle que nos destituem do “direito ao olhar”, reivindicamos esse direito, entendendo que ele pode ser restituído pela educação.

Palavras-chave: Mídias contemporâneas. Educação. Direito ao olhar. Multiletramentos.

Industria cultural, medios digitales y educación

Resumen

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Basándonos en las críticas a la industria cultural y a la cultura de masas elaboradas por Theodor Adorno, problematizamos la forma en que las imágenes difundidas por los medios digitales contemporáneos, alineadas con la lógica del capitalismo, producen visualidades hegemónicas que influyen en los comportamientos e instituyen modos de vida estandarizados en la contemporaneidad. Ante este escenario, defendemos que la educación asuma la responsabilidad de una formación emancipadora, que permita a los sujetos cuestionar y resignificar los efectos de estas visualidades en sus vidas. En diálogo con Guattari, Walter Benjamin y Foucault, presentamos puntos comunes y contrapuntos frente al enfoque contundente de Adorno. Sostenemos que la emancipación de la mirada debe darse en los contextos de aprendizaje y señalamos la Pedagogía de los Multialfabetismos como práctica educativa que permite ver e interpretar el mundo más allá de lo visible para la mirada desprevenida. Considerando que las visualidades, según Mirzoeff, contienen técnicas de control que nos despojan del “Derecho a la mirada”, reivindicamos este derecho, entendiendo que puede ser restituído a través de la educación.

Palabras clave: Medios contemporáneos. Educación. Derecho a la mirada. Multialfabetismos.

Introduction

A defining feature of contemporary society is the constant flow of information that permeates our lives through digital media, influencing relationships between individuals across various spaces and times in which life unfolds. Friedrich Kittler (2011) even asserts that:

[...] technical media are models of the human precisely because they were developed to override their senses. Although physiological equivalents for image generation exist both in cinema and television, these equivalents are no longer as consciously controllable." (Kittler, 2011, p. 40).

The omnipresence of technical media in our daily lives, combined with the rapid dissemination of information, challenges humans' capacity for critical processing and tends to dull our perception when engaging with the world. Consequently, it becomes imperative to develop media literacy that enables navigation through this relentless flow of information without becoming adrift.

With the advent of digital media and particularly social networks such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook, among others, the communication networks used nowadays, it can be observed that there has been a significant transformation in how information is consumed and disseminated. These platforms have become dominant arenas for communication and the formation of superficial opinions, raising crucial concerns about the quality and depth of this information.

It is verified that the images and information conveyed through these new technical media come to us laden with content designed to support the demands of development and maintenance of the neoliberal capitalist socio-economic model. This phenomenon leads us to assert that, in this context, we witness processes of aestheticization of images aligned with the cultural industry, and as a result, the impoverishment of aesthetic experiences that might restore us from the trivialization of information to which contemporary imagery has taken us.

In this regard, Benjamin (1985), in his essay "The Storyteller: reflections on the works of Nikolai Leskov," early in the twentieth century, with the changes generated by the advent of communication technologies that allowed

the spread of the cultural industry, warned us of the decline of consistent experiences, which, according to him, were the result of the “secular evolution of productive forces.”

Just as Benjamin observed in his era, today we face a deepening of these volatile relationships wherein “information has value only insofar as it is new.” Currently, the cultural industry predominantly floods information through digital media on social network platforms. These platforms not only act as communication channels, but also play a dispersive function in the ways of attention and perception, which derive in subjectivation processes increasingly attuned to the empire of capital – conforming individuals to a capitalistic order. The fact is that we are continuously exposed to commodities sales that seduce us with lifestyle standards, suggesting that happiness and success are intrinsically tied to the ownership of these material goods, ultimately “[...] flattening particular systems of value, placing on the same level of equivalence material goods, cultural goods, natural areas, etc.” (Guattari, 2001, p. 9).

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The cultural industry and the domination of subjects

In the work “Theory of semi-culture”, Theodor Adorno (2005) addresses issues that transcend his historical moment and that become relevant to contemporaneity, helping us to problematize the cultural formation of subjects within the digital media-mediated relationships of today. The author refers to a human consciousness that becomes dominated by technologies and which produced mass culture. Although Adorno was referring to an era in which digital media was a dystopian concept, the “semi-formation” or “pseudo-culture” that, according to him, was produced by the cultural industry, has assumed unimaginable proportions in contemporary life.

In introducing the concept of “semi-formation” (*Halbbildung*), Adorno criticizes the superficiality of information that discourages critical reflection. He argues that the cultural industry, by providing content encouraging passive acceptance of ideas and values, perpetuates an uncritical consciousness. This is especially pertinent when relating this phenomenon to current forms of communication. The German philosopher emphasizes that all elements of production in the cultural industry are deliberately designed to perform a specific function,

associated with social behavior conditioning and with the maintenance of one social class's dominance over others. When contextualized in today's world, Adorno and Horkheimer's perspective leads to understanding how images and information serve a market logic allied to predatory capitalism. Thus, for these Frankfurt School philosophers, in contemporaneity, the cultural industry, within digitally mediated, contributes to a consumerist society maintenance, in which "human spirits" lose critical awareness of their choices, influenced by images and information conveyed by digital networks.

The "clichés" Adorno identified, highly present in the cultural industry of his time, can be recurrently observed in digital media today. This domination manifests convincingly through algorithms that facilitate processes of selling, disseminating, and consuming information, marketing an image of purported success and social status through images that lead to impulsive decisions. For instance, influencers frequently post photos and videos consuming products and sharing how to buy them, promoting a continuous consumption cycle.

In the first edition of the book "Culture Industry and Society", Adorno (2021) criticizes a form of "entertainment" that provides workers with a sense of satisfaction without requiring need to think, enjoying "free time" as leisure, ensuring rest for the return to work:

Entertainment is the prolongation of work under late capitalism. It is sought by those who want to rescind themselves of mechanized labor processes so that they may be able to face them again. But, at the same time, mechanization has acquired so much power over humans' leisure time and happiness, through the manufacture of entertainment products, that individuals can only apprehend copies and reproductions of the labor process itself. (Adorno, 2021, p. 19)

Therefore, leisure time is oriented toward consuming cultural industry products, privileging entertainment over contemplative idleness. Today, as we scroll through Instagram and enjoy sponsored videos, we remain entrapped in the production-consumption cycle, perpetuating the capitalist logic that Adorno and Horkheimer vehemently criticized. Entertainment here does not free us from labor but prepares us to return to it, transforming leisure into an extension of the production process. We use "free time" to purchase products, generate views, shares, and likes that convert ordinary citizens into influencers, sponsored to

promote brands. In this endless cycle, the worker continues serving the means of production and consumption, reinforcing capitalist structures.

Adorno distinguishes true leisure from “free time,” which is not genuinely free. The critique of the ideology that takes up the cultural industry recognizes that this industry dominates and controls the consciousness of its audience, perpetuating neoliberal era standards. When workers engage with social media after a day’s labor, they continue playing a role in a productivity logic, steered by algorithms promoting consumerist-oriented content.

In his cultural industry criticisms, Adorno recognizes emancipatory education as a crucial pathway to transformation. Emancipation here goes beyond critique, it demands overcoming passive consumption and the conversion of “free time” into an experience of freedom. This requires emancipating the gaze to break with clichés and normative models disseminated by digital media and social networks such as Instagram. Hence, from an emancipatory standpoint, education would have as a challenge to restore to contemporary images and information an ethics that unveils “[...] the invisible in an age of overexposure, in a world dominated by cliché” (Peixoto, 1992).

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It is necessary to show the invisible through images that restore reality, revealing the drama of individual existences and vast landscapes, surpassing the superficiality of computerized images. This requires a critical and spiritual vision that transcends what is displayed on screens. (Peixoto, 1992, n.p.).

Therefore, it is essential to have an education capable of problematizing the cultural industry and its clichéd images, which permeate our daily lives, influencing subjective relationships between individuals and life. Isolated pedagogical reforms and prohibitive resolutions are not enough; a political and collective confrontation is necessary. Emancipation of the gaze presupposes a critical practice toward media, demanding multiliteracies in these contexts, rather than simply prohibiting the use of technologies in schools. Prohibitive measures are isolated practices that do not face the extra-pedagogical reality of contemporary children and youth.

The pseudoculture that dominates contemporary reality demands a critical attitude toward the cultural industry in the media. It’s not enough to acknowledge the existence of these media; it’s crucial to problematize what is seen

and shake the passivity of those who see it, developing an autonomous attitude when navigating digital networks. In this sense, education plays an essential role in fostering a critical and sensitive formation, capable of developing an autonomous attitude toward the visualities that circulate on digital networks.

From the cultural industry to the micropolitics of desire: commonalities and contrapoints in the dialogue between Adorno, Guattari, and Benjamin

Adorno highlighted how the cultural industry not only shapes people's preferences and behaviors but also serves the interests of power by providing mechanisms of control. In the current scenario, these forms of domination manifest in various ways. We suffer daily from the direct influence of private companies, which, through data cross-referencing and algorithms, flood our eyes with sponsored posts and marketing campaigns on digital media. These strategies aim not only to sell products but also to shape ideas, values, and produce identities to frame consumers according to the commercial interests of large corporations. "Schematically speaking, we could say that just as milk is manufactured in the form of condensed milk, with all its molecules added, representations are injected [...] as part of the process of subjective production" (Guattari; Rolnik, 1996, p. 25).

Thus, despite the relevance of his critiques, what Adorno and some marxists of his time could not note is that these power correlations are not merely ideological, since this is about the production of [...] "a subjectivity of industrial, machinic nature, that is, essentially manufactured, modeled, received, consumed" (Guattari; Rolnik, 1996, p. 25) that subjugates us through micropolitics of a "desire economy" (Guattari; Rolnik, 1996, p. 25).

Certainly, Adorno warned of the dangers of this type of domination, arguing that the cultural industry not only reinforces existing social inequalities, alienating individuals and making them passive and conforming to dominant power structures. However, this discussion needs to be broadened by incorporating subtler and more complex aspects than conjunctural analyses through the lens of superstructure or even infrastructural perspectives. To fully understand contemporary forms of domination, it is necessary to consider micropolitics and their organizational processes within a space of practices (Foucault, 2010).

Guattari warns us that the concept of culture intersects itself in complementary semantic nuclei involving mass media and capitalistic subjectivity (Guattari; Rolnik, 1996). Understanding these relations becomes essential for comprehending the collective construction of the workforce, but especially what the author considers as the collective force of social control (Guattari; Rolnik, 1996).

If, on the one hand, from Adorno's perspective, the cultural industry not only reflects but also perpetuates power and domination relations in contemporary society, Walter Benjamin (1985), in his turn, offers a less radical view than Adorno's in his analysis of the effects of technique on culture in modern society. While Adorno focused on power and control structures exercised by the cultural industry, Benjamin, despite acknowledging that technical reproduction could lead to the trivialization of artworks, saw an emancipatory potential in these new forms of reproduction.

For Benjamin (1985), the technical reproducibility of artworks could democratize cultural access, enabling a broader audience to appropriate cultural content previously restricted to elites. The author argued that the loss of the "aura" of original artworks, a consequence of mass reproduction, could be offset by the possibility of new forms of perception and collective experiences. That way, Benjamin saw a dual sense in technique: at the same time, it could be used for domination and control, it also could be used as a mean of liberation and social transformation. Education, therefore, should cultivate subjects capable of critically reading the signs of the present, attentive to the images and discourses that traverse them. This perspective brings Benjamin's thought closer to the multiliteracies proposal, which values education open to the multiple languages of contemporary times and committed to emancipation.

This would be a contrast between Adorno and Benjamin, which highlights differing perspectives on the impact of the cultural industry and technique on society. Adorno perceived the cultural industry as an instrument for maintaining the *status quo*, shaping subjectivities to conform to capitalism's demands. Benjamin, on the other hand, recognized the ambivalence of technique, capable of both oppression and emancipation. For him, despite dominant forces present in the cultural industry, there are spaces for resistance and possibilities of subversion in everyday cultural practices. He valued cultural forms and expressions that

escape the totalitarian control of the cultural industry and demonstrated that in an essay on film montage, which, according to him, would explode the dogmatism of universal truths.

Moreover, Benjamin emphasized the importance of democratizing art and the creative appropriation of mass communication technologies by the public. Rather than being mere passive consumers of propagandistic messages from the cultural industry, people had the potential to use these tools to create and share their own narratives and experiences. For Benjamin (1985), mass culture is not only an instrument of domination but also an arena of struggle and negotiation, where subaltern voices can find space to express their perspectives and contest hegemonic narratives. Despite recognizing the dangers of alienation and conformism pointed out by Adorno, Benjamin stressed the importance of active resistance and the seek for alternatives within the contemporary cultural sphere.

Education and the emancipation of the gaze: deconstructing visualities and promoting countervisualities in the digital era

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While the first part of this article has tracked down a problematization of the consumer society constituted by the cultural industry and spread through media in the digital age, our research is not limited to merely theoretical analyses about visual studies and information in digital media since, as educators, we are concerned with a formation emerging from contexts here addressed, seeking to use technological tools in our advantage as possibilities for constructing an emancipated gaze toward images and their intentionalities. In this regard, Guattari's words help us think about solutions to this state of affairs:

[...] the question now is no longer "who produces culture", "who will be the recipients of these cultural productions", but how to manage other modes of semiotic production in order to enable the construction of a society that simply handles to stands up. Semiotic production modes that ensure a social division of production without confining individuals within oppressive segregation systems (Guattari, 2001, p. 22).

In light of the above, this article advocates the possibility of providing, in various learning spaces and times, especially in schools, emancipatory movements so students could produce discussions and problematizations that allow them to see how images are being disseminated in the most widely used mass media today, “[...] attempting to awaken students to the wonders of visuality, to the practice of seeing the world and especially, looking at other people” (Mitchell, 2005, p. 2).

Multiliteracy practices presented by Rojo (2019) could be a path toward an “emancipation of the gaze,” based on learnings that are no longer focused on understanding the world through hegemonic visualities that simplify ways of seeing, but through open attentional states, allowing us to see and feel the complexity of human experience via perceptual modes decolonized from a fundamentalism that fixes and directs our visions toward a “[...] solitary introspection of a disembodied intelligence” (Mitchell, 2005, p. 18). Thus:

Merleau-Ponty's profound reflections on the dialectic of seeing, the chiasms of the eye and vision, and the intertwining of vision with the flesh of the world become much more accessible when the viewer/spectacle visibly engages and participates in the classroom. A more ambitious goal of showing the seeing is its potential as a reflection on theory and method itself. As should be evident, the approach is imbued with a kind of pragmatism, but not (it is hoped) closed to speculation and experimentation, even to metaphysics one. Fundamentally, it is an invitation to rethink what theorization is, to imagine theory and practice it as an embodied, communal practice... (Mitchell, 2005, p. 17).

For visibility and invisibility to cease being ordered in imagery culture, schools must consider learning processes based on what contemporaneity demands: a no longer passive attitude toward images surrounding and dominating us from a “visual construction of the social” (Mitchell, 2005, p. 18).

Given that digital network access occupies a significant portion of our daily lives nowadays, an attentive educational attitude to what is being seen is necessary, and schools can be important spaces to problematize the visualities reproduced in their spaces/times, enabling an emancipated gaze (Mirzoeff, 2016) toward the world.

For Mirzoeff (2016), the concept of “visuality” is not merely a matter of seeing but carries historical and social relations of domination itself, implying “authority over the right to look”. Indeed:

The first domains of visuality were the plantations’ slavery, monitored by the overseer’s surveillance - the sovereign’s substitute. This sovereign surveillance was reinforced by violent punishment and supported the modern division of labor. Then, from the late eighteenth century onward, visualization became the hallmark of the modern general, as the battlefield was too large and complex for anyone to see it integrally by its own. Working with information from subordinates (a new class of hierarchically inferior officers created for this purpose) and his own ideas and images, the modern war general, as practiced and theorized by Karl Von Clausewitz, became responsible for visualizing the battlefield. Soon after, visuality was named as such in English by Thomas Carlyle in 1840, referring to what he called the tradition of heroic leadership, which visualizes history to sustain autocratic authority. Thus, to visualize is to produce visuality, that is, to make historical processes perceptible to authority. This visualization was the exclusive attribute of the Hero (Mirzoeff, 2016, p. 747).

As we verify, according to Mirzoeff (2016), visualities are closely linked to a domination process intrinsic to colonialist practices. In contemporary times, visualities continue operating under a domination logic through digital media images that feed and are fed by the cultural industry. However, Mirzoeff points to an escape from this domination that opens possibilities for pedagogical practices restoring “the right to look.” It is the production of countervisualities - a concept that can become educational practices related to an autonomy, ethical attitude of diverting the gaze and rejecting what is being seen as truth to show another way of seeing. This is a form of repair constituting subversion against the cultural industry to which we are subjected.

Foucault (1990), in his turn, in one of his studies on power, governmentality, and subjectivation, points toward ways out of gaze passivity in the face of the repetitive images/clichés that numb our seeing. For this French philosopher, while the subject is produced by micropolitical practices of subjection, this subjection is never a state of totality, because subjectivity is always in process. The subject does not produce itself as an end but is always being produced by

effects. Therefore, when we think of countervisualities, we refer to producing a counter-gaze with enough force to make a difference amid the constant repetition of clichés.

Also with Foucault (1990) in *What Is Criticism?*, the author addresses the question of “theorized” criticality, in other words, based on validated knowledge leading us to reflect that it is insufficient to problematize only the issue of images in mass culture; but we must understand the reasons behind those images to build an attitude of “inservitude” that makes us see beyond what is being presented - an emancipation of the gaze:

But above all, it is seen that the focus of criticism is essentially the bundle of relations that ties one to another, or one to two others: power, truth, and the subject. And if governmentality is indeed this movement whereby one deals in reality with a social practice of subjecting individuals by power mechanisms that claim a truth, well then, I would say that criticism is the movement whereby the subject grants itself the right to interrogate truth regarding its effects of power and power over its discourses of truth; thus, criticism will be the art of voluntary disobedience, that of reflected indocility. The essential function of criticism would be dis-subjugation in the play of what might be called, in a word, the politics of truth (Foucault, 1990, p. 5).

To “interrogate” truth, its discourses, and effects implies that schools and their formative processes dialogue with a pedagogy which enables subjects to be eternal inquirers and questioners of the reality they live and see - as Paulo Freire (1996) expressed in one of his most important and timeless works for education, *Pedagogy of Autonomy*. For Freire (1996), educating requires the indocility of those who are in the process of learning, and from which it is possible to build a critical and emancipated gaze toward images and their supposed “truths,” from the perspective of a pedagogy attentive to the traps that dull the gaze in contemporaneity.

Multiliteracies as an emancipatory practice for “the right to look”

It is not new that written texts are not the only devices used in learning processes. Cinema can be a good example to help the reflection on these issues

- especially when Duarte (2002) critiques the secondary role that the seventh art occupies in education, not giving due importance to its formative potential when we understand that cinema should not be merely an illustrative complement to curricular contents. Using images only as representations and examples barely reaffirms our “passivity” in relation to the visual culture intensified by digital media.

In this context, Peixoto is invited to this conversation, since in 1992 he already claimed for an “ethics of the image,” (Peixoto 1992, n.p.) pointing out that this ethics would be in the possibility of “[...] showing the invisible [...] of images that restore a bit of the real, images [...] capable of restoring the drama of individual existences [...]; going beyond the asepsis of computerized images, [...] and excessive bloody snapshots [...].” (Peixoto, 1992, n. p.).

Currently, social networks act as technological supports mediating relationships between subjects and the world, often presenting us with an excess of fluidity, videos, photographs, and games that function as multimodal texts, indicating the importance of an education that embraces other forms of reading. After all, not only cinema is presented as a narrative text, but all and every image carries a narrative in itself.

Hetwoski and Menezes (2019), in “Education, (multi)literacies and technologies”, highlight the need for literacies facing languages presented beyond “conventional” writing forms, such as images, sounds, and movements, understanding them as multimodal texts:

We advanced toward multiliteracies that consider cultural and semiotic multiplicity, which constitute the texts circulating in social contexts mediated by ICT. This brings new demands, which are the skills to interpret language in its different representations due to multimodal texts combining more than one semiotic mode in their organization, such as linguistic, imagetic, gestural, and sonorous (Hetwoski; Menezes, 2019, p. 214).

Rojo (2012) emphasizes that the “multiliteracies” concept refers not only to multimodal devices but also entails the multiculturalism embedded in this concept, as there is a multiplicity of cultural manifestations in constant movement, constituting a language diversity that requires literacies of the semiotic instances they contain. Rojo (2012) approaches multiliteracy pedagogy as a political

choice because the contemporary world is globalized and expressed through multisemiotic narratives, whether analog or digital. This multisemiosis demands new practices and reading skills.

Although Rojo does not specifically address the concept of mass culture, the author critiques the dichotomy in school discussions that remain in a modern model, separating culture into erudite and popular. From her texts' reading, we feel confident to affirm that the multiliteracies concept expands and challenges the traditional separation between erudite and popular culture, promoting the valorization of multiple cultural expressions. Considering the above, the education that is desired to be democratic - for all - cannot do without valuing students' cultural and linguistic diversity, promoting inclusion of different social practices. This approach suggests that education must encompass not only reading and writing but also the interpretation and production of languages in their various semiotic modes.

Focusing on "education in contemporaneity," Rojo (2012) presents other learning possibilities that create conditions for generations to navigate different cultural and communicational contexts, acting autonomously in an increasingly globalized and technologically advanced society. Multiliteracy pedagogy seeks to recognize and incorporate diverse cultural and textual practices in the school curriculum, contributing to equality consolidated in equity, breaking hierarchies that value some over others. Thus, it fosters a more inclusive educational environment capable of responding to a multifaceted world's demands, where multiple voices and forms of expression find a place to coexist and enrich learning experiences.

Using *anime* culture as an example, which has a rich variety of narratives, unique artistic styles, and singular cultural values, the author shows how many young people not only know these cartoons but also possess cultural and technical knowledge in producing this drawing style and narratives. Such technical and narrative knowledge is only possible through "multiliterate" learning, which, as demonstrated by these youths, already happens in "extra-pedagogical" contexts and therefore should be incorporated by schools in their pedagogical practices.

Beyond these issues, the concept of multiliteracies carries in itself, as mentioned earlier, the sense of multiplicity, moving us away from repetitive and

representational imagery clichés. Rojo (2012) proposes that one characteristic of multiliteracy studies is “transgression” regarding pre-established power relations. Under this view, when referring to multiliteracies, it is possible to affirm that she also proposes opening up the right to look, as Mirzoeff (2016) demands, alongside an emancipatory education, as presented by Rancière (2011), in response to what is being required in contemporary schools.

Our invitation to formal education is to engage in multiliterate formative practices that recognize the features of contemporary societies, providing a criticality of a problematizing gaze toward clichés and truths that endorse the class society’s maintenance, excluding diverse forms of existence.

It must be understood that the dominance of cognition as a problem-solving process centered on behavior control and task completion (Kastrup, 2004) no longer fits us today. New problems related to attention and cognition arise, requiring more complex problematization in knowledge acquisition. We face dilemmas that urgently demand new cognition policies - policies that engender learning processes accompanying the rhythms of new communicational forms, considering that “[...] cognition is not limited to functioning governed by invariant laws and principles occurring between preexisting subject and object, between the self and the world” (Kastrup, 2004, p. 9).

Making schools places of possibilities means opening spaces for learning experiences which allow children to dare to make inventive practices counter to representational learning modes traditionally used by schools throughout their history. This involves offering students opportunities to look, feel, speak, listen, and express themselves in *aión* time, which is the time of experience. Time when we can give meaning to worldly things from what happens to us, as Heidegger (2002 *apud* Larrosa, 2002) explains, something that reaches us, seizes us, topples us, approaches us, calls us, opening space for transformation. Opening spaces proposing encounters with the world so youth and children can experiment, relate, appropriate, and find their own paths in different territories of existence. This requires a commitment to aesthetic education, understood as openness to the sensible and multiple forms of expression, creating meeting spaces with the world, providing conditions for children and youth to appropriate their trajectories and modes of existing critically and creatively.

Some considerations...

Contemporary digital media create an intense flow of images and information, which, immersed in capitalist logic, produce hegemonic visualities capable of shaping behaviors and instituting standardized ways of life. This dynamic generates a false sense of autonomy because algorithms and artificial intelligences control what we see and how we interact, prioritizing heteronomous engagement to the detriment of critical and autonomous reflection in choices. Faced with this scenario, education assumes a central and urgent role.

Inspired by Theodor Adorno's critiques of the culture industry, this article advocates for an emancipatory education that develops a critical gaze to problematize the images and discourses conveyed by digital media, breaking with passivity and fostering students' reflective autonomy.

Education cannot deny this reality, taking upon itself the responsibility to strengthen a critical and political reading of the world. Thus, pedagogy becomes a space of resistance and emancipation, where the "right to look" is exercised as a countervisuality against the normative incursions of capitalism, which, according to Adorno and Deleuze & Guattari, shape subjectivities and modes of existence in contemporaneity.

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