

Media education projects and practices in Rio de Janeiro's municipal government public schools¹

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Abstract

Rio de Janeiro's municipal public education network has been developing media educational practices since the years of the 1980s. The research addressed by this article had as target the analysis of features and scope of these practices and possible relations with guidelines formulated by the SMERJ (Rio de Janeiro's Municipal Education Bureau) for the sector. It was conducted, at a first stage, through questionnaires, presented to the managers of the 1009 Elementary and Middle School facilities; at a second stage, visits were held to eight schools with diversified media educational practices, with observations and interviews; finally, the analysis of documents of the SMERJ, in which proposed guidelines can be found regarding media educational practices in schools. In virtue of the extent of the data produced, the article approaches the results of questionnaires' analysis, in connection to the documental analysis. Results indicate that the media education is present in more than 90% of the schools of the network, where content analysis practices of mass media products (audiovisual materials; online journalism texts; TV news) and, in smaller scale, of social medial network prevail. Media production, an important practice in the perspective of media education, is not very usual in schools, as well as the use of Computing and Communication Technology in pedagogical practices. Results indicate that the proposals formulated by the SMERJ for this area, in the 1990s (under the influence of the guidelines for *media education*, systematized by Unesco), are strongly present in school practices. However, new formulations in this field, although integrating more recent guidelines of educational policies of the Bureau, do not yet integrate the school daily routine.

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Keywords

Media education – SMERJ – Educational Policies – media educational practices.

Introduction

Media education is a subject that has been regularly discussed for almost one century. Studies on the configuration of the media education field or education for the means (BELLONI, 2001; RIVOLTELLA, 2005; FEDOROV, 2008; DONI, 2015) indicate that the first practices of this kind go back to the first decades of the 20th century, in the so called cinema clubs, that formed audiences to understand the new technique and the meanings of the narratives this technique allowed to create. With the creation of television and the technologic mediation devices of communication, the debate about the needed training to deal with the impact of these technologies in social life has conquered legitimacy in the academic field, in international education agencies and among educational policies formulators.

In the school environment, the process occurred in a similar way. In the 1920s, it was a matter of integrating radio and cinema to lessons; between 1970 and 1980, the debate included the necessity of articulating television and didactics and, later, the guidelines for the use of media in educational practices had /have to do with respect to the adoption of digital information and communications technologies, in ever increasingly complex perspectives (MASTERMAN, 2000; UNESCO, 2007; OROZCO-GÓMEZ, 2000; MARTIN, 2000; GUTIÉRREZ; TYNER, 2012; BUCKINGHAM, 2015). The recognition of the importance of these practices to the citizenship formation took countries like France, the United Kingdom, The United States, Italy, Russia, Germany and Canada, among others, to include media education as a regular discipline on the basic education curriculum (FEDOROV, 2008).

In the Brazilian context there are still few large scale research about media education practices developed in teaching networks and about the formulation of guidelines for these practices, in the realm of educational policies. In general, studies systematize and analyze media education or communication education experiences developed in some schools or classrooms (BUENO; COSTA; BUENO, 2013; CHAMPANGNATTE; NUNES, 2011; RIBEIRO, 2016; UNICEF, 2010; SIQUEIRA, 2012; VELLOSO, 2011; SIQUEIRA, 2017). It is important to produce evidence on how these practices are being developed on the teaching networks and of which guidelines are being proposed in this sense in educational policies of the bureaus of education. It is relevant to point out that São Paulo's municipal government teaching network has incorporated, a few years ago, the educommunication in the school syllabus (SOARES, 2015) and Rio de Janeiro's Bureau has adopted the media education as an exemplar parameter of practices of media usage in its schools. To analyze these practices, we have conducted an interinstitutional research with managers from 1009 Elementary and Middle Schools of the city's network.

The study was conducted by the Education and Media Research Group, in partnership with *Instituto Desiderata* and with the Media Education Department of SMERJ, and its

main target was to identify and analyze media education projects and practices in the schools from the network. Out of the consolidation of results, we sought to articulate what was identified at the level of practice with the descriptive analysis of the guidelines proposed by the SMERJ for this area, in the years of 1990 and 2000.

For the mapping of school practices with media, the research has employed the following definition of media education practices included in the questionnaire sent to the school's managers:

[...] educational activities with media use focused in: 1) the critical analysis of the broadcasted content by the means of communication; 2) knowledge and usage of different languages employed by the media (written, digital, audiovisual, sound, photographic); 3) approach of school contents; 4) content production for the media and/or media materials (online newspapers, TV news, videos, radio programs, blogs, sites, amongst other possibilities). (DUARTE et al., 2016, p. 7).

Methodology

Given the dimension of the city of Rio de Janeiro's public teaching network (around 1500 schools, of which 1009 are Elementary and Middle schools), the first stage of the research – where the focus was to identify if, how and how often media education practices are developed in Elementary and Middle schools – was conducted through self applied questionnaires for managers of the schools (direction and pedagogical coordination). The questionnaire was hosted *on-line* and the access link was sent to the schools' institutional electronic addresses, along with a message explaining the objectives of the research and requiring for it to be filled in.

The conduction of the research had been previously informed to the managers by SMERJ. Questionnaires were sent to 994 of the 1009 Elementary and Middle schools (e-mails of 15 schools have not been identified); Of this total, 924 have been answered and 911 validated (13 schools did not integrate the data base because it wasn't possible to obtain information regarding the students, necessary to the design of the research).

The analysis procedures involved the extraction of simple frequency of responses, considering the conceptions that guide the construction of the instrument of research: analysis activities of media products and contents; activities related to the production of media in the school context; use of media in pedagogical practices; number of equipment available in schools; and internet access quality.

After that, a factorial analysis of data was carried out (HO, 2006; FIGUEIREDO FILHO; SILVA JUNIOR, 2010). This made possible to identify three types of media education practices, with distinct frequencies (often, seldom, never): 1) practices of analysis of content broadcasted in the media; 2) practices of media production; 3) the use of media to approach curriculum contents. With these indicators, schools have been gathered in groups with the following criteria: those that developed one or more types of practices, in frequencies defined as high (recurrent practices) by the research protocol. Frequencies considered high took into account, not only the interval in which the practice is conducted (varying from weekly to annually), but also the complexity involved in its execution; thus, for instance,

the frequency of conduction of the analysis of media contents is considered high if these have been carried many times per month. This categorization assumes that students and teachers have permanent access to different contents and these can be analyzed/discussed in the classroom with the same frequency that they are accessed, since this practice does not require the mobilization of large quantity of technological and/or didactical resources. The complexity (technical and rhetorical) and the technological infrastructure involved in the production of videos and radiophonic materials, for example, affects the frequency of conduction of these practices with larger time intervals.

From this criteria, analytical synthesis were produced of two of the identified practices: 1) synthesis of media analysis practices (encompassing the items related to activities that address the content and shape of various materials broadcasted in the media); 2) synthesis of media production practices (encompassing the items related to activities of production of materials using media). The distinct degrees of difficulty involved in the execution of the activity integrate the composition of these synthesis, with the addition of different weighing according to difficulty.

Finally, a general synthesis of media education practices has been produced – *mediaedu synthesis* –, for a general overview of schools, according to the frequency and diversity of media education practices. In the production of the *mediaedu synthesis*, each one of the further synthesis has been standardized using the transformation 0-1 technique, being 1 the higher value and 0 (zero) the lowest possible value. This way, a scale has been established for all variables. For calculation purposes, each value was subtracted by the lowest value found in the set of data and divided by the difference between the higher and the lower value. The *mediaedu synthesis* was then calculated by the arithmetical average of indicators of the different dimensions.

To understand the relations between what had been identified in the school realm and the guidelines proposed for the sector by SMERJ, a descriptive analysis was carried out of educational policies reference documents, produced in the two decades immediately preceding the conduction of this research (1990 e 2000), considering this the shortest period of time needed for the effective incorporation of guidelines to the target activity. As a criterion for the selection of documents, previous studies about the insertion of media in Rio de Janeiro's public municipal schools were taken as reference (FONSECA, 2004; VELLOSO, 2011), and a survey conducted by other members of the team (ARAUJO; MILLIET, 2017), resulting in the selection of the following documents: 1) *Núcleo Curricular Básico Multieducação* (RIO DE JANEIRO, 1996); 3) *Núcleo Curricular Básico Multieducação* (RIO DE JANEIRO, 2004); 4) *Fascículo da Mídia-Educação, do Núcleo Curricular no Multieducação* (RIO DE JANEIRO, 2004); and 5) *Plano Municipal de Educação* (2008).

From the *mediaedu synthesis*, eight schools have been selected for the conduction of the qualitative research, which involved observations and interviews. Given the dimension of the data produced, we have chosen to present in this article a synthesis of the results of the first stage – survey carried with the schools' managers– and the descriptive analysis of the guidelines proposed by the SMERJ for the sector, seeking to articulate the identified practices to the guidelines proposed for its execution.

Media education practices in Rio de Janeiro's public schools from the municipal teaching network

The research database covers 911 schools. On the stratification criteria adopted in the analysis, the distribution of schools by number of students indicates that 58% is medium sized (between 301 and 800 students); 30% is large (more than 800 students) and 12% small (up to 300 students). As for the distribution by segment, 50% provide Elementary school education, 18% provide Middle school education and 32% provide both segments. We had supposed that schools with more students would face more difficulties in carrying out practices with media, in virtue of the number of equipment available, and also that these practices would be more frequent in schools with teenagers. The analysis has indicated that these features do not significantly influence the characteristics and regularity of practices.

According to the survey conducted, 91% of schools of Rio de Janeiro's municipal public network develop, regularly, some type of media education practice. Around 80% of them has as a consolidated practice (the sum of the daily, weekly, bimonthly and monthly frequencies) the analysis of films/ videos (90,6%), of photographs/fixed images (81,1%) and of pieces of news (80,8%). In process of consolidation in schools the analysis of contents broadcasted in social media (69,3% of schools) and the evaluation of reliability of information broadcasted on the internet (63,8% of schools). The space the internet occupies in students' lives has probably impelled the debate over the subject in the school realm, but it has not yet incorporated the practices of the use of the computers net completely. The use of cellular phones and smartphones in the classroom remain forbidden, except when for pedagogical use, and data from this research does not indicate the use of these devices in pedagogical activities.

The following have been categorized as non consolidated practices: 1) analysis of publicity (58,1%) and analysis of radiophonic programs (12,9%), which its low incidence may be connected to the false impression, in vigor in educational means, that the radio plays a secondary role in diffusion of information, compared to other medias. In fact, FM radio stations reach, at present, around 85% of the Brazilian population and the most listened frequencies in the country have, in average, two hundred thousand listeners per minute. Cell phones and *smartphones* have devices to access online radios, promoting the growth amongst young audiences. Thus, it's a mistake to disregard the need to integrate vehicle with practices with media in the school environment.

Therefore, practices of critical analysis of media contents prevail, largely over further activities of education for media carried out in schools linked to the SMERJ³. This is not surprising. As highlighted by Siqueira (2012, p. 238), the capacity of “[c]riticizing, analyzing and interpreting documental sources of diverse nature, recognizing the role of different languages” is one of the abilities to be developed in lessons also according to the objectives of the National Curricular Parameters, published in 2000 by the Federal Government. Although important, the content analysis is insufficient in the

3- A more detailed analysis of data related to these practices is published in Tavares, Duarte e Jordão, 2016.

present context, considering, as stated by Aparici and Silva (2012), the new forms of communication and broadcasting of information integrated to post massive media and the strong learning potential involved in the pedagogy of interactivity.

Regarding the use of media in the approach of school contents, non-didactical books, films, videos and music appear in high percentages of recurrent use in classrooms, in about 80% of the school unities researched. But the majority of schools (51,5%) does not use web radios, blogs, internet pages and digital games in the approach of school curricular contents. Audio recorders, film cameras, cell phones and smartphones are also absent from classrooms in about 70% of the researched schools.

Contemporary media production practices are still very unusual and fragile in municipal schools and can be considered to be at an early stage of development. In average, 38% of schools produce written materials (fanzines, newspapers, books, comics) with relevant frequency (from daily to bimestrial), which seems to us a quite modest production, considering the available resources and the value attributed by the school to written language. In relation to the additional media, the production is even smaller: in average, 64% of schools have declared they have never conducted activities of production of video, photography, TV program, radio program, publicity, and 54% have never carried out activities of production of materials on the internet. Only 20% of schools have media production practices with relevant frequency (at least once every two months).

The content production for media by students only appears as recurrent (daily, weekly, bimestrial) when it comes to Comics (54,2% of schools), non-didactical books (35,8% of schools), magazines (18,5%) and printed/digital newspapers (35,8%). Amongst the additional media, the non-recurrent production (every six months, annual or never) prevails, with percentages varying from 53% (videos/films) and 89,5% (TV programs), being 57,3% publicity; 88,6%, radio programs and 85,8%, sound material (audio files). These results indicate that students are not being offered the opportunity, essential in the contemporary world, to learn to express their selves properly in different languages, having as focus the appropriation and the diffusion of knowledge addressed in school. There is no doubt that this learning occurs outside, but the school can play a relevant role in this process, discussing the quality of what is produced and broadcasted, the need to ensure conceptual solidity and truthfulness, and also ethical aspects of communication on-line, placing in the agenda possibilities and limitations of the freedom of speech and the respect for human rights, amidst other issues. By not inserting the media content production and broadcasting as regular practice in its target activity, the school refrains from mediating the development of fundamental abilities for the comprehension of the current world, social life and citizenship participation.

Factors associated to the lack of consistent production, with relevant frequency, of media in school contexts are many. Alongside the precariousness of the internet access (73% of schools have informed that their internet connection is bad or terrible) and the scarcity of available and in good shape equipment (only 37% have more than 10 computers working and 12% have more than 10 notebooks), it is worth highlighting that:

- Small concern of the Brazilian society with digital literacy, many times understood as a merely technical ability, that would be “naturally” developed with the use of digital media;
- Poor public debate about the democratization of means;
- Lack of media production practices in courses of initial teaching education;
- Little legitimacy attributed by the educational means to materials that are not produced in written language.

It is important to point out that we are not defending here that the school carries random content productions, which would only thicken the vertiginous flow of media materials in circulation. It is a matter of ensuring how to make use of different forms of expression, producing materials of good technical quality and with high theoretical reliability, as part of the process of appropriation/construction of formal knowledge and the student's insertion, as citizens, in an ever more mediatised society. As pointed by Gutiérrez and Tyner (2012), the objectives of education to the media, in the contemporary school contexts, share with education in general the wholesome formation of individuals. If, in the last century, media education practices were centered in the critical reception of contents of the mass means of communication, today they need to incorporate new dimensions, related to “social and citizenship competence; cultural and artistic competence; information treatment and digital competence” (GUTIÉRREZ; TYNER, 2012, p. 34).

Guidelines to media education in the educational policy of the SMERJ, 1990-2010

In order to understand school practices one must also understand the principles guiding and organizing them within the educational policy. From this perspective, we have identified in reference documents of the educational policy of the SMERJ, guidelines for the insertion of media in schools of the network and we have analyzed their conjectures and possible sources of influence. We have adopted the following parameters for the selection of documents: 1) research conducted by Fonseca (2004), which analyzes the implementation of the Reading Classrooms, preeminent locus of insertion of media in schools in the years of the 1980s; 2) study carried out by Velloso (2011) about school curriculum and practices of media use in Rio de Janeiro's public municipal schools; 3) documental survey produced by other members of the research team (ARAÚJO; MILLIET, 2017).

According to Fonseca (2004), the first initiatives of the SMERJ of endowing the schools with educational Technologies began in the years of the 1970s, influenced by the international debate about the modernization of the school environment (QUARTIERO, 2007). In this period, *Multimeans* Technical Unities have been implemented, destined to supply resources to back up the work of teachers (FONSECA, 2004). *Multimeans* meant any resource complementary to the regular didactical material available in the classroom (black board, chalk, didactic books etc.): para didactical books, posters, mimeographed drawings, colored card stock, maps, atlas, amongst others.

In 1983, the Bureau launched at the *Centros Integrados de Educação Pública* (CIEP) the first Reading Rooms, destined to the formation of readers, which should be endowed

with diversified material, including audiovisual resources; In 1990, the implementation was extended to further schools. According to Fonseca (2004, p. 44), due to the fact that they used educational technologies, the Reading Rooms were managed by the *multimeans* team of the SMERJ. Thus, in addition to the book collection and printed materials, they have incorporated the electronic devices of the *multimeans* rooms. With the incorporation of VHS devices, televisions and educational videos, the managing teacher of the Reading Rooms Pole (support point for nearby schools, which did not have their own Reading Room) started to receive training on how to add audiovisual to reading incentive actions. In the document that disposes about the redefinition of the attributions of the managing teacher of the Reading Rooms Pole, published by the SME in 1993, one of the first records of the expression media education can be found, but the expression only refers to the resources. Amidst the attributions of the managing teacher one finds that of “managing the media education resources, propitiating the participation of teachers and students in a process of collective production.” (apud FONSECA, 2004, p. 45).

In 1996, the SMERJ published the first version of the *Núcleo Curricular Básico Multieducação* (NCBM), systematizing basic curricular guidelines for schools. The document presents guidelines and advice for the implementation of the curriculum, in its different perspectives (philosophical and pedagogical principles, contents, methods and materials) and includes as one of the educative principles for the teaching of disciplines “the different languages, that allow us to see the world with different lenses, giving rise to various possibilities for the constitution of knowledges” (RIO DE JANEIRO, 1996, p. 10).

Part of the Transversal Languages Axis, guidelines for the insertion of media in pedagogical practice, seen as indispensable sources to the access of knowledge, in the perspective of critical appropriation, with the presumption that “the educational principle of autonomous and participative citizenship is widely linked to the critical appropriation of means and languages of communication” (RIO DE JANEIRO, 1996, p. 132). This is unfolded into two points:

The illiterate of the 1990s are not only those who do not possess the written word and its mediators, but those who do not establish a critical-productive-participative relation in the audiovisual context and those who are not able to interact with the various forms of electronic technologies in their interfaces with all sorts of information. (RIO DE JANEIRO, 1996, p. 132).

[...] To conquer his social, affective, political, professional space the citizen of the information-media society needs to acquire the technical and linguistic ability that enables him to travel and survive in the informational milieu he is plunged into. (RIO DE JANEIRO, 1996, p. 132).

In this document the expression. Media education only appears in the references, where it's quoted in the article published in 1994 by the then recently created Media Education Division of the SMERJ: “MONTEIRO, Eduardo. *Mídia-educação. Contexto, questões propostas*” (RIO DE JANEIRO, 1996, p. 345). The inclusion of this reference indicates that the concept was present in the discussions produced in the Bureau, but it hadn't been incorporated to the speech about the curriculum yet.

With the emergence of new information and communication technologies, the concept of information society (proposed in the 1970s by Daniel Bell) stood out in debates promoted by international bodies like the United Nations, The World Bank, The Inter-American Development Bank, The World Trade Organization – around the guidelines for economic development and for educational policies. Under the influence of this context, educational reforms have been carried out in Latin American countries, which were coming out of a long period of military dictatorships (specially Brazil, Chile, Argentina and Uruguay), incorporating the mandatory insertion of computing and communication technology in schools and teachers trainings for this purpose (MARTÍNEZ et al, 2016; CASTRO, 2016).

Brazil created the National Program of Educational Computing (Proinfo),⁴ with the aim of improving the school learning through the incorporation of new technologies to the educational context (CASTRO, 2016). The program fomented the actions of the SMERJ in this sector, with the implementation of computing labs in school units, the offering of teachers trainings and the subsidy of resources for local trainings. Focusing on a strictly didactic pedagogic use of computers, defined as “teaching tools” (QUARTIERO, 2007), Proinfo ended up partially displacing the Bureau’s media policy from its original scope. However, at the same time, it enabled the development of new projects, in virtue of the widening of equipment numbers in schools and the subsidies of resources to continuous teachers trainings for the use of TIC in the pedagogical practice.

In 2004, after a discussion process with managers from the Regional Education Coordination and the schools with the teachers (VELLOSO, 2011), the Bureau reaffirmed its vision about medias in school, in the revised and enlarged version of the reference document from the Multieducation Basic Curricular Nucleus. There, the insertion of medias in school practices has acquired more relevance, having as main rationale the impact upon society of the cultural exchanges provided by the diffusion of information, in large scale and in greater speed, on the internet.

Included in the curriculum’s new version, a bundle specifically dedicated to media education, aiming to “subsidize the development of media educational practices” (RIO DE JANEIRO, 2005, p. 5). In the perspective defended in this document, the target of the work with media in schools is to enable critical appropriation of the contents broadcasted by the means of communication. Quoting reference authors in the field (Jésus Martín-Barbero, Maria Luiza Belloni, Nelson Pretto, Cecilia Feilitzen and Ursula Carlsson, among others) the guiding assumptions of the media education practices are presented, amidst which the following can be highlighted (RIO DE JANEIRO, 2005, p. 21):

[the different medias] need to be understood as more than mere support tools for the pedagogical work or simple apparatus to make the classes more interesting;

The critical appropriation of information and communication technologies in schools necessarily involves the daily exercise of effective change between teachers and students, seeking to build new knowledge collectively, from the various contexts of use.

4- Created by Administrative Rule nº 522/MEC, from April 9th, 1997, to promote the pedagogic use of computing and communication technologies (TICs) in the public teaching network of Elementary and Middle Schools– Brazilian Ministry of Education <<http://www.portal.mec.gov.br>>.

From our point of view, the formulation of the guidelines was strongly influenced by the international debate, developed between 1980 and 1990, regarding the definition of the political pedagogical foundation for the implementation of the *mediaeducation* in the school syllabus.

In an article summarizing the historical path of media education, Fedorov (2008) points out the great development in this field, in the beginning of the 1980s, propelled by Unesco. For the author, the entity has played a decisive role in the formulation and diffusion of proposals for the area, specially by the end of the 1970s decade, when “not only it turned public its inclination to support initiatives of education for the means, but also included media education in its priority list for the following decades” (FEDOROV, 2008, p. 60).

In 1978, the entity published, in Paris, *A general curricular model for mass media education*. In the 1980s, directions and guidelines for media education practices were agreed upon in international events and systematized Assembly minutes and Declarations, disseminated around the world by Unesco. Among the main documents produced, we find: The Grunwald Declaration⁵ (1982), signed by representatives of 19 European countries taking part in the International Symposium on Media Education, in the city of Grunwald, in the former West Germany; The International convention on Children’s Rights⁶ (1989), recognizing as a fundamental human right “the right to freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of boundaries, orally, in writing or with printed materials, through the means of the arts or any other means chosen by the child” (Art. 13); *Acta del Colloque de Toulouse*⁷, named Les Nouvelles orientations dans l’éducation aux médias, a result of the meeting of 200 representatives from 45 countries in 1990.

From then on, many European countries have assigned education resources for the creation and/or maintenance of research and teachers and educators training media education centers. The French Ministry of Education created the Centre pour L’Education aux Médias et a l’Information (CLEMI); The British government allocated resources to the educational initiatives of the British Film Institute (1983), a non-governmental organization, founded in 1933, with a target on the production of films and education for the cinema; The German government started to support initiatives of the Jugend Film Fernsehen (JFF), Institute for Media Education in Research and Practice, a private law institution, founded in 1949. On the following decade, these countries and others, like Canada, the United States, Russia, Australia and Italy, would incorporate media education in their school syllabuses (FEDOROV, 2008; DONI, 2015).

In general, guidelines formulated for the sector in international documents vindicated the need of forming citizens to critically deal with the contents imparted by

5- Available at: <http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/MEDIA_E.PDF>.

6- Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/brazil/pt/resources_10127.htm>.

7- International meeting held by Unesco in 1990, that gathered, in the city of Toulouse, in France, two hundred representatives of 45 countries in Europe, in partnership with the British Film Institute, Centre de Liaison de *l’Enseignement et des Médias d’Information*, linked to the French Ministry of Education the *Conseil de l’Europe*. From this meeting resulted a systematization of a proposal of international guidelines for the education for the means (http://app.owni.fr/timeline_medias/). The whole minute is available at: <<http://aeema.net/2011/01/colloque-de-toulouse-nouvelles-orientations-dans-l%E2%80%99education-aux-m%C3%A9dias-1990>>.

the means of communication, with special concern towards the training of children and youth. Amongst the proposed measures, we highlight the following: 1) the conduction of projects turned to the development of the critical spirit; 2) education for the access to information and the means of expression; 3) democratization of information diffusion spaces (soundwaves and TV channels); 4) incorporation in the school syllabus of media education contents and practices.

Recognizing the importance of these proposals for the development of the field at a world level, it is worth observing that the absence, in these proposals, of a criticism to the monopoly of the content production by great private communication conglomerates, with evident economic and political power, and to the debate, already in course, about the social control of the means. In the documents of the field, the debate about democratization regards the access to information, but not the assurance of a cultural and production sources diversity. Although there weren't the great number of communication possibilities that the internet would provide to media users in the following decades, there was already a set of public debate and theoretical formulations, which pointed to the need of restrictions to the content production monopoly, the strengthening of public channels and of endowing universities and organizations of the civil society with conditions to produce diversified contents. This debate has not been present in the first documents of the field, whose focus carried on as being, up to the mid 2000s, the formation of audiences/listeners/readers for the critical consumption of contents (UNESCO, 1999, 2005).

The familiarity of the SMERJ with the international debate on media education is also evidenced with the fact that the city hosted the 4th World Summit – Media summit for Children and Teenagers in Rio: Media from all, Media for all,⁸ with the support of the city hall and under the coordination of MultiRio and the NGO MídiaTiva – Brazilian Media Center for Children and Teenagers. The event has gathered representatives from the Ministry of Education, Unesco, and governmental and non-governmental institutions linked to education and communication, managers of communications companies, journalists, producers, researchers and students from 20 countries.

The debates promoted in this meeting had an impact on the structuring process of the media education policies in public education in Rio de Janeiro. In 2008, new conjectures and guidelines for the area were incorporated to the Municipal Education Plan (Law N. 4866 July 2nd 2008), in which Rio de Janeiro's Municipal Teaching Network

[...] reaffirms its commitment with an educational public policy integrating different media to pedagogical practices developed inside each school unit, recognizing that the presence of the media in schools has to be analyzed not only as a need originated from the technological advancements, but also, and above all, as a cultural question, where the media constitutes itself as a dimension, alongside the dimensions of space and time, as part of our lives. (RIO DE JANEIRO, 2008).

8- Created in 1995, by the World Summit on Media for Children Foundation, the World Summit on Media acts towards the democratization of the means of communication and promotes debates about the social function of the means and about the quality of what they produce, motivating good quality media production for children and youth.

The plan includes amongst its priority actions for the use of public resources in education the compliance of assuring the “composition, widening and production of media education materials destined to the collections of the educational units” (RIO DE JANEIRO, 2008, p. 78), as a key action to the schools’ functioning, as well as physical and technological infrastructure, active teachers trainings, universalization of childcare and pre schooling, children’s nourishment, amongst others of the same relevance. It means that between 1993 and 2008, media education has conquered the legitimacy and expression. Needed to feature in the SMERJ’s educational policies priority measures.

The 2008 Municipal Education Plan included an item about media and education (3.4), presenting guidelines for the implementation of media education practices (RIO DE JANEIRO, 2008, p. 85) anchored in the three systematized perspectives of international documents: “educate through the media, educate with the media and educate for the media” (RIO DE JANEIRO, 2008, p. 86), thus described in the law:

[educate through the media] Teaching networks [...] counting with the work of thousands of teachers, the professional updating programs [...] will need to, increasingly make use of Distant Learning strategies to widen their reach, reducing distances.

Educate with the media– it is pressing that the school, its students and teachers can fully and responsibly profit from the diverse possibilities presented by the means.

[educate for the media] [...] from everything that’s produced [in the media], from everything which is consumed, only a part presents good quality. In the school case, the desired product is that of high quality, manifesting itself in the accuracy of content and information, in the respect for diversity, in the promotion of inclusive values of democracy and justice, in everything that favors citizenship. [...] Beyond the qualification of the production, the reception also needs to be enabled. Teachers and students must get hold of the media products and its process of production, in a critical and creative manner. (BELLONI; BEVORT, 2009, p. 1098).

According to Fedorov (2008), research about the impact of the media in society has subsidized the debate over the need to prepare people to critically relate with the contents broadcasted by the media. In the years of the 1960s, the field counted with the powerful support of the studies conducted by Lasswel and McLuhan who, when delineating the thesis that the world would transform itself, through the advancements of the communication technologies, into a global village, have warned us about the need to form citizens to deal with the consequences in future societies. In the years of 1980 and 1990, studies gained relevance in Europe (MASTERMAN, 1985, 1988; JACQUINOT, 1985; BUCKINGHAM, 1990, 1993, among others) and in Brazil (SOARES, 1984, 1984a; BELLONI, 1991, 1992, 2001) about the formal teaching of media and about its implementation in schools. The argumentative structure of the analyzed documents, the proposals and guidelines they contained and many of its bibliographic references are present, to some extent, in SMERJ’s media education policy.

According to Belloni and Bévort (2009), from the mid 2000s on (UNESCO, 2005, 2007), studies that indicated the impact of the logics of information and content production have influenced the creation of new proposals for action in this field, pointing

to the necessity of the inclusion, as a media education practice, “the appropriation of media as means or tools of expression and participation, accessible to an young or adult citizen” (BELLONI; BEVORT, 2009, p. 1098), a dimension which had not been explicated in Unesco's documents until then. In the authors' own words:

The Paris Agenda [UNESCO, 2007] reaffirms, with great emphasis, the need for media education in face of the omnipresence of the media in social life, mainly in the life of youth people, as important elements of contemporary culture, as potential means of active participation of citizens and as expression tools of personal creativity. It also highlights the ever increasing importance of media education in the fight against access inequalities (social and regional) to different medias and to form the competences necessary to obtain technical mastery and to critical comprehension, not only of the media messages but also of the politic and economic forces that structure them. (BELLONI; BÉVORT, 2009, p. 1099).

This perspective is included in the documents guiding the *Cineclub in Schools Project*, implemented by the Media Education Division in 2008 (GONÇALVES, 2015; MENEZES, 2017), but, according to data from the present research, it has not yet been incorporated to school practice, which continues to be referenced within the consumption of information and critical analysis of contents. This may be due to the fact that the incorporation of political guidelines into target activities requires a relatively long period of time for maturation, meaning reassessment and appropriation, necessarily crossing through the way in which the community of practices apprehends and evaluates what is proposed. Besides, the progressive weigh attributed to the external evaluation of the school performance may leave the pedagogical activities even more centered in the strictly curricular content, which, associated to a traditional conception of teaching, raises many difficulties upon the conduction of media production activities. This is a theme for future studies.

Final considerations

The extension of data from this research, the first in this area in the country, with the participation of 90% of Elementary and Middle Schools from Rio de Janeiro's Municipal Teaching Network, enables assertive affirmations regarding the general charter of media education in this school context. The results show that the practice of media content analysis is consolidated in the network, since it is conducted in 80% of the schools, with considerably high frequency. These are important practices, but they are not enough in the current context of technological mediation of communication.

The focus given by the SMERJ to the formulation of its media insertion policy in schools is media education, and the practices identified in schools indicate significant appropriation of the proposed guidelines. The documental analysis indicates that the formulation of these guidelines was influenced by the conceptions of media education fomented and diffused by Unesco, in the decades of the 1980s and 1990s, related, above all, to the training for critical analysis of the contents broadcasted by the media.

The results show that the changes implemented in the international guidelines for media education (UNESCO, 2005, 2007) and the new theoretical and methodological perspectives of the field (MASTERMAN, 2000; OROZCO-GÓMEZ, 2000; MARTIN, 2000; BELLONI; BÉVORT, 2009; GUTIÉRREZ; TYNER, 2012; APARICI; SILVA, 2012; FANTIN; RIVOLTELLA, 2012; SOARES, 2015), even though present in most recent programs and projects formulated by the SMERJ within its educational policy, are not incorporated to the school practice.

The use of media languages in the production of contents and materials is still unusual in the network, with only 20% of schools conducting this practice in a significant frequency. The production of photographs, audiovisual and sound materials and digital texts for the internet is not a part of the schools daily routines, nor is it present in the teaching-learning relations, in the supported perspective, expected by the policy formulators. Even considering the material difficulties, it can be assumed that the main factor associated to the non-accomplishment of these activities is the logic presiding the schools organization, syllabus and pedagogic practices. Anchored in a disciplinary structure, fragmented and of unidirectional communication – from the school to the teacher, from the teacher to the student, from the broadcaster to the receptor – the school logic raises difficulties to the implementation of interdisciplinary projects, collaborative work, bidirectional communication and the overcoming of barriers imposed by school time in relation to the teaching-learning relations (PINHO; SOUZA, 2015).

Regarding the presence of media in the approach of school contents, the data analysis indicates that this practice is consolidated only when it comes to traditional didactic medias, that is, the use of mass media focused on what we call watching practices (film and video screenings and/or fixed images and/or digital texts). This consolidation, in a positive perspective, provides the grounds for the construction of strategies combining, complementing and widening the usages, which can propitiate the so much longed for qualitative jump in terms of literacy and socialization of the Elementary and Middle School students. However, it's insufficient to safeguard the expression in different languages, with intellectual, moral and political autonomy needed for the participation on society.

Findings point to the need to formulate new guidelines for policies, embedded in the dimensions currently posed by the field, with the perspective of propitiating media education practices in schools, in accordance to the requirements of the contemporary social life. It is considered fundamental that the educational policy ensures: the implementation of teachers training programs in media education; the installation and functioning of high speed broad band internet in all schools; full availability of appropriate equipment for the production of media with new digital technologies; the debate about ethical, aesthetic and political aspects of online communication.

Finally, we highlight that the results of the research offer a relevant overview to substantiate the evaluation and the formulation of public policies for the sector, and it can be replicated to monitor the development of the area and to guarantee the continuity and improvement of the actions.

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