

MYTHICAL ORAL NARRATIVES IN RIVERSIDE SCHOOL DAYLY LIFE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE ECOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE

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ABSTRACT

This article takes into account the fact that most schools in the Amazon region of Pará give little value to other literatures as literary literacy practices because they are not recognized by academia as literature proper, such as mythical oral narratives, which feed the symbolic imagination of riverside social groups. The objectives of this work are to analyse the theoretical foundations that problematize the invisibility of popular knowledge, based on Santos' ecology of knowledge (2006) and to analyse the issue of literary segregation, through mythical narratives, of social groups that inhabit riverside communities in the Amazon region of Pará. This is a scientific study. Among the theoretical references analyzed in this text are Arroyo (2014), Bacherlard (1942) and Santos (2006; 2010). The results stand out: literary reading, as well as the oral exposition of mythical narratives from different social groups through storytelling, which do not have oral records, need to be discovered by children and young readers as an infinite source of leisure/knowledge/doing, and it is necessary for teachers to mediate the relationship between popular knowledge and scientific knowledge, carrying out the ecology of knowledge in schools and recognizing and valuing the traditional knowledge of these communities.

Keywords: Oral narratives. Popular literature. Ecology of knowledge.

NARRATIVAS ORAIS MÍTICAS NO COTIDIANO ESCOLAR RIBEIRINHO SOB A ÓTICA DA ECOLOGIA DE SABERES

RESUMO

Este artigo leva em consideração o fato de que a maioria das escolas da região amazônica paraense dá pouco valor a outras literaturas como práticas de letramento literário por não serem reconhecidas pela academia como literatura propriamente dita, como as narrativas orais míticas, que alimentam o imaginário simbólico dos ribeirinhos. grupos sociais. Os objetivos deste trabalho são analisar os fundamentos teóricos que problematizam a invisibilidade do saber popular, com base na ecologia de saberes de Santos (2006) e analisar a questão da segregação literária, por meio de narrativas míticas, de grupos sociais que habitam comunidades ribeirinhas em região Amazônica do Pará. Este é um estudo científico. Entre os referenciais teóricos analisados neste texto estão Arroyo (2014), Bacherlard (1942) e Santos (2006; 2010). Destacam-se os resultados: a leitura literária, bem como a exposição oral de narrativas míticas de diferentes grupos sociais por meio da contação de histórias, que não possuem registros orais, precisam ser descobertas pelas crianças e jovens leitores como fonte infinita de lazer/conhecimento/fazer, sendo necessário que os professores façam a mediação da relação entre o saber popular e o saber científico, realizando a ecologia de saberes nas escolas e reconhecendo e valorizando os saberes tradicionais dessas comunidades.

Palavras-chave: Narrativas orais; Literatura popular; Ecologia do conhecimento.

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INTRODUCTION

In the majority of schools in the Amazon region of Pará – in the case of this study, the islands of Belém – we have observed in our experience as a teacher that there is no appreciation of other literatures as a literary literacy practice, because they are not recognized by academia as literature proper, such as the mythical oral narratives that feed the symbolic imagination of the riverside social groups that inhabit the islands of the metropolitan region of Belém. We also noticed that they are not even mentioned in textbooks or collections of tales and myths from Pará, because there is no effective work to value these oral narratives, since they are not of interest to studies in the social and human sciences, in order to broaden the cultural repertoire, in a journey through the knowledge that comes from the theoretical support for the historical and philosophical foundations of the human sciences, which privileges the debate on modern scientific epistemological thinking, sidelining local cultural knowledge, as is the case with the mythical narratives of the Amazon.

The need for northern students to be involved in our literary roots is poignant, because the absence of literacy practices is relevant, since it severely affects the recognition of the socio-cultural-literary value of our state and the Amazon region. To this end, there are various strategies to encourage these practices and one that we consider vital is research, as it makes it possible to explore the unknown, through curiosity, playfulness, the fantastic, the imaginary, beliefs and religiosity, in order to discover in the intricacies of mythical narratives the particularities belonging to the culture of distinct social groups, in the case of this research, small social groups that are grouped together on the banks of the rivers that surround the metropolitan region of Belém-PA, these groups being so close to the urban center, but so socio-culturally distant, in the case of riverside societies, as these social groups are classified. And, above all, by placing the riverside social segments as subjects of their knowledge, history and culture.

The objectives of this work are: a) to analyze the theoretical foundations that problematize the invisibility of literary literacy practices of people from these communities recognized as riverine and the popular knowledge that comes from the empirical knowledge that guides their experiences, based on Santos' ecology of knowledge (2006); b) to analyze the issue of literary segregation, through mythical narratives, of social groups that inhabit riverine communities in the Para Amazon.

As this is a scientific study, the search for bases that support the concern that drives this research elucidates the path taken in the studies with regard to valuing the subject through re-education and pedagogical sensitivity. However, Arroyo (2014, p. 27) points out:

[...] The most important thing about the pedagogy of the practice of freedom and of the oppressed is not that it shifts the focus of pedagogical attention from this method to that method, but from objects and methods, from contents and institutions to subjects. Paul doesn't invent methodologies to educate adult peasants or workers or the oppressed, but he does reeducate pedagogical sensitivity to capture the oppressed as subjects of their education, of the construction of knowledge, values and culture. Other social, cultural and pedagogical subjects in learning, in formation. He doesn't propose how to educate them, but how they educate themselves, nor how to teach them, but how they learn, nor how to socialize them, but how they socialize themselves, how they affirm and form themselves as the social, cultural, cognitive, ethical and political subjects that they are. Where does Paul grasp or learn that young people, workers and peasants are pedagogical subjects? By being attentive to their

presence and their social and cultural movements, to their practices of freedom and of recovering their stolen humanity.

Arroyo brilliantly presents the importance of sensitization in the process of pedagogical relationships that are established at school. Valuing the subject in a broad sense is essential, considering the humanization of relationships, respect is necessary in the construction of the individual's knowledge.

1 THE SOCIO-CULTURAL FUNCTION OF THE VALUE OF OTHER LITERATURES

Children and young people arrive at school with knowledge and experiences that often come from oppression, poverty and violence, and this experience re-educates teachers, who have to review values, concepts and even opinions in the face of the varied situations presented and experienced at school by everyone who is part of it. This is one of the functions of education: to confront reality.

When teachers become capable of interpreting the knowledge brought by students, the school becomes humanized, pedagogy gets closer to the reality of students' lives and starts to consider them as the social, cultural, cognitive, ethical and political subjects they are, as well as interpreting their knowledge of the world, what they know about themselves, race, gender, segregated and oppressed knowledge. Arroyo also comments on these assertions:

What questions do these Other Subjects raise for pedagogical theories? If students are Others to teaching, can teachers be the same? Challenging questions for popular and school education. The educational experiences that are closest to popular dynamics are very sensitive to capturing the presence of new subjects. The literature on popular education, from its beginnings in the 1960s, highlights its centrality in educational action. Subjects in movement, in educational actions. Education as a process of humanization of diverse collective subjects. *Pedagogies in movement* (ARROYO, 2014.p. 26).

To think of a school that is committed to its socio-cultural function is to generate possibilities to give new generations access to historically produced knowledge. A welcoming school, capable of going beyond its walls and recognizing that it is made up of people from different backgrounds. A school that does not disregard the emotional dimension of the subjects that make it up fails to value an important dimension of life, because before we are teachers, students, staff, we are human.

Next, we present the theoretical basis of the relationship between different forms of knowledge through what Santos (2006) calls the ecology of knowledge and, subsequently, the analysis of literary production involving mythical narratives in schools in riverside communities, pointing out the need to recognize local cultural knowledge in the school environment.

For Santos (2006, p. 33), "in the field of knowledge, abyssal thinking consists of granting modern science a monopoly on the universal distinction between true and false, to the detriment of two alternative forms of knowledge". In this way, the dichotomy between scientific and empirical knowledge is not validated from the point of view of the scientific community, nullifying other forms of knowledge production in scientific inquiry, in other words, poetic poetry suffers invisibility in its narratives.

It is important to consider that in schools there is a dichotomy between knowledge, with scientific knowledge being valued and popular knowledge being segregated. Thus, when educators disregard the knowledge of students' cultural life experiences, they establish dividing lines between this knowledge, so that it is not recognized in the scientific community, and is no

longer considered legitimate social knowledge, which is in the experiences brought by students to the school environment, presented as lived experiences and applied in everyday life.

We emphasize that there are different types of knowledge in the social space, as expressed by Santos in his Epistemology of the South.

[...] tensions between science, philosophy and theology have always been highly visible, but as I argue, they all take place on this side of the line. Their visibility is based on the invisibility of forms of knowledge that don't fit into any of these ways of knowing. I'm referring to popular, lay, commoner, peasant or indigenous knowledge on the other side of the line. They disappear as relevant or commensurable knowledge because they lie beyond the universe of true and false. It is unimaginable to apply to them not only the scientific distinction between true and false, but also the unverifiable truths of philosophy and theology that constitute the other acceptable knowledge on this side of the line, there is no real knowledge, there are beliefs, opinions, magic, idolatry, intuitive or subjective understandings, which, at best, but become objects or raw material for scientific inquiry (SANTOS; MENEZES, 2010, p. 23).

The authors in question consider that knowledge must dialogue with each other; each social group has its own knowledge, which must break down barriers created by the hegemony of knowledge in modernity, which deauthorizes other discourses. All knowledge must be valid and overturning the Eurocentric paradigm is vital.

In the Ecology of Knowledge, scientific and popular knowledge come together to epistemologically strengthen collective actions. Thus, in order to understand the biodiversity of the Amazon, there is a need for indigenous knowledge or the knowledge of riverside populations, in addition to scientific knowledge. Santos (2006, p. 33) talks about this:

in the ecology of knowledge, knowledge and therefore also ignorance intersect. There is no ignorance that is as heterogeneous, autonomous and interdependent as knowledge. Given this interdependence, the learning of certain knowledge can involve the forgetting and concealment of others and, ultimately, the ignorance of these, in ecology, ignorance is not necessarily an original state or starting point. It can result from the forgetting or unlearning implicit in the reciprocal learning through which interdependence takes place. That's why in the ecology of knowledge it's crucial to ask at every moment whether what is learned is worth what is forgotten or unlearned. Ignorance is only a disqualified form of being and doing when what is learned is worth more than what is forgotten. The utopia of inter-knowledge is to learn other knowledge without forgetting your own. It is this technology of prudence that underlies the ecology of knowledge.

In contextualizing the concept of the ecology of knowledge, the author discusses the hegemony and domination of scientific knowledge, insofar as there is other knowledge that can explain our reality. He also questions why they are called "traditional, alternative or peripheral", considering that they are all "non-scientific knowledge". He understands that the hierarchy between scientific and non-scientific knowledge is evidence of a relationship of domination. "Knowledge is not on an equal level and they are not all valid. The ecology of knowledge is part of an epistemological whole in which the cognitive aspect is not separated from the political" (SANTOS, 2006, p. 33).

Santos (2006) expresses the need for equality between these different forms of knowledge and proposes dialog in a horizontal relationship, in which there is no superior or inferior knowledge, but rather different conceptions of reality that must communicate and become interdependent.

Thus, at school it is up to educators to carry out an exercise in cultural mediation that will integrate the knowledge that circulates in the student's life and imagination.

2 SCHOOL, CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE AND THE SYMBOLIC IMAGINATION: MYTH, LITERARY LITERACY

The riverside communities are made up of different sizes of houses, either isolated or in small agglomerations along the various islands of the Belém metropolitan region. Generally, the dwellings are close to the water of permanent canals and rivers.

The Riverine Populations are made up of social subjects strongly linked to the Amazon's hydrography, which plays an important role in the process of occupation of this Brazilian territorial space (SANTOS, 2014). These populations fight for equal rights; the right to education, health, leisure, territory, and the valorization of their customs and traditions. They are also fighting for their knowledge and culture to be valued, which includes the recognition of their literary production.

The transcendental power of reading is recognized here, but this transcendence is not something totally detached from the reality that surrounds us, because if it were, it wouldn't intervene in reality and would only be responsible for alienating reproduction. On the contrary, the power and magic of literature resonates precisely with this reality, helping us to understand it and intervene in it, recreating it. By immersing oneself in reading, [the reader] enters another sphere, but does not lose the sense of reality and therein lies, in our view, the magical function of literature: through it we experience another reality, with its emotions and dangers, without suffering the consequences of what we do and feel while reading.

Working with literary reading at school must therefore take into account the following question: what concept of literature and reading guides work with the text at school? When literary texts circulate in school, it is necessary to work with them in a way that goes beyond simply reading them and then doing exercises to fix them.

For Soares (2003), literacy refers to reading and writing practices in a context in which they make sense, i.e. students need to know how to make social use of and get involved in reading and writing activities. And, according to Rojo (2009), literacy goes beyond the literacy that takes place in schools and occurs in multiple ways, through social relations.

Thus, analyzing the use of differentiated methods of reading and literacy through oral narratives, in a way leads the reader to highlight the surrealism contained in the myth; to know and discuss the textual genre myth as literature.

For the narrator of the myth, the fact has a real character, even though they didn't witness it and, in order to confirm it as a true fact, they use the myth as a means of confirming their social and cultural traditions. Myths are strengthened through orality, always told by an ancestor who has told someone else, such as grandparents, older uncles and friends.

Narratives such as those that tell of the birth of Jesus, in which the virgin Mary is impregnated by the Holy Spirit; in the stories that involve the emergence of the world with the Big Bang phenomenon, in which scientists claim that the origin of the universe came from an explosion, or even the tales of the Amazonian caboclo such as the Boto narrative, in which an enchanted young man impregnates a girl on the banks of a river and the existence of the big snake, there is a surreal character that involves the essence of Western myth.

According to Monteiro (2005), there is an old belief that there is a large snake sleeping under part of the city, with its head under the main altar of the Basilica of Nazaré and the end of its tail under the Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

Figure 1 below illustrates how the Cobra Grande myth is part of the daily life of riverside communities in the Amazon.

Figure 1: Illustration of the mythical figure Cobra Grande



Source: <https://binged.it/2R4pV9t>

The imaginary must be respected in its essence of truth and not as fiction, illusion, fantasy, invention, since the creative force of the image has already been established in science. It is necessary to extensively study human cultural production, especially the images that emerge from oral narratives, religions and the cultural manifestations of social groups. Therefore, it is necessary to establish an anthropological path of the imaginary, which spans from the biological to the social, as well as from the social to the biological. “Imagination is not, as its etymology suggests, the faculty of forming images of reality; it is the faculty of forming images that go beyond reality, that sing reality. It is a faculty of superhumanity” (BACHERLARD, 1942, p.16). Legros at al (2007, p. 155), states that “For Durand, the symbolic imagination is at the origin of scientific theories”:

the imaginary [has the capacity] to incite, to direct scientific or technical research. Canguilhem (1952) had noticed that heuristic development follows an imaginary plan and vision. This biologist has an imaginary of the fragment, the cell, the molecule: his verbal schème is “to cut” and “to frequent”, while that of another, on the other hand, only situates his research in sets, tissues, organs, functions; therefore, his verbal schème is “to take coherently” and “globalizing”. Bachelard had already pointed out this phenomenon: it doesn’t matter how one invents, but that one is always prepared for an inventive reverie, an imaginary declension. Holton, a Harvard physicist, has masterfully shown that it is the radically opposed problematic “forces” that led Einstein and Niels Bohr to their theories. In one, the imaginary of the continuous; in the other [...], the imaginary of the punctual and the discontinuous (LEGROS at al, 1996, p. 180-181).

Considering the reality of our society, which still assumes preconceptions in the face of what deviates from the standard that has been imposed on culture, literature and social concepts for centuries, there is a long and arduous road ahead in the quest to deepen studies, research and data collection, in order to gather and organize a collection of mythical oral narratives from riverside dwellers, emphasizing the unprecedented nature of these narratives, since the extraordinary number of distinct oral narratives on all the themes that keep the traditions alive

of these social groups that live somewhat isolated from urban centers, such as the city of Belém, is unknown.

Some islands around Belém are still without electricity. When we mention isolated, it's because even though they are so close to the urban center, the riverside dwellers of the Pará Amazon also go through a process of dehumanization, segregation and neglect on the part of society as a whole, and especially the government and public policies that don't reach them, except when there is some kind of socio-economic interest.

Weber (1973), when analyzing the concept of social action, takes a close look at the meanings of "social relationship". The author explains how a social relationship is called a "community relationship" and when it is called an "associative relationship".

a social relationship is called a "community relationship" when and to the extent that the attitude in social action - in the particular case or on average or in the pure type - rests on the participants' subjective feeling of belonging (affectively or traditionally) to the same group. A relationship is called an "associative relationship" when and to the extent that the attitude in social action rests on an adjustment or union of rationally motivated interests (with reference to values or ends). The associative relationship, as in the typical case, can rest especially (but not solely) on a rational agreement, by reciprocal declaration. Then the corresponding action, when it is rational, is oriented: a) in a rational way with reference to values, by the belief in one's own commitment; b) in a rational way with reference to ends by the expectation of the other party's loyalty (WEBER, 1973, p. 25).

Weber's statement endorses the inherent characteristic of every social relationship, which is the tension between opposing values and ideas that intersect and provide the basis for the constitution of the *ethos* and worldview of a given social group.

What can be seen in observations made of the way of life of riverside communities is that there is knowledge that is silenced by these peoples who feel, in some way, subalternized and who live on the margins of knowledge. However, men and women in the Amazon re-signify everything they experience by recovering memories in the narratives of family members, elderly people from the family or neighborhood, old friends; they re-signify these oral legacies left by their ancestors who claim to have had experiences with supernatural beings who live in the forests or on the rivers.

This knowledge and imagery built up in riverside social practices needs to be in school in interaction with scientific knowledge, from the perspective of Santos' ecology of knowledge (2006), recognizing and legitimizing the traditional knowledge of these communities that still remains invisible in the school epistemological field.

3 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In view of the above, considering the symbolic imagination of the Amazonian caboclo and the maintenance of the oral tradition of tales and myths that, in a way, govern their lives and daily lives, also considers that this tradition, maintained within the riverside social groups, does not break the paradigms of silencing that are established in the social relations of these groups, since these oral narratives do not reach teachers and schools through pedagogical practices that value the expressions of literature that feed and maintain oral traditions, which foster the playful and poetic character applied in the conversation circles that are formed when members of the same community or visitors get together to relate mythical facts that are considered real from a historical perspective of the reality of riverside men and women.

We understand that all reading practices humanize us and, by humanizing us, make us closer and more open to school dialogue. Therefore, literary and non-literary reading

practices are dialogues between the past and the present, through which we share knowledge, experiences and visions of the world and life.

Therefore, different forms of literary manifestation need to be included in the riverside school, such as reading circles, which are “spaces for sharing”, which highlights the dialogical nature of reading and its relevance as a social and historical practice situated in the construction of meanings and knowledge that permeate the mythical oral narratives that spread literary literacy in a social group.

Literary reading, as an oral exposition of mythical narratives from different social groups through storytelling, which have no oral records, needs to be discovered by the child reader as a source of pleasure/knowledge/doing, using reading strategies in the reader’s interaction with the text, with the dialog, with the storytelling, as well as the application of methodologies capable of integrating the relationship with the various possible relationships with the reader. The teacher will be responsible for mediating these actions, creating an ecology of knowledge and recognizing and valuing the traditional knowledge of these communities.

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