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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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PEDAGOGICAL DIALOGUES: "RED LIKE THE SKY" FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF LEARNING THEORIES

Maikon Joaquim Barbosa Ecard da Silva^{1,*}, Hermelinda Peixoto Pereira Martins², João Paulo Martins Barcelos³, Renato César Oliveira Junior¹, Vanessa de Medeiros Figueiredo Tavares¹, Raíza Teixeira Griffo Vasconcelos¹, Elizabeth Premoli Azevedo⁴, Silvana Reis dos Anjos¹ and Lafayette Menezes de A. L. Rios⁵

¹Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Espírito Santo, Campus Ibatiba, ES, Brazil

^{2,5}Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Paraná, Campus Colombo, PR, Brazil

³Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Espírito Santo, Campus São Mateus, ES, Brazil

⁴Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Espírito Santo, Campus Vitória, ES, Brazil

⁵Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Bahia, Campus Jequié, BA, Brazil

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*Corresponding author:

Maikon Joaquim Barbosa Ecard da Silva

ABSTRACT

This article seeks to analyse the educational theories present in the film "Red like the sky", how it was practiced the teaching of children who studied at Cassoni Institute boarding school and as Mirco, main character of this movie, brings out a different way of learning. The movie 'Red like the sky' has the school routine of visually impaired children as the central idea of the film, and depicts a stage in Mirco's life, an active and curious child, surrounded by friends, who one day suffers a domestic accident that left him blind. For analysis, qualitative research was used, through bibliographic investigations and detailed description by authors about learning theories. Among the results, we identified that the use of cinematographic work allows the formation of knowledge to take place from the observation of the described reality, not being as obvious as it appears, many times, reading a scientific article, thus the comparison between the events identified in the film under the perspective of different authors allows the viewer to resort to different mental processes, from ideas identified in the work, about some of the characteristics present in the school universe where children with disabilities are normally inserted.

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INTRODUCTION

The film 'Red like the sky' (Bortone, 2006) depicts an excerpt from Mirco's life, active and curious child, surrounded by friends, who one day suffers a domestic accident that left him blind. Set in Italy in the 1970s, children with visual impairments couldn't, at that time, share a room with children without disabilities. Thus, Mirco's parents are encouraged to place him in a boarding school called InstitutoCassoni. At the InstitutoCassoni, the training of students extends from basic to professional education, such as weaver or panel operator. So, according to the director, Padre Achille, in conversation with Mirco's parents, the institute's students were taught to perform functions that their physical condition allowed, and not those that they wanted. In this boarding school, braille is used as a writing method, with Professor Don Giulio being pointed out in the film as the only person

responsible for teaching students with visual impairments. As part of a class accustomed to Braille throughout the school year, Mirco initially presents great difficulty, a fact that makes him withdrawn during classes. It is noteworthy, however, that Professor Don Giulio doesn't use a traditional teaching method during classes, but has a proposal where he leads students to develop their perceptions through tactile stimulation, for example, how to feel leaves, fruits and twigs to sharpen the way students perceived their reality during an activity about the seasons. Shortly after arriving at the institute, Mirco befriends Francesca and, for much of the film, it was portrayed as the two of them having fun, indicating that Mirco, despite his limitations, acted like a child of his age, as seen in the scene where they ride a bicycle. Promising to surprise Francesca, Mirco hides an audio recorder and, reusing the institute's tapes, starts recording different types of sounds, dedicating himself to identifying them carefully. Mirco invents a fable to be recorded on the tape recorder.

Initially made by him and Francesca, Mirco decides to call some colleagues from the institute to record together with them. Showing enthusiasm and fantasy, Mirco resorts to the use of objects to give reality to the recorded scenes. Over time, Professor Don Giulio discovers about the recording of the fable and attributes to Mirco a natural talent for it, after all, even with visual impairment, Mirco described the objects and their sounds with great accuracy, proving to be a different student from the other colleagues. Mirco's misuse of the recorder is the trigger for a discussion between Professor Don Giulio and Father Achille about the way in which the Cassione Institute was dedicated to teaching visually impaired children. Although it was clear in the film that Professor Don Giulio realized that children could learn more if they were given the opportunity to experience their daily lives more, Father Achille, in addition to disagreeing, also expelled Mirco due to the unauthorized use of the recorder. After Mirco's readmission, the visually impaired students do rehearsals with Professor Dom Giulio, and later they perform an end-of-year presentation for the parents. After this scene, Mirco returns home and sees his friends again. Finally, in the post-credits elements, the film reveals that the story is based on real events and sought to describe part of the life of MircoMencacci, considered to this day a great Italian sound editor. Thus, based on the succinct description of the film, this article aimed to analyze the educational theories present in the film "Red as the sky". For this, the study was carried out through its analysis, detailed description and the search for bibliographic support in authors on learning theories such as Moran (2004) and MOREIRA (2009).

DEVELOPMENT

Having the school routine of visually impaired children as the central idea of the film, this article sought to analyze how the teaching of blind children enrolled at the Cassoni Institute boarding school was done and how Mirco, the main character of this film, brings out a different form of learning. Thus, although the institute is ranked in the film as one of the best educational institutions for students with visual impairments, in this work we see another approach to how disabled students learn. At first, attention is drawn to the authoritarian way in which children are treated in their daily lives by the nuns of the boarding school, indicating to some extent that the education practiced would be of the traditional type. However, as the film unfolds, it can be seen that the character Professor Don Giulio, the main person responsible for school teaching at the institute, seeks different ways of learning, using Braille as a form of written language. About Braille, Vygotsky (2011) states that through different combinations of points that present relief, the student is able to read with their hands, replacing visual reading by tactile. In the film, it can be seen that Mirco refused to learn Braille because he believed that he could still see, requiring, therefore, that Professor Don Giulio treated him differently from the other students, with teaching centered on him and not as happened with most students. of students. In this way, student-centered teaching is one of the basic ideas of humanism (MOREIRA, 2009). In this sense, the student must be considered the protagonist element in/of the teaching-learning process, taking into account their particular characteristics and their individual needs, and the teacher will act as a facilitator, creating conditions for students to learn for themselves, through their experiences. In turn, by treating all visually impaired children as equals, that is, unable to learn through new learning models, it is clear that Mirco's presence deconstructs this reality. Although he was not born blind like his colleagues and, thus, having already seen the world with his eyes, Mirco is considered curious, being a child who seeks to describe the things he observes with his other sense organs, especially his hearing. This passage of the film's narrative reflects the conception that the educational process can be carried out in different ways, one of which is focused on cognitivist teaching, where the ways in which people deal with environmental stimuli, organize data, feel and solve problems, acquire concepts and employ verbal symbols. Although there is a concern with social relationships, the emphasis is on the student's ability to integrate information and process it. (Misukami, 1986, p.59).

Thus, it is observed that the theoretical approach to learning and teaching practiced at the Cassoni Institute are made up of Cognitivist ideals and principles, since Professor Don Giulio, through stimuli such as leaves, fruits and sounds, sought to make children with disabilities build their knowledge from their tactile perception, that is, enabling the student to be considered as agents of the construction and transformation of their knowledge through the use of their cognitive structure (MOREIRA, 2009). In turn, based again on the notes of Moreira (2009), Mirco obtains his knowledge through experimentation, building his knowledge through his curiosity, that is, learning to learn, indicating that the film seeks to demonstrate with him the focus theoretical learning of the humanist type. In this approach, trends or approaches found predominantly in the subject are considered, without, however, this emphasis meaning pure nativism or apriorism. This does not mean, however, that these trends are not, in a way, interactionist, in the analysis of human development and knowledge. (Mizukami, 1986, p. 37). To differentiate these two teaching philosophies, cognitivism is given emphasis on "[...] cognition, the act of knowing; how the human being knows the world" (MOREIRA, 1999, p. 14). In the same sense, Coelho and Dutra (2017) state that cognitivism can be defined as "[...] the study of how people perceive, learn, remember and ponder information". Thus, through the Cognitivist theory, that is, through the experimentation of the world, blind students were led to understand objects and their shapes, being encouraged to remember and retain information. The humanist philosophy describes that "[...] the being learns, primarily, as a person. The important thing is the person's self-realization, his personal growth. The learner is seen as a whole – feeling, thoughts and actions – not just the intellect" (MOREIRA, 2009, p. 15). Mirco's constant search for self-realization, as well as the appreciation he gives to friendship, not only to his intellectual growth, is one of the indications that there was a significant learning process when teaching uses humanist philosophy. During the film, it is seen that Mirco breaks all the rules established at the Cassoni Institute, as he is driven to fulfill his desires, such as using his bicycle to go to the cinema or when he took the recorder without consent to record different sounds. Although the description of these scenes can demonstrate that Mirco is just a naughty child, with acceptable behavior for his age, these attitudes are different, at the time, from what was expected of a blind child, indicating, as MOREIRA (2009) points out, that limitations cannot be considered as an impediment to learning. In this understanding, Lima (2018, p. 164) states that, according to humanist theory:

The educator shouldn't adopt a single model to facilitate learning, he needs to put the students' interests first, this method consists of the student following, learning to learn and the teacher, being a facilitator of this learning in a unique and free way, with authenticity, acceptance, trust in both self and student, and empathic understanding. This means that the student must be the protagonist in the (re)construction of their knowledge, while the teacher occupies the space of mediator of this process, effectively contributing to the intellectual formation of the student.

Another aspect to be considered in humanist theory is:

the student-teacher relationship must transcend the classroom because education without action is compared to training, in educational practice the student needs to be an actor in his learning process, reflecting, questioning and making choices (Lima, 2018, p. 164).

In this sense, educational practice, in the broadest sense, must extrapolate the limits imposed by the walls of the classroom. Knowledge is understood here as an element of liberation from the bonds that the system itself imposes on students. It can be observed that, while Mirco breaks the rules established by the boarding school, the other blind students of Professor Don Giulio follow a Cognitivist learning routine. Its methods can be seen as cognitivist, because, as described by Silva Neto and Melo (2018, p. 5), in cognitivism, learning takes place "[...] from sensory experiences, representations, thoughts and memories". Still according to these authors, in the model of Cognitivist psychology "[...] the individual, through a

repeated situation, will know with more or less precision what to do, or what can happen". Professor Don Giulio, seems to realize that the way Mirco learns things can contribute positively to the learning of other students. At this point, it is clear that the teacher is open to new teaching methodologies and understands that there are new ways of learning. The teacher must always be aware of new ways of teaching and/or promoting learning. He must always strive to find the best way to teach, so that the student learns (Nunes, Silveira, 2009). However, in the film, a school environment is portrayed where the individual particularities of blind students were not considered, and they were all treated in a standard way. In one of the scenes, the director of the Cassoni Institute, Father Achille, told Mirco's parents that he could not do whatever he wanted, but rather carry out activities that his condition allowed, indicating that the students were limited by his blindness. It can be seen in this way that, in general, the pedagogical perspective of the boarding school disregarded all the subjectivity of the students, that is, the perception that the students had of the world or of what they experienced more intimately. In this sense, Mirco showed that it was possible to better explore the imagination of these children. In agreement with this analysis of the film, Barbosa (2008, p. 1) states that:

even at the risk of being expelled by the director, who believed that the blind child shouldn't be deceived due to his visual incapacity, Mirco continues to put his subjectivity into practice through audio recordings of the sounds of various things. (Barbosa, 2008, p. 1)

Another point worth mentioning is the fact that, by accompanying Mirco on his adventures, the other visually impaired students begin to actively experience the world, from a Humanist perspective. In this way, by arousing the curiosity of his friends, Mirco gradually reveals in the film that the other students are also capable of learning driven by their own curiosity, needing a teacher to direct this learning. In agreement with this approach to learning, Moran (2004) considers that individuals learn driven by different ways, such as: a) interest; b) necessity; c) experience; d) experience and; e) establishment of links.

In one of the most significant moments of the film, Mirco, Francesca and some of the inmates of the Cassoni Institute, record a fable, leaving Mirco in charge of the construction of the sound design of the story. It is evident that the students immersed themselves in the story, a fact that later draws the attention of Professor Don Giulio, awakening in him, as an educator, a new perception of his role in learning. Professor Don Giulio already had the understanding that blind boys were not limited in their learning, however, he believed that they were not able to understand nature without ever having seen it. Thus, in view of the results that the children obtained with the recording of the fable, their understanding of the teaching-learning relationship approached a humanist view, as they began to consider the way in which they interacted with each other, the way in which this interaction was internalized and assimilated, and also, as each visually impaired student re-elaborated the outside world. This understanding of Professor Don Giulio, in the perception of Moran (2004) is classified in the humanistic learning theory. In one of the last scenes of the film, there is a discussion about the way in which the teaching-learning relationship took place at the Cassoni Institute, between Professor Don Giulio and the director Father Achille. While director Achille defended the teaching tradition used at the Cassoni Institute for more than 100 years, Don Giulio indicated that the way Mirco and his friends had developed new skills from the way they experienced the world was similar to the way the priest himself Achille had obtained his training, as he was not blind from birth. In this sense, Amaral (2018, p. 1), when carrying out a critical analysis of the film 'Red like the sky' and pondering the scene described above, stated:

The school principal, despite being blind, believes that the boys are quite limited due to their disabilities. In the film, this character brings a pessimistic tone and with some resentment for the loss of vision, but it is a representation of the vision of children's ability to be limited, common among teachers, parents and other

individuals without giving the opportunity for their development. (Amaral, 2022, p. 1)

The criticism established by Amaral (2018) reflects a possible occurrence, among education professionals, of cultural prejudices rooted in individuals and that, often, can limit the cognitive development of children with disabilities precisely because they do not believe that these students are capable of learn, because of the limiting barriers.

CONCLUSION

The film 'Red like the sky' allows the viewer to resort to different mental processes, based on ideas identified in the work, about some of the characteristics present in the school universe where children with disabilities are normally inserted. In this sense, the cinematographic work awakens a more critical look at the reality exposed on the screen, causing each scene to be associated with an understanding of how the construction of learning takes place in disabled children. From an academic perspective, the use of cinematographic work allows the formation of knowledge to take place through the observation of the described reality, not being as evident as it is often shown in the reading of a scientific article. While an academic text prioritizes technical and scientific language, guiding the reader through the clear establishment of issues, objectives, methodologies, discussions and conclusions, in a film the student/spectator is led to revisit their experiences and acquired knowledge, making it possible to understand the work both from a scientific perspective and also being moved by the story described in the drama. Finally, at the end of the film, it is seen that the story is based on real events, and that MircoMencacci became, as an adult, a renowned Italian sound editor. In this way, the film gives the viewer the feeling that the adventures of Mirco, Francesca, Felicio and the other visually impaired children are evidence that these students do not have a limited learning capacity, on the contrary, that they can learn, for through a form of teaching that contemplates different creative paths and interaction between individuals.

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