

The internationalization of Brazilian education journals: tensions of an ongoing process

A quick look at the table of contents of this issue of *Educação e Pesquisa* reveals a strong presence of foreign authors in the articles gathered in it. Seven of the 14 texts come from other countries: five are Portuguese, two are from Spain, three from Mexico and four from Chile, in different co-authorships. Although they share some common topics, as we will see, all articles result from spontaneous submission by the authors, which evidences the increasing interest in our journal throughout Latin America and the Iberian Peninsula. Although part of this interest can be explained by the pressure on researchers to publish the results of their work in articles – a phenomenon of international nature –, it is also the acknowledgement of our work.

On the other hand, it is possible to identify here examples of some tensions in the process of internationalizing the production of knowledge in the Brazilian educational field and, particularly, in the internationalization of our academic journals. It is a contradictory and complex process, which can only be understood in the context of the international division of intellectual work.

In the realm of social science, several authors have already indicated the lack of power balance in the production of knowledge on the global level, with a great concentration in the core capitalist countries, metropolises or nations “of the North” – in a more political than geographical sense – (CONNELL, 2007; SANTOS; MENEZES, 2009; ROSA, 2014; to name only a few). We do not intend to go deeper in this complex debate, which leads to theories of dependency and to authors associated with post-colonial studies. In general, we can say that, in social science, it would be up to the “South” intellectuals to provide empirical material for the theoretical constructions taking place in the metropolises, theories whose universal meaning is established beforehand, since they proclaim themselves capable of knowing and classifying all societies with no exception, including the peripheral ones (MARTUCCELLI, 2010). Besides, these theories implicitly establish the polarity between modern and traditional or present and past, represented respectively by the metropolises and by “the rest of the world”.

Are we the representatives of tradition, permanence and the past? Can our societies be fully explained by the theories generated in the metropolises? The articles gathered in this issue of *Educação e Pesquisa* (Education and Research) are good examples that the answer to these questions is obviously no. Four articles address the complex relations between new information technologies and teaching, a theme that could hardly be understood as “traditional”.

The text by Román and Murillo is exemplary of the complexity found in the educational research conducted in Iberian-American countries, and it also depicts the emergence of studies that evidence the scenarios and possibilities resulting from intellectual and material investments in teaching in multiple contexts. Under the title “The use and availability of ICT in Latin American schools: the impact on school performance”, the article analyzes data from a study conducted in 16 countries in Latin America. Results show a more satisfactory performance in terms of proficiency in mathematics and reading among students who have access to a computer at home or school, as well as access to this tool in school activities, in opposition to those students to whom a computer is still an object far away from their reality and school experience.

Also dealing with the theme of information and communication technologies, the study conducted at the University of Vigo, Portugal, by Ricoy and Couto, explores the perception that freshmen to higher education have of these technologies. Based on the analysis of students’ autobiographic accounts, the authors state they find evidence of a positive evaluation regarding the use of ICT in teaching and learning, even when they are not directly associated with a didactic strategy. The article leads us to think that the importance granted to ICT, even though they do not represent innovation in didactic/pedagogical terms, is grounded in the possibility of utilizing them as a tool and method for future interventions in the sphere of professional performance by university students.

Computer use and internet access is the scope of the article named “The credibility of information on the Internet: criteria stated and criteria used by Mexican students”, by Kriscautzky and Ferreira. Acknowledging the importance granted to internet as a source of information, in a quantitative study with students between 14 and 18 years old, the authors propose an analytical tool, *TICómetro*[®] (ICTmeter) and, based on its use for research and on the data collected, they find incongruence between the criteria claimed for the search and those actually utilized in website selection and internet search.

The interactivity allowed by internet and teaching platforms was the object studied in the article “Individual competences of distance education tutors”. This article by Borges and colleagues presents quantitative data and their analysis with the purpose of listing technical and behavioral competences of tutors in performing their role at Universidade Aberta do Brasil (Open University of Brazil). The tasks of these tutors focus on instruction, motivation and guidance of online activities. Results point to tutors’ perception of the need to master techniques and contents for effective interaction, as well as to the relevance of aspects of social interaction such as cordiality, honesty, and ethics.

In the interface with the discussion of the role of technology for teaching in general and the teaching of science, this issue of *Educação e Pesquisa* brings an article which focuses on technologies and their effects on education. In the text “Perspectives

and contemporary reflections on the triangle education-technology-society and its influence in science teaching”, Morais and Paiva discuss the triad outlined in the title, describing the role of each component in teaching and learning science. The study focuses on whether the use of technology in teaching is aimed at learning to master technology or whether the interest in utilizing it concerns the frontiers of learning more general concepts, techniques and procedures. The authors come to the conclusion that there is a need for teaching that problematizes situations in order to enhance a critical and investigative spirit among students.

The need to work on aspects that lead students to play an active, critical and participative role in teaching, arising from social and cultural contextualization, appears in other three articles in this issue which deal with the teaching of science. By reflecting on the knowledge of those who preceded the Europeans in the human settlement of the Americas, the article by Quintriqueo, Quilaqueo and Torres about the knowledge of the Mapuche people points out the challenges to keep Mapuche educational tradition and culture in education environments which, in principle, neglect the possibility of cultural multiplicity. In the text, the authors stress that, in the schools attended by representatives of the Mapuche society and also in the other schools, there should be relations between school culture and the knowledge the school disseminates and the Mapuche culture and knowledge, as this would foster the development of cultural rationality among students. In the face of such scenario, the text analyzes interviews conducted with 32 Mapuche wise men (called *kimches*) and, through this data, comments on the incorporation of educational strategies and methods of this culture to teaching, highlighting the relationship with the natural environment and the living beings and its effects on assessing calendars and precepts of life and well-being.

The importance of theoretical thinking is emphasized in the work by Cavalcanti, which deals with “Epistemological views and educational research in the science teacher education”. This article highlights the debates about the contributions of dialectics, positivism, phenomenology and structuralism for educational research and, specifically, the research on science teacher education. Along the text, the author stands for epistemological plurality not as an epistemic or didactic obstacle but as an enriching factor, showing the importance of complementarity and the convergence of multiple viewpoints and meanings instead of exclusion and divergence, in building meanings about the situations studied.

Based on assumptions that touch the complexity resulting from complementarity, divergence, and convergence, Almeida and Giordan, in the article “The magazine *Ciência Hoje das Crianças* in school literacy: the retextualization of popular science articles”, aim to analyze the interaction of children with this sort of writing. The main focus of the work is the production of meanings about the scientific discourse by means of such kind of reading. The comprehension and responsiveness coming from students when they share with classmates what they read in the magazine appear as the outcome of the study on the re-textualization analyzed through the ideas of genre of discourse, scientific literacy and orality. Therefore, the study highlights

students' process of authorship when they expose, with their own words and meanings, what has been read.

We believe that the very centrality of the investigations about science teaching as well as the studies on information technologies reveal that the educational research conducted outside the countries of the global North is not at all traditional or static in time. And the complexity and originality of the issues brought about by our reality require constant re-reading and re-creation of theories capable of explaining such reality and providing perspectives of change. As Rosa (2014) reminds us, despite its little visibility, social science is also produced in the South.

The third major theme that is connected with the study by Almeida and Giordan and which encompasses two other articles in this issue of *Educação e Pesquisa* concerns reading and communication in the educational context. In "Literature and communicative competence: a wrong assorted matrimony?", considering the Chilean school curriculum, Araos addresses the problematic relationship between learning literature and developing communicative skills. Betting on the possibility of teaching literature without losing its specificities and, at the same time, of developing the communicative approach, the authors analyze several literary texts, emphasizing the skills that such study allows students of different age groups to acquire.

A broad project that is also intended to develop reading and writing skills, based on the co-authorship of reader and writer, is described by Corazza and colleagues in "Writreadings: a way of 'reading-writing' amidst life". Taking place in four centers linked to different Brazilian universities, the project includes research, teaching and cultural extension, by means of workshops which operate with the didactics of translation to articulating the philosophical, scientific and artistic dimensions to carry out trans-creation processes and connect the concepts of poetic translation and inter-textuality in the perspective of the thinking of difference.

By dealing with issues such as re-writing, translation and inter-textuality, this set of studies talks about questions which have also been asked to academic journals, especially in the positions taken on the international level. We, who produce knowledge in the word global South, usually translate our texts in the broad meaning of the word translation. As Sonia Alvarez (2009) indicates, far beyond the transfer of linguistic meanings, translating in a broad sense means to explain and contextualize in order to make our analyses and theoretical interpretations understandable for the reader who does not share the same cultural, historical and political references. Similarly to what these articles deem to be required in the educational realm, in the context of academic knowledge dissemination, it is necessary to act as mediators between languages, cultures and ways of thinking. For *Educação e Pesquisa*, this challenge is tougher, since each article is also published in English and made available for online access in all versions.

Claudia de Lima Costa and Sonia Alvarez (2013) utilize the metaphor of human migration to indicate that activities such as translation, publication, and circulation of texts are controlled by apparatuses of power: “texts do not travel through linguistic contexts without a visa” (COSTA; ALVAREZ, 2013, p. 580). Some academic papers circulate more easily than others and the flow is much more intense from the center towards the peripheral areas than the other way around. The legitimacy of an article, testified by its ample circulation, depends not only on its intrinsic qualities but also on who wrote it, on where it was written, on the dissemination tools etc. In general, it is hard for works published in the peripheral areas, especially theoretical studies, to circulate in the metropolis and in other parts of the periphery. The articles from the global South that circulate the most in the North are those which bring empirical material, descriptions that may be read as exotic, that is, different. And we, peripheral intellectuals, tend to know best the works from the metropolises than those produced in other peripheral areas.

It does not seem random to us the fact that our journal has been earning readers and authors mainly from the countries in Latin America and the Iberian Peninsula. With them we share sibling languages – Portuguese and Spanish – and we also share similar cultural, historical and political contexts, which are references though different, are recognizable by each other. Translation both in strict and broad senses requires less effort in these cases than in that of the studies developed in other parts of the world.

We also share similar views about the unequal power relations that are at work in the production of knowledge, since Portugal and Spain may be considered some kind of “South within the global North”. Thus, this exchange of articles, authors, ideas, and readers in Latin America and in the Iberian countries flows in the opposite direction of the one-way circulation from the global North to the South and means a threshold of opposition to powerful political and economic forces by promoting a “South-to-South” dialogue.

This type of internationalization, however, is often taken as insufficient, since the great target would be the English-speaking countries, the truthful internationalization would be publishing in English and being acknowledged in the core capitalist countries, by means of readers, authors, and citations. So we are left with many questions: how can we effectively translate our ideas, the context where they have been produced and their meanings? How can we take a stand in the global landscape without losing the assets of our local and contextualized research? How can we legitimate our journal in the internationalization process without giving up our precious opportunity to contribute to the South-South dialogue?

The last four articles included in this issue deal with a variety of topics, all of them representative of the good educational research in our countries. An articulation between the studies on political elites and the research on educational policies guides the analysis by Abrantes and Roldão about the 27 persons who have held the office of Minister of Education in Portugal, since the 1974 Revolution. In the article titled

“A brief history of the Brazilian higher education and teacher education for secondary school”, the authors show that the office holders were men, born in Lisbon, with a Master’s or PhD degree and with their careers linked to higher education teaching or public administration, features that distinguish them and create tension with the educational field and the teachers in basic education¹.

Hanglei Cacete, in the article “A brief history of Brazilian higher education and teacher training for the secondary school”, provides us with a history of teacher education for the higher education in Brazil, between 1930 and the early 1970s. The author analyzes how this teaching sector has evolved from the public universities and schools of philosophy, science and literature to isolated private colleges, in the 1970s, which gave rise to large in higher education in the 1980s.

A survey conducted in the city of Rio de Janeiro about youth and violence, involving 16 public secondary schools and high-schools, is the empirical ground for the article “Possible relationships between students’ perceptions of violence, school climate, and collective efficacy”, by Cunha. The author explores the convergences between the concepts of school climate and collective effectiveness and concludes that there is: a negative association between indicators of school climate and perceptions of violence within the school; relations between perceptions of violence within and outside the school; as well as the association between perceptions of the existence of drugs and violence within the school premises.

“The concept of compensation in the dialogue of Vigotski with Adler: human development, education and disability” closes the section of papers in this issue of *Educação e Pesquisa*. In it, Dainêz and Smolka give a remarkable theoretical contribution that is to the field of Special Education, by reviewing the concept of compensation in Vygotsky’s work, in communication with his contemporaries, mainly the Austrian psychoanalyst Alfred Adler. Compensation is a core concept in Vygotsky’s studies on human development under adverse organic conditions and it supports his defense of possible development beyond disability, as well as his understanding of the different ways of humanization.

This issue closes with an interview conducted by Galian and Louzano with professor Michael Young, from the University of London, when he visited Faculdade de Educação, USP (School of Education, USP), in November, 2013. This article also expresses the wealth and difficulties of international dialogue and translation; besides, it highlights how much we have in common within our differences, now concerning the theoretical debate about the school curriculum. Based on what Young defines as “powerful knowledge”, in opposition to his previous notion of “knowledge of the powerful”, he advocates that curricular choices are not based exclusively on power disputes and that, acknowledging the curriculum’s nature of social construction, we must also sustain it with the objectivity and reliability of knowledge, and thus provide opportunities for the development of students.

1 - Translator’s note: In Brazil, basic education comprises early childhood, primary and secondary education.

In short, the topics of the new information technologies, the complex operations involved in the processes of reading and writing and the power relations in the production and legitimacy of knowledge, remarkable in the articles in this issue of *Educação e Pesquisa*, concern us directly also as researchers and editors of the journal. Fast access with no frontiers to journals and their articles, both as readers or as authors, allows both a feeling of proximity and distance between researchers, readers and their peers. We are able to closely follow what has been produced by colleagues, and we may utilize the results, oppose ideas, corroborate statements. Obviously, although this is not a privilege or purpose pursued by the current journals only, it is necessary to acknowledge that the traffic of information has grown in amount and speed, fueling processes of re-textualization, re-reading, dialogue and confrontation.

Likewise, it is noteworthy that the internationalization of our academic production is determined not only by unequal political power of the international division of intellectual labor but also by market forces. Connell reminds us that “Texts are also material objects produced by publishers and governed by copyright laws” (2007, p. 219). Ideas may only circulate when materialized in texts which circulate in the form of commodities. In the Brazilian educational context, the most important journals are funded with public money and their publication is guaranteed by the extra work of professors and researchers, both in the editorial boards and in writing peer reviews, which allows us to publish free of charge to readers, who access our online journal at SciELO.

In the global level, however, dissemination of scientific production, centralized in journals, is controlled by large profit-making publishers, which have even imposed their measurement of effectiveness, by means of the “impact factors” they created. Today, journals are the main vehicle of international circulation and legitimation of academic texts. Thus researchers from the metropolises and the peripheral areas are pressed up to publish in the ones, with high indexes of citation, which brings into focus the role of journals as critical mediators in the transit of ideas (RICHARD, 2001).

But how far can a journal go when it runs in the opposite direction of powerful market forces and of the international division of intellectual work? Only the unfolding of the contradictory process of internationalization currently under way may set this limit.

Marília Pinto de Carvalho
Lúcia Helena Sasseron

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