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THE PEDAGOGY OF COMPETENCES AS A POST-FORDIST TECHNICISM

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Abstract: The texts and curricula based on the pedagogy of competences suggest that this form of teaching, contrary to classical technicality, helps students to develop autonomy, enhances critical and creative abilities, facilitates inclusion and integration, contemplates the individual in his multiple dimensions and contributes to the improvement of democratic institutions. What this article seeks to discuss is that the pedagogies of competences, contrary to what is supposed, are the revival of technicist theses but on new bases. If the technicism of yore was the pedagogical expression of Fordism, teaching by competences is its current equivalent, fulfilling the same social function.

Keywords: Competence pedagogies, technicality, post-fordism.

The recognition of the pedagogy of competences as a neoliberal and postmodern expression is a consolidated subject in the critical literature, of which we highlight the work of professors Newton Duarte (2011) and Saulo Carvalho (2014). What we intend to demonstrate, however, is its intimate

connection to the new forms of productive organization, which ultimately determine which skills will be developed in students through school education. For didactic purposes, below is a table that summarizes the main differences between the Fordist pattern and its substitute.

(Table below)

Let's start with the Fordist scheme of work management, paradigmatic of the "industrial age" that thinkers often invoke. Specialization was essential, as each employee performed the same task, repeatedly, so excellence was performing it in the shortest possible time. Ending wasted time was the main scope of this managerial approach and to achieve this objective the employee underwent training until he was able to keep up with the timer. The employee who excelled in this regard was rewarded, whoever was unable to keep up with the pace was dismissed. There was a very heavy hierarchical control between supervision and execution, in which some employees had the specific role of regulating and leading the others. Quality control evaluated the result of the work only at the end of the entire process.

	Fordism	Post-fordism
Activity	Single task	multiple tasks
Worker Characteristic	Specialist	Polyvalent
Training	Learn by repetition	Learn in the process; continuing education
Remuneration	Proportional salary (by type of activity)	Salary based on result (or per piece)
Desired Behavior	Discipline and hierarchical obedience	Proactivity, creativity and engagement
Production X Supervision	Clear division	fine division
Emphasis	In the individual	In the team (valuation of interpersonal relationships)
Production	Bulk - stock	On demand - <i>just in time</i>
Product	Homogeneous product; standardization	customized product
Assessment	Quality test after	Quality test in the process
Components	Made their own components	Suppliers manufacture the components

Remuneration varied according to the type of activity, but always *pro rata*. The main moral virtues extolled were obedience to authority and discipline, attitudes indispensable for the good functioning of such a rigidly hierarchical and systematized organization. All this legitimized by the modern ideas of structure, organism and system.

While critics condemned the alienation and inhumanity intrinsic to the Taylorist/Fordist scheme, its defenders claimed that this was the most efficient way of managing production, even pointing out that the Soviet bloc countries had adopted such an organization. This technical equivalence allowed Bell (1977) and Castells (2011) to claim that socialism and capitalism are both expressions of industrial society. The indignity of the form of work under this configuration was widely recognized, not being restricted to philosophical discussions or sociological analyses, being even the target of satire, as in Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times*, and inspiring dystopian predictions, as in *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley, 1984 by George Orwell, *Revolution in the Future* by Kurt Vonnegut Jr. and *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury. However, this degrading picture was "compensated" by public policies of the regulatory state, both Keynesian and socialist. This type of extensive economic growth, in its short period of time, provided a significant improvement in living conditions and, for this reason, the discourses that highlighted its negative aspects, although always present and widely publicized, did not find, until the 1990s, the necessary elements to convert into systematic revolts against the degradation operated by Taylorism/Fordism. Although criticism of Fordist industrialism never completely disappeared, they remained dormant during the post-war period of economic growth until the world crisis of the 1970s. The economic collapse did not take

long to generate a picture of intense social instability. Several strikes were launched, both in central and peripheral capitalist countries, and bourgeois institutions were losing legitimacy and, consequently, their ability to curb revolutionary impulses. Faced with this scenario, in which it was imperative to rescue levels of accumulation on the one hand and maintain ideological hegemony on the other, radical liberalism was resurrected, now emancipated from certain social concerns and attaching the prefix *neo* to its name, as a societal alternative. In terms of industrial management, it was necessary to rethink the model and adapt it to the new reality. Three points were immediately necessary: reducing the number of employees, undermining the possibilities of downtime, and devising a new way of controlling inventory in order to avoid overproduction. The models that gained the most attention were those applied in the Volvo and Toyota factories, serving as a reference beyond the automotive sector.

The fall in the rate of profitability, a tendency of the capitalist mode of production according to Marx (2015), forces capital to increasingly stress work, that is, it inevitably results in the maximization of worker exploitation. Faced with the structural crisis, which began in the 1970s and whose echoes are felt to this day, the resumption of the levels of capital accumulation requires action on two fronts: absolute surplus value, in which the rhythm of labor, and relative surplus value, in which the value of labor power is reduced. This mechanism drives constant technical/technological development on the one hand and the dwindling employment of employees on the other. The worker who performed the same function in production, as in Fordism/Taylorism, was a problem for a very fundamental reason: if he didn't work, whatever the reason, production stopped. The strikes, therefore, were much stronger

than they are today, also for this reason. Such multi-specialization is precisely that: all employees must know how to perform various functions in order to be reassigned whenever necessary. Or yet, due to the extinction of a position/trade, another worker accumulates his functions, earning the same, if not less. If before, for example, there was a person who weighed the fruit and vegetables in the market, today the cashier has also accumulated this function; if before, in urban transport, there was a collector, today the driver is the one who must perform this task and so on. Both examples demonstrate that this logic reaches far beyond the industrial sector; in fact, it guides companies from all economic sectors.

If there is no longer a single task to be performed by the employee, he must always be ready to perform in different roles; therefore, instead of previous, specialized, repetitive training, conducted by an experienced instructor, it is now recommended that the employee remains in constant improvement and, if possible, that he learns on his own and during the work process itself. The layout of contemporary factories, radically different from Fordist treadmills, is also more open for this reason, to provide a broader view, so that everyone starts to supervise and assimilate the attributions of all the companions. By the way, the division between supervision and production tends to blur, as it is much more advantageous for the company to have each “productive” worker cover himself and his colleagues than to pay a supervisor just to monitor and direct them. This is possible by convincing them to be co-responsible. No one would be an employee anymore, they would now be collaborators; this way, risks and responsibilities are equally shared by all; profit, on the other hand, belongs only to the capitalist. Far from implying greater trust and lower demands, what is observed, both

in factories and in service providers, is the illness of the psychic health of individuals. This intensification of the exploitation of the workforce put into practice by this new management model, translates into symptoms such as depression, panic syndrome, burnout syndrome, anxiety crises, in short, in a situation of psychological degradation never seen before, nor in the beginnings of the first industrial revolution. The imposition of abusive goals added to an individual evaluation system provides this excessive self-demand, makes them go beyond the tolerable limits, even neglecting their personal life and rest, taking chores to their own house. According to a recent study, four out of five people claim that work or its absence are largely responsible for their illnesses and psychological suffering. In another survey, carried out by Isma-BR, 72% of Brazilians in the job market say they suffer from problems related to the stress of their occupations. Of this total, 1/3 would be affected by the burnout syndrome, a disease recognized even by the WHO, characterized by extensive physical and psychological exhaustion; apathy and loss of personality; in addition to low job satisfaction ¹.

In the Fordist approach, the behaviors most valued within the professional activity were organizational discipline and hierarchical obedience, necessary for that type of vertical and inflexible organization. In the current management model, which is very different from the previous one, other behaviors and values are praised. As production is designed to respond to demand in a way that does not create large inventories and the product is no longer so uniform, but slightly “personalized”, a new dynamic is installed, forcing employees to be much more creative to think of solutions in the face of new situations and take the initiative to solve the problems identified without anyone having

1. <https://noticias.uol.com.br/saude/ultimas-noticias/estado/2019/05/28/estresse-no-trabalho-vira-doenca-afirma-oms.htm>
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to summon them to do so. This more agile and flexible scheme only becomes operative if the employee is persuaded to engage by the company, or in corporate parlance, “put on the shirt”. The report “*The future of jobs*” of the World Economic Forum (2018) points out that associated with proficiency in new technologies, it is desirable that they develop *human skills* such as: Analytical thinking and innovation; Solving complex problems; Critical thinking and analysis; Active learning and learning strategies; Creativity, originality and initiative; Attention to detail, reliability; Emotional intelligence; Reasoning, problem solving and ideation; Leadership and social influence; Coordination and time management.

Now, this list of skills has nothing to do with the integral improvement as advocated by the Enlightenmentists or with omnilateral development in the terms put by Karl Marx, as explained by Justino de Sousa Júnior (2013). What is defended here is the total subsumption of human capacities to the logic of capital. The confusion arises because, in Fordism, due to the explicit division between production and supervision, there were employees who used only manual skills, while others, supervisors, operated with certain intellectual and social skills necessary for their function; today, that one-sidedness has disappeared. However, contrary to what is reported by emissaries of the “knowledge society” and “industry 4.0”, this did not mean humanization of work. The full development of human capacities is not being promoted or their intrinsic importance is being recognized, nor is the product of their physical and mental efforts contributing to the benefit of humanity as a whole. They

are, after all, simple commodities. Capitalism imposes determinations on work and its result, regardless of whether it is a Taylorist, Fordist, Volvista, Toyotist or Hyundaiist model, the ultimate purpose of work is the “valorization of value”. In this sense, what is different today, in relation to the perspectives of the past, is the directing of the set of the best manual, intellectual and social potential - of all employees - at the service of private profit. Let us return here to the report of the World Economic Forum (2018). For purposes of demonstration, we will separate the grouping of the *skills* “em alta”: *creativity, originality and initiative*. The initiative “requires willingness to assume responsibilities and challenges”². In other words, as we have already analyzed, what is implicit is the idea of co-responsibility and engagement. This leads us directly to the second skill listed, responsibility, understood as the ability to “make decisions on your own”. The third: *skill*, and that completes the meaning of the first two, is autonomy, understood here not in the Enlightenment sense of self-determination, but as the ability to “plan your work with little supervision”. Creativity, seen as the ability to “test your own ideas”³, only deals with ideas that allow us to “think outside the box” and thereby make the company more profitable, not seeking to recognize creativity as a human predicate in itself. Innovation is defined in the aforementioned report as a faculty “to develop new ideas and answers to work-related problems”⁴. Originality signals the “ability to present unusual or clever ideas about a particular topic or situation, or to develop creative ways to solve a problem”⁵.

The block of emotional intelligence *skills*, equally in demand today, is also very revealing

2. In the original document: “*Job requires a willingness to take on responsibilities and challenges.*” (2018, p.41) Disponível em: http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs_2018.pdf <acesso em 06/09/2021 às 19:46>

3. In the original document: “*Workers on this job try out their own ideas.*” Idem, *ibidem*.

4. In the original document: “*Job requires creativity and alternative thinking to develop new ideas for and answers to work-related problems.*” Idem, *ibidem*.

5. In the original document: “*The ability to come up with unusual or clever ideas about a given topic or situation, or to develop creative ways to solve a problem.*” Idem, *ibidem*.

that the skills required by the world of work must not be understood in its broadest and most humanistic sense, but in a pragmatic and financial sense. A *concern for others*, in literal translation “concern for others”, or empathy in a loose translation, indicates the requirement to “be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others and to be understanding and helpful at work”.⁶ In this bias, solicitude is only legitimate if it results in greater effectiveness. The ability to cooperate as “being pleasant to others at work and showing a good-natured and cooperative attitude”⁷ is not understood as an instrument of emancipation, as in the utopian socialists. the ability to *social orientation* is complementary to the first two and indicates “preferring to work with others rather than alone, and being personally connected with others at work”⁸. Finally, we have the *skill* “social perception”, meaning “being aware of the reactions of others and understanding why they react the way they do”. Such abilities, in short, do not stem from the need to care about the difficulties and sufferings of another human being or to seek cooperation as a way of overcoming privatism; stem from this flexible organizational model that forces individuals to act collectively in order to obtain greater profitable effectiveness. Following the same line, the praise of critical thinking does not mean, by far, considering the deep understanding of social relations in their entirety and their innumerable mediations, but simply “using logic and reasoning to identify strengths and weaknesses”. of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems”. Another skill of the same grouping is “monitoring”, that is, evaluating “your own performance, that of other individuals or organizations, in order to make improvements

6. In the original document: “*Job requires being sensitive to others’ needs and feelings and being understanding and helpful on the job.*” The same.

7. In the original document: “*Job requires being pleasant with others on the job and displaying a good-natured, cooperative attitude.*” The same.

8. In the original document: “*Job requires preferring to work with others rather than alone and being personally connected with others on the job.*” The same.

or take corrective measures”. With the reduction in the number of supervisors and the elimination of the need to evaluate during the process, as discussed above, it is natural to attribute greater “autonomy” to the employee, even attributing to him a “critical” sense of the result of their own work activity as well as that of others close to them. The practical consequence of this new approach is not an increase in the broad criticality of the subject, which allows him to read the world in a more profound way, but a panoptic control, according to which everyone supervises everyone. For obvious reasons, there is no way to train subjects in all these skills when they join their companies. Not only would it take a long time for individuals to acquire such skills, the capitalist also does not want to bear the costs of such training. Therefore, this task would be left to the schools. Also for this reason, large institutions and foundations maintained by large capitalists seek to intervene in the development of curricula and advocate a method of teaching and school management. The Lemann Foundation, founded by one of the largest Brazilian capitalists, with an estimated fortune of almost 20 billion dollars, actively participated in the construction of the National Common Curricular Base, for example. Todos pela Educação is an organization formed from a conglomerate of large capitalists from the financial market, agribusiness, communications, etc., and which, as demonstrated by Erika Moreira Martins (2013), has sought to influence the direction of education. *in the field: brasilis*.

The pedagogy of competences, with its obsession with the immediate applicability of everything that is learned, re-edits the old technicality, but on other bases. During the

period of Fordism, the school considered a model reproduced the same industrial logic through the branch called technicism. The 50-minute class period worked as the factory stopwatch, the blackboard copies and the resolution of exercises were the daily tasks, good students were rewarded and the bad ones were punished, without any embarrassment. Systematic repetition and the volume of tasks were praised. In the same way that the worker performed an activity without understanding the entire process, the students did not understand why they were learning such subjects. Hierarchical control within the school reproduced the factory model and was not limited only to the relationship between teacher and student, but also between employees, marked by the same division between execution and supervision. The moral principles most valued in educational institutions were strictly the same as in the factory environment: obedience and discipline. The exam, a kind of quality control, was carried out at the end of the educational process and served to assess the performance of students based on their “production”, and more than that, it was exactly the same for everyone.

The teaching model and the technicist-oriented curriculum were objects of criticism since its implementation, when this trend grew from the failure of the experiences of the so-called Escola Nova (SAVIANI, 2012). Two critical strands stood out in denouncing methodological insufficiencies and mistakes and the social function of pedagogical technicality: that of the critical-reproductivists, who keenly observed the inclination of education systems to compete for the perpetuation of this societal model, among which stand out Pierre Bourdieu and Jean Claude Passeron, Cristian Baudelot and Roger Establet, Samuel Bowles and Hebert Gintis and Althusser (Saviani, 2008); and

that of the progressives, who also denounced the preserving and procreative role of the technicist school but, unlike the former, proposed an alternative educational model, with emphasis, in Brazil, on the propositions of Paulo Freire and the idea of Escola Libertadora and Dermeval Saviani with the constitution of Historical-Critical Pedagogy.

With the final crisis of Fordism, technicist education, in the classical molds, also found its end. Criticism, always present, now found room to flourish. However, the most radical propositions, whose expansion of critical mass was the ultimate foundation of pedagogical practice, did not interest the bourgeoisie. Reforming education was essential, but the conservative ideological orientation of its curriculum could not be jeopardized. The fall of the so-called real socialism had a profound impact on curricular proposals based on socialism, especially those with a Marxist orientation, allowing the neoliberal offensive, unwilling to make any social concessions, to penetrate education without much opposition. The rhetoric of a completely new, meritocratic, transparent, less bureaucratic, technological world, which allows the free circulation of ideas and capital, and whose main input is knowledge and no longer raw materials. In short, the advent of the knowledge society conferred the necessary legitimacy for the curricular adaptation to the new competences.

In view of this, educational thinking based on the “single discourse” needed to point out the guidelines to be followed, but in order to hide its agenda, seeking to present itself as avant-garde, innovative, dynamic. An education that insists on training aimed at guaranteeing greater autonomy and a sense of responsibility to students, that encourages critical and creative thinking and that promotes cooperation and social concern is not an object of great controversy. Because they were flags widely defended during the

Enlightenment, the height of bourgeois thought, and later adopted by socialist thought in its different hues, these competences enter contemporary curricula and are greeted with great enthusiasm by most progressive theorists in education. However, the curricular insertion of such capacities has been emptied of its original humanist meaning. What comes to us is the corporate simulacrum of initiative, autonomy, critical thinking, creativity, etc., along the lines of the World Economic Forum report (2018).

Despite being based on the idea of a new, technological and globalized world, contemporary curricular proposals must, first of all, demonstrate the limitations of the previous paradigm. This did not require much effort, because as we have seen, the criticism of the technician model in education was already widely known for decades. What was lacking was precisely the proposition of new competences, more in tune with post-Fordism. As we have seen, these proposals require very different intellectual and social skills from the predecessor model, such as working in a team, being “proactive”, self-supervising and self-evaluating, solving problems quickly and creatively, multitasking, learning new things, being able to devise and execute a project, having the resilience to mentally withstand the demands of both others and the subject himself, in addition to the obvious intimacy with new technologies. This attribution of greater technical and behavioral obligations to individuals needed to start with basic formal education in order to adapt them immediately to this new paradigm. The solution was ready from the beginning: the theses of *Escola Nova*. Everything that the apologists of the competency curriculum needed, including to prefigure it as a critical and progressive approach, was already there.

Let's start with the figures directly involved in the teaching-learning act. The teacher must

be a facilitator, someone who puts students in a learning situation and they must be able to learn on their own. In other words, there is no more teaching, since the transmission of knowledge is seen as an authoritarian act, which would limit the autonomy and critical capacity of individuals. This non-direction requires that the teacher has much more mastery of psychological instruments, in order to motivate and foster curiosity in students, than actually specialized knowledge of the subject for which he is responsible, that is, the professional profile changes radically. In this bias, a teacher who behaves like a stand-up comedian, who transforms the class into a show of humor, is much more requested and valued than a specialist teacher in the traditional mold. The expansion of the critical mass on any relevant subject requires seriousness and intellectual discipline, since the deepening of readings is almost never a pleasant exercise, requiring concentration for long periods.

The student is, in this perspective, the center of learning. If in the classical New School this premise was the recognition of the centrality of the subject in the relationship of knowledge, a typically modern perspective, today this is taken over by a societal imperative, since all that the post-Fordist model aims is for the individual to be a manager (or despot) of himself. Autonomy, a word reiterated both in the curricula and in its guiding texts, has nothing to do with human emancipation, as in Enlightenment thinking, as at first it might suggest, but with the ability to plan and execute one's work activity with the minimal supervision, making decisions on their own and becoming accountable for them. Ideally, students must be able to learn to learn and learn to self-assess themselves, so that they can continue to improve according to daily demands, without the presence of another supervisor who forces them to do, train/study

or still someone who judges the quality of your work. If in the Fordist period communication between employees ends up harming the progress of the “treadmill” in the production line, in post-Fordism communication between workers is essential. As the school must adapt to the new paradigm, attention, silence and discipline, indispensable to intellectual activity, make room for interpersonal communication proper to teamwork.

(Table below)

Its foundations, whether psychological, philosophical or political-economic, are different from the predecessor model since they are those that best suit the bourgeoisie in this new economic and socio-technical configuration and not because they have been “overcome” by improved theories. Behaviorism did not cease to be the main psychological theory of the curricula in view of the scientific recognition of its inadequacies in relation to

children’s learning. What actually happened is that it ceased to be an estimated theory, as some of its assumptions were not compatible with the requirements of the new model. For Fordism, behavioral conditioning was very important since the individual repeated the same movements and the same behaviors to exhaustion; at this stage, however, this is no longer interesting given the imperative of flexibility. In this scenario, the Vygotskian historical-cultural approach, in a postmodern reading called socio-interactionism, and Piagetian constructivism, due to the primacy given to the autonomous action of subjects, are the most appreciated theories.

Although the competencies required by the post-Fordist model were very different from those demanded by the Fordist/Taylorist scheme, which undoubtedly modifies almost all of its didactic aspects, competency-based curricula, despite their

	Technicist curriculum	Competencies (as presented)	Competencies (as they are in fact)
Psychological Foundation	behaviorism	Cultural-Historical Psychology	Constructivism And Socio-Interactionism
Philosophical Foundation	Positivism	Late Humanism	Postmodernism
Economic Foundation	Keynesian liberalism	Social Liberalism	Neoliberalism
Objective	Economic development	Expansion Of Democracy	Economic Development
Professor	Executor of an external program	Essential Mediator	External Program Runner
Student	learn to do	Learning To Know, Do, Live And Be	Learn To Do
Learning	Memorization and repetition	Troubleshooting, Contextualization	Mobilization Of Practical Knowledge
Technical Graduation	efficient workforce	More Critical, Creative And Autonomous Citizen	Efficient Workforce
Ideological Formation	Reproduce capitalist sociability	Reform, Improve Society	Reproduce Capitalist Sociability
Classic Subjects	Devaluation	Inter And Transdisciplinary	Devaluation
Emphasis	Efficiency and yield	Inclusion And Integration	Efficiency And Yield
Resume	rigid and pragmatic	Flexible And Democratic	Pragmatic Self-Service
Assessment	classification, selection	Continued Evaluation	Automatic Approval

appearance, are profoundly similar to classical technicism, regarding its objectives. This is where our argument lies: the competency-based curriculum is a revival of technicality. The social function of formal education is strictly the same as in the past, to form a competent workforce within the current technical-industrial standard while instilling a world view that naturalizes social relations. In both the technical and ideological spheres, schooling ultimately contributes to the reproduction of this societal model. The essence, therefore, is the same. At the most empirical level, the different theories in education, the differentiated didactics, suggest a revolution in education; however, when we go down to the deeper causes, we realize that the changes remain epidermal, as the nature of the educational process remains capitalist.

The technicist curriculum had economic development as its “reason for existence”. As this pedagogical paradigm has long been superseded for the reasons mentioned, to say today that the scope of technicist education aimed to develop a set of knowledge and attitudes making everyone more productive and fostering economic growth is something easily accepted by most thinkers in education. However, most of these intellectuals ignore, consciously or not, that the curriculum based on competences re-edits the total subsumption of the school to the market, now under the neoliberal sign. Trapped in an irrationalist epistemology that no longer differentiates between appearance and essence, many professionals and academics in education allow themselves to be deceived by the pseudo-democratic and pseudo-humanist discourse present in the curricula and in the seminal texts that endorse them. As Newton Duarte (2011, p. 53) notes, “intellectuals at the service of capital are masters in using a vague discourse that hides ideological commitments”.

One of the most used strategies is to adopt

a lexicon specific to the economic sphere, adorning it with a “democratic, sustainable and inclusive” glaze. Christian Laval (2004) reveals that the notion of “lifelong learning”, which, at first, would suggest an integral concern with the human being, is linked to the ideas of effectiveness and performance, as well as the very term “competence” that, as we have already commented, denotes neoliberal rationality by proposing “an essentially practical representation of useful knowledge” (idem, p.45). The emphasis, therefore, of the competency-based curriculum is not inclusion and integration, as advertised, but efficiency and performance.

School education is increasingly seen as “initial training”, that is, preparatory to professional training and thus able to legitimately receive, in feedback, its injunctions, especially in “behavioral” matters. The school is there to ensure a kind of primitive accumulation of human capital. The general culture must no longer be guided by disinterested motives when, in the company, it is no longer a very restricted specialization that is requested, but a base of competences necessary for the versatile and flexible worker (LAVAL, 2004, p. 46).

Education, at any time, aims at the reproduction of social life based on socio-technical training (since work, as a transformation of nature, is unavoidable) and the set of ideas and values that explain reality and make it operative. Due to private property, a mutilating split was established in the fundamental human act: those who idealize the work no longer executes it and those who execute it no longer have the prerogative to design it, nor does the result of their effort belong to them. This duality is verified in all its fullness in education, where the elites reserve the right to appropriate the theoretical knowledge that allows them precisely to perpetuate themselves as a dominant class, in addition to access to the

arts and literature in their more generically developed manifestations; and the masses are left with practical and immediate instruction, limited to the alienated daily life, with the predominance of values and ideas that naturalize their relationship of domination/exploitation. Although “competent” curricula sell themselves by proposing the formation of a more critical, creative and autonomous citizen, both at work and outside of it, in reality they contribute to the reproduction of capitalist sociability that ontologically obstructs the possibility of everyone acquiring such capacities.

There is no full development of such human competences disregarding or diminishing the importance of the humanities. We come, then, to the other outstanding feature of the competency-based curriculum, which is a distinctive feature of technicism: the contempt for classical disciplines, especially the humanities. If there were indeed the intention of a curriculum that promoted human capabilities in their entirety, the arts, literature, social sciences, geography, history and philosophy would enjoy much greater prestige than they do today. There is no way to talk about fully developing autonomy and creativity in students relegating the arts and philosophy to formative itineraries. There is no way to claim truly critical thinking without a solid education, with an emphasis on social sciences and history. There is no way to awaken real empathy without improving sensitivity through contact with the classics of universal literature. There is no way to humanize through the principle: *teach less, learn more*⁹, after all, as Georges Snyders (1974) asserted, a spontaneous education does not provide the necessary tools to identify the ideological traps of this system that feeds on inhumanity.

9. The expression in English: *teach less, learn more* can be translated as “teach less, learn more”. This phrase became popular when it became the motto of the educational reform of Singapore, a tax haven considered by neoliberals as a reference for the model they proposed.

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