



Human training as a holistic construction in the hybridization between mind and body

A formação humana como uma construção holística na hibridização entre mente e corpo

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ABSTRACT

The present article is a bibliographic review on human formation, structured from the mind and body hybridity in the everyday relationship. The purpose of the text is to demonstrate that human formation goes beyond the purely cognitive question, building a relationship between the practical situations of the experience with the conceptual ones. For this purpose, authors from the field of philosophy, sociology, theology and education, such as Maurice Merleau-Ponty, James K. A. Smith and Martin Heidegger, were chosen to theoretically support human formation through mind and body hybridity. The research was developed theoretically, analyzing the writings of the authors mentioned above and others, based on the investigation of the hybridity of mind and body in human formation in the family, school and society. In this way, broadening the understanding of education, relating mind and body hybridity, enables a holistic human education, which contemplates the complexity of life, and contributes to greater assertiveness in relation to the preparation of students to interpret the context of today's society. With the present study, it was verified that the human formation, from the mind and body hybridism, is a construction that occurs in all spaces and throughout life, however, in the phase of childhood, adolescence and youth, the bases that guide choices in adult life, having a breadth that relates mind and body.

Keywords: Human formation, Hybridism, Mind and body.

RESUMO

O presente artigo é uma revisão bibliográfica sobre a formação humana, estruturada a partir do hibridismo mente e corpo na relação do cotidiano. O objetivo do texto é demonstrar que a formação humana ultrapassa a questão puramente cognitiva, construindo uma relação entre as situações práticas da vivência com as conceituais. Para tanto, foram escolhidos autores do campo da filosofia, sociologia, teologia e educação, como Maurice Merleau-Ponty, James K. A. Smith e Martin Heidegger, para fundamentar teoricamente a formação humana por meio do hibridismo mente e corpo. A pesquisa foi desenvolvida de forma teórica, analisando escritos dos autores acima mencionados e outros, tendo como base de investigação o hibridismo mente e corpo da formação humana na família, escola e sociedade. Desta forma, ampliar a compreensão da formação, relacionando o hibridismo mente e corpo, possibilita uma formação humana holística, que contempla a complexidade da vida, e contribui para uma assertividade maior em relação ao preparo dos estudantes para interpretar o contexto da sociedade atual. Com o presente estudo, constatou-se que a formação humana, a partir do hibridismo mente e corpo, é uma construção que ocorre em todos os espaços e por toda a vida, entretanto, na fase da infância, adolescência e juventude, são formadas as bases que direcionam as escolhas na vida adulta, tendo uma amplitude que relaciona a mente e o corpo.

Palavras-chave: Formação humana, Hibridismo, Mente e corpo.



1 INTRODUCTION

In this text education will be considered as a formative act that contemplates both cognitive and corporeal issues, in order to debate the educational practice not only in the school space, but in any and all places where the human being is. And, because of this, the school will only be considered in the final part, being first constructed an argumentation that demonstrates the breadth of human formation, based on theoretical and practical issues, related to the world of life, daily living. Bringing everyday issues to the analysis of human formation makes it possible to contemplate a larger field of analysis, and also to demonstrate the importance of considering the corporeal factor in educational practice.

Human formation is sometimes considered as strictly related to cognitive issues, linked to academic practices, disregarding the contributions of community experience, that is, the practical situations of human relations. Faced with this, Heidegger, through the ontology of being, presents "a relationship of the human being with the world and with others, when trying to explain the being, from the Dasein". (COELHO, 2009). According to José Henrique Coelho (2009), Heidegger, understands that "the Dasein understands himself", and this happens, from the "relationship established with the entities that he goes living in the daily life of the world in which he is inserted, and his presence in the world has a varied interpretation, and his presence faces difficulties present in his way of being" (COELHO, 2009).

From Heidegger's observations, it is possible to presume a human formation, associated with a multiplicity of spaces and forms, which act, not only cognitively, through conceptual elaboration, but, through practical situations, in a format of repetitive rituals. Thus, human formation can be considered a holistic construction, in the relationship between mind and body, linked to the daily life of human experience. For such a theoretical analysis, Martin Heidegger's idea of being-in-the-world will be used; the phenomenological concept of Maurice Merleau-Ponty; the socioconstructivist theory of Lev Vygotsky; and James A. Smith's proposal for a cultural liturgy.

The understanding of holistic is given by a look at reality "as a totality of integration between the whole and the parts" (COSTA, et. al, s.a., p.118), in order to build an educational practice, which contemplates "the integration in the pedagogical act of multiple dimensions, which requires dialogue with various orientations of thought" (COSTA, et. al, S.A., p.118). *Trata of an article, in which, for the achievement of the proposed objective, the methodology employed was the bibliographical research, which consists of the survey of material already elaborated and published in documents, such as books and magazines, in order to explain the hybridization between mind and body in the holistic human formation.*

In this way, human formation will be analyzed, relating the various formative spaces that integrate daily life, expanding the cognitivist perspective, which often centers training in school and maintains a focus on the theoretical. Thus, to establish the parameters of a hybrid formation between mind and body, having knowledge as something guiding the being-in-the-world, that is, linked to daily life and its social and spatial



relations, serving as a contribution of meaning of the experience in community. In this sense, the hybridity mind and body, will be approached as exerting a significant role in the formation, enabling human development in different spaces and formats.

2 HUMAN FORMATION AND THE DAILY LIFE OF THE WORLD

For some lay people, education is a structured action exclusively or practically only in the cognitive construction in spaces suitable for such practice, that is, the school. When education is understood as structured on cognition, that is, most of it happens theoretically, through books, and through the pedagogical practice of teachers, it can be concluded that formative action only happens when something is intentionally transmitted and in well-defined places such as school. However, education goes beyond the cognitive and extrapolates the spaces commonly attributed to educational practice, assuming a posture of formation that intends to develop in the human being their "potentialities of knowledge, judgment and choice to live consciously in society, which also includes the notion that the educational process, in itself, contributes both to conserve and to change values, beliefs, mentalities, customs and practices" (BENEVIDES, p.225).

In this way, when considering education, it is essential to keep in mind that in the "formation of the new generations is at stake more than mere learning or the simple acquisition of knowledge. The great legacy to be transmitted, and which requires a living dialogue between generations, is that of the human world as an artifice sustained in a reciprocal complicity" (BOUFLEUER, 2019, p. 302). In this sense, the concept of education that will be analyzed here, proposed by James K. A. Smith, extrapolates the cognitivist understanding, being structured on the hybridization between mind and body, a subject worked by Merleau-Ponty.

Smith starts from the premise of a shared formation between practice and theory, considering education an action that does not "transit mainly through abstract ideas and disconnected from the body" (SMITH, 2018, p.39), making a connection between what the person learns in a theoretical and practical way. The author states that "education is a holistic effort that involves the whole person, including the body, in a process of formation that aims at our desires, that equips our imagination and guides us in relation to the world." (SMITH, 2018, p.39). Smith proposes an expansion of the idea of education, investigating its formative action both through cognition and embodiment, in a non-dichotomous hybridization, happening in everyday practice, involving a diversity of forms and practices.

One of Smith's theoretical bases is Merleau-Ponty, who considers it important to observe the relationship of formation with everyday life, that is, a significant part of the formation process does not occur in the field of ideas, but in the everyday world that the person lives, to the point of affirming that "the world is not what I think, but what I live" (Merleau-Ponty, 1981, p.18). The daily life in which I am inserted and that I interact with is part of the formation, whether conceptual or experiential, in which "education



requires this apprehension with those who came before, in time and culture, that is, it requires the mediation of those who have already gone through the experience of having graduated, or, as one can say, of those who have already faced the challenge of their humanization" (BOUFLEUER, 2019, p.294).

While we live we are learning, even when there is no intention to learn, because human formation occurs in multiple spaces and forms, contemplating a diversity, related to the world of life, the everyday. Therefore, when we think about educational action, it is necessary to broaden the field of study, and consider the issues of everyday life, linked to the body, that is, the practical things of everyday life, and their relationship connected with theoretical concepts. Because of this, Merleau-Ponty's provocation, in stating that the world is not what I think, connects like the one proposed by Smith, broadening the debate on human formation, so that in fact one understands the whole that surrounds it and its complexity.

As Smith comments (2019, p.64) hybridity is "a kind of corporeal suspension of ours between angelicity and animality – as mind and body", constituting a relationship of our being in the world between instinct and intellect, in the simultaneous construction of life in society, uniting both the cognitive and the corporeal. The point that Merleau-Ponty observes through the hybridity between mind and body, is, in formative practice, to consider the role of embodied actions together with cognitive and intentional ones, not giving any superiority, but considering each according to its participation in human formation.

In this sense, it is necessary to turn attention to embodied actions, since "much of what we do is not the result of conscious deliberation; on the contrary, much of what we do is born of our passionate orientation towards the world – which is influenced by all the ways in which we have been trained to perceive it" (SMITH, 2019, p.51). This training occurs both in a practical and theoretical way, from interpretative schemes, since "the perceived world is the one that reveals itself to us from our interpretive schemes" (BOUFLEUER, 2019, p.298), are constructed in the experience and absorbed in an embodied and cognitive way.

For Smith (2019, p.65), Merleau-Ponty's concept of hybridity points to a "model of the human person that is not tied to the dichotomies of mind or body, but that does justice to our intermediary and its peculiar preconscious knowledge: we are not just subjects; nor are we mere objects." The strongest fact of the concept of hybridity is intermediation, that is, the person in his formation process maintains a constant intermediary between mind and body, that is, cognitive and corporeal issues, and this is characteristic of the human being. It is in this sense that the actions that the person demonstrates happen in two distinct fields: 1) as if by instinct, because they are pre-cognitive formations, about which there is not much reasoning; 2) rationalized ones, structured by concepts; however, both are connected through the intermediary between mind and body, linked to daily life, learned during living and living together.



3 THE GUIDING KNOWLEDGE FOR BEING IN THE WORLD

Considering the relationship of intermediation, Smith (2019, p.51) that "our actions spring from the way we imagine the world", and the way we imagine the world is directly related to the formation we receive in the social environment we live, cognitive and corporeal formation. From this, it is possible to consider that the human being influences and modifies the world around him, as well as how he is influenced and transformed by the interaction in the daily life of the world in which he is inserted. Human formation, in this perspective, is something holistic, in the hybrid relationship between mind and body. However, the formation unfolds, according to Smith conceptualizes, in the field of desires and imagination, in which daily life influences desires, and leads the person to make the choices that best satisfy him, in which the imagination fulfills the role of point of contact between the theoretical and practical, of being-in-the-world, hence the importance of broadening the idea of education.

The imagination structures the cognitive and corporeal formation, creating an argumentative line, which offers the person a meaning and guiding the being in the world. It is in this sense that human formation, whether at any stage of life, is closely related to multiple issues, that is, the human being learns in different ways and in different places. This is what the authors mentioned above, in their theoretical proposals, seek to unveil in each of their fields of study, demonstrating the complexity that involves the human being, and therefore the educational action. The perspective of complexity lies in the search to understand a certain phenomenon, from "all the facets that make up its human condition, that is: biological, psychic, physical, social, affective, rational and cultural" (BERTICELLI, RAMLOW, 2018, p.76), in a holistic view, proposing that human formation be rethought in contemporaneity "under new theoretical and methodological possibilities" (BERTICELLI, RAMLOW, 2018, p.77).

Thus, human formation as a holistic process, structured from the hybridity between mind and body, has in Smith, the idea of pre-cognitive knowledge, in which the author, through his concept of cultural liturgy, has in mind "a quasi-faculty through which we interpret the world on a pre-cognitive level, in a sphere that is essentially aesthetic precisely because it is so closely associated with the body." (SMITH, 2019, p.38). For this reason, Smith considers it necessary to associate with the debate of human formation, whether in the school context or in the world of life (to use an expression of Habermas), the role of imagination, because "imagination is a kind of organizing and synthesizing faculty of medium level that builds the world for us in a primarily affective way." (SMITH, 2019, p.39). What Smith (2019, p.39) suggests is that "imagination is a way of designating this everyday capacity for unconscious understanding of the world", that is, it is a way of understanding and orienting oneself through the world, based on the information received, in everyday relationships and in the context in which it is inserted, from the hybridity mind and body.



Thus, associating the idea of imagination with Heidegger's being-in-the-world, it is possible to visualize a formation that involves cognition and relational experiences, because "one of the characteristics of 'being there' (Dasein), in Heidegger's philosophy, which understands the human being not as a mere natural organism, neutral and separate from the world, but as a being that inhabits and coexists in (and with) the world" (CARRASCO, 2017). Therefore, it is necessary to consider the breadth of human formation, and its hybridity, in its daily relationships, in the interactions that occur through the experiences lived in the repetition of everyday rituals. In this sense, the imagination, as an organizing and synthesizing faculty of medium level, builds the world, having as one of its formative references the daily life, because it is in this space that the person is inserted and imagines the world. So how does imagination organize and synthesize a person's world?

To answer this question, it is necessary to understand that the formation of the human being is not "a consciousness separate from the world, but relates to the world, inhabits a historical period and a geographical space, where it coexists with people, objects and relations with language and culture" (CARRASCO, 2017), which in a way, means that the human being, it is made up of and in the world. To the point that, the compound expression "being-in-the-world, already in its coinage, shows that it intends to refer to a phenomenon of unity" (HEIDEGGER, p. 90), a relationship that generates a mutual construction, because "we do not have to be-in-the-world; we are being-in-the-world – entrenched actors, embodied at home in an environment that navigates with a kind of intentionality that precedes knowledge and whose *locus* is in the body." (Smith, 2019, p.65).

What is intuited, when we align Heidegger's being-in-the-world and Smith's understanding of imagination, linked to Vygotsky's idea of constructivism, is human formation as the product of an individuality (how I see and understand the world) and a collectivity (how others see and understand the world), that is, a social construction. According to Vygotsky's constructivist concept, "development is a process of necessarily social origin, never individual, as understood by the psychology of his time. Higher or cultural functions, before they are constituted on the personal level, already exist on the social or interpersonal level." (BOIKO, ZAMBERLAN, 2001, p.52). Education, whether school or in another space, is a "dynamic and dialectical process, in which theory and practice are permeated by the social, cultural, economic and political context of the different communities in which education is inserted." (BOIKO, ZAMBERLAN, 2001, p. 53). Since, the formation of the person is "always an educational process, even when the relationship is not conscious (both on the part of the one who educates himself, and on the part of the one who acts as mediator), and is always effective within a certain social practice." (BOIKO, ZAMBERLAN, 2001, p.54).

In this sense, embodied actions play an important role in human formation, along with cognitive ones, because "my body is not just an object that moves in a space that in other circumstances would be



neutral; rather, he finds himself surrounded by that "practical field" which shapes and constitutes the world." (Smith, 2019, p.65). By the fact that the body, "brings with it a kind of knowledge or *know-how* acquired, based on habit that are irreducible and inarticulable and, however, fundamentally guiding for our being-in-the-world" (SMITH, 2019, p.66). The body is not only "a medium for the mind, but 'our means of communication' with the world: the 'horizon latent in all our experience and by itself always present and prior to all determining thought.'" (MERLEAU-PONTY, 1999, p. 106).

Thus, "the horizons of experience (the expectations I bring stored) are not something that I have to consciously invoke or that I must reflect on in order to constitute my world; they operate without me thinking", (SMITH, 2019, p.72), which is considered by Merleau-Ponty (1999, p.147), from the perspective that the person "walks through the world with an intelligence that in no way relates to intellectualism", but rather, constructed by the imagination. These horizons are the result of a history, of an involvement with the daily life of the world, in which the person is inserted, to the point that, these relationships, represent "an accumulation of habits, dispositions and inclinations with which I interpret my world in certain ways. Although my horizons are fatally social and shared—in fact, I acquire them from others—they are not *a priori* or universal." (SMITH, 2019, p.73). The horizons constitute the product resulting from the formation developed in a cognitive and embodied way, and that is expressed through the imagination, being projected in the choices of life.

Thus, Smith from the contribution of Merleau-Ponty, considers the constitution of our experience as "something that occurs in the body and through it" (SMITH, 2019, p.73), not only cognitively considering the reality that surrounds it, but, experiencing the situation, the experiences of everyday life. Through the authors cited, it is possible to consider that human formation occurs in a cognitive and embodied way, in a hybridity between mind and body, constituting an imagination, by which the person organizes and synthesizes the being-in-the-world. Therefore, the human being learns through practices, in his social involvement, building his history, while living in society, in social interaction.

4 HYBRIDITY AND ITS FORMATIVE ROLE IN THE DIFFERENT SPACES OF DAILY LIFE

As has been worked up to this point, the formation of the person, happens in a hybridity between mind and body, forming from the horizons of experience, building an imaginary by which it organizes and synthesizes the being-in-the-world. In this way, to think in relation to the imaginary "is to capture the symbolism, the meanings that a society carries; it is a process that goes beyond formal, determined considerations" (SILVA, et. al., 2012, p.134), and so it is necessary to consider the spaces of formation, which will be described in three, that is, the family, the school and society. These are the places of daily life in which the person is inserted, their conceptual and practical formative context. It is in these spaces that the



imagination is formed, having personal desires, as influencers of experiences, directing decision making, promoting criteria of choice.

The family and the school are social structures that complement each other in human formation, because they are guiding spaces, which direct by a social imaginary, providing an intentional formation. But, the family and the school need to understand that education, in the twenty-first century, encompasses a context of diversity of forms and thoughts, in a technological reality, which requires a preparation of students, not only cognitive, but as adaptable and versatile individuals in the face of different contexts. It is indispensable to consider the reality of a formation that contemplates the hybridity mind and body, in order to offer tools that make it possible to make a reading of reality, and this begins with an intentional education.

Society, on the other hand, represents the space of plurality, of multiple locations (physical or virtual) where the person interacts with the physical environment and his fellow human beings, in which "we live in historical circumstances that interconnect, in the extension of the world, individuals and peoples in a network of relations that do not cease to tighten their knots, uniting the destiny of all" (GARCIA; FENSTERSEIFER, 2011, p.18). In these connected networks the human being walks autonomously, in which the formation occurs associated with desire - that which is attractive and provides pleasure.

However, it is important to consider that, even if these spaces are treated separately in the text, they form a complex set, which interrelates and influences simultaneously, promoting a cross-formation. According to Júlio Zabatiero (2012, p.168), "we need to learn to live in the tension between the structuring of knowledge in its disciplinary frameworks and the experimentation of new articulations of knowledge in perennial construction and reconstruction", regardless of whether this knowledge is expressed theoretically or in a practical way. Thus, there is the possibility of forming, in the person, the capacity to understand, to know the world that surrounds him, to think reflexively and to live in society, contributing in his own way to the common good.

When considering the educational action, from the referred spaces, contemplating a hybridity between mind and body, it is fundamental to observe that the family and the school as complementary structures need to develop practices that contemplate a holistic formation from early childhood. The awareness of this reality should trigger practices that stimulate in the student, the development of habits that enable the daily living of being-in-the-world, that is, in society. When the notion of education is broadened, and the relationship between mind and body is considered, the importance of actions that encourage habits that enable autonomy in adulthood is perceived.

This process begins in the family space, because it is the first social space of the child, where he lives with his peers, and, therefore, requires from the family members an intentionality of practices related to mind and body, to educate, because "the learning of children begins long before they attend school" (VYGOTSKY, 2007, p.94). The awareness of the family, in relation to its role in the formation, passes



through the awareness of the educational action going through all the stages of life and structured in the mind and body, in order to enable actions that promote the diversity of horizons of experience, making the child is gradually involved in a social imaginary that connects to the daily reality.

As for the school, José Carlos Libâneo (2006) speaks of educational practice as a way to humanize the human being, thinking of developing in the student the ability to understand and interpret the context he lives, and thus contribute to social development, in a conscious and constructive way. Being able to look at the dynamics of social life and think beyond the personal perspective, with a reflective capacity, considering the diversity of factors that involve life in society. This refers to the construction of a social imaginary, having in hybridity the formation of an autonomy that enables the analysis of reality, of being-in-the-world, with a greater diversity and amplitude.

To this end, in the school as in the family space, it is necessary to look at educational formation in a broader way, not only as a cognitive action, but also as an experiential, pre-cognitive construction. However, this posture moves with the school structure, which generally remains focused on the cognitive, having only experiential insertions at specific times. In this sense, a structured reflection is appropriate, supported by educational practices of intermediary, in order to align the processes and methods applied to the formation of the student, to the hybrid model between mind and body.

This is important because it constitutes the basis for a life in society. Society is the place where the individual is constituted as a person, the being-in-the-world, relating daily with people and structures, developing life, from the imaginary under construction. It is in society that the person, by using theoretical and practical information, builds their relationships, contributing with their peers in the social structuring. It is for the conviviality in society that the family and the school need to work the formation, since it is in this space, so to speak, multiple, where the person needs to have at hand tools that allow him to deal with the most diverse situations.

However, this is also a space of formation, where the person learns autonomously or not directed, without the influence of the family and school, having an autonomy of choice in relation to what, and with whom to learn. For this reason, it is important to understand that the imaginary of the human being is always under construction, open to modifications, in which the bases laid in childhood and during the school period serve as a structural contribution, but it is never something completed. Therefore, when we consider the family and school space, the importance of laying the foundations and offering conditions for autonomy was emphasized.

It is with the intention of establishing solid foundations, while the person is under the guidance of the family and the school, that the holistic educational practice is proposed, because it makes it possible to understand and treat the human being in all its complexity, with a directed education, to transform the perspective of the student, in order to adapt to the context that is exposed while living in society. Therefore,



humanization or the horizon of experience, unfolds in the cross-relationship between the family, the school and society, in which both form the person, whether intentionally or not, giving him intellectual subsidies and experiential experiences. Cross-relations refers to different conceptions of the world, or imaginary, that intersect in the everyday relations of the world of life, in our case, between the family, the school and society, generating pressures and tensions, due to points of divergence.

The comprehension of this reality needs to challenge the transformation in the way in which the educational practice is understood, in order to enable the development of the student, in his infantile, adolescent and young phase, aiming at adult life and in society. In this sense, the educational practice, when contemplating the hybrid formation - the cognitive and the embodied -, stimulates an amplified vision of the formation, making it possible to reach a larger field of aspects that are fundamental to the person in the development of his life in society in adulthood. For this reason, it is necessary to consider the imaginary that developed through the practices that are promoted.

In Smith's words, a transformative, humanizing education is worked out from practices that develop habits, since "all habits and practices ultimately want to transform us into a certain kind of person." (Smith, 2018, p. 84). Therefore, in closing, I want to propose a question asked by Smith, but which fits very well at this point in the discussion: "what kind of person is a particular habit or practice trying to produce, and to what end does that practice point?" (Smith, 2018, p. 84). This questioning directs the reflection, in relation to the path chosen by the family and the school, regarding the formation, that is, what are the points considered fundamental for a family and school formation, which contemplates an embodied and cognitive structure, which adapts to the current needs and has a look at the future of society.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The text aimed to understand educational formation as a hybridity between body and mind. To this end, this analysis was based on a set of texts that contemplate practical and theoretical aspects, demonstrating the relationship between the horizon of experience and daily life in human formation. First, a literature review was carried out on the connection between body and mind in human formation; perspectives were presented from several authors, such as Smith, Meleau-Ponty and Heidegger, who defended human formation related to the hybridity between body and mind.

Taking into account the effects of understanding human formation, related to the hybridity between mind and body, perspectives on the occurrence of this in the daily life of being-in-the-world were analyzed, with the intention of understanding the breadth of formative spaces and their influence on life. It is also concluded that the hybridity between mind and body is the basis of human formation; the horizon of experience influences from and in everyday life; and the imaginary of the person, guides the decisions in the daily life, structured on the desires.



The present study presents as a result the theoretical demonstration of the practical issues connected to the formation, whose domain can lead, the education professionals, to an educational action that contemplates the complexity of life in society, offering students a diversity of formative tools that contribute to their autonomy in adult life. In this investigation it was found the fact that the formation goes beyond the cognitive, being constituted in a hybridity between mind and body. Therefore, it may be important to take this element into account when planning educational actions.

Future investigations may broaden this study by focusing attention on how to achieve hybrid integration between mind and body in family and school educational practice, thus building a pedagogical model applicable in the two contexts mentioned. Finally, this text was a contribution to the knowledge of the breadth of educational practice and the challenges that involve human formation. Given the importance of the theme, it is considered that there is still much to go in the field of research in this area and is therefore a fertile field of work for other researchers.



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