

Teacher: Authority in evidence

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Abstract— *The end of authority in modern society has been evidenced by educators and society as a whole. At first, studies point out that this rupture originated from two main factors: the denial of the past by the bias of tradition and the ascension of modern society, which promoted equality in all spheres of human life. It is assumed that teaching is sustained when professors are bearers of knowledge recognized as legitimate in the school hierarchy and this asymmetry is conceived and exercised within an institution bearing the republican principles of equal opportunities and commitment to the common good. In this perspective, we defend a cultural and social scenario that promotes a lasting knowledge, that deals with universal issues, discusses and cultivates tradition, investigates principles and foundations of knowledge in general. It is not a matter of defending a dogmatic posture that denies doubt, but of understanding the contradictions about the ideal and material conditions of the relationship between what is known and what is on the way to learning. The study is theoretical in distinct epistemological fields, aiming at articulating education, philosophy and sociology. An approximation is sought between the concept of authority and knowledge and its relationship in educational processes from authors such as Rousseau (1979), Arendt (2010), Assmann (2000), Bauman (2010), Sennett (2001), Freire (1991), and Morin (2002). Finally, the text also expresses the subjective meaning and the interweaving between the thinking subject and the researched object.*

Keywords— *authority, tradition, educational processes.*

Professor: Autoridade em Evidência

O fim da autoridade na sociedade moderna tem sido evidenciado pelos educadores e sociedade como um todo. A princípio, estudos apontam que essa ruptura se originou a partir de dois fatores principais: a negação do passado pelo viés da tradição e a ascensão da sociedade moderna, que promoveu a igualização em todas as esferas da vida humana. É pressuposto que o ensinar se sustenta quando os professores são portadores de um conhecimento reconhecido como legítimo na hierarquia escolar e essa assimetria seja concebida e exercida dentro de uma instituição portadora dos princípios republicanos de igualdade de oportunidades e de compromisso com o bem comum. Nesta perspectiva, defendemos um cenário cultural e social que promova um saber duradouro, que se ocupe de questões universais, discuta e cultive a tradição, investigue princípios e fundamentos dos saberes em geral. Não se trata da defesa de uma postura dogmática que nega a dúvida e, sim, de perceber as contradições acerca das condições ideais e materiais da relação entre o que sabe e o que está em via de aprendizagem. O estudo é de cunho teórico em campos epistemológicos distintos, com vistas a articular educação, filosofia e sociologia. Procura-se uma aproximação entre o conceito de autoridade e conhecimento e sua relação nos processos educativos a partir de autores como Rousseau (1979), Arendt (2010), Assmann (2000), Bauman (2010), Sennett (2001), Freire (1991) e Morin (2002). Enfim, o texto expressa também a significação subjetiva e o entrelaçamento entre o sujeito pensante e o objeto pesquisado.

Palavras-Chave— *autoridade, tradição, processos educativos.*

Maestro: Autoridad en la Evidencia

El fin de la autoridad en la sociedad moderna ha sido evidenciado por los educadores y la sociedad en su conjunto. Al principio, los estudios indican que esa ruptura se originó en dos factores principales: la negación del pasado por el sesgo de la tradición y el auge de la sociedad moderna, que promovió la ecualización en todas las esferas de la vida humana. Se supone que la enseñanza se sostiene cuando los maestros son portadores de un conocimiento reconocido como legítimo en la jerarquía escolar y esa asimetría sea concebida y ejercida dentro de una institución portadora de los principios republicanos de igualdad de oportunidades y de compromiso con el bien común. Desde esa perspectiva, abogamos por un escenario cultural y social que promueva un saber duradero, que se centre de cuestiones universales, discuta y cultive la tradición, investigue principios y fundamentos de los saberes en general. No es la defensa de una postura dogmática la que niega la duda, sino más bien percibir las contradicciones sobre las condiciones ideales y materiales de la relación entre lo que sabe y lo que está en el camino del aprendizaje. El estudio es teórico en diferentes campos epistemológicos, con el fin de articular la educación, la filosofía y la sociología. Se busca una aproximación entre el concepto de autoridad y conocimiento y su relación en los procesos educativos de autores, como Rousseau (1979), Arendt (2010), Assmann (2000), Bauman (2010), Sennett (2001), Freire (1991) y Morin (2002). Por último, el texto también expresa la significación subjetiva y el entrelazamiento entre el sujeto pensante y el objeto investigado.

Palabras clave— autoridad, tradición, procesos educativos.

I. INTRODUCTION

The bankruptcy of authority in public school is claimed by the society as a whole. Although there are doubts about the category of authority in evidence: legal authority based on the legal framework; the respect for new charismatic characters (within politics and religion); or that one mediated by the love for knowledge. This writing holds on to the authority of school knowledge based on credibility and trust. In the teaching and learning relationship, observations that refer to the difficulty of exercising teaching authority in front of the student often arise. The deauthorization of the teacher stems from a number of factors in the public and private spheres. It is assumed that in the absence of a teacher, there can be no student. Between them, the duties are reciprocal and, if they are poorly fulfilled on one side, they have certainly been neglected on the other one. This is the ethical and rational basis of the intervention in the formative processes of human beings through the teaching task. With regard to the task of teaching, there is no limit or exhaustion of what can be taught: it is impossible to *know everything*. The authority of education is exercised by the relationship of unequal individuals, in which there is a reciprocal recognition of the roles and position occupied by each one. In this concept, what motivated the crisis of the teacher's authority in relation to their students?

A priori, we are treating authority not as a relationship based on violence/force or persuasion, but on

respect and duty. In the field of education, it is on the natural need of children, in the face of unfamiliarity with the common world, to listen, from who knows, to the directions to be followed.

The search for a permanent well-being can be associated with the decline of authority to the extent that the excessive valuation of the new and the random engenders fluid relationships as opposed to the past solidity. Moreover, political indifference reveals a characteristic trait of the new times, in which individuals are overly concerned with their private lives and less with public events. Net values and fragile relationships, driven by private interests, as Zygmunt Bauman describes in his works, have made the crisis of authority significantly acute.

The autonomy of the world of childhood, where children are precociously emancipated from parents insofar as they are raised and educated in non-domiciled spaces, hostages to the information society, averse to habit and tradition, must also be understood within the context of the crisis of authority in education. In the educational processes, there is an accentuated substitution of the references that historically used to move the teacher and student relationship. The protagonism and the individualism, fruits of modern culture, take the deconstruction of these references as a criterion of life. Moreover, it seems that the new beings in formation have grown weary of the authoritarian and repressive relations

of the legally constituted society and have displaced this rejection by rising up against school rules. Other questions, still under study, arise from debates at school level: Is protagonism, demanded by adolescents and young people, a sign of the breach of trust based on unequal knowledge? Is the deauthorization of teachers a consequence of the ephemeral and the negation of tradition? Is the precariousness of the initial training of teachers a source of indiscipline and a breach of trust between student and teacher?

Finally, what matters for the purposes of this reflection, in particular, is the theoretical contribution about the importance of authority in education in the characteristics and singularities defended by the theoretical scope.

II. AUTHORITY ARISING FROM KNOWLEDGE

When it comes to knowledge, there must be an asymmetry between student and teacher, as Plato defended, when the best ones, those qualified by the art of reading and reflection, must lead others, minors and incapable. Education requires distinct roles and responsibilities and is based on the difference of knowledge. Thus, authority is established in a play of forces in which there needs to be certain recognition and cooperation on the part of those who will experience it.

It is not about submission to any authority. The price and weight of being a student is to recognize, as Hannah Arendt (2007, p. 128) wrote, that the teacher is one step ahead. Thus, the educator fulfills, in the school universe, a socially constructed and authorized function.

In Arendt's understanding, the crisis of authority is a political crisis that has spread to the creation of children and to education, spaces where authority has always been required in view of natural conditions: the helplessness of the child, the political need and the continuity of civilization. In this logic, teachers must know more than children themselves, since they are someone who already knows what society is, how it works and is structured. Thus, tradition legitimizes authority, since elders are closer to the past. Children, orphans of a past, are unable to take a leading role in something they do not know and need to recognize that learning becomes a strategic tool in our society, demanding from individuals the ability to be permanently competent trainees/learners.

Arendt considers that

The crisis of authority in education is most closely connected with the crisis of tradition, that is with the crisis in our attitude toward the

realm of the past. This aspect of the modern crisis is especially hard for the educator to bear, because it is his task to mediate between the old and the new, so that his very profession requires of him an extraordinary respect for the past. (1992, pp. 243-244).

Sennett relates authority to certain qualities such as self-control, security (not intransigence), superior capacity for judgment, resourcefulness, example, and affection. Someone who has authority is "someone who has strength and uses it to guide others through disciplining them, changing their way of acting by reference to a higher standard" (2001 p. 30). We are born biological, fragile and totally dependent. In early childhood, we may be among the most vulnerable species of mammals, and when left to our fate, we tend to die. Thus, for Hannah Arendt (2010), education assumes the responsibility of preventing the new being from becoming a harm to society. Collective responsibility for the world is the role of the educational processes, and education has the task of making children co-responsible for the society that has welcomed them. Rousseau expressed this thought when he said: "We are born weak, we need strength; helpless, we need aid; foolish, we need reason. All that we lack at birth, all that we need when we come to man's estate, is the gift of education" (1979, p. 11).

Kant (1999) suggests that who has no culture is a brute and who has no education is a savage. Kant saw, in the conquest of majority by the student, the primary purpose of the educational process. Hence, education would handle the demand of conscious individuals for their autonomy and freedom before the omnipresent State, capable of conducting their destiny. In this understanding, school is not the only legitimate and socially recognized means of building learning and knowledge.

Assmann, in turn, highlights the adoption of culture as something inherent to human beings: "We are born awkward, extremely poor and premature in many respects. As such, we can only survive because our corporeality is already genetically impregnated with extraordinary adaptive capacities that, to a good extent, imply the learning of behavioral rules" (2000, p. 144).

Autonomy and responsibility are values acquired from the educational processes and are consolidated over time; they may even dispense the submission to an educator. Something that resembles what Rousseau describes as an imaginary pupil: "I have therefore decided to take an imaginary pupil, to assume on my own part the age, health, knowledge, and talents required for the work

of his education, to guide him from birth to manhood, when he needs no guide but himself" (1979, p. 17).

Having established these theoretical principles, educating with authority also requires opposing. To this end, it is necessary, in order to not confuse and weaken the authority of parents and educators, to give the correct understanding of the conception that a child bears the same fundamental rights as an adult. Educational processes have the function of interdicting individual or private purposes that may affect the community life. Arendt (2007) argues that authority implies a respect for which a new human being in formation needs to know, from those who know, the directions to be followed. In the same direction, Freire (1993) points out that *teaching* should not mean, in any way, that the teacher should venture to teach without the competence to do so. It does not authorize him to teach what he does not know. The teacher's ethical, political and professional responsibility places on him the duty to prepare himself, to capacitate himself, to train himself even before beginning his teaching activity.

Arendt differentiates authority from other relationships among individuals which imply obedience, such as force and violence. A relationship mediated by violence engenders obedience, but an obedience that comes from fear and not from respect and duty. The legitimacy of authority lies in non-violence and persuasion.

The authoritarian relation between the one who commands and the one who obeys rests neither on common reason nor on the power of the one who commands; what they have in common is the hierarchy itself, whose rightness and legitimacy both recognize and where both have their predetermined stable place (2007, p. 129).

It is possible to identify, in all social, political and economic spheres, authoritarian postures that prevail to the detriment of authority. Sennett (2001) states that in authoritarianism the focus is on repression, without necessarily having a commitment to something productive or aggregating.

Kant calls it *enlightenment* the emancipatory force and the creative capacity of humans:

Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed nonage. Nonage is the inability to use one's own understanding without another's guidance. This nonage is self-imposed if its cause lies not in lack of understanding but in indecision and lack of courage to use one's own mind without another's guidance (2005, p. 63).

Authority comes from the social role and mastery of knowledge that the teacher possesses. In this understanding, the teacher's authority is reaffirmed by the student when he accepts it and sees him as an authority figure. A priori, the school institution has in its structure principles and values given by the educational system (laws, decrees and regulations) which, within them, also reinforce the teacher's authority. The hierarchical position occupied by the teacher in relation to the student should therefore occur because of his competence and commitment and not as a means of protecting himself from possible threats that the students might represent to his teaching activities. In any case, promoting public education universally and for free is the nation's duty.

2.1 Relativized authority: the ephemeral and the new

The decline of authority can also be understood as a disbelief that accompanies the overvaluation of the new and the disposability. The isolation of people and the relativization of values and references generate what Bauman calls the liquid world:

The solidity of things, as well as the solidity of human bonds, is seen as a threat: any oath of allegiance, any long-term commitment (and even more for an indefinite period of time) foreshadows a future full of obligations that limit the freedom of movement and the ability to perceive new opportunities (as yet unknown) as soon as they (inevitably) present themselves (2010, p. 40).

The fluid and unstable relationships, within the capitalist logic, make stability and solidity impossible. We are constantly witnessing the breakdown of the hierarchy of knowledge manifested predominantly by the symmetry in relationships, that is, everyone has equal places, without distinction between the roles played. The child, the adolescent and the young person who enters the school place themselves in a process of equalization, based on natural and cultural principles and attributes.

Equality is required on the basis of conventions, declarations, and constitutions that, within them, seek to preserve and protect the most vulnerable. The legal apparatus, created to regulate human life, however, disregards the diversity of interests and specific living conditions of individuals within society. By making every human being similar or equal (as determined by the UN

Convention in 1989),¹ prerogatives previously reserved for the adult world, such as freedom and equality, have been extended to the child world.

The consequence of freedom of opinion and expression surreptitiously impacts on the asymmetry of roles played by parents and teachers on children. The Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Child recognizes children as holders of fundamental rights (freedom of opinion, expression, thought, conscience, religion, association, peaceful assembly, and privacy).

When the law enforcement does not recognize the different roles in the evolutionary line of education, it weakens the authority exercised by parents and educators over children.

Inger Enkvist, a former advisor to the Swedish Ministry of Education, in an interview with the newspaper *El País* (in 2019), argues for the need to restore discipline and authority of teachers in the classroom. "*Children have to develop systematic work habits and for that they need the guidance of an adult. Learning requires effort and when the students are let to choose, it just doesn't happen*" (MENÁRGUEZ, 2019). The educator recognizes the need to draw a line, today diffuse and diluted, that separates adults and children in the public and private spheres of life.

Adults, and especially educators, are presumably the caretakers of knowledge and tradition. The ephemeral denies tradition. Renouncing tradition, however, means to omit the advances and setbacks of the past. Tradition, for Arendt, is what legitimizes elders' knowledge and authority. The negation of the past is the reason for the crisis in education, according to which the educational process consists in replacing, as far as possible, learning by doing. The loss of tradition, in turn, "[...] has meant losing the one that serves as a support, that selects and appoints, that transmits and preserves, that indicates the directions to be followed" (2007, p. 232).

The logic of assigning caretakers of tradition and knowledge is seriously impacted by teachers' initial training and the fluidity of the new. The growth of distance teacher training courses in countries where there is no tradition of reading or writing is a slippery slope into learning. The precariousness of the teacher training, combined with the increase of educational books and manuals that are seen as capable of handling education, impacts on children's behaviour. In the absence of face-to-face relationships, behaviour and rules are established by

virtuality. The prison to which Internet users are subjected constitutes an escape from the outside world as a whole to the inner subjectivity of the individual.

For young people, the main attraction of the virtual world derives from the absence of contradictions and contrasting goals that infest the offline life. The online world, contrary to its offline alternative, makes it possible to think of the infinite multiplication of contacts as something plausible and feasible. This is due to the weakening of the bonds in sharp contrast to the offline world, oriented towards the constant attempt to strengthen the bonds, greatly limiting the number of contacts and the deepening of each one of them (BAUMAN, 2010, p. 67).

The mass and information society has created a concept of equality. It has generated a psychological characteristic according to which everyone knows everything. In this sense, in order to confront individuals influenced by the consumer society it is necessary to empower the educational action. The conquest of this empowerment involves an acquis of specific, interdisciplinary, and pedagogical knowledge of the teacher. Moreover, teaching requires the appropriation of ethical, linguistic, aesthetic and political values derived from the solid scientific and cultural formation of the teacher.

The interhuman bonds, which used to weave a safety net worthy of a broad and continuous investment of time and effort, and were worth the sacrifice of immediate individual interests (or of what could be seen as being in the interest of the individual), become increasingly fragile and admittedly temporary. The exposure of individuals to the whims of the labor and commodity market inspires and promotes division rather than unity. It encourages competitive attitudes, at the same time as downgrades collaboration and teamwork to the condition of temporary stratagems that need to be suspended or completed when their benefits are exhausted. "Society" is increasingly seen and treated as a "network" rather than a "structure", it is seen as a matrix of random connections and disconnections and of an essentially infinite amount of possible disruptions (BAUMAN, 2007, p. 8)

However, observing the contemporary *societal* transformations, as relations become distant and virtual,

¹ Defended with more intensity from the French Revolution, with its trilogy: Freedom, Equality and Fraternity.

individuals are left in an ontological uncertainty, originating from the awareness of the absence of centers of privileged languages or discourses considered elevated. The ephemeral relationship establishes a systemic and dispassionate loneliness of introspection between "life and science". Pragmatism and social and cultural immediacy, averse to all forms of reflection, are certainly at the root of cultural massification and of the impoverishment of critical consciousness that characterizes the current social context.

In this context, we are witnessing the dethronement of the school culture and the teacher's authority. The problem is different from individual postures and becomes systemic and structural when it extends to the whole professional category. More recently, teaching prerogatives and powers, either deliberately or inadvertently, are exercised by new teachers of truth. Roles delegated to the mass media, informers, religionists, moralists, preachers, analysts, ideologists, cultural animators, and circus. Moreover, in a society where institutions are being dismantled (family, public institutions, community and work), the school assumes prerogatives that are presumably not within its competence².

The moment calls for incisive and continuous public policies for the revision of the current licentiate degrees and continued education programs for professionals who already practice the teaching profession. Moreover, there is a need to focus on educational policies, presently pressured by the productive and financial circuits that counteract the flexibilization of educational institutions to offer a lighter education. It is not possible to speak of teaching qualifications and formation of knowledge authorities in the midst of the mercantilization of education which, on the pretext of the "democratization

of education", offers distance learning courses, which are the greater expression of the precariousness of education.

Education as a commodity, moved by owners of educational complexes, is no longer an elementary right. The exacerbation of the individualism and the absence of a hierarchy based on the authority of knowledge have thus caused a crisis of human subjectivity. Moreover, there is no dialogue among universities, nor within them. They constitute an aggregate of nations that live sovereignly: the nation of arts, social sciences, biological sciences, medical sciences, agricultural, exact and technological sciences. Each university compartment respects the authority of its knowledge, but ignores or even denies the authority of the other.

Hannah Arendt (2007) maintains that everything that happens is a response to a summons. According to her, when one love is erased, another one is imposed. This principle is the great question: At a time when education is vacillating with old certainties and does not know how to adopt new loyalties, do younger generations not seek other affiliations?

2.2 The absence of knowledge as a generator of indiscipline and breach of authority

In the school context, authority primarily derives from the relationship of trust established between student and teacher. Trust is established by the asymmetry of knowledge and by the respect for the learner. In this perspective, Sennett (2001) argues that the recognition of authority passes through complex factors, which need to be built up daily in relationships. In this understanding, the teacher no longer has authority simply because he is a teacher, but because he has attitudes and behaviours which make his students perceive a moral asymmetry in him, an ability to be an example and an ethical attitude in line with his moral discourses.

In educational institutions, the supposed authority cannot be required by the evaluation process. The responsibility to evaluate and determine who has or has not learned is the school prerogative, according to the specific legislation. The almost immediate consequence of this exclusivity is the blaming and accountability of the student for success or failure. The speed with which the school evaluates the student cognitively and morally is questionable. Parents, in many situations, even more enlightened in the Kantian sense than the masters themselves, feel unauthorized to interfere in the teaching and learning process by those who arrogate to themselves the power of specialists.

By occupying a position of authority in the evaluation, it is assumed that this is a relationship of trust

² António Nóvoa, PhD in Education from the University of Geneva, acknowledges that the school is currently a fragile and overburdened institution: "Education has taken on many tasks. It is the phenomenon of an overflowing school. Someone needs to do these tasks while no one wants them and the school has to deal with them. But it is one thing to say that they are all school's mission and another to understand that the institution needs to fulfill them while other spheres of society are not strong. When that happens, we will have a sharing that I call the public space of Education. In the public space of Education, the school is not alone. There are other institutions. They also have educational, cultural and scientific responsibilities, among others. We have to trace a path of accountability towards these spheres" (PORTILHO; VICHESSI, 2012, p. 01).

between the educator who knows and the learner who is in the process of learning. How do we respect the authority that uses the evaluation process to neutralise any objection or dissent? Distrust consists in the arbitrariness of those who eventually do not know enough and arrogate to themselves the right to classify and select students as learners or non-learners. Authority becomes inconceivable and absurd, totally devoid of ethical values. The relationship is not based on love and trust, but on an authoritarian position that the evaluator occupies in the relationship with the student.

On the other hand, it is argued that the function of the school is to develop a questioning, critical, citizen behaviour in a democratic society. In the theoretical and practical relationship, inconsistencies in the attitudes of educators are perceived. The paradox created inside the school is that this questioning power is felt as an affront to the teacher's authority.

In fact, authority is, in the first place, an attribute of people. But the authority of people does not have its ultimate foundation in an act of submission and abdication of reason, but in an act of recognition and knowledge: it recognizes that the other is above us in judgment and perspective and that, as a consequence, his judgment precedes, that is, it takes precedence over our own. In addition, authority is not granted, it is acquired, and it must be acquired if it is to be appealed to. It rests on the recognition and, therefore, on an action of the reason itself which, by becoming aware of its own limits, attributes to the other a more correct perspective. This rightly understood sense of authority has nothing to do with blind obedience of command, but with knowledge. There is no doubt that being able to give orders and find obedience is an integral part of authority. But that only comes from the authority one has. Even the anonymous and impersonal authority of the superior, which derives from orders, does not ultimately proceed from those orders, but makes them possible. Its true foundation is, also here, an act of freedom and reason, which grants authority to the superior basically because he has a broader vision or is more consecrated, that is, because he knows better (GADAMER, 2002, p. 419/420).

The loss of authority also derives from the estrangement between old pedagogical practices and the "information society". The imposition of net values, as

described by Bauman, impacts on pedagogical practices and on the teacher/student relationship. How to remain in the classroom for a period of four hours or more, when all technologies are programmed to be exercised for minutes or fraction of seconds?

The profound changes in the organization of society are intensely perceived in economic, social, political, cultural, and philosophical relations. However, possessing information does not mean having knowledge. Transforming information into knowledge is a human process, and not a machine one.

The production of unstructured data does not automatically lead to the creation of information, just as not all information is synonymous with knowledge. All information can be classified, analyzed, studied and processed in any other way in order to generate knowledge. In this sense, both data and information are comparable to raw materials processed into goods by the industry (ASSMANN, 2000, p. 8).

According to Castells, technology is the material basis of this new society:

Technologies assume a prominent role in all social segments, allowing the understanding of the new social structure – network society – and, consequently, of a new economy in which information technology is considered an indispensable tool in the manipulation of information and construction of knowledge by individuals, since the generation, processing and transmission of information become the main source of productivity and power (1999, p. 21).

The great challenge of the school and the teacher – in the new context of the information society – is to develop the reflexive competence that can establish connections with the information in order to transform it into knowledge. The universalization of access to the information has deprived the teacher of the monopoly provider of contents and of the new. Digital natives (students after the Internet) are unaware of the old teaching authority based on the exclusivity of information and knowledge.

The education of the future confronts this universal problem, because there is an increasingly widespread, profound and serious inadequacy between, on the one hand,

disunited, divided, compartmentalised knowledge and, on the other, the increasingly multidisciplinary, transversal, multidimensional, transnational, global, and planetary realities and problems. In this inadequacy the context, the global, the multidimensional and the complex become invisible (MORIN, 2002, p. 36).

At the threshold of the 21st century, the use of the Internet began to have global dimensions, incorporating more attractive elements for reading online and making academic information available on a worldwide network. Theories and conceptions about humanity, science and politics, which demand time, cannot compete with a new computer program, whose functionalities are learned in a short period of time and without the necessity of school. The logic of consumption has entered educational institutions and, like books and equipment, teachers tend to be disposable.

Hypnotized by image and virtuality, a large number of students arrive at school and encounter practices that do not contemplate the technological developments. Although, as Castells argues, the massive use of the Internet also represents exclusion:

Certainly, in the near future, the use of the CMC (community mediated by computers) will expand mainly via educational system and will reach substantial proportions of the population of the industrialized world: it will not only be an exclusive phenomenon of the elites, although it should be less penetrating than the big media. But as it will expand through successive waves, starting with a cultural elite, the use of the practitioners of its first wave will form the communicative habits of the CMC. It will play an increasingly decisive role in shaping the future culture and, progressively, the elites that mold its format will enjoy structural advantages in the emerging society (2000, p. 283).

The academic character of the Internet, in turn, is only partially assimilated by the school. There is a strangeness about its use as a pedagogical tool. The regulation of its use takes space in school debates. Regulations and decrees are produced to inhibit, prohibit or limit the use of electronic media³.

António Nóvoa defends a new way of teaching:

³A typical example is Law No. 14,363 of January 25, 2008, which prohibits the use of mobile phones in state schools in the State of Santa Catarina.

A hundred years ago, societies paid little attention to childhood, to movement, to playing, to communication. They were essentially rural and had an immense rate of illiteracy. This has changed, but we still think Pedagogy as before. We have to start another revolution. It's up to the school to go forward to make the dimensions of knowledge and communication more complex. We need to invent the science of learning – enriched with Neuroscience –, of communication and of learning management (PORTILHO; VICHESSI, 2012, p. 05).

The intensive use of electronic media contributes to maculating the sacralized position historically occupied by the teacher. The relationship deteriorates because of the lack of meaning perceived by younger generations in the didactics used in many schools. Moreover, the teacher's recognition and legitimacy are perceived when he becomes a representative of something that transcends his own relationship with his students. Thus, the crisis in authority also derives from the incoherence between discourse and practice. The transmission of human values such as ethics, respect, love and responsibility is fully effective when taught by example.⁴

In addition to the distance between discourse and practice noted in many professionals, fragmented knowledge and the absence of the universal knowledge generate distrust among students in the process of learning. The multiple and complex human being submitted to a fragmented education diminishes his view of the world, as Morin warns:

Fragmented, compartmentalized, mechanistic, disjunctive and reductionist intelligence breaks up the world complex into disjointed fragments, fractionates problems, separates what is united, makes the multidimensional unidimensional. It is a myopic intelligence that ends up being normally blind. It destroys the embryo of the possibilities of understanding and reflection, reducing the possibilities of corrective judgment or long-term vision (2002, p. 43).

The greater difficulty lies in solving a problem in a global, multidimensional and complex context, acting in a fragmented manner. Divided and scanned knowledge

⁴ The incoherence is extended to the classroom as late arrival, use of cell phones by the teacher in situations where it is forbidden to the student, absence of collegiality or even biological and cultural discrimination exercised on the students.

leads to instrucionism, which means the mere reproduction of information.

This is the first challenge that pedagogy must face, that is, a type of knowledge ready for immediate use and, successively, for immediate elimination, such as that offered by softwares (updated more and more quickly and therefore replaced), which is much more attractive than that proposed by a solid and structured education (BAUMAN, 2007, p. 63).

On the other hand, it has to consider, as Assmann (2000) proposes, the need to reinforce the democratic character of the information society in order to not legitimise the abandonment of those deprived of technologies and, consequently, to allow the creation of a class of info-excluded.

Technologies change behaviours: their trivialization establishes itself on the existing culture and transforms not only the individual behaviour, but that of the whole social group. In this understanding, pedagogy is increasingly instrumentalized in favour of capital. It submits to and assumes the guidelines of the economy, becoming a mere epiphenomenon of it. By dismissing the teacher, who is knowledgeable and authority in his area of knowledge, the education legitimizes the socioeconomic pillars of the contemporary society. The quantification and monetarization of education shifts issues of content and quality of education to a secondary level.

Inger Enkvist, in turn, disagrees with the thought that the student should choose what must be addressed in class.

The new pedagogy promotes anti-schooling. The schools were created with the objective to teach students what society had decided was useful. What is the purpose of the school if the student decides what he wants to do? These currents want to emphasize as much as possible the freedom of the student, when what he needs is a systematic and well-structured teaching, especially if we take into account the distraction problems of children. If one does not learn to be organized and to accept the authority of the teacher in primary education, it is difficult to achieve it later (MENÁRGUEZ, 2019, p. 03).

The educator also challenges the Rousseauian idea that all children want to learn and therefore it is a good option to let them take the initiative and learn on their own. According to her, "the more self-discipline, the more possibilities you have ahead of you and the less desperate you will feel in the face of a limit situation". The

Portuguese writer and educator António Nóvoa defends the return of the legitimacy of the role of the teacher:

My response tends to be brutal. Students don't have to say what they want to learn, what they like and what they don't like. The worst thing to do is to imagine that they decide everything. [...] The Swiss Jean Jacques Rousseau writes that "children should only do what they want". This phrase has served to denigrate the pedagogues because it is misinterpreted. I have read the original version of the book to understand it completely. The passage goes on like this: "But they ought to want only what you teachers want them to want. The child ought not to make a step without you having foreseen it, the child ought not to open his mouth without you knowing what he will say". In other words, it is not a libertarian quote. The teacher must place his authority at the service of the student's freedom. Use it to turn him into an autonomous individual. It is the paradox of Education: to put our authority at the service of the other's freedom (PORTILHO; VICHESSI, 2012, p. 04).

Finally, Hannah Arendt sums up well the dilemma of the crisis of authority that plagues education: "The problem with education in the modern world lies in the fact that, by its very nature, it cannot give up either authority or tradition, and is nevertheless forced to walk in a world that is neither structured by authority nor held together by tradition." (2007, p. 245).

Kant argued that discipline and authority are principles that help to govern human relations: "*When man is allowed to follow his will fully throughout his youth and is not resisted in anything, he retains a certain savagery for life*" (2002, p. 14). The philosopher perceived, in the conquest of majority, the primary purpose of the educational process. Hence, education would meet the demand of conscious individuals for their autonomy and freedom.

However, in the midst of the turmoil of changes coming with post-modernity, a great number of teachers find themselves at a crossroads and in disorder. For this reason, they add individual anxieties born from the uncertainties of their role as educators and fears provoked by the threat of betraying the new.

III. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

There is no single reason that explains the decline in teacher authority at school. The fact is that there is an urgent need to restore the student's confidence in the teacher. Confidence, as already described in the text, comes deeply from the knowledge of who teaches. From the desired teaching, expected and prepared by the educators. Paulo Freire expresses the prestige necessary to educate in a singular way: "*No one begins to be an educator on a certain Tuesday at 4 in the afternoon. No one is born an educator or selected to be an educator. We become educators, permanently, in practice and in reflection on practice*" (1991, p. 58).

The teaching authority will be guaranteed if there is clarity of the purposes of the interaction – both for teachers and for students – and a clear perception of the roles and responsibilities inherent to each party involved. The path will be the construction of a new relationship in which the teacher will constantly need to look at himself, his weaknesses and potentialities. This look must be from an affective bond and a "link between unequal people", as Sennett asserts (2001, p. 22).

This is a task that involves both institutional and structural planning and the training of professionals who, for the most part, are not prepared enough to be references and authorities in education. It should also be stressed that – often – educators feel the change or absence of traditional values as a crisis. However, there is no absence of values or references, but rather a readjustment and a positivation of some values to the detriment of others. Moreover, teachers affected by the precariousness and crisis of all the institutions of society end up taking on assignments that hide their real task. The teacher's authority assumes a decisive aspect in the social function of the school and in the fight against all forms of indifference and exclusion.

It must be recognized that the initial and continuing training of teachers is only one of the conditions for establishing authority in school education. Teacher authority requires more than the mastery of content. It is exercised within an educational system that must necessarily prioritize public policies to value the school as an institution.

António Nóvoa defends mechanisms for monitoring and improving teaching to assess whether the person is capable of teaching. In his opinion, in order to exist evaluations, teachers must be available for the process. According to the writer and educator, "*it will be very difficult to establish regulatory mechanisms as long as each one assumes that the only boss is the minister of Education or the governor*" (PORTILHO; VICHESSI,

2012, p. 05). The educator fulfills a socially constructed and authorized function in the school universe. It is effectively his role to present the world to the new generations as expressed by Hannah Arendt. New technologies and interaction formats compete with school knowledge. The role of the teacher, in conducting the educational process, requires a mediating character, in addition to the clarity of the principles that govern classroom activities.

Finally, authority must be exercised within a Free State and based on a power of recognition that exists in education, legitimate holders of knowledge not yet universal to everyone.

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