

# Assertive use of transmedia storytelling and Information and Communication Technology as tools to foster learning

*Uso assertivo de narrativas transmídia e de Tecnologias da Informação e Comunicação como ferramentas para fomento da aprendizagem*

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**Abstract:** Technological innovations and contemporary social concepts – virtual, digital, ephemeral, competitive, imagery – favor the development of new educational processes and the inclusion of these technologies as tools to foster learning. Educators, parents, children and professionals producing these contents are involved in the process. The study aims to reflect on the characteristics of digital natives, children, players, viewers, consumers, and content producers, requiring a multidisciplinary team of story, audiovisual and game producers. Through literature review and content analysis and synthesis, changes in actions related to the development and importance of Transmedia Storytelling are observed and verified for individuals of this generation, and these products are already part of their lives, and their use can be beneficial if mediated, directed and planned by those in charge, educators and the team of professionals who produce them.

**Keywords:** Transmedia Storytelling. Technology. Information. Communication. Education.

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**Resumo:** As inovações tecnológicas e as concepções sociais contemporâneas virtuais, digitais, efêmeras, competitivas, imagéticas favorecem o desenvolvimento de novos processos educacionais, e a inclusão dessas tecnologias como ferramentas para fomento do aprendizado. Educadores, pais, crianças e profissionais produtores desses conteúdos estão envolvidos no processo. O estudo objetiva reflexão sobre as características dos nativos digitais, crianças, jogadores, espectadores, consumidores, e também dos produtores de conteúdo, que demanda equipe multidisciplinar de produtores de histórias, audiovisual, jogos. Através de revisão bibliográfica e análise e síntese de conteúdos, observa-se e constatam-se mudanças das ações na formação e na importância das Narrativas Transmídia para os indivíduos dessa geração, e de que esses produtos já fazem parte de suas vidas e seu uso pode ser benéfico, se mediado, direcionado e planejado, pelos responsáveis, educadores e pela equipe de profissionais que os produz.

**Palavras-chave:** Narrativa transmídia. Tecnologias. Informação. Comunicação. Educação.

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## Introduction

Technologies in both interpersonal and socio-cultural communications change the interests of individuals and consequently their formations (PRENSKY, 2012). The teaching and learning processes are intensified with these innovations acting strongly as tools.

This paper seeks to provide references to reflect on situations that embrace the current and future education scenario, which brings changes and consequences as well as the productions of Transmedia Storytelling (NT), its characteristics and production methodology. Through studies on Education, Information and Communications Technology (ICTs) and NT in the teaching and learning processes, it aims to contribute to the creation of new paradigms in the field of teaching and learning processes. The research postulates that intentionality, planning and good use of tools are important and valuable instruments to generate positive teaching strategies, which can contribute to building consensus among actors in a field and proposes to describe changes in the communication, educational and its specificities.

Currently, children are already immersed in ICTs, so the work characterizes a methodology to the study where the individual is autonomous and curious, seeking its development, in other words, instinctively seeks to deepen knowledge and add information, in an attractive way through content and procedures of their interest, with innovative and inventive means, in the process of appropriation of knowledge.

Prensky (2012) states that changes are needed: education professionals, students, their families and the community can share a different dynamic, the media allow the exercise of protagonism through consumption, production and sharing of

content, participation. Educators now have to consider weaving the narrative of curricula through the media in an interactive manner.

The contemporary world brings countless opportunities, in contrast it shifts already consolidated paradigms. Due to the advances in technology, access to education has been made easier, democratizing knowledge. Cyberculture makes new learning styles possible, facilitating access to knowledge, it is necessary to choose and filter information, organize it in groups and communities where interests and ideas can be shared.

We must build new models of the knowledge space. Instead of representation in linear and parallel scales, in pyramids structured in 'levels', organized by the notion of prerequisites and converging to 'superior' knowledges, from now on we must prefer the image in emergent, open, continuous, flowing, non-linear spaces of knowledge, reorganizing itself according to the objectives or contexts, in which each one occupies a singular and evolutionary position (LÉVY, 2004, p. 158).<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the capacity to acknowledge the other as a subject endowed with intelligence is developed, since the different knowledges complement each other, generating effective communication, sharing information and valuing the individual, promoting collective growth.

## Transmedia storytelling

The emerging of new technologies has generated new possibilities, thus, the concern with the production and the quality of the production has also been increasing, mainly in relation to the content. The need to reflect on the future impacts of all this on the formation of citizens is growing.

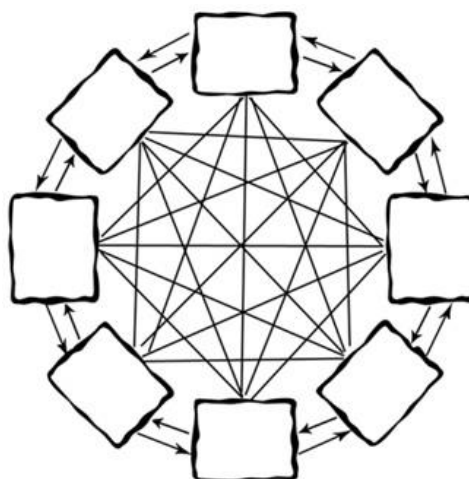
Transmedia Storytelling is the ideal aesthetic of the culture of convergence, it is constituted from the diversity of independent and related contents. Since the production, they are scripts and interfaces thinking about this narrative.

In the ideal form of Transmedia Storytelling, each medium does what it does best - so that a story can be introduced into a film, expanded by television, novels, comics; its universe can be explored in games or experienced as an attraction in an amusement park (JENKINS, 2008, p. 138).<sup>2</sup> An example cited by Scolari (2013, p. 24) is the Pokémon franchise:

Pokémon is implemented through games, television programs, films and books, and no average privilege over the other. Young consumers have become hunters and collectors of information, like to dive into stories, reconstruct the past of the characters and connect them to other texts of the same franchise.<sup>3</sup>

Transmedia content changes the way audiovisual content is produced, at first the story was adapted to your platform, now each platform must tell a different story. The professionals are enabled for specific function, with global vision, are integrated multidisciplinary teams from several areas acting together and simultaneously, as shown by the rhizomatic<sup>4</sup> flowchart.

**Figure 1** – Rizomatic Flowchart Model



Source: Renó (2011)

Transmedia Storytelling is considered the result of the articulation of the different parts of a great narrative, all of them complementary and connected to it. Each one is conveyed by the platform that best enhances its expressive characteristics. Being part of contemporaneity in the era of collaborative networks, communications between the media, between the media and the viewers, and between the viewers strengthen the articulations of Transmedia Storytelling as an intensely creative and socializing movement. In this convergence of contents in multiple platforms, or media, the cooperation between the various media industries is guided, in a way, by the migratory behavior of its audience that decides what will be its narrative sequence (RENÓ, 2011, p. 210).<sup>5</sup>

There may even be a “mother ship”, the main product, which favors expansions, but today the “tuber” of the rhizome is the narrative. To Scolari (2013) the NT are the fruit of integrated production and are a network of characters, successes, times, platforms and means. Gomez (2010) proposes eight characteristics of Transmedia production:

- 1-The content is originated by few visionaries.
- 2-Cross-media is planned at the beginning of the franchise life.
- 3-Content is distributed to three or more media platforms.

4-Content is unique, meets the specific strengths of the platform and is not redirected from one platform to another.

5-Content is based on a unique vision for the world of history.

6-The effort is made to avoid fractures and schisms.

7- Effort is vertical throughout the company, third parties and licensees.

8- The development presents participatory elements of the audience, including: web portal, social networks and user-generated content guided by stories.

The author elaborates that a team is necessary to execute this development, several professionals with the necessary skills to coordinate transmedia teams of screenwriters, interdisciplinary teams.

Becerra, Miguel e Gutiérrez (2015) describe that for a business model that favors good distribution and exploitation of content must be created a project of intellectual and industrial property, analyzing the brand, geographic territories, and local culture, for which it is intended to distribute, thus prospecting the success of the product, from the profile and characteristics of the characters, the format, original soundtrack, multimedia applications, games, social networks, advertising, film, television, radio.

This strategy is currently on the rise and allows the increase in profitability of breeders. Internet users are increasingly demanding content that is linked to the same idea (Alonso et al, 2005). It is important to distinguish between crossmedia content and transmedia content. The term crossmedia, is understood from a central content, other derivatives are created in order to extend the brand. For history to make sense, they must be consumed together. The crossmedia content strategy refers to the distribution and consumption of similar content through the combined use of different media and media, such as the Internet, TV, radio or cell phones. But the term transmedia starts with a brand, and in it different additional content is created. The difference is that they can be consumed independently without blurring the concept, complementing the main plot. Each small part favors the formation as a whole (BECERRA; MIGUEL; GUTIÉRREZ, 2015).<sup>6</sup>

Thinking about knowledge and innovation in media and technology, how these Transmedia contents can favor education, the construction of knowledge and science through new processes, and the renewal of culture.

What is going to be of all this? Faced with such questioning, it is necessary to rethink the use of technologies in education and by the subjects. Access to ICTs is, to a certain extent, growing, but appropriating it so that the subject becomes a critical and reflective citizen is still a path to be explored more and more.

## Learning processes and use of NTs and ICTs

It is necessary to think about ways to bring knowledge to children. According to Prensky (2001), digital natives are the generation of those born and raised with the technologies present in their lives. To Serres (2013) immigrants and digital natives do not live in the same time and history. The natives are formatted by the media, which transforms the society of the spectacle into a pedagogical society, where competition overshadows the school.

Bauman (2001) will describe this moment as liquid modernity, social relations today are fluid, there is a definite absence of form, speed, mobility and inconsistency. The future of digital natives is uncertain, nebulous and indefinite. The only hope is contained in the now, it is necessary to enjoy the experiences and enjoy the now, pleasure is highly valued.

The liquid modernity is characterized by the obsession for the new: the new news, the new promotion, the new car, the new social network, the need to live in the eternal present. The representativeness and appreciation of the image suppresses frustrations of reality. As Baudrillard (2002) relates in “Simulacra and Simulation”: The Reality leaves to exist, if it lives in a representation, symbols possess more value than the proper reality, the society is attracted by the simulation.

Seres (2013) highlights that by the power it wields, the media seduces and educates, and teachers have become less heard within this instituting, dominant, rich and noisy system, while the child is an autonomous creature, in solidarity, creative, and seeks for its own means of learning and producing knowledge. Thus, ICTs, with a face for education, can be used for learning through interaction, play, games, books, competitions.

The MEC, Ministry of Education and Sports, brings in the National Referential Curricular for Education, which:

The learning context can be ludic, so that the individual has pleasure in learning, not exclusively with reference to games and jokes, but the ludic as research, travel, observation, meaning and involvement with the content, taking advantage of the possibilities (BRASIL, 1998).<sup>7</sup>

In order for the content to be interesting for the classroom, it is important that it has: Clarity of the Objectives; Adequacy of the objectives to the content; Coherence in the subdivision of the content; Adequacy of the content to the time available; Appropriate selection of the teaching material; Relationship of continuity between the plan and the development of the lesson; Clear language, correct and appropriate to the content; Approach of the fundamental ideas to the content; Logical sequence of the

content discussed; Articulation between the ideas presented: Applications and updated information; Content with correct information; Adequacy of content according to the time stipulated for the test; Structure of the lesson, evidencing introduction, development and conclusion; Proper use of teaching material.

The National Referential Curricular for Education of Brazil (1998), also defines that the process that allows the construction of meaningful learning by children requires intense internal activity on their part. This process enables them to modify their previous knowledge, broadening their ability to perform new learning, making them meaningful.

Several teaching tendencies elucidate this posture, of construction of significant learning, and are commonly used as theoretical reference for pedagogical projects. In order to define the best ones, with a view to applying the appropriate approach to the theme, they are deepened, and lines that reflect the objectives of the product are highlighted, that is, it brings the content closer to reality and allows the student to reflect, identify, and build knowledge, with the addition of information obtained from the program.

Vygotsky (1993) declares that the thought itself is generated by motivation, that is, by our desires and needs, our interests and emotions. Learning always contains interpersonal relationships, and that the understanding of the world is based on the other, there is no ready internal knowledge that is updated without external influence, influenced by the environment. The author theorizes that the child is born only with psychological functions that after the learning of the culture is transmuted into superior psychological functions, and through the people who interact with the child giving value and social meaning to the information.

To Freire (2015), knowing is a conscious and participatory dynamic act, inseparable from curiosity and interest in deciphering and changing the world, a creative act and creator of invention and reinvention. Knowledge is linked to reveal something hidden, through scientific and philosophical effort, so the perception of the object does not lead to knowledge of it, it is necessary that analysis and synthesis, reflection, and the creation of the object.

Freire's teaching practice (2015) is grounded in education based on assimilation with the object of study, through dialogue as reality, as opposed to what he calls technical education, banking. The learner would create his own education, making his own unique path instead of following some previously constructed one, following and creating the course of his learning.

The mission of the education advocated by Freire (2015) is to educate in order to transform, emancipate, fight injustice, discrimination, violence, prejudice, exclusion in order to strengthen participatory democracy. This is because his goal and to develop

reflective criticism in students, according to Ferrari (2015), he said that while the conservative school seeks to accommodate students to the existing world, the education he advocated had the intention of worrying them.

The new generations need new proposals to expand their interest in content. Knowing is a creative and creative act of invention and reinvention. The NT can function as a tool to corroborate these purposes. According to Jenkins (2008) it occurs on different platforms, with different characteristics, with new contexts that contribute to the whole, it is an expansion to several universes, the understanding of each part is independent, not redundant.

Martino (2015, p. 38) describes that the attractive side of NT is to provide different audiences with specific ways of living the narratives beyond what is presented in film or television, being a multiplatform and multilingual technological innovation to disseminate information and content. It is important to stress, as the author also does, that success depends on the public's engagement with the products.

To Scolari (2013) with Transmedia the experience and the narrative expands, enables new senses and even new content. The production of stories, which accompanies the growing possibilities offered by ICTs, expands the possibilities that we have to tell, listen, see and now also be part and protagonists of old and new stories.

Imagination is essential to the process of knowing the world, in the aesthetic, affective and cognitive development. It is a way for the child to see beyond, making the possibilities viable.

The work with technologies and media in Education must prioritize and promote dialogue with the world and also with the different languages, empowering the power of communication, babies and children must be led to experience, experience, discover, play with the media, discover a new way to communicate, express, create, research, imagine and think the world.

Interactivity is an intrinsic property of digital communication: immersion is intense when the user is involved in the space of virtual reality. At school, the environment has to prepare for the digital thinking that will guide an existence full of experiences that gravitate between the concrete world and the virtual universe.

We are crossing distances and times in a way that our physical body alone would not be able to. People are increasingly using access to virtual space in any device: it is access practices that build the hybrid space between virtual (cyberspace) and physical environments in which our biological body circulates (SANTAELLA, 2007). However, without appropriation of digital existence we will not be able to exercise our freedom of choice. This is the role reserved for Education in the digital age (BIZELLI; HEREDERO, 2016).



Since the acceptance of an interactive system is determinant of the success of the system, the user satisfaction factor emphasizes the subjective evaluation of the system made by its users, including emotions that may arise during interaction, whether positive, such as pleasure and fun, or negative, such as boredom or frustration (PRATES; BARBOSA, 2003).

In this sense, technologies are a means of disseminating information, but in order to appropriate knowledge and verify the sources of this information, school education is fundamental in the formation of the individual from the criticality and reflection.

The construction of knowledge demands intellectual freedom, space for the curiosity to arise naturally. Nakagaki's (2014) research highlights that in terms of learning outcomes, more teachers at the school are providing easy to understand instructions for children using ICT tools and successfully conducting classes in a way that helps children extend and deepen their thinking processes through the use of ICTs.

While in Brazil education professionals are still learning to handle ICT in the classroom, in Japan, Nakagaki (2014) reports that teachers have shown their ability to use various digital materials to make children explore one more subject and become independent thinkers, and that it is clear that teachers can conduct classes more effectively and efficiently using ICT tools. For the researcher, the benefits of ICT education will only become known when ICT tools are effectively used, and their effectiveness verified.

The contemporary transmedia culture favors the consolidation of relationships and communities, enables greater inclusion, dynamism, democracy, participation, and through entertainment processes favors playfulness and learning. What benefits the construction of knowledge and intellectual autonomy presupposes the realization of free research, where the curiosity of the child arises naturally, including for the development of their own narratives.

Instead, each child integrates information from various media, which leads everyone to know something their friends don't know. Together, they share the information and collaboratively rebuild the narrative universe. Each medium contributes to the construction of the narrative world; obviously, the contributions of each medium or communication platform differ from the others (SCOLARI, 2013, p. 25).<sup>8</sup>

The challenge lies in the pedagogical reality, in the concrete school, which needs to be able to absorb students who live a digital existence stamped on multiple platforms and multiple applications. At the same time, in a digital context, to account

for tasks such as teaching-learning processes for the formation of reflective, critical, creative and collaborative subjects.

## Considerations

In this scenario, the complex notes stand out: shallow information with a large volume of access; attention deficit; access to inappropriate content without reflection on the part of the subject and the families – on the part of the families is when there is no inspection.

On the positive side, we highlight: collective intelligence; universal digital languages; true globalization and knowledge of cultures; possibility to deepen knowledge and know everything at a click; collective construction of real data knowledge, collective research.

Transmedia Pedagogy allows students and content to flow through media platforms. Students can insert their learning in a way that meets their needs, and educators can leverage the strengths and maximize the power of individual platforms.

Transcending content in this way enables collaborative sharing and proliferation of knowledge around the world. This new learning model goes beyond the confines of a classroom and instead allows content to flow across the curriculum and from one media to another.

Positive aspects of ICTs in teaching and learning processes depend on the participation of education professionals as well as society. The challenge posed, therefore, is an effort to overcome the horizon of offering a pedagogical reality in the concrete school that is capable of absorbing students who live a digital existence stamped on multiple platforms.

Whether in Communication or Education, it is worth thinking about the challenge proposed by Jenkins (2008): to understand the contemporary media possibilities to provoke a participatory culture. To have interactivity it is not enough that technological resources point out for this purpose, it is necessary to provoke, in the target public, the desire to interact, to participate, to collaborate, to create.

The education of the future, in the current information and technological society with the use of technologies, various possibilities exist, but professionals in education, audiovisual, psychology, health should interact and promote discussions in a multi and interdisciplinary way, also including family and students.

The liquid modernity, for which we are in transition, favors fluidity, but in this process of change, in the educational environment there are still many teachers with

minds, reasoning, and analogical methods, while the majority of students have these digital attributes, since they were born immersed in this culture.

The influence of cyberculture, virtual, possibilities, collective intelligence, connected, is explicit, the acquisition of knowledge does not occur only by institutional means, according to the traditional perspective of teaching. Knowledge is a complex, dynamic and continuous process that involves a series of preparatory steps and the development of meta skills, of knowledge also of the tools and their use, in addition to the contents that it favors.

In the digital age it is not possible to acquire all the available information, reductionism no longer fits the current culture, the superficial is overcome by the database. The relevance of knowledge is reflection, that the machine does not do, it stores and processes. The individual synthesizes the study of its interest, not the whole, because it would not realize everything. Thus, the essential learnings are focused on diversity, content and depth.

Through multi-platforms, educational audiovisual and educational applications can be used for digital learning through innovations such as games, books, relationships and virtual exchanges.

In digital existence, the technologies must provide for the integration and motivation of the student giving conditions for development of a human being more reflective, more critical, more creative and more collaborative.

Commitment to the construction of knowledge must be the pact that establishes between schools, teachers, students and the surrounding community. Only in this way can interest in Education be recovered, identifying it with the present - the concrete world, the material conditions of existence - and with the future opened by the possibilities of digital thinking - which will certainly be the bridge to the necessary transformations for citizen life, global thinking, new processes, and the renewal of culture.

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#### Notas:

<sup>1</sup> Devemos construir novos modelos do espaço dos conhecimentos. No lugar de representação em escalas lineares e paralelas, em pirâmides estruturadas em 'níveis', organizadas pela noção de pré-requisitos e convergindo para saberes 'superiores', a partir de agora devemos preferir a imagem em espaços de conhecimentos emergentes, abertos, contínuos, em fluxo, não lineares, se reorganizando de acordo com os objetivos ou os contextos, nos quais cada um ocupa posição singular e evolutiva (LÉVY, 2004, p. 158).

<sup>2</sup> Na forma ideal da narrativa Transmídia, cada meio faz o que faz de melhor - a fim de que uma história possa ser introduzida num filme, expandida pela televisão, romances, quadrinhos; seu universo possa ser explorado em games ou experimentado como atração num parque de diversões (JENKINS, 2008, p. 138).

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<sup>3</sup> Pokémon se despliega a través de juegos, programas de televisión, películas y libros, y ningún medio se privilegia sobre el otro. Los jóvenes consumidores se han vuelto cazadores y recolectores de información, les gusta sumergirse en las historias, reconstruir el pasado de los personajes y conectarlos con otros textos dentro de la misma franquicia (SCOLARI, 2013, p. 24).

<sup>4</sup> Rizome – Resulting from the structure of some plants whose sprouts can branch at any point and turn into a bulb or tuber. The production structure exposed in the flowchart is based on this organic branching.

<sup>5</sup> A Narrativa Transmídia é considerada o resultado da articulação das distintas partes de uma grande narrativa, todas elas complementares e ligadas a esta. Cada uma está veiculada pela plataforma que melhor potencialize suas características expressivas. Por fazer parte da contemporaneidade na era das redes colaborativas, as comunicações entre os meios, entre os meios e os espectadores e entre os espectadores fortalecem as articulações da narrativa Transmídia, como um movimento intensamente criativo e socializador. Nessa convergência de conteúdos em múltiplas plataformas, ou mídias, a cooperação entre as diversas indústrias de mídias se orienta, de certa maneira, pelo comportamento migratório do seu público que decide qual será a sua sequência narrativa (RENÓ, 2011, p. 210).

<sup>6</sup> Esta estrategia está hoy en día en auge y permite el aumento de rentabilidad de los creadores. Los internautas están cada vez más demandando contenidos que estén vinculados a una misma idea (Alonso et al, 2005). Es importante distinguir entre los contenidos crossmedia y los contenidos transmedia. El término de crossmedia, se entiende a partir de un contenido central, se crean otros derivados con el objeto de extender la marca. Para que la historia tenga sentido se deben consumir en conjunto. La estrategia de contenidos crossmedia hace referencia a la distribución y consumo de contenidos similares a través del uso combinado de diferentes medios y soportes como son Internet, TV, radio o teléfonos móviles. Pero el término transmedia parte de una marca, y en ésta se van creando diferentes contenidos adicionales. La diferencia está en que se pueden consumir de manera independiente sin que se desdibuje el concepto, complementando la trama principal. Cada pequeña parte favorece a formar un todo (BECERRA, MIGUEL, GUTIÉRREZ, 2015).

<sup>7</sup> O contexto do aprendizado pode ser lúdico, afim de que o indivíduo tenha prazer em aprender, não exclusivamente com referência a jogos e brincadeiras, mas o lúdico enquanto pesquisa, viagem, observação, significado e envolvimento com o conteúdo, aproveitando as possibilidades (BRASIL, 1998).

<sup>8</sup> Más bien cada niño integra la información de varios medios, lo que lleva a que cada uno conozca algo que sus amigos o amigas no saben. Entre todos comparten la información y van reconstruyendo de forma colaborativa el universo narrativo. Cada medio hace un aporte a la construcción del mundo narrativo; evidentemente, las aportaciones de cada medio o plataforma de comunicación difieren entre sí (SCOLARI, 2013, p. 25).

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