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## **THE CURRENTITY OF SOME ADVICE AND GUIDELINES FOR EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY**

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**Abstract:** The 21st century has arrived and with many changes and transformations in human life, in all its aspects, social, economic, cultural, religious, etc. Faced with these changes, several thinkers have written and developed their theories about how the school and education professionals must act in the face of them, to make education advance and keep up with such changes. This is a work of bibliographic review, where the works chosen here were those (some), which, among other things, were written at the end of the 20th century, and the beginning of the 21st, and which were intended for education and professionals of the future. That is, how education and its professionals must be inserted and integrated into this process of change. Thus, the objective of this article was to analyze some of these works, in order to reach the conclusion whether such works, which are characterized as being advice and/or guidelines for education professionals in the 21st century, are still current or not. As a conclusion, yes, they are works that are still very current.

**Keywords:** XXI century. Education. Theories. Present.

## INTRODUCTION

The modern world has changed a lot over the centuries, especially with the Industrial Revolution. However, nothing has been more significant and rapid than the changes that began to happen in the world in the last decades of the 20th century. These are changes that have occurred in practically all aspects of human life on planet Earth. Among the reasons for these changes are the advancement of technology, responsible for the invention of the internet, which, as a consequence, brought about the emergence of social networks, which has caused a whole change in behavior and customs. In other words, there has been a cultural change in humanity. New

paradigms have emerged. Several thinkers have been writing about these changes and transformations, in all areas and aspects of human life.

Schools, especially schools, education or national education systems must go hand in hand with these changes, they must evolve, accompany evolution, development, modernization. Schools cannot be left behind, stuck in time, oblivious to everything that is happening. According to some specialists, schools or countries that present negative results in education, are countries in which education has not kept pace with modernization, they are stuck in time.

Precise education is open to the new, to change, to the new reality, to the new paradigms that appear all over the world. It needs to evolve in its practices, methodologies, actions, etc., and at the same time be able to serve all children, young people and adolescents, not leaving anyone behind, regardless of any situation, be it social, economic, political, religious, etc. and even independently of physical or psychic aspects. Everyone has the right to quality education.

However, in the final years of the 20th century, the reality seen and witnessed in several countries, and even here in Brazil, is of a backward education, which did not follow the modernization process through which the world was experiencing, as well as, not accompanying the new educational paradigms. In these countries, what was seen was a backward, obsolete education, with old practices, and above all, an exclusionary school, which left a huge number of students, the most humble, mainly, outside its walls, without access to knowledge.

Faced with this reality, some authors, thinkers, theorists began to write about what could be done to change this reality. In addition, international bodies, such as UNESCO, also began to be concerned about

this reality, and began, among other things, to ask some education thinkers to write their suggestions for changing education in the 21st century. Thus, in view of this, some works were written, as is the case of the work entitled: The seven necessary knowledge for the education of the future, by Edgar Morin.

Thus, in view of the above, the objective of this work basically consists of analyzing some of these works, by some national and foreign authors, which appear as suggestions, advice, guidelines, etc., to education and education professionals, so that it is modernized, and follow the changes that the world has been experiencing. These works quoted here were written exactly at the end of the 20th century, and were guidelines, suggestions and advice to be followed, so that 21st century education could develop and modernize itself, and most importantly, be a inclusive education, which serves everyone equally and with equity. And that it could also improve its results, with regard to learning and that this improvement was seen and perceived in large-scale exams, as well as in evaluations by international bodies.

After two decades of the 21st century, has education, in this case, the Brazilian one, managed to advance, show good results? Is the use of technological tools already something totally normal in your practice? Has it really become inclusive and global? The answer given to these questions will define whether these works are still current, valid, that they are still works that must be read.

Thus, this work, which is essentially bibliographical, is divided into two parts, where in the first part, we discuss some authors and their works, works that were written in the late twentieth century, or early twenty-first, and that they were constituted as suggestions, guidelines for education and educators of the 21st century. In the second part, we discuss and reach a conclusion about

the relevance of these works, after two decades of the 21st century have already passed.

### **ADVENT OF THE 21ST CENTURY: SOME ADVICE FOR EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY**

From the middle of the 20th century, mainly, the world began to experience a series of changes and transformations. This new reality that was beginning to be present, and on a planetary scale, is mainly the result of technological advances. The changes that have occurred, which are many, encompass different aspects of human life (social, economic, technological, cultural, etc.).

Several authors have written about these advances and changes that occurred in the world at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st. We can cite several works, among them: The Gutenberg galaxy, by Marshall McLuhan (1972), The network society, by Manuel Castels and Gustavo Cardoso (2005), Cyberculture, by Pierre Levi (1999), Globalization: the human consequences, by Zigmund Bauman (1999), The race for the 21st century: In the roller coaster loop, by Nicolau Sevcenko (2001), among many others. These works seek to show an overview of everything that was happening in the world, mainly in the socioeconomic and cultural aspects, which were being provoked by the advancement of technology, since the invention of the printing press, etc., and which brought about very important and significant transformations for the whole the humanity.

Faced with these changes, the teaching and learning processes are also affected, having to adapt to this new reality, in order not to remain behind. Thus, several theorists wrote about how schools, educational systems and education professionals must proceed to keep up with these changes and these new paradigms. Thus, we highlight here two new elements that from the beginning of the

21st century, mainly, began to be part of the reality of schools, being very present within their walls, having these, to learn to deal with this new situation and reality. And most importantly, not being able to exclude any child, youth or teenager, regardless of anything. We are talking about ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) and inclusive education.

With regard to the advancement of technology, which has been consolidating the process of globalization, a process that Bauman (1999) says is irreversible, several authors (theorists), among them, we highlight here, José Carlos Libâneo and Moacir Gadotti, wrote about this new reality in education. Thus, Libâneo wrote, in 1998, the work entitled: *Adeus professor, Adeus professor? New educational requirements and the teaching profession*. In this work, Libâneo questions whether the teaching profession would be threatened by the emergence of new information and communication technologies.

As a conclusion to this issue, Libâneo (1998) says that the teacher is indeed necessary. However, the author says that this new reality that society is experiencing requires teachers capable of adjusting to this new reality. For this, teacher training in a differentiated way is necessary, so that these new perspectives of society and education can be met and contemplated. That is, it is necessary to train a new professional, more capable and prepared to act in this new reality. Let's see what the author says about this:

However, new educational requirements ask universities and training courses for teachers to have a teacher capable of adjusting their teaching to the new realities of society, knowledge, students, different cultural universes, and the means of communication. The new teacher would need, at the very least, a broader general culture, ability to learn to learn, competence to know how to

act in the classroom, communicative skills, mastery of informational language, knowing how to use means of communication and articulate classes with the media and multimedia (LIBÂNEO, 1998, p. 04).

Another author who also wrote about technology and education at the beginning of the 20th century was Moacir Gadotti. This author published, in 2000, an article entitled: *Current Perspectives on Education*. In that article, Gadotti:

It seeks to understand education in the context of globalization and the information age, draws consequences from this process and points out what may remain of the "old" education, indicating some fundamental categories of the education of the future (GADOTTI, 2000, p. 03).

In this article, Gadotti seeks to answer some questions, among which we highlight: "What is the role of education in the information age? What perspectives can we point to for education at the beginning of the Third Millennium? Where are we going?" (GADOTTI, 2000, p. 03).

This publication, Gadotti (2000, p. 09), ends with a topic entitled: "To think about the education of the future", where he makes use of four advices or pillars, contained in the work: *Education: a treasure to be discovered*, by Jacques Delors (1998), for lifelong learning. These pillars are: learning to know; learn to do; learn to live together; and learn to be.

With regard to inclusive education, the name that could not be missing is that of teacher Maria Tereza Egler Mantoan. And the work we highlight here is entitled: *School inclusion – what is it? Why? How to make?* Published in 2003. Professor Mantoan is a world reference in the defense of inclusive education. We highlight here one of her statements that very well expresses her defense and fight for inclusive education:

We are "re-signifying" the school's role with teachers, parents, interested communities

and installing more solidary and plural forms of coexistence in their daily lives. It is the school that has to change, not the students, to be entitled to it! The right to education is unavailable and, as it is a natural right, I do not make agreements when I propose to fight for a school for all, without discrimination, without separate teaching for the more and less privileged. My aim is for schools to be institutions unconditionally open to all students and therefore inclusive (MANTOAN, 2003, p. 8-9).

In this speech, Mantoan also makes clear his defense, not only for the right of the disabled to study, but for everyone, regardless of anything, and without any type of discrimination.

However, if ICTs and inclusive education are now part of the reality of education, several authors, in their works, writings and speeches, defend the need for continuous training of education professionals to work in these areas. Thus, we highlight here some authors who defend this, so, with regard to technologies, we highlight, among many: Kenski (2012), Jordão (2009), Barreto (2002), etc., who in their writings defend the need for continuing teacher training, for better practice in the classroom. In the field of inclusive education, teacher Maria Tereza Égler Mantoan, in her struggle, does not dissociate the defense of inclusive education from the defense of continuing teacher education.

However, in addition to these two relatively new aspects, which are now part of the educational reality in Brazil and in the world, there is still the question of active methodologies, which several authors also highlight and defend, as a way of making classes more dynamic, attractive and interesting for students, which would be responsible for raising and improving educational results, especially here in Brazil, a country that has poor results in education.

Thus, among the main names that defend the use of these so-called active methodologies,

we have professors José Pacheco, a Portuguese who has lived in Brazil for several years, and who is the founder of the famous Escola da Ponte, in Portugal, a school that for a long time it was the main reference when talking about differentiated methodologies in the teaching and learning process, or new practices in education.

Asked about the functioning of Escola da Ponte, Pacheco replied:

There are no series, cycles, classes, years, manuals, tests and classes. Students are grouped according to common interests to develop research projects. There are also individual studies, later shared with colleagues. Students can turn to any professor to request their answers. If they cannot answer, they are referred to a specialist (PACHECO, Nova Escola magazine, 2004).

Another professor that we also highlight here is Manuel José Moran, born in Spain, but naturalized Brazilian. Professor Moran is today one of the main, (if not the main) name in Brazil when it comes to active methodologies involving the use of technology. Moran speaks,

The Internet is also exploding in education. Universities and schools rush to become visible, not to be left behind. [...] Face-to-face education can change significantly with electronic networks. The walls of schools and universities open up, people intercommunicate, exchange information, data, research (MORAN, 1997, p. 01).

Professor José Moran, for years has been writing and defending the use of different methodologies, always with the support of technology, thus becoming a reference in Brazil when it comes to active methodologies. Among his published works, we highlight: “the education we want: challenges of educators with technologies” (2009); “new challenges and how to get there” (2012); “new technologies and pedagogical mediation” (2013); “changing education with active methodologies” (2015); and so many others.



Finally, we highlight here two thinkers who wrote, mainly directed to education professionals, about how they must behave and act in front of the school/education of the future, the education of the 21st century. These two thinkers are Edgar Morin and Phillippe Perrenoud.

Edgar Morin is a French anthropologist, sociologist and philosopher, internationally recognized as a thinker of complexity. Here we will quote just two of his works. The first work is entitled: "The seven knowledge necessary for the education of the future". This work was published in the year 2000, and resulted from a request made by UNESCO to Morin, so that he could present his ideas regarding the education of the future.

For Morin (2000), the seven types of knowledge that are indispensable to everyone involved in education are: 1- The blindness of knowledge: error and illusion; 2- The principles of relevant knowledge; 3- Teach the human condition; 4- Teach earthly identity; 5- Facing uncertainties; 6- Teach understanding; and 7- The ethics of the human race.

From Morin, we also highlight the work entitled: "A well-made head: rethinking reform, reforming thinking", published here in Brazil in 2003. In this work, Morin says that "teaching is not enough".

Strictly speaking, the word "teaching" is not enough for me, but the word "education" contains both an excess and a lack. In this book, I will slide between the two terms, with an educational teaching in mind.

The mission of this teaching is not to transmit mere knowledge, but a culture that allows us to understand our condition and help us to live, and that favors, at the same time, an open and free way of thinking (MORIN, 2003, p. 11).

That is, for Morin (2003), more important than mere teaching is transmitting a culture that will serve the student, the person, the

individual, the condition of open and free thinking, for the rest of their lives. Mere teaching, or "shallow teaching", which does not allow this condition to the individual, has no importance or effectiveness. It is nothing more than a mere teaching, perhaps superfluous. For this reason, he defends that the head be well made, in the sense that teaching is efficient and that, this way, it brings significant learning, which stays and serves for the entire life of the human being.

Another thinker that we highlight in this scenario, which is the thinkers who wrote about education in/for the 21st century, focusing mainly on the role of the teacher, is the Swiss sociologist Philippe Perrenoud, who in 1999 wrote "Ten new skills for teach: Invitation to travel". This work was published in Brazil in the following year (2000). In it, Perrenoud seeks to write about the skills that the teacher must present or develop in the face of the new world that is emerging, the changes witnessed at the turn of the century. So he said, when justifying such writing: "I will emphasize what is changing and, therefore, the competences that represent more a horizon than a consolidated knowledge" (PERRENOUD, 2000, p. 12).

Therefore, it is clear in the author's words that his intention, in that work, was not to emphasize the competences already consolidated, but to emphasize all those competences that represent the new, the change. Thus, in this work, Perrenoud lists ten (10) skills that must be followed by education professionals who do not wish to stand still in time, "die standing up, with chalk in hand, at the blackboard".

However, it can be expected that countless teachers accept the challenge, because they refuse the dual society and the school failure that prepares it, because they want to teach and lead people to learn in spite of everything, or else because they fear dying on their feet, with chalk in hand, on

the blackboard, according to Huberman's formula (1989a), when summarizing the essential question that arises with the proximity of 40 years in the life cycle of teachers (1989b) (PERRENOUD, 2000, p. 11).

Thus, in the hope that teachers, in order not to die on their feet, "with chalk in hand, on the blackboard", Perrenoud (2000), published the ten skills that teachers must have to face the changes of the 21st century. These competences are: 1-organizing and directing learning situations; 2-manage the progression of learning; 3-conceive and evolve the devices of differentiation; 4-involve students in their learning and in their work; 5-work as a team; 6-participate in school administration; 7-inform and involve parents; 8-use new technologies; 9-face the duties and ethical dilemmas of the profession; and 10-administer your own continuous training.

## **THE CURRENTITY OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY COUNCILS, FOR THE 21ST CENTURY EDUCATION**

When these and many other theorists wrote their theories, thoughts, perspectives, knowledge and advice to education professionals about what could be done or changed in relation to education and pedagogical practice, the main idea, and the desire to each of them was that education, in general, could go through transformations, changes, accompanying the whole process of social, economic, cultural changes, and the new paradigms of education, etc., that the world was experiencing. The school could not (and cannot) fail to follow these changes and remain frozen in time. A modern world demands a modern school, with modern practices. The school cannot stand still in time.

And even more important than not standing still (the school and/or education) in time, and

keeping up with the changes that the world was going through, is not leaving students behind, without access to education. It is not losing students because it is not interesting and attractive to them, which leads to a lack of interest, which culminates in dropout and evasion. And to stand still in time, without keeping up with the changes that the world is experiencing, would lead to this reality of abandonment and school dropout, as students would not be able to stand being in this space that did not evolve, that did not keep up with change, that did not modernize. This is one of the main reasons why these various authors cited in this work wrote the works cited here.

We can say that such works, written, must have more impact, especially on national education systems that were not showing good results, that were not demonstrating that they were keeping up with the changes that the world was going through. In this context, Brazil is a country that historically presents very unfavorable social, economic and educational indicators. Historically, Brazilian education has not been able to improve its numbers (improve considerably, as some authors mention that there have been advances). So, all these works, advice, etc, made or given at the end of the 20th century, or at the beginning of the 21st, were perfectly applied to reality, the Brazilian one.

However, after two decades of the 21st century, what we can see is that our education has made little progress, little has its indicators improved (with rare exceptions). In general, our education remains behind, or on the margins of development. It fails to advance significantly, and deliver good results. As Professor Hamilton Werneck (2019, p. 38) said, today, everything has changed, "it changed the concentration time of a child or teenager[...] If the concentration time in the first half of the last century was 50 minutes, today, the concentration time does not exceed

20 minutes”.

These words from Professor Werneck (2019) show just one example of something that has changed in the world and that is present within the scope of the school. The world has changed, and several aspects related to education have also changed, such as, for example, not to mention more changes, inclusive education and ICTs. Inclusive education, which is something already foreseen in several official government documents, such as the PNE (National Education Plan) and the BNCC (National Common Curricular Base), realizing that students with special needs must be attended to in the classroom classroom, (normal classroom, with so-called normal students).

As for ICT, which is the result of technological progress, it is present in each and every space on planet Earth, and if so, in the school space it is also present, and cannot be ignored. However, despite the changes that have been taking place in the world, and even those imposed by law, as is the case of inclusive education, Brazilian education has not been able to show improvements. As Professor Werneck (2019) says, the school does not seem to keep up with this change, and thus, it continues to work in the same way it has worked for decades. That is, Brazilian education seems not to have been able to shape itself, and keep up with the changes and transformations that the world is going through.

Therefore, if Brazilian education has changed little, and mainly, it has not been able to keep up with the changes that the world has been suffering, and it is still working in the same way as it worked decades ago, and having presented little significant results, what we can say is that the writings, speeches, advice and teachings of the various (theoretical) authors cited here remain alive, still having validity for Brazilian education today, even though

two decades of the 21st century have already passed. In other words, the writings and teachings of these authors, and many others, continue to be mandatory reading for those involved in Brazilian education.

It is impossible not to agree with statements like this one by Professor Mantoan (2003), which is something very current and present in our schools:

I noticed, and I am reluctant to admit, the exclusionary measures adopted by the school when reacting to differences. In fact, these measures exist, persist, insist on being maintained, despite all the effort spent to demonstrate that people are not “categorizable” (MANTOAN, 2003, p. 07).

This speech, which concerns inclusion, can perfectly be taken to other aspects within schools, proving the relevance of the works and authors cited here.

And with the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, which, as is constantly and widely known and disseminated, which frighteningly intensified and opened up social inequalities in Brazil, also increased the learning deficit, further delaying the learning process, reflecting in a worsening of the quality of Brazilian education. Faced with the impact and negative consequences of Covid 19, for our education, intensifying its problems, such works are increasingly current and necessary.

## CONSIDERATIONS

Having concluded this article, which deals with the actuality of several writings, advice, tips, etc., which were published at the end of the 20th century, and beginning of the 21st, on the education of the future (21st century), it is clear that many of the writings, from several authors, taking into account the Brazilian reality, remain very current.

The relevance of these writings and their authors for Brazilian education is due to the fact that it remains, according to their



data and indicators, as well as according to several authors and their publications, being practiced in the same way as it was decades ago. That is, time seems not to have passed for her. This means that our education continues with the same practices and with the same negative results, which many authors place as being the result of their old practices, which are still from the last century.

Over the last few decades, the world has undergone several changes and transformations, and education must have followed this reality, changing its practice and methodology. The world has experienced the advancement of technology, which in itself has already brought a series of socioeconomic, cultural, etc. transformations, and as it could not be otherwise, technology is also something that can be used in the field of education, and thus, this is one of the fields in which education must have followed, and be making extensive use of it, since it is already quite widespread in its practice. In addition, other issues have also become inherent in education, such as inclusive education. That is, it is one more aspect in which the school must follow and adapt, thus having to change its practice and methodology.

Faced with this new reality, of changes and transformations that the world has been going through and experiencing, it is that several authors have written about how the school/education and education professionals must proceed and behave in their pedagogical actions, in the face of these various aspects and situations, so that it could also evolve and fulfill its function, which is teaching and learning, with quality, for everyone, regardless of any situation and in every part of the world.

However, given the current Brazilian educational reality, it is concluded that such writings, advice/guidelines and authors who wrote about the education of the future, even after two decades of the 21st century, are still

very current. However, it is worth noting that in terms of education, changes and results do not arrive immediately, overnight. However, we emphasize that two decades is already enough time to verify a significant change.

However, despite this reality of little progress in our education, we had the aggravation of the Covid 19 pandemic, which even having consolidated the use of the internet, and technologies, as a whole, on the other hand, brought a big setback in the teaching and learning process, which makes the challenge of improving our education even greater, reinforcing these cited works and authors, with their advice and guidelines as still very current and necessary readings.

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