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THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN READING, NOETIC CAPACITY FOR SELF-DISTANCING AND ASSERTIVENESS

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Abstract: This study deals with reading as a psychosocial activity that contributes to the promotion of the noetic capacity for self-distancing, important for self-reflection and assertiveness, a social skill related to communicative expression in clear language. Readers with low levels of proficiency do not read texts or contexts with autonomy, not demonstrating self-reflection and assertiveness. The question is relevant: What is the relationship between reading, self-distancing and assertiveness? This is a correlational, descriptive, transversal and quantitative research that focused on 267 people from Santaluz/BA, Brazil, with the objective of analyzing the relationship between reading, the noetic capacity for self-distancing and assertiveness. The instruments used for data collection were the Reader Profile Questionnaire, developed by the researchers, the Längle Existential Scale, A. Orgler, C. and Kundi, M. (2003) and the Rathus Assertiveness Scale (1973). The correlation between the variables was performed using the Pearson model with significance $p < 0.05$. Symmetric measures were also used to measure the degree of association between the variables, Phi, Cramer's V and contingency coefficient. The results showed a moderate association between reading and self-distancing and between reading and assertiveness, attesting to the benefits of reading to promote psychosocial skills. Symmetric measures were also used to measure the degree of association between the variables, Phi, Cramer's V and contingency coefficient. The results showed

a moderate association between reading and self-distancing and between reading and assertiveness, attesting to the benefits of reading to promote psychosocial skills.

Keywords: Reading, Noetic capacity for self-distancing, Assertiveness.

Reading, understood as a complex activity of language, can contribute to the formation of the human being in the personal and social aspects, since it offers a support of vocabularies and ideas, necessary for the man's reflection on himself, his condition, the events and social relationships.

The reductionist concept of reading, based on the decoding of linguistic signs, for a long time weakened the teaching and learning process, an approach centered on the text and its structure, whose function of the reader was simply to identify the structural elements in an ascending, hierarchical way bottom up, to understand the content of the text.

Readers with low levels of reading competence do not autonomously read the various written texts or the contexts, which makes citizen action difficult and favors mass behavior, in which people do not think critically about their social reality, about ideas and information that reach them, reproducing them, sometimes without even analyzing the veracity of the content.

According to Maisonueve (1988), in the mass state, the individual does not have a clear social conscience and reacts uniformly. In this sense, reading is fundamental, as it contributes to developing reflection and critical thinking, which are essential for a more assertive and citizen-oriented performance.

Based on the aforementioned problem, centered on the consequences that the reductionist concepts of reading and the lack of good levels of reading competence can bring to the life of the human being, the question becomes relevant: What is the relationship

between reading, the noetic capacity of self-distancing and assertiveness?

From the need to analyze the close relationships between reading and human formation, studies that consider reading as a perennial process, which has a preponderant role in the life of human beings, in their social relationships and in the exercise of citizenship, begin to gain space.

Therefore, thinking about the complexity of reading, in relation to the global formation of the individual, leads us to consider it as a promoter of higher capacities, which point not only to cognitive aspects, but also to noetic, spiritual capacities, in an anthropological sense. , not theological.

In this article, we present the main contributions and results of scientific research on reading related to the noetic capacity for self-distancing and assertiveness, which aimed to analyze the relationship between reading, the noetic capacity for self-distancing and assertiveness, pointing out a as an activity that contributes to the development of individual and social capacities.

READING FROM A PSYCHOSOCIAL PERSPECTIVE

Reading is understood as a broad and complex activity of language that is based on the vision and understanding that the individual has of himself and the world. Furthermore, reading can be considered as a superior linguistic skill, which is linked, on the one hand, to a mental process and, on the other, to social interaction. In this perspective, Allende and Condemarín (2005, p.17) state that reading is “[...] a determinant of thought processes and fulfills an important social function”.

Thus, it can be said that, in a two-way street, reading results from psychosocial processes, since it involves cognitive, thinking, reflection and social aspects, since the reader

is influenced by his social context to attribute meaning to what he says. read.

Sardinha (2007) understands that reading can provide an integrative education, which contributes to the construction of a personal identity, always imperfect, and also of a social identity. For the author, reading contributes significantly to the formation of autonomous and interventionist citizens.

For Coracini (2005), the reader casts a subjective look at the object of reading and this subjectivity is constructed through its socio-history. This way, considering the subject's socio-historical constitution means that his individuality is constituted in the social relations he establishes.

Vygotsky (2008) clarifies that all the basic activities of an individual are constituted through their socio-historical process and that there is a relationship between linguistic competence and the process of psychological and social growth. As a result, as individuals become more psychologically mature and more aware of their social dimension, their language also changes and adapts to new interests and capabilities.

In this perspective of development that occurs through social interactions, the Vygotskian theory can be understood as “[...] a descriptive notion of inter-intra-extra psychological processes, which result from the production of meanings in and through language” (Magalhães & Oliveira, 2011, p. 108).

In the same way, reading, mediated by thought and language, involves cognitive and social aspects. In reading, the reader, in a complex dialogue, interacts with the author through the ideas of the texts and both the author in writing and the reader in the act of reading are influenced by their socio-historical and cultural contexts, which gives reading a psychosocial character.

READING RELATED TO SELF-DISTANCE AND ASSERTIVENESS

Reading is essential for the overall formation of the individual, as it contributes to the development of different capacities. In the act of reading, the reader builds with the text from a dialogical, reflective process, assigns meaning to what he reads and expands his knowledge and experiences.

From this perspective, reading means being questioned by the world and by oneself and, at the same time, being able to have access to writing, finding and constructing answers that integrate the information in the text with those that are included in the repertoire of subjective experiences (Foucambert, 1994).

Reading can be thought of from an existentialist perspective, since reflection is present in the act of reading, in which the reader takes distance so that the dialogic relationship is possible. Thus, it favors the development of important capacities for human life, such as self-distancing.

The noetic dimension is manifested through capacities related to reflection, to man's awareness of himself, his actions and events. This is the spiritual dimension, in the sense of human intellection, in an anthropological, not a theological perspective. At the moment when man reflects on himself, makes himself an object of thought, when he manifests consciousness about himself, then the human being crosses the noetic dimension (Frankl, 2011).

In reading, the reader's awareness is very important for the interaction to happen. Awareness of oneself, of the relevant context for oneself, is what supports the reader for the reflective process, which includes asking questions, doubting, agreeing or disagreeing with ideas, adding information and, finally, attributing meaning to the reading.

About the reflective activity of the human being, it appears that "Thought and reflection

signed an indestructible pact with the concrete situation of existence" (Buber, 1979, p. 6). The same can be said of reading, as it becomes effective through thought processes and reflection on texts in the light of the reader's experiences.

In the act of reading, there is a distance from the reader, which is very important to think about what he reads without being confused with the text, this way, it is possible to reflect and attribute meaning to the reading. "While the reader abandons himself in the search for the reality of the text, his perception implies a return to his personal experience and a vision of the text's own history" (Martins, 2006, p. 66), in a reflective process and interactive.

This distance from the reader that occurs in the act of reading can favor self-distancing. Through this capacity, man can distance himself from himself and events, judge his own conduct, his attitudes, in various aspects and choose the answers to situations in a more autonomous way. From the point of view of this human capacity, "[...] the person is free to shape their own character, being responsible for what they make of themselves" (Frankl, 2011, p. 27).

The human capacity for self-distancing is a way of exercising self-awareness and metacognition, not only to see oneself in different situations, but to regulate one's own processes and manifest the power of opposition between the spirit and the psychophysical. It is also a way of controlling and monitoring one's emotional processes (Martinez, 2012).

The relationship between reading and the noetic capacity for self-distancing can favor the development of social skills, which "[...] constitute a specific class of behaviors that an individual emits to successfully complete a social task. [...]" (Del Prette & Del Prette 2009, p.19). Social skills can be trained to allow the individual to handle different situations of social interaction in the most appropriate way.

More specifically, the relationship between reading and self-distancing may favor the social skill of assertiveness. The purpose of assertiveness is a clear communication of people's needs. "To behave assertively, it is essential to realize oneself and the context that is nearby" (Caballo, 2014, p. 362).

The noetic capacity for self-distancing propitiates reflection on situations and on one's own being. This way, it is possible that an individual, endowed with good levels of this ability, can choose with more clarity and autonomy the best way to behave in order to achieve more assertive interpersonal relationships.

This way, the observation of human beings about themselves, about the world and about situations requires a distance that can be exercised through reading and put into practice through self-distancing, which leads the individual to an important self-knowledge to choose more appropriate answers. autonomous, more assertive.

METHOD

This study focused on 267 people of both sexes, aged between 18 and 45 years, living in Santaluz-BA, Brazil. The sample was chosen through a non-probabilistic sampling, following the criteria of age and sex.

The research was approved by the Ethics Committee Brasileiro-CEP, from Faculdade Nobre de Feira de Santana-FAN, Bahia, under number 14876618.6.0000.5654 and final approval report number 3,389,763 CEP/FAN.

To know the reader's profile, a questionnaire developed by the researchers was used. To characterize the reading frequency of the sample, the researchers developed an evaluation scale with the following levels, non-existent (Does not read), low (Reads at least once a month), very low (Reads less than once a month), medium (Reads at least once a week) and high (Reads every day or almost

every day).

To measure the levels of the sample's noetic capacity for self-distancing, the Existential Scale of Längle, Orgler and Kundi (2003) was used, adapted to measure only the subscale of self-distancing. Regarding the criteria for analyzing the levels of self-distancing, the principle of Längle et al. (2003) that the highest scores represent higher levels of meaning in life, of noetic capacities.

The assertiveness of the sample was measured using the Rathus Assertiveness Scale (1973). The results were used to relate assertiveness to reading. The correction and assessment of assertiveness levels were based on the scores and evaluation used by Madrigal and Halabí (2009). The sum of the points resulted in the levels of assertiveness, shown in table 2.

Initially, a factor analysis of two of the research instruments that had not been validated was carried out, the reader profile questionnaire and the adapted existential scale to measure only self-distancing.

The reliability of the instruments was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, which assesses the extent to which the items form a consistent scale. Hair Jr., Babin, Money and Samouel (2005) recommend that in order to have internal consistency, values equal to or greater than 0.7 must be considered satisfactory.

Bivariate analysis was performed using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient, used to relate reading type and reading frequency to levels of self-distance and assertiveness. A significance level of $p < 0.05$ was adopted. The correlation between the variables was performed using the SPSS program, version 22.0 in Portuguese.

RESULTS

The results of the factor analysis of the Reader Profile Questionnaire and the

Existential Scale adapted to measure only self-distancing showed that these instruments are valid for measuring what they propose.

The survey data collection instruments were organized into a single factor. In the reader profile questionnaire, the factor was called Interest in reading, in the adapted Existential Scale, Distancing from oneself and from situations. Both presented excellent factor loadings, greater than .500 (Mingoti, 2005) in all items. The lowest factor loading for the reader profile questionnaire was in item I1 (.674) which corresponds to the question Do you like to read? as for the highest factor loading, it was found in I2 (.996) corresponding to the question How important is reading for you?

The Cronbach's Alpha of the two instruments was excellent, surpassing the 0.70, which is suggested by Hair Jr. et al. (2005) as a satisfactory degree of reliability. The factor loadings of the items of the two instruments were also excellent, demonstrating that they are valid for measuring what they propose.

CORRELATION BETWEEN READING AND SELF-DISTANCING

Type of reading and self-distancing were correlated to identify the type of reading most likely to favor the development of this noetic capacity. An analysis of the relationship between reading frequency and self-distancing was also carried out to verify if there is an association between these variables.

The results in table 4 showed that 47.1% of people who read books showed a high level of self-distancing. Then, academic texts stood out, with a relevant association, 31.6%. Newspapers and literary works also showed good results in the association with a high level of self-distancing. For newspapers, the results corresponded to 7.4% and literary works, 7.0%.

As for the very high level of self-distancing,

academic texts were the type of reading that presented the best correlation, 5.3% of the sample, followed by newspapers, 3.7% of the sample, books in general, 3.3% and literary works, 2.3%, however, the percentages were not significant.

According to the results of table 5, among the participants who read every day or almost every day, and therefore, had a high reading frequency, 55.9% had a high level of self-distancing, among those who read at least once a week, with average frequency, the percentage was 11.4%.

It is also noteworthy that people with a high reading frequency were the only ones who presented a very high level of self-distancing, 6.9% of the sample. As for the average level, it appears that the most expressive results were from people who had an average reading frequency, 62.5%, followed by people with a low reading frequency, 38.5% of the sample.

Regarding the average level of the noetic capacity for self-distancing, it can be seen that the most expressive results were that of people who had an average reading frequency, 62.5%, followed by people with a low reading frequency, 38.5% of the sample.

People who had a very low and non-existent reading frequency were those who presented the most expressive results of the low level of self-distancing. For the results of people who read less than once a month, this data corresponded to 86.7% and for those who do not read, 69.6%.

The correlation between reading and self-distancing obtained a moderate degree of association, as can be seen in Pearson's correlation and in the results of symmetric measures, described in table 6.

The results in table 6 attest that it is possible to accept the alternative hypothesis (H1) of association between the variables. The results of Pearson's correlation were low for the two correlations, however, sufficient to consider

Self-Distancing Subscale Levels	Very low	Low	Medium	High	Very high
	17 points	18 to 24	25 to 31	32 to 39	40 to 48
Punctuation	or less	Spots	spots	spots	Spots

Table 1 - Self-Distancing Subscale Levels and Scores
Source: prepared by the authors based on Längle et al. (2003).

assertiveness levels	much lower than average	lower than average	Middle level	higher than average	Much higher than average
Punctuation	29 points	30 to 39	40 to 60	61 to 70	71 points
	or less	Spots	spots	spots	or more

Table 2 - RAS assertiveness levels and scores
Source: Madrigal and Halabí (2009, p. 204).

Instruments	Cronbach's Alpha	Lower factor loading	Higher factor loading	Sig. Pearson
Reader Profile Questionnaire	0.872	I1- .674	I2- ,996	p<0.001
Adapted existential scale	0.99	I8- .886	I4- 997	p<0.001

Table 3 - Psychometric characteristics of research instruments
Source: Research data.

reading type	Self-Distancing Level					Total
	High	Low	Medium	Very high	Very low	
Comic books	0	10	0	0	0	10
	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
newspapers	two	8	15	1	1	27
	7.40%	29.60%	55.60%	3.70%	3.70%	100%
books in general	57	11	49	4	0	121
	47.10%	9.10%	40.50%	3.30%	0.00%	100.00%
I don't read	0	16	two	0	5	23
	0.00%	69.60%	8.70%	0.00%	21.70%	100.00%
Literary works	3	15	24	1	0	43
	7.00%	34.90%	55.80%	2.30%	0.00%	100.00%
Magazines	1	15	8	0	0	24
	4.20%	62.50%	33.30%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
academic texts	6	4	8	1	0	19
	31.60%	21.10%	42.10%	5.30%	0.00%	100.00%
Total	69	79	106	7	6	267
	25.80%	29.60%	39.70%	2.60%	2.20%	100.00%

Table 4 - Correlation between reading type and self-distancing
Source: survey data.

Frequencyreader	Level of Self-distancingSelf-distancing					Total
	High	Low	Medium	Very high	Very low	
Less than once a month	1 6.7%	13 86.7%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 6.7%	15 100.0%
I don't read	0 0.0%	16 69.6%	two 8.7%	0 0.0%	5 21.7%	23 100.0%
At least once a week	10 11.4%	23 26.1%	55 62.5%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	88 100.0%
At least once per month	1 2.6%	23 59.0%	15 38.5%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	39 100.0%
Every day or almost every day	57 55.9%	4 3.9%	34 33.3%	7 6.9%	0 0.0%	102 100.0%
Total	69 25.8%	79 29.5%	106 39.7%	7 2.7%	6 2.3%	267 100%

Table 5 Correlation between reading frequency and self-distancing

Source: Research data.

Correlation between the Variables	Pearson's Correlation	Sig. bilateral	phi	V of Cramer	Contingency coefficient
Type of reading and Self-distancing	0.16	0	0.775	0.388	0.613
Reading frequency and Self-distancing	0.208	0	0.872	0.436	0.657

Table 6 - Association between reading and self-distancing

Source: Research data.

reading type	Assertiveness level					Total
	lower than average	much lower than average	Much higher than average	Middle level	higher than average	
Comic books	5 50.00%	1 10.00%	0 0.00%	4 40.00%	0 0.00%	10 100.00%
newspapers	8 29.60%	0 0.00%	1 3.70%	17 63.00%	1 3.70%	27 100.00%
books in general	4 3.30%	0 0.00%	13 10.70%	49 40.50%	55 45.50%	121 100.00%
I don't read	14 60.90%	4 17.40%	0 0.00%	5 21.70%	0 0.00%	23 100.00%
Literary works	7 16.30%	0 0.00%	1 2.30%	33 76.70%	two 4.70%	43 100.00%
Magazines	10 41.70%	1 4.20%	0 0.00%	13 54.20%	0 0.00%	24 100.00%

academic texts	two	0	0	12	5	19
	10.50%	0.00%	0.00%	63.20%	26.30%	100.00%
	50	6	15	133	63	267
Total	18.70%	2.20%	5.60%	49.80%	23.60%	100.00%

Table 7 - Correlation between type of reading and assertiveness

Source: Research data.

reader frequency	Assertiveness level					Total
	lower than average	much lower than average	Much higher than average	Middle level	higher than average	
Less than once a month	8	1	0	6	0	15
	53.30%	6.70%	0.00%	40.00%	0.00%	100.00%
I don't read	14	4	0	5	0	23
	60.90%	17.40%	0.00%	21.70%	0.00%	100%
At least once a week	10	0	0	64	14	88
	11.40%	0.00%	0.00%	72.70%	15.90%	100%
At least once per month	18	1	0	20	0	39
	46.20%	2.60%	0.00%	51.30%	0.00%	100%
Every day or almost every day	0	0	15	38	49	102
	0.00%	0.00%	14.70%	37.30%	48.00%	100%
Total	50	6	15	133	63	267
	18.70%	2.20%	5.60%	49.80%	23.60%	100%

Table 8 - Correlation between reading frequency and assertiveness

Source: Research data.

Correlation variables	between	Pearson's Correlation	Sig. Bilateral	phi	V from Cramer	Contingency coefficient
Type of reading and assertiveness		0.156	0	0.766	0.383	0.608
Reading frequency and assertiveness		0.184	0	0.832	0.416	0.639

Table 9 - Association between reading and assertiveness

Source: Research data.

the association between the variables. Furthermore, the results were of excellent significance, <0.001 .

As for the symmetric measures, the Phi result was significant, however, as this measure is more suitable for a 2x2 table, the contingency coefficient was used, which obtained a good result for both correlations, indicating a moderate association between the variables. As for Cramer's V, the result was also significant to consider a moderate association, according to Barbetta (2001).

CORRELATION BETWEEN READING AND ASSERTIVENESS

The correlation between reading and assertiveness was carried out through data on the type of reading and assertiveness levels, as well as through the correlation between reading frequency and assertiveness levels.

The results in table 7 pointed to books in general as the type of reading most associated with high levels of assertiveness. When it comes to the level much higher than average, 10.7% of people who have this level are those who read books in general, 3.7% of those who read newspapers and 2.3% of those who read literary works.

Regarding the level of assertiveness above average, the most expressive results are those who read books in general, 45.5%, in second place, are academic texts, 26.3%, also those who read literary works appear, even than in an insignificant percentage, 4.7%.

According to the results presented in table 7, most of the sample of this study showed an average level of assertiveness, totaling 49.8% of the sample and even those who do not read had a significant percentage of people with this same level.

It is noteworthy from the results of table 8 that people who read every day or almost every day and, therefore, have a high reading frequency, were the only ones who presented

a level much higher than the average, with a percentage of 14.7%. They were also the ones with the highest level of education, 48.8% of the sample.

Most of the sample showed an average level of assertiveness, 49.8% of the sample. Of this data, those who read at least once a week had a more expressive percentage, 72.7%, followed by those who read at least once a month and those who read less than once a month. Of those who read every day or almost every day, 37.3% had an average level and those who do not read, 21.7%.

Regarding low levels of assertiveness, 60.9% of people who do not read had a level below average. Also those who read less than once a month, whose percentage was 53.3% and those who read at least once a month, 46.2%, had a significant percentage for the level below the average.

The results in table 9 allow us to abandon the null hypothesis (H_0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1) of a positive association between the variables. The Pearson coefficient found in the two correlations was low (.156/ .184), however, sufficient to verify an association between the variables. It is also noteworthy that the results found were extremely significant <0.001 .

It was also found, Cramer's V .383 for reading type and assertiveness and .416 for reading frequency and assertiveness, contingency coefficient .608 for the first and .639 for the second correlation. These data indicate a moderate association between type of reading and assertiveness and between reading frequency and assertiveness, the latter with slightly more expressive results.

DISCUSSION

According to the literature, reading is associated with several variables and aspects, among them, cognitive (Capovilla, Capovilla &, Suiter, 2004, Sardinha, 2005, Vygotsky,

2008), sensory, emotional, perceptive (Martins, 2006) to the processes of individual and social identity development (Alliende & Condemarín, 2005, Foucambert, 1994, Sardinha, 2007), among many other aspects and benefits.

There is an interrelationship between language, psychological maturity and social development, so human activities can only be thought of from these aspects. Through social interaction, made possible by language, the human being develops (Vygotsky, 2008).

For Martins (2006), the reader is configured from the various life experiences, from the most elementary and individual to those that come from the exchange of their personal world and their social universe.

In this study, reading is considered in its psychosocial aspect, which involves individual and social processes and contributes to the development of capacities in these two aspects as well (Alliende & Condemarín, 2005). This idea was corroborated by the association between reading and individual capacity, noetics of self-distancing, also between reading and the social skill of assertiveness.

Correlational results indicated that the book is the type of reading that most contributes to the promotion of the noetic capacity for self-distancing. Books are a diversified type of reading that contributes to broadening knowledge in general. It can be inferred that this relationship contributes to the development of self-awareness, since both reading and self-distancing include metacognitive processes.

For Grossi (2003), it is in books that we contact the unknown, that we get to know other times and places and with them we open our minds. According to the author, encouraging the formation of readers is fundamental in the globalized world in which we live, it means working for the sustainability of the planet, guaranteeing peaceful coexistence among all

and respect for diversity.

Reading frequency was also associated with self-distancing. People who showed high reading frequency were those who showed high and very high levels of self-distancing. This relationship indicates that reading contributes to the promotion of this ability and corroborates the idea present in other studies and ratified by other authors that reading includes dialogical and self-reflexive processes (Martins, 2006).

The results also showed an association between reading and assertiveness. People who read books showed the best results in assertiveness levels higher than average and much higher than average, indicating that this type of reading is the one that can best favor assertive behaviors.

For Sardinha (2007), reading competence is important for the citizenship of a country. This statement highlights the importance of reading for social formation and citizen participation. It can be inferred that reading the text provides a reading of the context.

Reading frequency was also associated with assertiveness. The results showed that those who have a high frequency, read every day or almost every day, presented more expressive results in the higher than average level and only this population presented a level of assertiveness much higher than the average.

The literature on reading related to the social aspect is extensive. The daily practice of reading expands ideas, experiences and knowledge, this multiplies the possibilities of readers (Martins, 2006) and expands their capacities to act in the best way in social relationships.

Kleiman (2004) highlights that reading habits play an important role in social, political, economic and cultural life and provide a new perspective on life and a new look at the world.

These ideas about the relationship between

reading and the development of social skills were reinforced in the results of this research, by the association between reading and assertiveness, a social coping skill, which is effective in communicative interactions, as it represents the ability of clear communication, direct, sincere, without aggression and without causing harm to others (Del Prette & Del Prette 2009, 2011).

Thus, the relationship found between reading, noetic capacity for self-distancing and assertiveness can be synthesized, corroborating the idea that reading, which implies distancing from the reader, dialogue and reflection, contributes to promoting self-distancing, which consists of reflection about oneself and about situations and favors more assertive behaviors.

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