

The critical reading of the means in the 21st century Brazilian society: from an ideological struggle to the conquest of citizenship



Regiane Regina Ribeiro

Universidade Federal do Paraná, Brésil
regianeribeiro5@gmail.com

Rosa Maria Cardoso Dalla Costa

Universidade Federal do Paraná, Brésil
rmd.costa@uol.com.br

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Résumé

Le texte commence par une compilation d'études de lecture critique sur les moyens de communication de masse au Brésil, dans le but d'analyser leur évolution politique et idéologique, depuis les années 70 jusqu'aux propositions actuelles de lecture de préparation à l'exercice conscient de la citoyenneté. Il est basé sur des textes de théorie de la communication afin d'analyser le champ de cette recherche ainsi que son contexte et ses conséquences, en identifiant les principales implications pour l'élaboration de la pensée communicationnelle en Amérique latine. Cette étude empirique expose ensuite deux expériences de lecture critique émises par des médias imprimés, premièrement un groupe national, la revue *Veja*, avec le projet *Veja* dans la salle de classe et deuxièmement, un groupe régional, le journal *Gazeta do Povo* avec le projet *Ler e Pensar*, et dont le siège social est situé dans la ville de Curitiba. En conclusion ce texte expose l'évolution des lectures critiques des médias, allant du dualisme manichéen de la période de la dictature militaire, à une vision complexe du phénomène de la communication dans la société, en tenant compte également de leurs implications sociales et culturelles.

Mots-clés : lecture critique, journal en classe, revue en classe, citoyenneté

La lecture critique des médias dans la société brésilienne du XXI^{ème} siècle: de la lutte idéologique à la conquête de la citoyenneté

Abstract

The text starts off by a compilation of critical reading studies of the means of mass communication in Brazil. It analyzes the changing from its remarkably political-ideological character, back in the 1970's, to its current proposals of readers preparation for the conscious exercise of citizenship. This paper is based on Communication Theory texts that analyze the research in this field in Brazil, as well as its contextualization and enfoldments, identifying the main implications on the development of the Latin American communicational thought. The empirical research tells two experiences of critical reading, developed by print media communication: *Veja* magazine with the project "*Veja na sala de aula*" (*Veja* in the classroom) and *Gazeta do Povo* newspaper with the project "*Ler e pensar*" (Reading and thinking). As the main result, one can

realize the changing in the signification of the media critical reading; which goes from the manichean dualism of the military dictatorship period, to a complex view towards the phenomenon of communication in society, also considering its social and cultural implications.

Keywords: critical reading, newspaper in the classroom, magazine in the classroom, citizenship

Introduction

While in the whole world the emergence and the popularization of the means of mass communication had led the society to concern about the risks the new generations would be submitted to, in poorer countries of the world, the concerns were headed to the dangerous of an ideological and political-cultural domination - in societies that barely had access to written publications.

It is within a Latin-American post-war context, that the studies in Communication in Brazil started to acquire and to consolidate the characteristics that make up its current identity. In the first place, it is necessary to highlight the direct link between the boom of the mass communication phenomenon and the capitalist model of production; that intended to conquest the Latin-American consumer market, and that soon realized the persuasion and conviction power of the electronic media in lands with high illiteracy rates. In the developing countries, the new international economic order was made by social representations, transmitted by radio and television broadcasting.

All of this happened in a moment of ideological dispute between the capitalist and the socialist systems, represented by the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. In theoretical terms, the two big thoughts of the Communication Theory (the Functionalism and the Critical Theory) based the investigations, which in turn aimed to use the communication to integrate the society to the new technological and industrial development. And on the other hand, to those who saw in communication a strategic point of manipulation or consciousness arousal of the population concerning the foreign domination (especially the North-American domination), that came through multinationals and also through an intense imported cultural programming that was on most of the television time.

This theoretical dualism - between functionalism and critical theory - and the political-economic dualism - between capitalism and socialism - were the scenario of the communication and education propositions that had developed in Latin-America and Brazil. On one side, there were the governmental propositions that invested in infrastructure of communication to assure a national integration, as the models of modernization designed by the dominant countries. On the other side, propositions of

education for the communication, created by various types of institutions and by the organized civil society.

Their majority, under the influence of the liberatory education, by Paulo Freire, that “reviewing the existing theories of communication in the 1970’s, laid the foundations for a new pedagogy, emphasizing the concept of ‘education for the media’ as an inherent activity in the literacy and popular education programs.” (Soares, 1999: 23)

Added to the Theory of Dependence¹ the pedagogy by Paulo Freire pushed projects called “critical reading of the means”, that according to authors as Soares (1999: 32) and Moran (1993: 31), had the interest of creating the critical consciousness of the receptors (especially the television viewers) to the “cultural invasion”. Projects that had been developed within alternative and popular organizations or within church pastorals influenced by the Liberation Theology. The governmental actions were restricted to technical investments in infrastructure and to the consolidation of private communication enterprises, which held concessions in favor of the defense of political interests of military governments².

According to Ortiz (1988), military did not invent capitalism, but had used the authoritarian State to consolidate in Brazil the late capitalism. And they recognize the importance of the means of mass communication, its capacity of disseminating ideas and, most of all, “the possibility it has of creating collective emotional states”.

Thus, there is a technological and regulator arsenal, coming from the coalition of the current political model with the communication enterprises and the international interests, that overwhelm the social and popular organizations, which in turn, allied to the Church and to Universities, try to raise awareness on the population, making basis education projects.

This scenario started changing by the end of the 1970’s, when all over Latin-America, the military governments were being overthrown or replaced by a redemocratization movement. The evolution of the communication theories points out to the complexity of the communicational process and exceeds the dualism and the radicalism between Functionalism versus Critical Theory. In Latin America, the studies of Jesus Martin-Barbero in cultural mediations and the influence of English cultural studies start to root new communication researches, which privilege the reception. In the Brazilian case, the research in communication itself starts consolidating, with the creation of postgraduation programs in communication in the 1970’s and the creation of Intercom (Brazilian Society of Interdisciplinary studies in Communication) in 1978. This way, one can affirm that: “in the late 1980’s, critical, empirical, and semiotic-structuralist studies coexisted in Latin-American, in a relationship that was becoming less polarized.” (Dalla Costa, 2006: 02)

The beginning of the 1980's registered an ebullition in the main Brazilian cities. Society claimed for a democratic regime through direct elections and the communication enterprises perceived the need to adapt their programming, especially the news, to the new receptor profile. This change, though very remarkable in the developing countries, happened around the world, politically and economically.

The fall of the Berlin wall, the economical globalization, and the creation of new information and communication technologies changed the international scene and also the panorama of education and communication projects. In the communication theory, there is something that Mattelart (1995: 75) calls a return to the routine and to the cultural practices analysis. There is a return to the debate about the historical relevance of the macrosocial models, which coincide, according to Souza (Soares, 2001: 26) "with the perception that industrial society was exhausted in its production model, reaching another stage, post-modernity, toward the languages, processes and services, rather than on the previous direction of the machine domain and its production processes."

One can notice, this way, since the beginning of the 21st century, an increasing maturity in the communication-education interrelation area, provided by many factors which complete one another. The return to democracy in the majority of Latin-American countries and the alterations in the social forces also caused changes in the communication enterprises, which were attentive to the new necessities and created their own reader loyalty project with clearly economic objectives - as a survival condition - but ended up contributing to the critical formation of the readers. Inserted in a highly professionalized business logic, these projects were different from the critical reading ones developed in the 1960's and 1970's, as it will be analyzed through the examples from the projects *Ler e Pensar* (Reading and thinking) and *Veja na sala de aula* (Veja in the classroom), described below.

1. "Reading and thinking" and the proposition of reading the world beyond words

In 2011, the project *Ler e Pensar* (Reading and thinking), created in 1999 by *Gazeta do Povo* newspaper and developed by *Instituto GRPCOM*, got the "Newspapers in Education Prize", that highlight the best education projects worldwide using newspaper media.

In the projects made for fund raising by *Ler e Pensar*, it is defined as "a project to encourage reading and to fight informational exclusion, developed by *Gazeta do Povo*". Its objective is contributing to improve the quality of education, the rates of reading and the strengthening of the citizenship amongst children and adolescents in the state of Paraná. Using the newspaper as a resource to stimulate the reading, which helps

the upgrading of oral and written expressions, this project aims to enlarge and give meaning to the school contents, stimulating the whole thinking and the development of the critical reflection.

According to its creators, *Ler e pensar* aims to increase the educational rates in the Brazilian society, as in the official statistics of the *Sistema Nacional de Avaliação da Educação Básica (SAEB)* and the *Índice de Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica (IDEB)* - both from the Education Ministry - which evidence that the Brazilian students, who are in the Elementary of High School, have huge difficulties in Portuguese Language and do not have reading habits. Indicators and results corroborate the national and regional reality and point out the need of projects and investments in the reading and critical comprehension areas.

Therefore, proposing this project, *Editora Gazeta do Povo* “sought not only to present the newspaper as a readable medium, capable of making learning more meaningful, entertaining and understandable; but also as a tool to the understanding of social reality, access to culture, and intellectual support for students and teacher.”

According to the reports, during 12 years, *Ler e pensar* served 10 thousand teachers and 550 thousand students from Elementary and High School in public and private institutions in the State of Paraná. Its scope also arose since its beginning: from a few schools within the city of Curitiba in 1999, to 338 school in 25 municipalities of Paraná in 2011 - Agudos do Sul, Almirante Tamandaré, Balsa Nova, Bituruna, Campina Grande do Sul, Campo do Tenente, Campo Magro, Castro, Contenda, Curitiba, Fazenda Rio Grande, Jaguariaíva, Lapa, Maringá, Palmeira, Paranaguá, Piên, Pinhais, Piraquara, Ponta Grossa, Pontal do Paraná, Quatro Barras, Quitandinha, Rio Branco do Sul, São José dos Pinhais, Tijucas do Sul.

1.1. Structure of the project

Currently, the Project is structured by different activities, formations, events and support materials offered to the target public: youth, educators and reading agents. The first is the realization of two cultural contests developed every year; one is turned to the educators and reading agents, and the other to the students.

The first contest is open specifically to teachers, schools and municipal offices of education, registered in the project. The objective of this contest is to encourage, recognize and spread practices of reading incentive, of education commitment and of community mobilization in favor of reading and cultural insertion. The three best works in each of the three categories get a prize. The students contest is open to Elementary and High School students who take part of the project. The objective of this contest is

to stimulate the creativity and the learning of youth and children, and also to recognize the best works developed in the program. Students in four categories get a prize. The mentor teachers of these jobs also get a prize for the incentive to the reading.

Another activity is the realization of the Annual Seminar of Education and Reading, commonly held in October, celebrating Teacher's day. On this day, one or more panelists of national relevance talk about reading incentive in the Brazilian educational context. During the school year, some promotions are made, as the entitled "*Vamos o teatro*" (Let's go to the theater), which presents to public school students a play about citizenship, acquaintanceship, human development and education value.

In workshops, a schedule developed by the program brings journalists and cartoonists of *Gazeta do Povo* to the schools. The journalists, voluntarily, talk to the students about reading, citizenship, freedom, amongst other cultural themes, as "*Papos de jornalista*" (Journalist chat), "*Charge e ilustração*" (Cartoon and illustration) and "*Leitura e literatura*" (Reading and literature). The project carries out other actions for the formation of young readers in the editorial offices of *Gazeta do Povo* newspaper, as *GAZ +* and *Vida universitária* (University life). These editorials promote more and more the interaction and the culture promotion on social networks and online platforms.

Considering the public diversity to be benefited by this project, the program has different strategies for continued formation to teachers and educators as reading agents. These professionals are the disseminators of local culture and are committed to multiply the materialization of the contents. Through Classroom Training, the teachers take part of courses about reading strategies under different techniques. The educators and reading agents are introduced to a sequential program, made up by contents which articulate and present theory and practice about reader's formation. In the end, a meeting takes place in the capital, as a way to reunite every reading agent trained during the year, encouraging the experience exchanges and the collective learning about reading techniques; disseminating, recognizing and encouraging different culture techniques made by the reading agents graduated throughout the year. The courses are also offered as Distance Teaching to guarantee the participation of the larger possible number of educators. Some of the courses given are: The newspaper and its creative and innovative possibilities, Significant and contextualized reading, Media critical reading, Literacy practices and newspaper literacy, Newspaper archive, Reading and telling stories with the newspaper, Art and education and News dramatization.

The program also encourages the free distribution of books and other reading materials to the agents, educators, students and partners: the public directly involved with the project.

Besides this sequential formation proposition, every agent in the project receives a press material, every two weeks, to keep up the discussions promoted in the continued formation. In this material, references are presented, also detailed techniques and activities suggestions to keep the reading agents immersed in a context of local culture promotion. The *Bolo* has the objective of qualifying the newspaper use in the classroom, diversifying the approaches and working with the socio-educational reality of students and teachers. In order to do this, its contents, which are produced from news published in *Gazeta do Povo*, promote significant and contextualized reading of the news and also identify possibilities of approaching the scholar contents. To guarantee that good practices may be replicated and aiming to recognize successful initiatives, the bulletin also disseminates and values teaching practices concerning reading of newspaper and works produced by the students who take part of the project.

Finally, the project offers and distributes orientation handouts to the exercise of using the newspaper as a reading instrument. These are used as support materials in different classroom courses given by the project team and certified by Higher Education Institutions.

Nowadays, in its structure, *Ler e Pensar* project holds a multidisciplinary team made up by 1 journalist, 1 sociologist, 1 philosopher, 1 graduated in Letters and 1 Pedagogy intern (all of them working full time). But, in its development, the project counts on the support of many partners and collaborators, amongst them: 45 volunteer teachers, which produce content for the Guided Reading Bulletins, 12 Higher Education Institutions, which provide content, evaluation, certification, and accompaniment of the projects action; an Education Council, made up by professors and teachers of the public school system which talk about the project activities and evaluate periodically the results, suggesting eventual improvements; social and cultural entities, enterprises and professionals who take part in the activities or who sponsor and support.

1.2. Evaluation and Results

The results of all these activities are monitored and registered in the teaching-learning processes and in the improvement of the reading and writing levels amongst the public (teachers and students). Specific evaluation tools for each one of the benefited publics (Municipal Offices of Education, teachers, schools and students) allow to measure, in qualitative and quantitative ways, the results of the educational actions as well as the impact of the project to the reading promotion. Every year, the collected data are used to rethink strategies and initiatives, recovering aims and indicators. The specific evaluations are compared to the *IDEB* results of the Education Ministry, marking out the evolution of the schools that adopted the project.

Some qualitative results gauged in 2010, evidenced, for example, that 80% of the municipalities served by the project raised its rates in *IDEB* and attributed this positive result to the participation of the schools in *Ler e Pensar*. Quantitatively, data point out that distributing 1,200 free copies of the newspaper every fifteen days, the project contributed to the democratization of the information in the municipalities served, as in many of them there was not newspapers nor access to this kind of media. After being used, the newspapers also are exchanged among the student's families.

2. The project 'Veja in the classroom'

Since 1998, *Editora Abril* and *VEJA* magazine, in partnership with *Fundação Victor Civita*, had implanted the program *Veja na sala de aula* (Veja in the classroom). It is a pedagogical complementary tool, which brings facts from Brazil and the world to the school universe. Its major objective, according to its creators, is to contribute to the development of High School Students, providing them subsidies to become active, prepared and well-informed. The mission of the program is: *to be a complementary and different pedagogical tool which brings facts from Brazil and the world to the classroom.*

The Project has as differential the Teacher's Guide that is a didactic textbook, elaborated by a team of teachers and distributed weekly, along *Veja* editions, to the schools. The guides are elaborated by a team from *Fundação Victor Civita*, with the collaboration of specialized educators in their respective area of knowledge. The guide brings together various school contents and the topicality of the largest (in number of circulation of copies) magazine of information in Brazil. It presents suggestions of activities, exercise, themes for debates, handouts and practical experiences, as well as complementary bibliography, filmography and a selection of websites for teachers and students to research on the internet and enlarge their knowledge. Every class proposed by the Guide is provided by the National Curriculum Parameters for High School:

1- *Human Sciences and their Technologies*

2- *Nature Sciences, Mathematics and their Technologies*

3- *Languages and Codes and their Technologies*

The Teacher's Guide offers many illustrations, infographics and pictures that sometimes are used in the activities, during the development of the class; however, in other opportunities, are put as possibilities for the teachers, so they can elaborate activities not listed in the Guide, but which they consider necessary to their classes.

2.1. The Teacher's Guide as a Pedagogical Tool

The mediation of the Teacher's Guide is a proposition of complex execution, as its communicative intention does not guarantee the success of the initiative. It is known that, in the classroom, there is a multiplicity of symbols which interact in the learning process and surely influence it, as well as are influenced by it. Among all of them, the performance of the teacher in the comprehension process and in the translation of the class plans, may be considered a main element.

Understanding the Guide as a direction of the communicative process, one tries to comprehend how this is related to the magazine and the process of critical reading of the means is considered a learning resource.

We know that a great number of pedagogical propositions, is apparently progressive, but when it is executed, the communication turns out to be based on statics and normative conceptions. This makes the teacher action a simple transmission of information instead of highlighting other aspects, such as feelings and ideas manifestation. And as already said, when only one side prevails, the possibility of analyzing intermediate aspects that are equally important in the process is inhibited.

As a first analysis of the Guide mediating the classroom, we could verify that its structure suits the modern perspective of school, where the harmonization of the students need and social values is a priority, using concepts such: participation, responsibility, creativity and problem solving.

The dispositions of verbal and non-verbal elements on the covers are structured in the same pattern, which privileges images. We could think these priorities are directly related to the guide intention of catching the reader attention to the tool, increasing the interest in its use. The use of images on press media produces a better comprehension of the contents, as well as encourages and sharpens our curiosity. The images are also basic condition of efficient communication in the school, where, as already mentioned, the verbal language is privileged (written and oral) instead of other languages.

One can notice that the opening parts of the class plans tend to arise curiosity and a constant intention to insert in the text one or more ways of exploring the content with the students. This action points out the importance of the dialogical discourse, proposed by Bakhtin, which relates communication, not as knowledge transference, but as an interlocutors meeting, which seek significance of the meanings.

When the communicative action of the guide proposes for the teacher to analyze arguments of the magazine and to ask the class opinion, or to contextualize the content of an article and its enfoldments, or yet to analyze with the students the implications of a specific phenomenon and to think over the already existent possibilities, it

is established an ambient where many voices take part of the learning process and it is promoted a dialogic discourse instead of an authoritarian discourse in the classroom, in which only the author voice prevails, emptying the active role of the receptor that gives meaning from its own socio-cultural trajectory and its inner world.

The class plans obey a flexible structure as every position has a number of fixed elements, but also others that organize themselves according to the content and the resources chosen by who had developed it. By the way, this is an extremely important question, as every composition of plans is directly related to the communication issuing. It is important, in this context, an interesting question. Is the knowledge of our respective areas and contents enough to an effective learning?

Actually, this content knowledge is vital but does not legitimate the learning. We may quote many cases of teachers who know the contents, but cannot correlate it with the external world or with cultural and social issues, or yet, cannot adapt their discourse to an understandable level for the students. This way, it is clear the importance of communicative actions and the context comprehension by the teacher.

It is fundamental that the teacher, when using the guide in the classroom, gets to know the content, recognizes the propositions of the program *Veja em sala de aula* and, consequently, the resources offered by it, so he/she may be able to converge interests so the objectives of learning may prevail. This way, even having the guide as a model to be followed, the teacher must know how to contextualize it in a critical way, otherwise it may become an absolute truth, something harmful and exactly opposite to the model of liberatory education, especially concerning the scenario of great domination of the communication means nowadays.

The class plans always start with the knowledge area discrimination, the content approached, followed by the title of the article from *Revista Veja* and its respective pages. Only after this presentation, the next steps are proposed. In these steps, the abilities, competences and time will be bounded for the development. The communicative actions are an extremely interesting resource, because when the teacher discourse achieves to transmit to the students the real meaning of determined content, we increase the interest of the learners. The student needs to understand why and what for he needs the knowledge, he needs to know where he will use the information, then he will get interested.

We can also observe that the guide chooses a deductive communication that highlights the reflection instead of memorization. Thus, the teacher role is not seen by a perspective of his competence on structuring the communication, but also on listening, facilitating the necessary articulation between “knowledge and competence” on one side and existential and cultural bases of the students, on the other side. The

reading of the magazine articles, the class plan introductions and the preparation for the activities show the concern of the guides to insert the student in the learning ambient, and the possibility of relating to other resources and other voices, which are not emerged in the classroom yet.

It is possible to give the student some time to build his knowledge and to argument about the proposed content. This initiative breaks a lot of limitations and leads the student to the development of a fundamental competence: learning construction by his own effort of searching, selecting and systematizing the information (learn how to learn).

This path must be explored and monitored by the teachers through communicative actions in oral exposition, as well as in practical activities that will follow the class plan.

The proposed activities also privilege the idea that education has to promote the activation of a natural aptitude of the human mind to formulate and respond to essential problems, using general intelligence, critical thinking exercises, argumentation and reflection.

One can perceive, by now, that the intention is to offer a sampling, as relevant as possible, of information and of social and professional relevant projects; hoping that, from this sampling, students may develop competences to deal with whatever they consider important in the future.

The project also allows the student to view that learning may happen with the information connected to the content. In other words, it is not necessary to study Mathematics using only theories and formulas, but also through practical realities that lead to those concepts. That provides, as already seen, “hotter and more interesting temperature” to acquire knowledge and, undoubtedly, more pleasant circumstances.

Another detected point is the insertion of elements that value the socio-cultural context, promoting a relation of the student with the external world. This communicative action tends to unconfigure the traditional isolation of school, creating “hotter temperature” and establishing linking points with the outside culture. If, eventually, the student needs to choose the school or other ambient, he will be able to choose the first, as this one can also generate “hot temperature”, operationalized by cultural elements and by diversity of objects inserted in this new context.

This action reflects the importance of relations between school and culture in the educative process. There is no education which is not immersed in the mankind culture and, particularly, in the historical moment that is happening. The reflection over these themes is co-extensive to the development of the pedagogic thought; one cannot conceive a pedagogical experience in which the cultural reference is not present.

School is undoubtedly a cultural institution. Therefore, the relation between school and culture cannot be conceived as if between two independent poles, but as two interlaced universes, a web woven daily and with very well articulated threads and knots. Starting off by these affirmatives, accepting the close association between school and culture, and considering its relations as intrinsically constitutive of the educational universe, it is exciting to verify that some pedagogical propositions, as the Teacher's Guide, tend to worry about this problematic.

The communicative action in the classroom uses a repertoire and linguistic resources that try to approach the student to the context of learning. In this kind of action, the available information is enlarged, images are proliferated, contacts among areas are created (in an interdisciplinary way), interactions based on verbal and non-verbal languages happen more often. Thus, students absorb the content and interact with them, practicing and interpreting. And interpreting is nothing but using your own cultural background to process received interpellations. So, even knowing that, in education and in any other semiotic process, there are good and bad interpretations, we should highlight that the result, positive or not, can already be considered learning and ability/competence production.

Another resource used by the Teacher's Guide is the proposition of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary pedagogical actions. These terms are widely disseminated and encouraged in school, but their application tends to not to overcome the theoretical plan, generating dissatisfaction both in teachers and students.

There are many motives to difficult this application; one of them is our educational system, which determined a fragmented knowledge scenario. This "hyper specialization", term adopted by Morin, is a specialization closed in itself, not integrated in a global problematic or conception. Also, the fragmentation of the subjects makes it impossible to understand "what is woven along", the complexity, as the true meaning comes from the relation of all the factors.

One can see that our educational system, instead of worrying about solving the problematic, obeys it. In Elementary School, they teach the students to isolate objects and subjects, and not to reunite them. It is the student obligation to reduce the complex to the simple, to break what was linked; to decompose, not to recompose; to eliminate anything that causes disorders or contradictions in the learning process. This way, pedagogical actions that produce interrelation provide a type of complex learning, leading the students to the position of reorganizer of thoughts.

In this context, we should reflect that pedagogical actions from the Teacher's Guide, even denominated interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary, are still not enough to solve such problematic. Although we cannot leave unconsidered that the intention of the guide is essential to chance this scenario.

Conclusion

The remains of a Manichean reading (contextualized in a moment of ideological struggle, in the scenario of the Cold War) made the scientific works, in a general way; look at reading incentive projects that are developed by communication enterprises with distrust and discredit. More than half a century after the development of critical reading projects that aimed preventing readers, receptors and television viewers from the “evil provoked by the media”; means of mass communication can make, themselves, the critical formation of their public.

There is a clear changing in their propositions of critical reading from one period to the other, but it remains the need of having a reader able to state an opinion about what was presented. Every proposition of critical reading brings the discussion of “what is it to be critical”. For the projects in the 1960’s, being critical would be disagreeing with the authoritarian political regime and lined up with some first world countries. But for the projects in 2011, the challenge is more complex and even the enterprises that develop them know that. So they invest in professionals, they ally to other entities and search for specific knowledge that may generate results which can be measured, evaluated and improved.

The desired criticality, back then and nowadays, if it had been really reached, could not be manipulated. The critical and conscious being exercises his will and autonomy. The historical review of the critical reading project and the analysis of these two current projects point out the role of the means of communication in the society. As Wolton affirms, the role of the means of communication is to be the thin line which sustains all democracies. As a learning resource, it was noticed that the presented projects represent an alternative of more dynamic, creative and interesting classes, filling an important blank in the process of acquisition of knowledge; and it may be considered a great difference from the majority of projects which aim the media insertion and the critical reading of the means. Using current facts, they help the teachers to create didactic activities that help the learning process, encouraging students to comprehend the world through the media.

The projects privilege the harmonization between the student’s needs and the social values, through concepts such as: participation, responsibility, creativity, problem solving and dialogic communication, being inserted in a modern school perspective and with the concern by the means of a more critical reader.

We cannot state that the initiatives *Ler e pensar* and *Veja em sala de aula* are the solution to questions as complex as the learning deterritorialization, the adaptation of the teaching to the new languages proliferation, the abundance of information, the manipulation of the individuals by the means and the comprehension of the school as a social and cultural space. But we should admit that these initiatives created and produced within a more adequate scenario to the learning, tend to make way to changes

in the traditional pedagogical practices and may be very important, because they place students, teachers and all the others in touch with the information. They give elements to make the public able to overcome the elementary steps during a superficial reading of the information, and finally changing those data into knowledge.

And it is right at this point that the commitment of educators and communicators lays, that is, making the information accessible. And the most important, providing elements that allow the decoding and the comprehension of the contents and the knowledge, in a complex chain, with culture and social elements, hoping a fairer and more democratic world.

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Notes

1. The Theory of Dependence is elaborated by an economists' group linked to Cepal (Economic Committee for Latin-America), according to this, the industrialized countries make the core of the exploitation of underdeveloped countries located in the periphery, creating permanent imbalance and dependence relations on both sides.
2. One of the most notorious cases is *Rede Globo de Televisão*, which had an implicit partnership with the Military Regime established in Brazil in 1964. In the 1970's, *Globo* held the monopoly of television in Brazil, raising to itself about 75% of the television advertisement funds