

CARLOS E. A. PLACIDO

THE CREATIVITY

IN FANZINES AND FANFICTIONS



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The creativity in fanzines and fanfictions

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The studies about creativity have increased since 1996 in Brazil. This is partly due to its teaching and learning reinforcement by the Brazilian government through the Brazilian Law of Directives and Bases of National Education. Based on this law, creativity is apprehended as a fundamental cognitive skill for today's world, and it requires systematic learning and constant practice.

The proper development of creativity should happen in all levels of learning (primary, secondary, and tertiary). In relation to the tertiary education, many researchers have demonstrated the importance of improving undergraduate students' creative skills by providing the adequate teaching of creative writing. But how can Brazilian teachers teach creative writing adequately, if there is little research about it in Brazil?

For this reason, the motivation of this research was the conspicuous lack of studies related to teaching and learning of fanfictional creative writing, especially at Brazilian Languages and Literature Universities. In addition, the conduction of this research has also opportunized the exploration of data collection methods that may be used by researchers of creativity, fanfictions, and creative writing in future investigations.

A criatividade não tem sido extensivamente pesquisada no Brasil. Há poucos cursos sobre escrita criativa em universidades brasileiras de Letras, e ainda menos publicações disponíveis nesta área (Myers, 2006; Morley, 2007; Blythe e Sweet, 2008; Healey, 2009; Oberholzer, 2014). De acordo com a Lei de Diretrizes e Bases Educacionais do Brasil (LDB), a criatividade deve ser compreendida como uma das habilidades fundamentais para se desenvolver a educação brasileira, do ensino fundamental ao superior. Referente ao ensino superior, a LDB estabeleceu a importância de estimular a criação cultural, a ampliação do pensamento criativo, o aprimoramento das habilidades criativas e as capacidades cognitivas. No entanto, pouquíssimas instituições brasileiras forneceram aos seus alunos de graduação disciplinas de ECI e/ou cursos extracurriculares com foco no desenvolvimento da escrita criativa de seus alunos. Por conseguinte, o objetivo desta pesquisa foi verificar o papel da criatividade nas fanzines e fanfictions. A metodologia aplicada foi a bibliográfica e baseada na teoria sociocultural vygotskiana (Vygotsky, 2004; 2007). Os dados coletados indicaram que a criatividade apresenta vários papéis na conceitualização das fanzines e fanfictions tais como a autoexpressão, a imaginação (Vygotsky, 2004; 2007), o pensamento conceitual (Lantolf, 2015), a autorregulação e a agência (Wertsch, 1998).

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Escrita Criativa; Teoria sociocultural; Fanfiction.

The creativity has not been extensively researched in Brazil. There are few courses about creative writing in Brazilian Languages and Literature universities, and even fewer available publications in this area as well (Myers, 2006; Morley, 2007; Blythe and Sweet, 2008; Healey, 2009; Oberholzer, 2014). According to Brazilian Educational Bases and Guideline Law, creativity should be comprehended as one of the main foundations of the Brazilian education, from the primary schooling to the tertiary level. For higher education, this law established the importance of stimulating cultural creation, creative thinking broadening, creative skills honing and cognitive capacities. Nevertheless, very few Brazilian institutions have provided their Languages and Literature undergraduate students with CWE disciplines and/or extracurricular courses focusing on the development of their students' creative writing.

The aim of this research was to identify the role of creativity in fanzines and fanfictions. The methodology applied was the bibliographical and based on the Vygotskian sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 2004; 2007). The data collected indicated that creativity played many crucial roles in conceptualizing fanzines and fanfictions such as self-expression, imagination (Vygotsky, 2004; 2007), conceptual thinking (Lantolf, 2015), self-regulation as well as agency (Wertsch, 1998).

KEYWORDS: Creative Writing; Sociocultural theory; Fanfiction

CWE – Creative Writing in English

ECl - Escrita Criativa em Inglês

ECFI - Escrita Criativa Fanfictional em Inglês

ESL – English as a second language

Fanwriting – Fanfictional creative writing

FCW – Fanfictional Creative Writing in English

LDB - Lei de Diretrizes e Bases Educacionais do Brasil

ISL – Inglês como segunda língua

USP – Universidade de São Paulo

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INTRODUCTION

Creative Writing in English (CWE) has not been extensively researched in Brazil. There are few courses on CWE in Brazilian Languages and Literature universities, and even fewer available publications on this area as well (Myers, 2006; Morley, 2007; Blythe and Sweet, 2008; Healey, 2009; Oberholzer, 2014). The Brazilian Educational Bases and Guideline Law indicate that creativity should be comprehended as one of the main foundations of the Brazilian education, from the primary schooling to the tertiary level. However, there are still few courses in Brazil which promote creative writing classes.

To communicate effectively in today's world is one of the most important skills required by schools, workplaces and even the internet (World Economic Forum, 2015). Therefore, to teach students how to communicate successfully, teachers should be able to carefully identify and select activities which can improve their students' creativity, self-expression, imagination (Vygotsky, 2004; 2007), conceptual thinking (Lantolf, 2015), self-regulation as well as agency (Wertsch, 1998). One possible way of achieving that is by creative writing, which is the focus of this thesis.

According to Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky (2007, p. 55), every cognitive activity materializes in a type of matrix. This matrix is socially and historically constructed and, consequently, it shapes sociohistorical development artifacts. In other words, still for Vygotsky (2007, p. 56), the cognitive qualities and how people think are not defined by innate factors, but they are direct artifacts of our social institutions. These social institutions are based on recurrent activities which form people's culture. Vygotsky (2007, p. 57) still attested that although culture may change throughout history, many of its fundamental characteristics pass from one generation to another.

Creative writing has been one of these cognitive activities. Conforming to David Gershom Myers (2006, p. 141), the demand for creative writing courses has increased exponentially since 1990 in the universities worldwide. He believed that this has happened due to the constant valorization of writing in our society. For Myers (2006, p. 143), writing is not simply a commodity anymore, but it has become a social necessity. By social necessity, he meant that people have felt more and more the necessity of expressing themselves.

The valorization of writing has also been intensified by the advent of the internet. The use of various social media platforms such as Facebook or Twitter has become a quite common activity in today's world. Millions and millions of people use these platforms to communicate with others with different goals in mind. Most of their communication is materialized in writing. These constant and increasing communications have composed what André Lemos (2004, p. 12) defined as cyberculture.

For Lemos (2004, p. 12), cyberculture may present various complex and mutable definitions. However, he still advocates that it may be composed by some recurrent features. In turn, these laws usually encompass a set of cognitive qualities such as transmitting,

connecting and reconfiguring. In addition, these qualities also entail a set of communicative practices. For instance, the transmission of information on the internet may happen through a communicative practice denominated “*do it yourself*”.

The communicative practice “*do it yourself*” refers to the activity which is done by a person who has not had professional training. According to Lemos (2004, p. 13), this activity also entails authentic contents or remixed ones. The “*do it yourself*” person can simply retransmit these authentic contents or he can generate “new” ones to post on different websites. In turn, these “new” contents can be shared and then retransmitted to other websites as well as become viral. Furthermore, these “new” contents can even aggregate other “new” contents such as comments and contributions. This is Lemos (2004)’s first law of cyberculture.

This unparalleled type of transmission of information has democratized the publisher’s role (Jenkins, 2006). As a result, this has also permitted many people to publish for themselves and others. Lemos (2004)’s second law is related to connectiveness. According to him, people have connected themselves with others more than ever since the advent of the internet. He perceived that it is not just enough for people to create content, they also want to transmit it as well as be read. Lemos (2004)’s third law is then related to how cyberculture has reconfigured our various communicative practices. Consequently, these “new” reconfigurations have been translated into “new” ways of people interacting with each other. One of this “new” ways is related to how people conceptualize, create, consume and divulge information.

The use of inverted commas around the word *new* is quite important here. The conceptualization, creation, consumption and divulgence of information are not new cognitive qualities. In fact, people had them even before the advent of the internet (Lévy, 2009). According to Vygotsky (2007, p. 143), these cognitive qualities are higher mental functions. Higher mental functions are human qualities acquired through social relationships. Simultaneously, these functions are mediated by social meanings and controlled voluntarily. In turn, they are all connected with a broader system of mental functions present in a person’s culture.

Nevertheless, these higher mental functions may have been reconfigured with the advent of the internet. According to Henry Jenkins (2006, p. 27), people already applied some of these cognitive qualities to write fanzines. For him, fanzines are basically texts written by fans as a form of homage to the original text. Hence, to complete that, writers need self-regulation and agency (Wertsch, 1998). Based on this research, I noticed that people seem to have written something like fanzines, but they have not denominated them as such. In fact, they have come up with a “new” name: *fanfictions*. Interestingly also to notice, people have written more than ever (Jenkins, 2006, p. 64), and not only in their first language, but also in their second and third languages. For Jenkins (2006, p. 64), the most second language used to write fanfictions is English.

In the same vein, Myers (2006) observed that the demand for creative writing courses in the American universities has increased unprecedentedly. He believed that due to people's constant desires for writing, especially for the internet, have made them search for more professional guidance. According to Myers (2006), people have searched for more professional guidance, because there is more competition on the internet. Compared to Lemos (2004)'s cybercultural observations and laws, Myers (2006) also attested that people do not only want to write for the internet, they want to divulge their writing more extensively and be read more frequently.

For these reasons, we can notice there is an increasing necessity of teaching people how to write creatively not only to become internet literates (Prensky, 2001), but also to help them become fuller global citizens (Banks, 2012) in today's world. Therefore, these reasons justified the development of this research. According to Alan Maley (2012, p. 17), the proper teaching of creative writing can result in various benefits to improve people's cognitive qualities. For instance, they can enhance their imagination, creativity and motivation, which are quite valued qualities in today's schools and workplace. In addition, people may ameliorate their self-expression, interpersonal relationships and even hone their agency (Wertsch, 1998). People can also practice their English language and develop their writing skills more intensively.

Therefore, the aims of this thesis were to 1) identify and analyze the most current concepts about creativity present in Fanfictional Creative Writing in English (FCW, henceforth) students, 2) identify and analyze the most current concepts about fanfictions present in FCW students, 3) investigate the main issues related to fanfictional creative writing and its possible contributions as a tool for teaching and learning English as a second language, 4) design, organize and teach a FCW in English course, 5) explore the various possibilities of development promotion in a FCW course and 6) identify as well as analyze how the FCW students may have (or may not) developed (Vygotsky, 2004. 2007) their fanfictional creative writing in an FCW course. Based on these aims, I intend to answer the following 4 research questions: 1) How do Languages and Literature students conceptualize creativity? 2) How do Languages and Literature students conceptualize fanfictions? 3) Where did the teacher promote zone of proximal development (ZPD)? and 4) How do students develop their fanfictional writing in a creative writing course?

To achieve my goals, I opted for dividing my thesis into two parts: the theoretical and the practical. In the theoretical part, I focused on investigating: a) the most current concepts about creativity, b) the most current concepts about fanfictions, c) the creative writing as an activity in today's world and d) the Vygotskian sociocultural theory as well as the main Neo-Vygotskians whose research are about creativity and second language development. In the practical part, I focused on: a) analyzing if the FCW students broadened their concepts about creativity and fanfictions, b) identifying in which parts of the FCW course I could promote development and c) investigating when and how the FCW students could develop their fanfictional creative writing.

In relation to the theoretical part, I could identify that there was more than one approach to creativity. In fact, there were many. For this reason, I decided for the most recurrent ones: He-paradigm, I-paradigm and We-paradigm (Glăveanu, 2011). The same situation happened to the concepts about fanfiction. Therefore, the decision was the same: fanzine and fanfiction (Jenkins, 2007). These decisions helped me design and apply the Fanfictional Creative Writing in English (FCW) course. For the better understanding of creative writing courses, I opted for authors who researched mainly the advent, formation and expansion of creative writing in English in the world (Myers, 2006; Morley, 2007; Blythe and Sweet, 2008; Healey, 2009; Oberholzer, 2014).

In relation to the practical part, the pedagogical foundation of the FCW course was one of the most important moments of my research. Therefore, I decided to design and organize the FCW course based on the Vygotskian sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 2004; 2007), along with some of its most recognized proponents (Wertsch, 1998; John-Steiner, 2015; Lantolf, 2015), mainly related to creativity and second language acquisition theories.

The Vygotskian sociocultural theory helped me not only to understand better concepts about creativity, learning and development, but also how to identify, analyze and apply them to the classroom. In addition, the Wertsch (1998)'s proposed concepts about self-regulation and agency, along with John-Steiner (2015)'s creative (joint) collaboration as well as Lantolf (2015)'s conceptual thinking gave the support I needed to investigate more profoundly the FCW students' development.

Furthermore, I would like to highlight here that this thesis may contribute to a plethora of areas of knowledge. For example, applied linguistics, literary studies and creative writing. In relation to applied linguistics, this thesis may help teachers and students develop their creativity, concepts about genre and linguistic skills. In relation to the literary studies, it may deepen researchers' knowledge about fanfictions, ficwriters, ficreaders and fandoms. In relation to the creative writing, it may also help teachers and students to deal with the writing process through a Vygotskian perspective, promoting self-expression (Vygotsky, 2004; 2018), self-regulation, agency (Wertsch, 1998) and conceptual thinking (Lantolf, 2015), which are still very infrequent in today's creative writing courses.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 APPROACHES TO THE CONCEPT OF CREATIVITY

The studies about creativity have increased since 1996 in Brazil. This is partly due to its teaching and learning reinforcement by the Brazilian government through the Brazilian Law of Directives and Bases of National Education. Based on this law, creativity is apprehended as a fundamental cognitive skill for today's world and it requires systematic learning and constant practice.

The proper development of creativity should happen in all levels of learning (primary, secondary and tertiary). In relation to the tertiary education, many studies (Simister, 2004; Tan, 2004; Pope, 2005; Mukundan, 2006; Carlson, 2011; Kearney, 2016) have demonstrated the importance of improving undergraduate students' creative skills by providing the adequate teaching of creative writing. But how can Brazilian teachers teach creative writing adequately, if there is little research about it in Brazil?

For this reason, the motivation of this research was the conspicuous lack of studies related to teaching and learning of creative writing, especially at Brazilian Languages and Literature Universities. In addition, the conduction of this research has also opportunized the exploration of data collection methods that may be used by researchers of creativity, fanfictions and creative writing in future investigations.

This research took place in the second semester of 2016, at the Faculty of Philosophy, Languages and Literature, and Human Sciences (FPLLHS), through the Department of Modern Languages (DML), in the University of São Paulo (USP), Brazil. The extracurricular course used for the data collection was the Fanfictional Creative Writing in English (*Escrita Criativa Fanficcional em inglês*, in Portuguese).

This extracurricular course had 12 enrolments, with undergraduate students from different language majors in FPLLHS. Nevertheless, especially for this study, the researcher only considered 5 out of the total of the enrolled undergraduate students. This occurred, because 5 of them abandoned the course at the beginning of it and the other 2 did not complete all the required tasks.

The primary beneficiaries of this research may probably be the Languages and Literature undergraduate students, their professors, Creative Writing teachers, public and private school managers, and even pre-service as well as in-service teachers. They may all directly benefit from this research, because its findings may be applied to improve their creativity, knowledge about fanfictions, creative writing courses as well as develop their teaching and learning skills.

2.1.1 Creativity: Concepts and typology

Creativity seems to be a cognitive skill which is unanimously apprehended as positive and liberating. Maley & Peachy (2010, p. 06) attested in their research that “(...) *creativity is widely believed to be a ‘good thing’, enriching the quality of life and learning*”. The focus of their research was on the development of tertiary students’ creative writing at English Universities. One of their main findings indicated that through the teaching of creative writing, students can better understand textual genres, express themselves and organize their own texts more properly.

This may occur, because “(...) *creativity is widely believed to be about letting the imagination loose in an orgy of totally free self-expression*” (Maley & Peachy, 2010, p. 07). Their findings unearthed that students may feel freer to speak their minds and, consequently, be more motivated to write about them. This motivation may opportunize constant reflections upon the textual genres they opt for expressing themselves and how their self-expression can be better conveyed.

Although Maley & Peachy (2010, p. 13-14) highlighted initially the positiveness and freedom revolving the concept of creativity, they also added that it may not be as positive and free as many English as a second language (ESL) teachers may believe. Creative writing classes exemplify these researchers’ various concerns.

In these classes, students may indeed feel secure to self-express, but their self-expression may become offensive depending on about what they write or even how they convey it. For example, if a person writes a joke about obesity, an obese person may find it inadequate and then abandon the course altogether.

Both Maley & Peachy (2010) then concluded that unprepared creative writing classes may hinder students’ creative writing development. In the same vein, John-Steiner (2015, p. 63)’s research also indicated this type of setback. Basing directly on Vygotsky (1987; 1989), she stated that “(...) *creativity depends on development, and development depends on creativity*”. If students do not have an adequate environment to develop their creative skills, the development of their higher mental functions (Vygotsky, 1987; 1989) may be limited and improper to deal with today’s world. The adequate environment is also highlighted by Connery and Marjanovic-Shane (2015) in their respective research on creativity and self-expression.

In addition, they also stressed that the development of students’ creativity (Vygotsky, 2007) while learning a second language through arts may boost their artistic flair. In other words, students may discover an artistic aptitude and feel more motivated to learn the target language. However, their findings displayed other learning setbacks. Connery and Marjanovic-Shane (2015) noticed that some of their students felt extremely insecure to performance a specific piece of art and, then, interrupted their class participation. According to them, this occurred, because some of their students apprehended creativity as a solitary and introspect process.

As we can see, creativity does not present a unique and fixed definition. All in all, I agree with John-Steiner (2015)'s statement, based on Vygotsky (1987; 1989), development depends on creativity and vice-versa. They have a dialectical relationship, and as any dialectical relationship is mutable and complex. Her theoretical framework is founded on the Vygotskian sociocultural theory. This sociocultural theory does not only deal with the understanding of the recurrent definitions of a certain concept, but it also attempts to understand its ontogenesis. Due to these factors, I will now focus on Vlad Glăveanu (2011)'s 3 concepts about creativity as he delineated the 3 main relevant approaches to it throughout history.

Furthermore, it is also relevant to mention that I used his concepts as part of my theoretical framework to organize and teach the course of Fanfictional Creative Writing in English. The summary of Glăveanu (2011)'s 3 concepts about creativity is illustrated as follows:



Fig. 01 - Glăveanu (2011)'s concepts about creativity

The He-paradigm

According to Glăveanu (2011), the best representation of the He-paradigm approach is the idea of the lone genius. This is one of the oldest concepts related to creativity, dating back to the Ancient Greece. For Sternberg (2003) and Pope (2005), the primary connection we should establish to better understand the idea of the lone genius is between the concept of the genius and his divine inspiration. This divine inspiration is described by Carter (2004) as the Muses.

The Muses are supernatural entities with inspirational powers to guide those literary, scientific and artistic 'chosen' ones who reproduce, duplicate, recreate the divine (usually artistic) work on Earth. They are also seen as a type of unlimited source of knowledge and beauty which are crafted materialized by the hands and voices of the 'selected' ones in several types of arts (lyrics, poetry, epic sagas, mythologies, etc.) and even weaponry.

The Muses channels God and Goddesses' creative powers which influence directly the demiurge (Platonic artisan figure who fashions and maintains the physical world, i.e., he is responsible for reproducing on Earth through The Muses' inspirational commands God

and Goddesses' wishes and wrath). For me, one of the best paintings which may clearly describe the demiurge's relationship with God is *The Creation of Adam* by Michelangelo (1512):

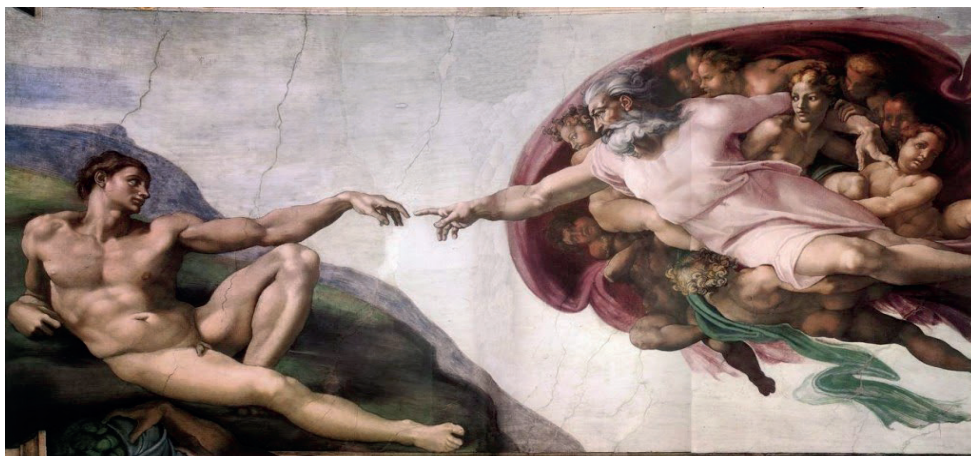


Fig. 02 - *Creation of Adam* by Michelangelo (1512). Available on <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Creation_of_Adam>. Accessed on 02/23/17.

This painting illustrates the demiurge's position before creation. On the right, we can see God superimposed and floating majestically in the air. He represents the otherworldliness and everything that is powerful in the world. He is elderly, but quite muscled which indicates knowledge and strength. He is surrounded by other supernatural entities which may be angels due to the time it was painted.

On the left, there is Adam who represents the Humankind along with his imperfections and limitations. Adam is in the position of subaltern and inferior being. His finger points to God to receive everything that is possible for the Humankind to develop themselves on Earth.

Therefore, the He-paradigm approach to the concept of creativity embodies the idea of the genius who is inspired by The Muses and then reproduces, duplicates, recreates the divine work among ordinary men. Glăveanu (2011) opts for the pronoun *He*, because the creator was usually portrayed by the image of the male (*androcentrism*).

In addition, Pope (2005) summated that the idea of the lone genius also implicates the characteristic of *exclusiveness*, due to the fact that just few members of the Greek community were chosen to reproduce the divine work on Earth. Therefore, those who were chosen would be denominated as the special people in the Greek community.

In the same vein, Dawson (2004) also dealt directly with the idea of exclusiveness. In fact, for Dawson (2004), only the free Greek male could reproduce God and Goddesses' work. However, he also mentioned the factor of *disconnection*. The He-paradigm 'creator'

creates nothing (ex-nihilo) insofar as he is the vessel which receives the divine inspiration and simply reproduces it on the mundane world.

As a consequence, there is nothing new, imaginative and/or revolutionary in his work, because his work does not belong to him, it belongs to the supernatural entities. Having said that, I can indicate the summary of the main He-paradigm characteristics as follows:

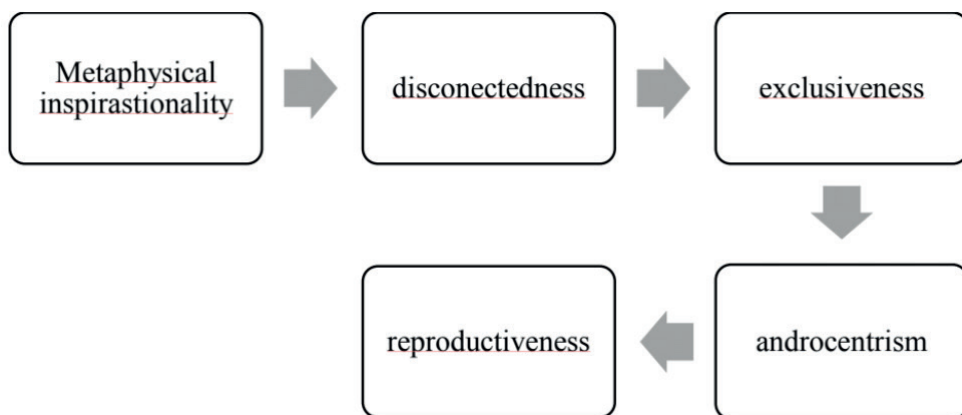


Fig. 03 - Vlad Glăveanu (2011)'s He-paradigm conceptualization

Although this summary may help us illustrate what are the main characteristics of the He-paradigm approach to creativity, this summary has not remained unaltered. Negus and Pickering (2004) enhanced the constant modifications of the He-paradigm approach characteristics throughout the centuries.

They promulgated that one of the main turning points of this approach occurred in the Renaissance era. During this period, the once unanimous influence of God upon the humankind diminished and it was slowly substituted by idea of genetic inheritance (Negus and Pickering, 2004, p. 12).

Based on them, Glăveanu (2011) concluded that the He-paradigm also embodies individuality, insight, outstanding ability and fertility of the genius. Glăveanu (2011) recognized these characteristics to directly criticize them. Vygotsky (2004) had already criticized the same characteristics in *The Psychology of Art*.

In it, he attested that “(...) *everyday understanding, creativity is the realm of a few selected individuals, geniuses, talented people, who produce great works of art, are responsible for major scientific discoveries or invent some technological advances*” (Vygotsky, 2004, p.10).

Furthermore, Negus & Pickering (2004) added that the He-paradigm approach to creativity reinforces aware or unaware elitism and essentialism. As direct consequences, they attested that the ‘black aura’ surrounding these characteristics such

as the anthropocentrism, incomprehension, limitation, reproduction and anti-socialization bolster exclusion at various levels.

The He-paradigm 'genius' is virtually an autistic creator who creates nothing and is detached from his own community. He lives in an otherworldly sphere, located in a parallel universe.

Nevertheless, according to Glăveanu (2011), the He-paradigm approach to creativity starts gradually to fade from the 14th to the 17th century (also known as The Renaissance era). Based on Glăveanu (2011)'s perspective upon it, people commence to believe in their own capacities and in their own chances of improving these capacities.

However, for Schaffer (1994, p. 27), these ideas gain real strength only in the early of the 19th century (the beginning of the Positivist era), due to, among several 'new' factors, people's growing 'fetishism' for the discovery of the novelty. Glăveanu (2011) called this innovative approach to creativity: the I-paradigm.

The I-paradigm

The I-paradigm has gained strength through several psychological studies (Weiner, 2000; Bilton, 2007; Carson, 2011) since mid-1950s. According to the British psychologist, Chris Bilton (2007), the main characteristics of the He-paradigm (androcentrism, exclusiveness and disconnectedness) were easily discharged by the I-paradigm researchers, because they proposed a more inclusive approach to better understanding the concept of creativity.

One of the main proposals of the I-paradigm researchers is to comprehend creativity as a characteristic present in every person. Everybody is born creative; thus, their creative skills can be improved. Bilton (2007) denominated this idea the democratization of creativity.

In contrast to the idea of the He-paradigm's exclusiveness, he (2007, p. 27) advocated in favor of understanding creativity as a "(...) *deliberately managed process*" which is person as well as collective-oriented. Bilton (2007) summated that creativity may be collective process as long as the individual does not lose its individuality.

Therefore, every single person can be apprehended as a creative being insofar as the person's individuality is not drastically influenced by the social (Carson, 2011). Still according to Bilton (2007), psychological studies on creativity should focus on the individual and his process of developing it. Being creative is no longer a supernatural skill given to the freemen, but it belongs to the people, regardless their gender, race, sex orientation, etc.

However, some relevant questions remain unanswered: If everybody is creative, why do some people create more culturally valued (material and symbolic) artifacts than others? And why do some people become Shakespeare and Einstein and others do not? In fact, the answering of these questions is not a very easy process. On the other hand, it should not be taken at face value.

In an attempt to answer these questions, some of the I-paradigm researchers (Gardner, 1999; Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Simonton, 2004; Gruber, 2008) proposed a differentiation between more skilled (Big C) and less skilled (little c) human beings (also named by creators). For them, Big C creators produce undisputedly eminent, unique creative artifacts. Artifacts that last generations after generations.

These creators may be nationally and internationally recognized scientists, artists, entrepreneurs, doctors, and so on. They might even receive distinctive awards and several types of decorations to highlight their contribution to society. In contrast, the little C creators reach more ordinary accomplishments. Their creativity is usually related to everyday activities. In general, their creations do not require extensive expertise.

All these researchers pinpointed that everybody possesses the little c creativity. Therefore, everybody can improve their creative skills and become a Big C creator. Furthermore, they all recognized that although everybody possesses the little c creativity, little c creative people in fact become Big C creators. For instance, in education, gifted students are those who pass exams with flying colors. Their giftedness stands out in the classroom through determination and constant practice.

According to Simonton (2004), gifted students' oral and writing skills are outstanding in comparison with their peers. Their outstandingness also embodies critical thinking and problem-solving capacities. On the other hand, those students who exhibit an average score in general tests might be apprehended as little c creators.

They create artifacts without extensive knowledge about them, usually to solve an everyday problem. For Glăveanu (2011), it is easy for the I-paradigm researchers to differentiate Big C from little c students. However, he criticized them directly for not knowing how to help little c become Big C students. All in all, Glăveanu (2011) agreed that creativity can be honed and transformed.

In addition, he still pinpointed that the characteristic of giftedness present in the I-paradigm highlights the shift from the supernatural perspective upon creative beings to the individualistic perspective widely promulgated in the Positivist era.

Furthermore, he constantly reminded us that the I-paradigm is chiefly person-oriented instead of God-oriented as it is the He-paradigm. Along with that, Glăveanu (2011) inferred that, apparently, most of the I-paradigm researchers have recognized, investigated and advocated in favor of the innate characteristic of this approach. Interestingly to notice, this characteristic has also been studied by the We-paradigm approach to creativity researchers.

Moreover, Glăveanu (2011) highlighted another characteristic of the I-paradigm approach to creativity. He stated that it is also cognition-oriented. In his own words, Glăveanu (2011, p. 05) ascertained that this approach "(...) *generated partial theoretical models which have extensively explored (and even exploited) the individual cognition and personality in a social vacuum and conceptualized creativity as a quality of the lone individual*".

Therefore, for Glăveanu (2011), one of the main goals of the I-paradigm researchers has been to investigate people's diverse cognitive capacities, without disregarding every person's individuality. The individual overlaps the social. In the same vein, Carson (2011) believed that by identifying correctly the strongest cognitive skills of a person, he may have more chances of becoming a Big C creator. Because of that, she proposed 7 distinct types of essential creative skills. These essential skills are: connect, reason, envision, absorb, transform, evaluate, and stream.

According to her most recent studies, if a psychologist can identify properly which essential creative skill(s) a certain person needs improving, the development of his creativity may be more successful. Although she defended that a person may become a Big C creator, she has not proved this hypothesis so far. The attempts of measuring properly a person's creative potentials is a recurrent procedure among the I-paradigm researchers. They have all promulgated that creativity is within the human psychology, i.e., it is cognitive-oriented. For this reason (and others already mentioned), most of them have tried to elaborate an ultimate measuring technique to assess a person's creativity and then promote their development.

By and large, these techniques are commonly known as psychometric tests. They are mainly applied by psychological and educational researchers as well as practitioners who need to measure students' school tests, knowledge, memorization and related activities to transform their little c into, at least, a closer to Big C creativity. In conclusion, a Glăveanu (2011) illustrative summary of the I-paradigm approach to creativity can be visualized below:

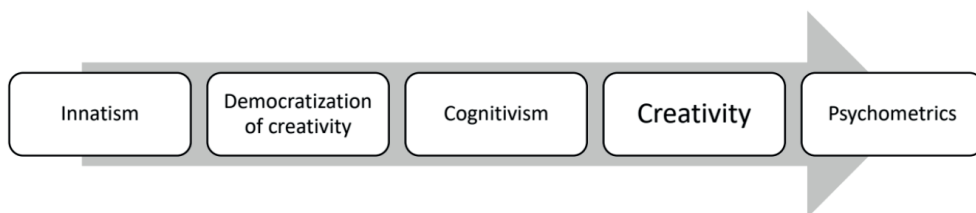


Fig. 04 - Vlad Glăveanu (2011)'s I-paradigm conceptualization

The We-paradigm

A plethora of researchers (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Marková, 2003; Paulus & Nijstad, 2003; Westwood & Low, 2003; Jovchelovitch, 2007; Glăveanu, 2011; John-Steiner, 2015; Kearney, 2016) have questioned the main characteristics of the He-paradigm and the I-paradigm approaches to creativity. They have all criticized these two approaches for not considering socio-historical and cultural factors in the composition of the concept of creativity.

According to Glăveanu (2011), the social aspect was clearly neglected by the two previous approaches. For this reason, he urged future researchers to investigate

more attentively societal relationships between the person (also named the self) and his environment (also named the social). Having done that, these budding researchers should then analyze how these 'ever-existed' relationships have influenced dialectically the development of people's creativity. His propositions are mainly based on sociocultural theory (SCT).

In the same vein, Westwood & Low (2003, p. 236) promulgated that "(...) *creativity takes place within, is constituted and influenced by, and has consequences for, a social context*". Therefore, the social context plays a significant role to how we should apprehend the concept of creativity, mainly because we are all inserted in a social context. By and large, they have advocated that the We-paradigm approach is the most effective approach for us better understand the complexities present in the concept of creativity insofar as we cannot distance ourselves from the environment in where we live.

Westwood & Low (2003) claimed that if we are in an environment where we cannot detach ourselves from, this environment may consequently influence how we should apprehend the self, the other as well as this environment. And if it indeed influences, creativity may then be a direct product of the relationships between the self and the other, and between the self and the environment surrounding this self.

Therefore, creativity is built through different processes. In relation to that, Vygotsky (2004) stressed two important activities which should be considered when investigating the different processes regarding creativity: the reproductive activity and the creative activity.

Vygotsky (2004, p.06) stated that the reproductive activity is "(...) *very closely linked to memory; essentially it consists of a person's reproducing or repeating previously developed and mastered behavioral patterns or resurrecting traces of earlier impressions*". Thus, this statement also involves two other cognitive skills: memorization and plasticity.

For Vygotsky (2004), memorization is an important characteristic of the reproductive activity insofar as we normally do not create anything new. We usually reproduce other people's inventions, because they help us develop ourselves or because we need them for sociocultural adaptations. The invention of the wheel is a very good example of that. Its first appearance is a product of creative activities, but its recurrent use to various aspects of our lives belong to the reproductive activity realm. This may occur because if we had to invent the wheel all the time that we needed it, we would waste a lot of time and energy to do it.

Nevertheless, we would still make progress, but a very slow one. By retaining the information of the wheel and how can we simply reproduce it, which gives us the chance of moving forward faster and losing much less energy in the process. Although we tend to simply reproduce what other people have already invented, we can also adapt these inventions to the changes of our society. Nothing remains the same for so long. We change as well as the artifacts of and knowledge about our world change too.

For this reason, plasticity is another important feature of the reproductive activity. According to Vygotsky (2004, p.08), plasticity "(...) *is a term denoting the property of a*

substance that allows it to change and retain the traces of that change". In other words, we change previous artifacts to adapt them and ourselves to new sociocultural environments.

The invention of the computer is another good example. The first computers were very small (abacuses) and created to make complex calculations easier and faster. After that, it was used to facilitate the creation of other artifacts and even wage wars. At first, they were enormous and monofunctional. Later, the computer became smaller and multifunctional. It has been applied to accelerate people's work at (and outside) the office and studies at (and outside) school. Nowadays, the computer fits our hands (smartphones) and it is also used for entertaining and bringing people together.

Therefore, we can adapt a specific invention to our times and needs. A problem to this is: How much of adaptation is a reproductive activity and how much is a creative activity? This is a very hard question to answer, but we can notice that the reproductive activity is usually oriented to the past while the creative activity is oriented to the future. Furthermore, according to Vygotsky (2004), the creative activity is sometimes called imagination which is a quite common mistake.

In addition, Vygotsky (2004) claimed that imagination is, in fact, a crucial element of the creativity activity and it, indeed, influences various sociocultural aspects of our lives. Nevertheless, we first imagine and then create. In other words, imagination is an essential characteristic of the creative process.

Therefore, imagination should not be simply apprehended as a pure synonym of creativity. Some contemporary researchers of the concept of creativity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Glăveanu, 2011; Kearney, 2016) also agree with Vygotsky (2004)'s division (creativity \neq imagination) and do not use these terms interchangeably.

According to Glăveanu (2011), we should comprehend imagination as a type of extended creativity, i.e. as an essential part of the creative process, without imagination, there is no creativity. Csikszentmihalyi (1999) made a similar proposition by adding the fact that imagination belongs to the metaphysical world whilst creativity is usually materialized in artifacts of different origins.

Kearney (2003) has also advocated in favor of imagination being apprehended as a fundamental characteristic of creativity. However, in relation to the previous researchers, Kearney (2016, p. 255) is the one who has cast more light on this matter. He has even attempted to 'dissect' the main characteristics of creativity by differentiating it from imagination. He claimed that creativity is:

- (1) the *testimonial* capacity to bear witness to a forgotten past; (2) the *empathic* capacity to identify with those different to us (victims and exemplars alike); (3) the *critical-utopian* capacity to challenge official stories with unofficial or dissenting ones.' The 'poetics of the possible' thus opens up the way for a 'politics of the possible.

In relation to imagination, Kearney (2016) comprehended it as the first manifestation of creativity. Therefore, imagination should also be apprehended as a full concept with its own characteristics and utilities. For these reasons, he urged his fellow researchers to use creativity more as an adjective to imagination, because there are diverse types of imagination (Hebraic, Hellenic, Medieval, Transcendental, Existentialist, Parodic, Postmodern, etc.).

Moreover, the imagination present in creativity is just one of many, i.e. imagination is also present in other human characteristics. Kearney (2003, p.14) then proposed the term 'creative imagination' and stated that:

1 Classical and early modern images of the *imagination as a mirror* that reflects and re-presents some other reality, also called a 'mimetic', 'reflectionist' or 'representational' model.

2 Romantic and post-Romantic images of the *imagination as a lamp that Creativities old, new and otherwise* generates and radiates its own heat and light, also called an 'expressivist', 'generative' or 'affective' model.

3 Modern and postmodern notions of the *imagination as a labyrinth of looking glasses* that refract potentially infinite variations on an ultimately illusory object, also called a 'self-referential', 'metatextual' or 'virtual'/'simulacrum' model.

As we can see, Kearney (2016) comprehended imagination as an essential part of the creative activity as well as the concept of creativity on its own. For Vygotsky (2004), imagination starts taking place in children's play. Every new children's play in our world presents a new and distinctive significance. Furthermore, Leontiev (1982) disagreed with Vygotsky (2004)'s point of view on this matter. Leontiev (1982) believed that the children's play is directly connected with objects and activities and, hence, they cannot be disentangled from them at all. He (1982) claimed that imagination comes from the outside world, i.e., it is developed by external factors such as tools.

While Vygotsky (2004) believed that imagination is a direct result from the children's feelings and respective experiences through their several and distinctive interactions with their surrounding world, Leontiev (1982) refuted this principle and problematized the importance of the artifacts (material and/or symbolic) to the development of children's imagination and, consequently, creativity.

In my opinion, creativity is a process developed by the constant interaction between the self and the other, and between the self and the world (the environment) which surrounds all of us. Hence, this means that imagination and creativity should be apprehended as mundane characteristics, i.e., they belong to people's everyday lives.

In addition, we may (and must) practice our imagination and creativity anytime and anywhere, depending on our objectives, desires and necessities. Nevertheless, I also believe that artifacts may directly influence the way we practice our imagination and then, consequently, develop our creativity. Therefore, for me, creativity is an external process which is in line with the ideas present in the Glăveanu (2011)'s We-paradigm's approach. This implies that imagination and creativity are constrained to the limitations of people's surroundings.

Everybody may indeed be creative, but not everybody has the possibility of developing their imagination and creativity. This may occur, because they may be hindered, constrained by a various set of external factors such as poverty, lack of education, lack of employment, and so on. Taken together, hindrances and constraints should not only signify unlikelihood, limitations, but they could also mean contingency for people to step further, develop themselves. This is what Csikszentmihalyi (1999) attested and tried to verify. As a result, he proposed to investigate possible connections which may directly influence the creative process and, consequently, the conceptualization of creativity.

Among many possible connections, he perceived three fundamental factors which should usually be considered by any researcher of creativity. These fundamental factors are entitled: 1) the *person* (or the self with his physical traits and subjective experiences), 2) the *field* (or the social system this person is inserted) and 3) the *domain* (or the system of symbols used to acculturate this person).

In relation to the field, Csikszentmihalyi (1999) ascertained that it refers to the institutions as well as individuals that choose and support a certain domain. For example, a university (the field) is composed by professors, deans, students, contributors (person), etc. In the same vein, the domain refers to knowledge encapsulated by diverse types of symbols which together constitute a system such as literature, medicine, religions, etc. The person refers to the individuals who are part of these institutions and are under (a) certain domain(s). Although these three factors may influence a person's life and try to promulgate a certain 'stability' to people's interactions, he acknowledged that, sometimes, this stability may be destabilized, giving room for creativity to thrive.

Still for Csikszentmihalyi (1999), he has displayed a more positive approach to the concept of creativity, emphasizing more frequently the advantages than the disadvantages of the studies upon this complex term. Most of his research is based on Vygotskian sociocultural theory. Two of its main advantages are the contextualization of creativity and its various sociocultural interrelationships. The first advantage may unveil unseen connections that may explain the reasons why a person is considered a Big C and the other is a little c creator. By contextualizing the creative process, we can apprehend more clearly different nuances, intersections and complexities related to the creative process.

The second advantage of the contextualization of creativity refers to the several opportunities researchers may have as long as they try to understand the construction of the concept of creativity throughout history. A historical approach to creativity may help us comprehend the different (and deeper) connections as well as discrepancies present among the social creativity (similar to the We-paradigm), the historical creativity (similar to the He-paradigm) and the everyday creativity (similar to the I-paradigm).

According to Csikszentmihalyi (1999), this approach may decrease the influence of cognitivism and psychometric studies upon the concept of creativity, providing thus researchers with exploring new paths. Glăveanu (2011) criticized directly the Csikszentmihalyi (1999)'s approach to creativity.

According to Glăveanu (2011), he claimed that although Csikszentmihalyi tries to conceptualize creativity more holistically, he fails to achieve that by overemphasizing the social and, consequently, sidelining the self. Runco (1999) also criticized Csikszentmihalyi (1999) on this matter. As a result, Runco (1999) proposed a 'novel' approach to the studies about creativity. His novel approach entailed the total separation between social factors (such as reputation, empathy, imagination, etc.) which may influence creativity from the social environment where it is under constant construction. Glăveanu (2011) also criticized Runco (1999). Glăveanu (2011) claimed that his attempts failed mainly due to his overemphasis on the self in detriment to the social environment.

Marková (2003) pointed out that it is a huge mistake to not acknowledge the dialectical relation between the self (called Ego by Marková, 2003) and the other (called Alter by Marková, 2003). He agreed with Vygotsky (1987; 1989) by attesting that societal factors may influence more the self than the other way around. However, the self may also influence his environment (to a lesser extent). Take again the computer as an example. Humans created it to fulfill their desires and necessities, many of them imposed by their own environment. Intentionally or not, the computer has also influenced how we socialize today.

In the same vein, Glăveanu (2011) also agreed with Vygotsky (2004; 2007). He highlighted the importance of acknowledging the various dialectical relationships present among the self and the social-historical-cultural factors which may influence the conceptualization of creativity.

In fact, according to Glăveanu (2011), these possible dialectical relationships are indisputably one of the most fundamental characteristics of the We-paradigm approach. Glăveanu (2011) has far advocated that our world is a symbolic world which means that it is constructed through a set of symbols, signs and artifacts of many provenances.

Another common point between Glăveanu (2011) and Vygotsky (2004; 2007) is that they both attested that we may have our 'own', personal, subjective opinions about our symbolic world, its meaning-making and constructions of knowledge. However, our opinions are *mediated* through the system of symbols and norms that constitute our societal interrelationships and culture.

Although some of these symbols may remain relatively unaltered, others may change rapidly (Jovchelovitch, 2007). Glăveanu (2011) endorsed Vygotsky (2004; 2007) as well as Jovchelovitch (2007)'s viewpoints by claiming that the (material and symbolic) artifacts are usually "(...) *preserved and transmitted to new generations offering our symbolic universe a certain degree of stability. Simultaneously, they are open to change, elaboration and transformation through collective processes of action and communication*" (Glăveanu, 2011, p. 08).

All in all, Glăveanu (2011) has not only enhanced the importance of the symbolic universe to the development of human creativity, but he has also advocated in favor of comprehending creativity as a social process stemmed from a set of networks of

collaborations and constant interactions fed by socio-historical-cultural factors. Glăveanu (2011) is not alone in this quest.

One of the main sociocultural researchers about creativity, Vera John-Steiner, has also defended the We-paradigm approach to creativity. She stated that *“I rely on L. S. Vygotsky’s cultural-historical ideas that creative activities are social, that thinking is not confined to the individual brain/ mind, and that construction of knowledge is embedded in the cultural and historical milieu in which it arises”* (John-Steiner, 2015, p. 05).

Still in relation to the social, John-Steiner (2015) ascertained that creativity is also a process of collaborative work. For this reason, this process requires joint efforts and continuous practice. She claimed that any new piece of creative work such as scientific inventions and even artistic objects are direct products of integrative collaborations and several incessant developments.

John-Steiner (2015) disbelieved that nothing comes from nothing (He-paradigm). Although she recognized that everybody is born creative (I-paradigm), everybody and everything are intertwined in a network of endless efforts and constant work. Having shared that, I now indicate the illustrative summary based on Glăveanu (2011)’s We-paradigm approach to the concept of creativity:

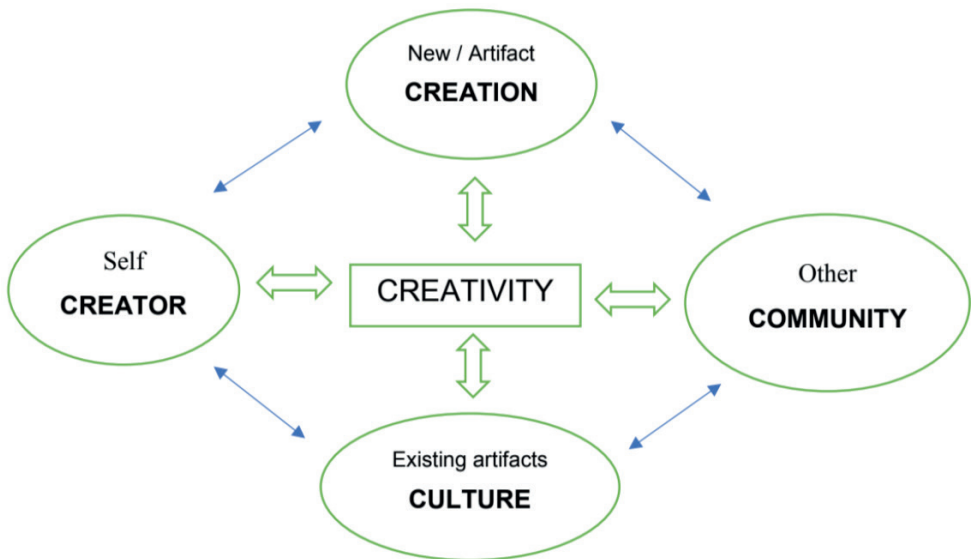


Fig. 05 - Vlad Glăveanu (2011)’s We-paradigm conceptualization

As we can seize by Glăveanu (2011)’s graphical scheme, the We-paradigm approach to creativity display several types of possible relationships that may occur among the creator, the creation, the community and the culture. Because of that, he advocated in favor of not separating one from the others. Researchers of creativity should try to analyze them more holistically and dialectically.

Although Glăveanu (2011) has defended this position, he has also recognized that it is difficult to achieve this type of analysis. One of its main problems is related to emphasis. He has attested that sociocultural researchers may tend to emphasize one factor more than the others during their investigations. Consequently, the results are partial and, sometimes, even completely inefficient.

Still according to Glăveanu (2011), these types of research results may happen, because the researchers' attempts of understanding a process more holistically and dialectically require many developed cognitive skills (such as memorization, concentration, assessment, etc..). If researchers do not possess them, their analysis may indeed be superficial and one-sided. Another point is related to the measuring techniques applied to comprehend the creative process more holistically and dialectically. If they are not reliable and manageable, the results may also be tainted.

THE VYGOTSKIAN SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY

In this section, I will elaborate on the most important tenets of the Vygotskian sociocultural theory as it informs the Fanfictional Creative Writing course in English I designed and taught for this research. I opted for this theory, because it helped me broaden students' concepts about creativity, definitions for fanfictions as well as creative writing courses. In addition, the Vygotskian sociocultural theory also helped me develop the students' fanfictional creative writing.

My main goal for this research was to investigate how Languages and Literature students develop their fanfictional creative writing in a creative writing course based on the Vygotskian sociocultural theory. Vygotsky's theoretical framework provides a rich and pragmatic contribution to the theories of human psychology. His research about 1) Meaning Making, 2) Creativity and 3) The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) has depicted substantially the transformative development of individuals and societies. Hence, these three tenets will be briefly described as follows:

3.3.1 The Vygotskian meaning making process

The meaning making process is one of the essential concepts to understand the Vygotskian sociocultural theory. Although meaning making is a crucial aspect of Vygotsky's research, it has not been extensively researched. For Vygotsky (2004, 2007), meaning making is people's construction of knowledge in their attempt to better understand others with and across different contexts and codes.

The comprehension of the various processes related to thinking and speaking are fundamental to contemporary researchers to better understand how students create meaning and then develop their various higher mental functions. In *Thinking and Speech*, Vygotsky (2007) investigated how the unification of thinking and speaking may result in appropriate system of meaning.

Furthermore, the meaning making process can sometimes be referred to as a synonym of comprehending. If a person knows how to conceptualize properly an idea, object or person, he will comprehend a command (or instruction) more properly.

Based on these reasons, Vygotsky (2007, p. 207) identified three distinctive phases related to the meaning making process. **The first phase, also known as syncretism**, is the phase in which the objects are unified. These unifications are merely subjective, and its many possible associations are not connected with the constitutive characteristics of the objects involved in the process of making meaning.

The second phase, also known as complexes, is the phase in which the objects involved are connected not only with subjective, but also with constitutive, factual characteristics related to them. Subsequently, **the third phase, also known as concepts**,

is the phase in which the person may abstract the meaning of the objects involved to compose a collective basis. In Vygotsky (2007, p. 207)'s own words, "(...) *synthesis must be connected with analysis*".

The syncretism phase can be divided into three different parts. The first part is called the trial-and-error. According to Vygotsky (2007, p. 207), this is the part in which syncretism purely, deliberately happens. In other words, the possible set of associations that can be made by a person are totally subjective, i.e., based on or influenced by personal feelings, opinions and even tastes.

The second part is called egoistic, because the meaning making process of it based directly on the person's own visual field, spheres of activity or interests. The third part is called combinations of collections. It is called that, because the person gathers the different combinations resulted from the trial-and-error and egoistic parts.

The complexes phase is the phase which has more constitutive parts, i.e., five in total. The first part is called associative complex. According to Vygotsky (2007, p. 208), it receives this name, due to its "family bond" characteristics. In it, the person creates meaning by collecting all the familiar features related to a specific group, the family group.

The second part of the complexes phases is called collection complex. Although in both parts, associative and collection, the person assembles features, in the collection part, the person gathers different attributes related to a specific family bond. Similarly, the third part, the chain complex, the associations are created through a chain, i.e., the first association is based on a common attribute, however, the second is based on different attributes, and so on as a sequential process.

The fourth part is called the diffuse complex. In this part, for Vygotsky (2007, p. 209), is a more fluid, flowing part. The person can connect attributes which are not reasonably stable. Therefore, the person can experiment more with the attributes involved in the meaning making process.

The fifth part is called pseudo-concept. Vygotsky (2007, p. 209) highlighted that this part is more related to the child's meaning making process, because "(...) *although phenotypically resembling the adult concept, is psychologically very different*". The children are more likely to be conducted by visibility and concreteness than the adults. As a result, the child forms bonds more perceptually complex.

In the same vein, the third phase is composed by two distinctive parts. The first part is called potential concepts whilst the second is concept-proper. According to Vygotsky (2007, p. 210), the potential concepts part is not limited to human beings, because it can also be identified in different types of animals. In this part, the person can associate possible attributes not yet associated to a certain concept. In other words, this part is one of the most creative parts related to the meaning making process.

The concept-proper part is the last part belonging to the meaning making process. In it, the person displays clear mastery of abstraction. This mastery is accompanied by

advanced complex thinking. Therefore, the person can come up with his own meanings which can or cannot be directly associated with pre-existent meanings.

If it is associated with pre-existent meanings, the person is thus sharing concepts properly, in its depth. If it is not associated, the person can create a genuine, brand-new meaning. This “genuine” meaning can or cannot then be shared by his community. For Vygotsky (2007, p. 211), a concept can only be created if its abstracted attributes are properly synthesized. As a direct result, this “new”, “genuine” meaning may become the main instrument of thought to be used by any person. In this specific part, the word has a crucial role. It is crucial, because a well-formed word can encompass all the previous parts involved in the meaning making process of a certain concept.

Consequently, all these processes related directly to the meaning making of a certain concept can indicate to the person’s community that this person now masters fully the different parts of the concept formation. This mastery also entails the person’s ability to be aware, conscious of the processes erstwhile acquired unawares. In addition, this person will understand more clearly who gave him this command and what is expected of him. Moreover, he will learn whether this command is legitimate or not (Vygotsky, 2004, p. 49). In other words, this person will be aware of the situation and be more capable of making more conscious decisions. As such, meaning making requires knowledge and it is a deeper form of understanding, which is a characteristic of development (Vygotsky, 2004, p. 51).

In relation to creative writing, some researchers (Earnshaw, 2007, Morley, 2007; Ramet, 2007) have demonstrated that the meaning making process in creative writing classes have 1) made the students self-aware of what, why and how they want to write a certain story, 2) made them self-mastered concepts, definitions and literary genres as well as 3) made them more creative by motivating them transform the creative writing content received.

In fact, learning how to write creatively has exponentially increased students’ awareness of the construction of several literary genres, assisting them interpret and produce better structured texts. According to Morley (2007, p. 64), “(...) *the major challenge to any writer is the work itself: getting the book written; making characters believable; allowing subject and form to work together; and creating verisimilitude*”.

If aspiring fictional writers desire to become crafted writers, they should comprehend very clearly the basic writing elements which compose a certain fictional text. He (2007, p. 65) went further and asked: *How can a writer compose a text, if he does not understand the text itself?* For Ramet (2007, p. 31), “*In order to be convincing, fictional characters must ring true. The reader should be able to relate to them and identify with them, but the description needs only to be sufficient to project a recognizable image*”. If a writer creates a character poorly, his readers will easily abandon their reading and lose confidence in his writing.

Similarly, Ramet (2007) indicated this to be a very common characteristic of a deficient writer. A crafted writer should not only be able to characterize properly, but he

should also comprehend about what he is writing: "(...) *professional writers do not only write, because they want to write something. Professional writers are extremely aware of what they want to write*" (Ramet, 2007, p. 32).

Raising awareness of what you are writing should be part of the meaning making process of any creative writing course. Morley (2007) discovered that many students who come to creative writing courses have already written some fictional piece of work. Additionally, he also discovered that they already have notions of literary terms such as characters, setting, atmosphere, mood, and so on.

Although the students are aware of their existence, they usually do not know how to conceptualize or define them, which make them produce very superficial stories. Still according to Morley (2007), this is one of the functions of creative writing courses. In them, students should have the opportunity of becoming aware that their knowledge about writing creatively is, sometimes, limited or even inexistent.

After becoming aware of their limitations, they can, along with their teachers, construct more substantial meanings for them. This is not a very easy task and requires lots of practice. For Ramet (2007, p. 01), "*One of the first rules to remember is that writers write. You should write something every day, even if all you do with the finished piece is tear it up and throw it away*".

Still for Ramet (2007), she claimed that constant practice is one of the most fundamental aspects for better understanding and developing the craft of writing. Furthermore, she added that this is the path to any writer who desires to master a certain literary genre. In the same vein, Earnshaw (2007, p. 365) also claimed that self-mastery only comes after years of practice: "*Repeating the performance, having an ongoing practice as a writer, just as a doctor or an engineer or a solicitor has a practice, is the real difference between a professional and an amateur*".

However, he attested that self-mastery without the professional help of a creative writing teacher is a much longer path. For Earnshaw (2007, p. 367), teachers are indispensable to assist their students to make sense of the creative writing world. For Vygotsky (2007, p. 12), "(...) *the functional use of the sign or word is the means through which the adolescent masters and subordinates his own mental operations and directs their activity in the resolution of the tasks which face him*". In other words, people should not only apprehend a sign or word, people should really comprehend (master) it to apply it to different contexts.

Moreover, it is quite typical of students to attend their first creative writing courses with 'fixed' concepts or definitions for basic writing elements, literary texts and even creativity. The broadening of students' concepts and definitions may be a challenge. As attested by Morley (2007, p. 66), the meaning making can be a very self-regarding and torturing process in any creative writing course, whether it is fictional or non-fictional. However, a professional writer should be able to "(...) *think yourself forwards into the kind of writer you want to become (or to cease to be the writer you have come to dislike)*".

Being aware of what, why and how you want to write a certain text is the first step for starting to produce it. After that, students should have the opportunity of constant practicing their creative writing. The more they write, the better they become. This path will lead them to master one or more literary genres. For Vygotsky (1987, p.14), self-awareness and self-mastery are indications of development. When a person comprehends a certain sign or word, he can better reflect and make more conscious decisions about his goals toward the required activity. However, increasing self-awareness and self-mastery are not the only characteristics of the meaning making in a creative process. People should also have the opportunity of transforming the information they receive.

Furthermore, creativity is a constant process that transforms the person to new perspectives of himself (Vygotsky, 1987, p.15). Earnshaw (2007, p. 365) also attested transformation as an essential characteristic for any crafted writer: “(...) *if the first and obvious rule of how to be a writer is ‘write something’, the second and possibly less obvious rule is, ‘do it again’*”. By doing it again, Earnshaw (2007) does not mean copying your work, but transforming it into a more “*substantial, sustained storytelling*” (Earnshaw, 2007, p. 365).

3.3.2 The Vygotskian concepts of creativity

For Vygotsky (1987, 2004, 2007), creativity is a process that entails children’s play, imagination and fantasy. Creativity is an important concept for us better understanding creative writing and how can creative writing teachers help their students develop it. Hence, according to Vygotsky (1987), the first step for developing creativity is during the early play. In this stage, children start investigating and playing with the world around them. Nevertheless, their play does not remain the same, inflexible.

The more the children play, the more they change their playing. Therefore, children’s play is a process which changes constantly throughout their childhood. According to Sharpe (2004, p. 11), “*A child’s play very often is just an echo of what he saw and heard adults do*”. However, he highlighted that this is not “(...) *simply a reproduction of what he has experienced, but a creative reworking of the impressions he has acquired*”. The children then fuse these elements to create their own reality, the “(...) *one that conforms their own needs and desires*” (Sharpe, 2004, p. 12).

As play is a process, imagination is also a process. Still according to Sharpe (2004), to better understand imagination, we must try to understand its relationship with reality: “*The first type of association between imagination and reality stems from the fact that everything the imagination creates is always based on elements taken from reality, from a person’s previous experience*” (Sharpe, 2004, p. 13).

Therefore, everything we create, we create based on something that already exists. Nothing is created from nothing: “*It would be a miracle indeed if imagination could create something out of nothing or if it had other sources than past experience for its creations*”

(Sharpe, 2004, p. 13). For him, the only exception to it is religion, because their defenders claim that imagination is originated from supernatural forces.

Nevertheless, some people are more imaginative than others. This occurs, because for Sharpe (2004, p. 14-15), “(...) *imagination depends directly on the richness and variety of a person’s previous experience because this experience provides the material from which the products of fantasy are constructed*”. In other words, the most varied a person’s experience, the better will be his imagination.

The second type of association between imagination and reality stems from a constant process of transformation: “(...) *products of the imagination also consist of transformed and reworked elements of reality and a large store of experience is required to create these images out of these elements*” (Sharpe, 2004, p. 16). The way I comprehend fanfictions may not be the same way my students comprehend.

The last type of association between imagination and reality stems from emotions. For Sharpe (2004), there are two forms of association: 1) emotions influence imagination and 2) imagination influence emotions. The first refers to the capacity of emotions in selecting impressions, thoughts and images: “*Everyone knows that we see everything with completely different eyes depending on whether we are experiencing at the same time grief or joy*” (Sharpe, 2004, p. 18).

The latter refers to the emotional reality of imagination. For Vygotsky (2004), all forms of creative imagination involve affective elements. Sharpe (2004, p. 19-20) added that “(...) *imagination has an effect on our feelings, and if this construct does not in itself correspond to reality, nonetheless the feelings it evokes are real feelings, feelings a person truly experiences*”.

In relation to fantasy, he noticed two forms of development: the subjective and the objective. The subjective fantasy refers to desire fulfillment and private inner life: “*The adolescent, with the help of fantasy, illuminates and clarifies himself and turns his emotions, his tendencies into a creative image*” (Vygotsky, 1987, p. 165). According to John-Steiner (2003, p. 70), Vygotsky comprehends the subjective fantasy as a “(...) *key force in personal transformation*”. Children and adolescents rely on it to delineate and even master their emotions.

On the other hand, objective fantasy refers to apprehending and building external reality. Still according to John-Steiner (2003, p. 70), “(...) *its applications contributes to cultural transformation. Through objective fantasy, adolescents, as well as adults, anticipate and plan their future behavior, helping to construct the culture of which they are a part*”.

Although Vygotsky separates these two forms of fantasy, he stresses that they are interwoven, conjoined: “*Objective expression is colored with bright emotional tones, but even subjective fantasies are frequently observed in the area of objective creativity*” (Vygotsky, 2004, p. 203). Another indication of development is the adolescents’ constant attempts to balance these two forms of fantasies properly. It is not an easy task and their

balance shows development when they become more reflective and critical about their own imaginative products.

Creativity is also composed by two activities: the reproductive and the creative. According to Vygotsky (2007, p.06), the reproductive activity is “(...) *very closely linked to memory; essentially it consists of a person’s reproducing or repeating previously developed and mastered behavioral patterns or resurrecting traces of earlier impressions*”.

Although we tend to simply reproduce what other people have already invented, we can also adapt these inventions to the changes of our society. This is the creative activity (Vygotsky, 2007, p.06). Therefore, the reproductive activity is usually oriented to the past while the creative activity is oriented to the future.

3.3.3 The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

A plethora of creative writing researchers (Myers, 2006; Morley, 2007; Blythe and Sweet, 2008; Healey, 2009, Oberholzer, 2014) have attested that most teachers do not feel confident enough in teaching creative writing. In fact, many of these teachers are not able to identify if their students developed their creative writing or not.

Myers (2006) even warned the academia that if the teachers cannot prove that their students have concluded their courses better than when they started, then there is no reason for having creative writing classes in the universities. I believe that this has happened, because there is not much research about the teaching of creative writing in the universities. In addition, there is even less research about the students’ creative writing development in these courses.

According to Vygotsky (2004; 2007), development cannot be separated from its social and cultural context. Therefore, if you want to understand mental processes, you must understand Vygotsky’s concept of mediation. Vygotsky (2007) reiterates the fact that social interaction with cultural artifacts forms the most important part of a learner’s psychological development.

Cultural tools or artifacts include all the things we use, from simple things such as a pen, spoon, or table, to the more complex things such as language, traditions, beliefs, arts, or science (Vygotsky, 2004; 2007). Furthermore, Vygotsky (1962) states in his genetic law of development that any higher mental function necessarily goes through an external social stage in its development before becoming an internal, truly mental function.

Several sociocultural theorists (Shayer, 2008; Wertsch, 2010; M. C.E EINER, A. (2010) 2014. a grammar John-Steiner, Connery & Marjanovic-Shane, 2015) have acknowledged that Vygotsky had investigated the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), because he was dissatisfied with two recurrent tendencies present in educational psychology of his time. 1) the assessment of a child’s intellectual abilities and 2) the evaluation of the instructional practices.

In relation to the first tendency, Wertsch (2010) claimed that Vygotsky believes that established techniques of testing was too restrictive and biased. Therefore, they could not measure the children's potential ability, only indicate the actual level of their development. For Vygotsky (1987, 2004, 2007), it was more important for the current psychology to deal with children's future growth (what they can become) rather than solely unveil what these children already know.

Additionally, Wertsch (2010) also claimed that Vygotsky devises the concept of ZPD to investigate the children's potential capacities and to question the *status quo* of the educational psychology. Wertsch (2010, p. 46) hence defined ZPD as "(...) *the distance between a child's actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving, and the higher level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers*".

Another important characteristic Vygotsky indicates is that learning may create ZPD. Shayer (2010, p. 35) also attested that by saying that "(...) *through learning, students may become aware of a varied set of internal developmental processes*". These processes may make the operations possible for developing the students' learning insofar as the children can interact with their peers, their surroundings and, most important, more experienced people.

Still according to Shayer (2010, p. 38), the moment "(...) *these processes are internalized, they consequently become part of the children's independent developmental achievement*". However, he highlighted that there are different two types of instructions: 1) the good and 2) the bad.

If students have contact with bad instruction, the chances of creating ZPD may decrease, hindering their development. For this reason, Shayer (2010, p. 39) advocated that "(...) *good instruction should proceed ahead of development and should awaken and rouse to life an entire set of functions, which are in the stage of maturation and lie in the ZPD*".

Furthermore, he noticed that the teacher plays a crucial role to his students' learning development. The teacher should thus be able to identify his students' ZPD and then organize his teaching to help his students accomplish their potential capacities.

Nevertheless, this process is not always easy. In earnest, Shayer (2010) highlighted that learning can become a very tortuous road if the teacher is not properly prepared to guide his students along the way. Therefore, for him, the very first crucial step for any successful course is to have well-educated teachers in its organization and teaching. By well-educated, Shayer (2010) meant teachers who know exactly what, why and how they will teach a certain content.

If teachers are well-educated, they can more easily locate their student's ZPD and then reorganize their teaching to provide their students with a safe space for learning. According to Blythe and Sweet (2008) as well as Healey (2009), students can only develop

themselves in a creative writing course, if they are provided with a safe space where they can share their writings and learn with their peers, along with more experienced people (usually teachers and professional writers).

Moreover, for Oberholzer (2014), without proper creative writing teaching, students may believe they are writing realistic fiction and, instead, they are writing historical fiction. They are both literary genres, however, they are not the same genre. Once more, the role of a well-educated teacher makes a stark difference in his students' creative writing development.

In the same vein, John-Steiner, Connery and Marjanovic-Shane (2015, p. 09) accentuated that this is not an easy process "(...) *in a broader view of the ZPD, scholars have come to identify that the co-construction of new ideas includes the sharing of risks, constructive criticism, and the creation of a safe zone*". Although it is not a painless process (it entails moments of crises), it should be considered in any creative writing course.

3.3.4 The Vygotskian concepts of development

A plethora of creative writing researchers (Myers, 2006; Morley, 2007; Blythe and Sweet, 2008; Healey, 2009, Oberholzer, 2014) have attested that most teachers do not feel confident enough in teaching creative writing. In fact, many of these teachers are not able to identify if their students developed their creative writing or not. For Healey (2009, p. 16), this may happen because many teachers do not have a very clear understanding of students' development.

In the same vein, Myers (2006) has warned the academic scholars that the creative writing teachers should pay more attention to their students' creative writing development. If the teachers cannot prove to the academia that their students have concluded their courses with more developed creative writing skills such as characterization or metaphorization, then there is no reason for having creative writing classes in the universities.

According to Vygotsky (2004; 2007), development cannot be separated from its social and cultural context. Therefore, if you want to understand mental processes, you must understand Vygotsky's concept of mediation. In addition, Vygotsky (2007) reiterated the fact that social interaction with cultural artifacts forms the most important part of a learner's psychological development.

Cultural tools or artifacts include all the things people use, from simple things such as a pen, spoon, or table, to the more complex things such as language, traditions, beliefs, arts, or science (Vygotsky, 2004; 2007). Furthermore, Vygotsky (2004, p. 23) stated in his genetic law of development that any higher mental function necessarily goes through an external social stage in its development before becoming an internal, truly mental function.

In *Mind in society*, Vygotsky (2007, p. 27) highlighted that it was more important for his contemporary psychology scholars to deal with children's future growth. In other words,

they would rather focus on what the children can become instead of what they already were. Vygotsky (2007, p. 28) believed that is also important to identify what these children already know and then help them achieve what is still needed for their development.

Therefore, Vygotsky (2007, p. 30) named what the children already know as the actual zone of development. In the same vein, he devised the concept of zone of proximal development (ZPD) to investigate the children's potential capacities and to question the *status quo* of the educational psychology. Vygotsky (2007, p. 36) defined ZPD as follows:

(...) the distance between a child's actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving, and the higher level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.

As stated by Vygotsky (2007, p. 36), the zone of proximal development (ZPD) should be better understood as an abstract rather than a concrete zone. It is an abstract place where people's lower mental functions have not yet been matured. He added that most of the lower mental functions are genetically inherited as well as unmediated and involuntary. However, Vygotsky (2007, p. 38) constantly pinpointed that these lower mental functions are in the process of becoming matured. Therefore, they have the potentiality of achieving higher degrees of maturation.

Consequently, for Vygotsky (2007), no child should be considered a clean slate or an empty baking account. Under his perspective, every child has a history and his/her history should not be taken for granted by more skillful peers such as his/her parents and teachers. Having stated that, he compared the ZPD to a bud. Vygotsky (2007, p. 51) did that, because the actual zone of development should be understood in retrospect whilst the ZPD in prospect. Therefore, for him, every bud has the potential of becoming a flower as every child has the potential of becoming a full-fledged human being.

According to Vygotsky (2007, p. 24), another characteristic of the human development is related to people's behaviors. For instance, a change in how a person starts behaving may indicate transformation. Nevertheless, this change of behavior is not a very easy process. In fact, Vygotsky (2007) highlighted its complex and qualitative characteristics. To change his/her behavior, a person must face a set of crises. To make matters worse, under his dialectical perspective, many of people's crises may not be resolved. Hence, people also should learn how to deal with frustrations.

Another characteristic of the human development (Vygotsky, 2007, p. 38) is related to people's speech. The better a person's speech, the better this person knows how to deal with practical activities. For Vygotsky (2007, p. 39), the convergence between these two elements result in one of the purest examples of intellectual development. Therefore, this convergence can distance the people from their more primitive versions, lives such as the apes. On that account, he attested that the human language is also a higher mental function.

The realization of this convergence, between a person's speech and practical activities, can be identified in the person's mastering of his own behavior (Vygotsky, 2007, p. 41). A child in his early years do not know how to use the speech in his/her favor. Therefore, he/she is other regulated by the language. However, the older the child gets, the better he/she becomes to apply his/her speech in his/her favor and maybe influence his/her environment. Therefore, this new behavior may produce new relationships with the child's environment and his/her speech is self-regulated, which are sure indications of human development.

These new socio-cultural relationships with the environment are a direct product of how people may acknowledge and apply the tools in hand. According to Vygotsky (2007, p. 18), tools are cultural artifacts that are used by people of a certain community to mediate their relationships with their surroundings. Consequently, this mediation is also a process applied by human beings to conquer their environments. Contrary to Newman and Holzman (2006, p. 09)'s *tool-for-result* approach to psychology, which have linear, instrumental and dualistic relations, Vygotsky (2004, p. 65) defended the *tool-and-result*, which has a dialectical approach to it.

In other words, for Vygotsky (2004, p. 65), this is a new conception of method. By this conception, the method lies in an activity which creates both tool and result simultaneously and continuously. This dialectical perspective upon cultural tools leads to another characteristic of development, also based on Vygotsky (2007, p. 81), the goal. For him, every human action is purposeful, meaningful. Hence, a person tries to or accomplishes something, because he/she has motives to do it. Otherwise, he/she would not do it. Even though his/her motives may initially be of one kind, they may eventually become another for other reasons.

Conforming to Vygotsky (2007, p. 83), in a child's speech, the meaningfulness can be properly identified. This occurs because a child may not only signal what they are doing, but he/she may also state the reasons why he/she is doing that. To exemplify the child's meaningfulness, Vygotsky (2007, p. 84) reported that a child may want to play with a ball and express his/her reasons for doing so, because people's speech has locutionary force. Although Vygotsky (2007, p. 84) attested that in children's behavior, adults can present similar results.

In the same vein, Vygotsky (2007, p. 86) highlighted that a child's speech and action are a constitutive part of a unique and complicated psychological system. Therefore, the more complex a certain action may be, the more demanding is the scenario where it is located. Consequently, a child's speech as well as goals are more relevant, multi-faceted and mutable. If a child cannot use his/her speech in his/her favor, he/she may not finish a certain task and, consequently, not achieve his/her goals. All this process can cause profound frustrations and constant disappointments, which can hinder the child's development.

The meaning making of concepts is another characteristic of development. In *Thought and Language*, Vygotsky (2010, p. 107) attested that the direct result from a certain complex

activity is concept formation. In other words, every complex activity encompasses a set of higher mental functions connected with a person's intellectuality. Therefore, development is also related to how a person comprehends a certain concept or group of concepts.

Nevertheless, Vygotsky (2010, p. 108) pinpointed that the real concept meaning making processes are "(...) *impossible without words*". Once again, Vygotsky (2010, p. 108) highlighted the importance of speech for people's development. This means that if a person desires to think conceptually, this person requires the speech. The better is his/her speech, the better is his/her communicative skills. Consequently, thinking and language are directly connected. For this reason, Vygotsky (2010, p. 110) apprehended the appropriate application of words as functional tools.

The expression of emotions is another characteristic of development is related to. In *The Psychology of Art*, Vygotsky (2018, p. 200) highlighted that emotions are constitutive parts of any type of artistic work. However, emotions present several characteristics and may be expressed differently. For Vygotsky (2018, p. 201), one of the main characteristics related to the expression of emotions is indefiniteness. For instance, he pointed out that a person may be pleasant or unpleasant about others' or his/her own artistic work and may not be aware of it. For this reason, to be aware of our own emotions is a sheer indication of the human development.

According to Vygotsky (2018, p. 200), most people are not aware of their emotions. In other words, they may like or dislike a certain piece of art without being able to tell the reasons why. He alerted us that if a person usually does not know why he/she likes or dislikes a certain piece of art, this person's emotions are other regulated. Therefore, this person has no control of his/her actions as well as cannot influence his/her environment. In contrast, for Vygotsky (2018, p. 202), a person may display development if he/she is conscious of his/her emotions toward a certain artistic work, which displays self-regulation.

To better understand a certain piece of artistic work, people should consider the set of characteristics this piece entails. Conforming to Vygotsky (2018, p. 211), no constitutive part in a piece of artistic work is relevant separately. As a matter of fact, for him, a sure sign of development is related to people's capacities to comprehend how the artistic elements put together in a certain piece may stimulate their various higher mental functions such as reasoning and voluntary attention.

Among many possible higher mental functions' stimulations, empathy is highlighted by Vygotsky (2018, p. 212). According to him, people do not insert their emotions into a piece of artistic work. It is the other way around. A piece of artistic work may incite a plethora of emotional reactions in people. Therefore, he attested that the act of empathy is socioculturally constructed. In addition, for Vygotsky (2018, p. 214), the empathic process is an act of freedom and realized in people's speech.

Furthermore, empathy is also related to agency. Conforming to Vygotsky (2007, p. 27), the more proactive and motivated a person is, the less impulsive and spontaneous his/

her acts may be. To exemplify this statement, Vygotsky (2007, p. 27) cited the ape case. In this case, the ape acts before thinking while the human being thinks before acting. However, he pointed out that not all human beings are equal. Therefore, there are people who may act before thinking. For Vygotsky (2007, p. 28), these people's mental functions still need developing. For him, the human development is a constant process. Subsequently, agency should also be understood as a process of 1) planning previously in speech and 2) acting to accomplish a goal. Both processes are motivated and acquired through acculturation (appropriateness).

In contrast, Vygotsky (2007) warned us that a person's goals are likely to change throughout his/her lifespan. To make matters worse, he signaled in his research about children who changed their minds in the middle of an activity. Therefore, he perceived that people's higher mental functions are composed by a set of quite complex psychological processes. Many of these processes are very flexible and mutable. For Vygotsky (2007, p. 28), these characteristics are related to his dialectical perspective upon learning which may stimulate people's own development.

According to Vygotsky (2007, p. 29), these children's goals toward the activity changed, because their concepts about this activity may have changed as well. Hence, agency also entails the meaning making process. For him, the more the child can manipulate his/her surrounding objects, the better he/she can control his/her own actions. As a direct result, the child can also better control his/her own behavior. Once more, the speech has an important role in this complex and holistic process.

For Vygotsky (2007, p. 33), unlike adults, children tend to mix more often their actions and speech to solve a certain problem and improve their behavior. In contrast, the adults can separate more easily and effectively the constitutive parts of a problem to solve it and improve their behavior too. In consequence, the children's acts are more syncretic in perception. However, Vygotsky (2007, p. 34) alerted us that adults can also mix actions and speech. In turn, this can influence negatively how these adults conceptualize their actions, behaviors and perceptions.

Therefore, the meaning making process requires learning and practice (Vygotsky, 2007, p. 35). Otherwise, it can result in huge discrepancies and utter confusions. To avoid that, Vygotsky (2007, p. 35) stated that the adult can use the language to develop their higher mental functions and then create better founded meanings. He stated that, because he believed that language is dialectical and dynamic. On that account, the meaning making process is also dialectical and dynamic.

Nevertheless, conforming to Vygotsky (2007, p. 37), the meaning making process can be a tortuous route. A person can indeed learn a set of different types of meanings related to a certain concept. However, he pinpointed that a sure sign of human development should encompass the person's capacities of synthesizing the core characteristics of a certain concept and then formulate his/her own. Consequently, based on the Vygotskian

theory (2004; 2007; 2010; 2018) presented so far, a more developed person is a person who has many of their mental functions improved, self-regulated and mastered.

For these reasons, Vygotsky (2004; 2007; 2010; 2018)'s main concepts of development may help many teachers and academic researchers better understand how: 1) students can broaden their knowledge about creativity, 2) students can broaden their knowledge about fanfictions, 3) teachers can organize and teach creative writing courses in English as a second language and 4) teachers can help their students develop their fanfictional creative writing.

3.3.5 The Neo-Vygotskian concepts of development

Several sociocultural theorists (Bronson, 2000; Bodrova and Leong, 2007; Chaiklin, 2003; John-Steiner, 2015; Kozulin, 2003; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Rey, 2008; Shayer, 2008; Stetsenko & Arievidt, 2002; Wertsch, 2010; M. C.E EINER, A. (2010) 2014. a grammar) have pinpointed that Vygotsky had come up with the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), because he was dissatisfied with two recurrent tendencies present in educational psychology of his time. 1) the assessment of a child's intellectual abilities and 2) the evaluation of the instructional practices.

In relation to the first tendency, Wertsch (2010) claimed that, for Vygotsky (2004; 2007), he believed that established techniques of testing were too restrictive and biased. Consequently, they could not measure the children's potential ability; rather, they could only indicate the actual state of their development. In relation to the second tendency, Wertsch (2010) stated that, for Vygotsky (2004; 2007), it was more important for his contemporary psychology scholars to deal with children's future growth (rather than what they were already). Furthermore, Vygotsky (2004; 2007) believed that is also important to identify what these children already know and then help them achieve what is still needed for their development.

In addition, Wertsch (2010) claimed that Vygotsky (2004; 2007) devised the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) to investigate the children's potential capacities and to question the *status quo* of the educational psychology. In his attempt to deepen Vygotsky (2004; 2007)'s ZPD concept, Wertsch (2010, p. 67) highlighted the urgency of dealing with two practical problems within the ZPD:

ZPD (...) is to deal with two practical problems in the learning situation: the assessment of learners' intellectual abilities and the evaluation of instructional practices. Learning activities challenge learners' thinking within the learning process.

Another important characteristic Vygotsky indicated is that learning may create ZPD. Shayer (2010, p. 35) also attested that by saying that "(...) *through learning, students may become aware of a varied set of internal developmental processes*". These processes may make the operations possible for developing the students' learning insofar as the children

can interact with their peers, their surroundings and, most important, more experienced people. Still for Shayer (2010, p. 38), the moment “(...) *these processes are internalized, they consequently become part of the children’s independent developmental achievement*”. However, he highlighted that there are two different types of instructions: 1) the appropriate and 2) the inappropriate.

If students have contact with the inappropriate type of instruction, the teachers’ chances of creating the ZPD may decrease, hindering the students’ proper development. For this reason, Vygotsky (2010, p. 39) advocated that “(...) *good instruction should proceed ahead of development and should awaken and rouse to life an entire set of functions, which are in the stage of maturation and lie in the ZPD*”.

Furthermore, Shayer (2010, p. 249) noticed that the teacher plays a crucial role to promote his students’ ZPD. If a teacher organizes his classes properly, he may enhance his students’ imagination, creativity, enthusiasm and agency exponentially. The teacher should thus be able to build up a learning environment where his students’ ZPD can be constructed adequately as well as organize his teaching to help his students accomplish their potential capacities.

Nevertheless, this process is not always easy. In earnest, Shayer (2010, p. 249) highlighted that learning can become a very tortuous road if the teacher is not properly prepared to guide his students along the way. Therefore, for him, the very first crucial step for any successful course is to have well-educated teachers in its organization and teaching. By well-educated, Shayer (2010, p. 249) meant teachers who know exactly what, why and how they will teach certain contents.

In the same vein, John-Steiner (2015, p. 09) accentuated that this is not an easy process “(...) *in a broader view of the ZPD, scholars have come to identify that the co-construction of new ideas includes the sharing of risks, constructive criticism, and the creation of a safe zone*”. In addition, development, for Kozulin (2002, p. 37), has to do with acculturation. By acculturation, he meant the mastery of the methods of actions present in a person’s environment. For example, if a person wants to apply for a job position, this person should write a résumé and attend the job interview. Therefore, a sheer indication of students’ development refers to their process of appropriating what is expected from them.

Furthermore, for John-Steiner (2015, p. 54), one of the main teacher’s roles is to promote a learning environment where all the students can express themselves without fears or anxieties. Still for John-Steiner (2015, p. 55), the teacher can achieve that by collaborating with his students to create these “safe learning environments”, which she called collaborative learning. John-Steiner (2015, p. 56) believed that this type of learning may become a success, if the teacher really tries to understand his students’ experiences, knowledge as well as feelings. As a result, the students can become more aware of their learning process and engage more properly in the course tasks.

Another characteristic of development is conflict, which for Vygotsky (2007, p. 81) is a dialectical process. For Lantolf & Thorne (2006, p. 193), the conflicting process entails a current state of knowledge hypothesis (thesis) and an antithesis (alternative hypothesis). The product of these two elements is a synthesis. As a result, both Lantolf & Thorne (2006, p. 194) highlight that this synthesis is the basis for another conflict. Consequently, this process is restarted. Nevertheless, any type of conflict should be preferably solved (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p. 233).

Still conforming to Lantolf & Thorne (2006, p. 238), development is “(...) *about much more than the acquisition of forms: it is about developing or failing to develop new ways of mediating ourselves and our relationships.*” For instance, if a person writes texts with paper, the paper is a type of mediation. Nevertheless, if this person learns how to use the computer, he can learn how to write texts with the computer, i.e., with the new type of mediation. Therefore, according to Lantolf & Thorne (2006, p. 240), an indication of development is when people learn how to use new ways of mediating themselves and their relationships.

Another characteristic of development is agency (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p. 240). Both these authors pinpoint that agency is always a social event. However, it does not occur in a void, in emptiness. Moreover, they indicate that even when a person involuntarily acts agentively, this act is socioculturally motivated and understood. Furthermore, Lantolf and Thome (2006, p. 143) highlighted that agency does not only encompass voluntary control, but it also encompasses the person’s capacity of establishing relevance, importance and meaning making of objects as well as learning situations.

Furthermore, for Wetsch (1998, p. 32), agency is related to appropriateness, which can result in child’s self-regulation. He attested that the social interactions play an important role in people’s self-regulation development. Still for Wetsch (1998, p. 33), people can become agents of their development if they become conscious of “(...) *socially approved behaviors*”. He then highlighted that a person’s consciousness may be materialized through a set of social interactions between a more skillful peer and one who is not. The more skillful peer provides the other regulation needed for the less to perform a task and, maybe, achieve self-regulation.

In relation to self-regulation, Bronson (2000, p. 25) claimed that it entails a set of complex processes. Subsequently, these complex processes can allow people to properly interact with their environment. Therefore, for Bronson (2000, p. 26), agency has also to do with appropriateness. Nevertheless, he highlighted that it is not only appropriateness. He advocated that agency also refers to motivation. In fact, for Bronson (2000, p. 30), motivation is at the center of self-regulation and relates to any type of voluntary control.

In the same vein, Bodrova and Leong (2007, 127) attested that self-regulation in a person is “(...) *the ability to act in a deliberate, planned manner in governing much of their own behavior.*” In other words, agency is also related to people’s mastery in performing an act. However, people’s mastery in performing an act is not a mere passive process, but it is

a process which encompasses a set of higher mental functions such as voluntary attention, meaning making and conflict solving attempts (Wertsch, 2008, p. 103).

For Wertsch (1998, p. 103), people's attempts of solving conflicts are also an act of agency. Still according to Lantolf and Thorne (2003, p. 243), "(...) *breakdowns, conflicts and attempts to reconcile tensions within any activity system catalyze change*". To better exemplify this statement, they exemplify that a certain student trying to learn French may indeed learn how to differentiate *tu* from *vous*. Nevertheless, he may not learn how to speak French, since he does not feel confident to do it. This student may not have confidence, due to various learning conflicts he still needs to overcome. Eventually, the teacher might help his student with this matter. All in all, the role of the teacher is crucial to the development of his students.

One more important characteristic of development was indicated by Lantolf (2015, p. 207). For this author, based on Vygotsky, teachers should be able to differentiate empirical from conceptual thinking to better identify their students' development. According to Lantolf (2015, p. 207), empirical thinking entails one's perception of recurrent features related to an object or event to organize them in distinctive groups and/or to classify them hierarchically. In turn, conceptual thinking entails one's more profound comprehension of an object or event's intrinsic features, its various relationships and genesis constructions. Therefore, conceptual thinking can provide students with a more holistic understanding of an object or event.

According to John-Steiner (2015, p. 11), in a dialectical approach to learning a second language, it is not always possible for teachers to eliminate his students' learning conflicts. In fact, they even highlighted that it is not always possible for teachers to eliminate their own teaching conflicts. Nevertheless, they pinpointed that a teacher can negotiate with his students how he can help them at least reduce their own learning conflicts. In fact, for John-Steiner (2015, p. 11), the reduction of teaching-learning conflicts may happen through cooperative struggle, because this process involves dynamicity, patience, persistence and creativity.

Correspondingly, Vygotsky (2018), in *The Psychology of Art*, acknowledged the importance of emotions to the human development. He attested that this importance overcame the logical and intellectual reductionism related directly to the contemporary psychological studies. In the same vein, Vygotsky (2018) pinpointed that emotions are as relevant to the human development as any other human phenomena. Therefore, the "(...) *human development is a process of subjective sense production*" (Rey, 2008, p. 152).

According to Rey (2008), the process of human development is subjective. It is so, because it encompasses a plethora of factors such as emotions, tastes and opinions. If a process is hence subjective, the people involved in this process are agentive. Therefore, they act upon or wield powers over others, activities and even institutions. Consequently, the involved information, ideas or conflicts are usually considered truthful by the participants'

perspective of a certain matter or matters. In other words, for Rey (2008, p. 152) an individual's development is dynamic, changeable and multi-faceted. To advance his point of view upon the human development as a subjective process, Rey (2008, p. 153) organized his theoretical tenets as follows:

First, they must represent symbolic-emotion units. It is necessary to understand the intellectual processes differently from the way in which these processes were treated in Soviet psychology and to advance a new comprehension of these processes within the "full vitality of life" as it was defined in relation to thought by Vygotsky. This integration of the "full vitality of life" in the study of the intellectual functions requires a completely new understanding of what "intellectual" means. Intellectual functions must be understood as complex subjective formations within which intellectual operations are inseparable from emotions and from other symbolic-emotional processes such as imagination, fantasy, and other symbolic-emotional productions capable of embodying the history and the current context of life of the person as the subject of intellectual functions. The concepts used for the study of subjectivity must be capable of simultaneously advancing subjectivity both as a process and as dynamic configurations able to take different forms during the flux of human action. Subjectivity is not a fact that determines the action; it represents the actual psychological nature of the action as defined by Rubinstein in his formulation of the principle of the unity between consciousness and activity. The concepts used in the study of subjectivity must be capable of integrating a subject's lived experiences from the past with the imaginative ideas of the future into the present. These experiences would not appear as a sum of lived experiences, but as new symbolic-emotional productions based on these lived experiences, which represent new imagined experiences regarding them. These processes are always behind consciousness, which represents an epistemological and methodological challenge.

In addition, Rey (2008, p. 161) emphasized that we should take into consideration the different tensions involved to better understand the processes of the human development. For him, development may encompass "(...) *complex and contradictory processes*". If so, there are various tensions in the constitutive parts of these processes. For instance, a teacher of English decides to hand extra grammatical exercises to a non-proficient student. He or she does that to help his student to improve what he needs. Nevertheless, this student decides to not do these exercises whatsoever. As a result, we have a tense situation.

According to Rey (2008), the student's clear (or even sometimes unclear) refusal influences directly his own development. To change this conflicting situation, the teacher may try to identify what is creating the tensions between the teacher and the student. Still according to Rey (2008, p. 161), the complex and contradictory processes are "(...) *characterized by permanent tension between already formed psychological repertoires and configurations and new social scenarios in a person's life.*" Therefore, we must consider that *the not handing of a certain exercise* may involve a set of various tense scenarios: the teacher-student, the student-teacher, student-student, principal-teacher, school-student, only to name a few.

In the same vein, Chaiklin (2003, p. 11) recognized that the zone of proximal development (ZPD), proposed by Vygotsky, is also a subjective zone. According to Chaiklin (2003, p.12), we should call it subjective ZPD, because we are talking about the development of a human being. In this way, each person is an individual case and should be comprehended dialectically. By dialectical, Chaiklin (2003, p. 12) also meant the various interactions a person may have with his or her environment, along with the tensions and conflicts in them. As an individual person, his/her development is never equal, uniformized, when compared to others. Each single person develops him/herself differently. Having said that, for Chaiklin (2003, p. 13), as the ZPD is subjective, we should take into consideration five distinctive features. These features are respectively:

(a) whole child, (b) internal structure (i.e., relationships between psychological functions), (c) development as a qualitative change in the structural relationships, (d) brought about from the child's actions in the social situation of development (reflecting what the child perceives and is interested in), where (e) each age period has a leading activity/contradiction that organizes the child's actions (within which subjective interests are operating) and which contributes to the development of the new functions.

As a result, still according to Chaiklin (2003, p. 08), we must comprehend the Vygotskian zone of proximal development (ZPD) not only objectively, which is the person's ontogenetical development, but also subjectively, which is the person's potential development. If we comprehend ZPD as such, we end up considering it then as "(...) *both a theoretical and an empirical discovery*". Therefore, the human development is not a linear process, but it is quite fluid and complex.

Furthermore, Stetsenko & Arieivitch (2002, p. 84) pointed out that "(...) *development is not acquisition of knowledge*." This is a crucial factor for us to better understand the Vygotskian concepts about development. In other words, they claimed that the sole accumulation of information is not a safe indication that a person really learned about something. This person may know something, but he or she may not know how to use it properly. If teachers want to identify if their students really developed themselves, they should verify if their students really know how to use the learning they acquired. For Stetsenko & Arieivitch (2002, p. 87), a sure indication of development lies on the person's "*mastery of new cultural tools*".

For instance, a teacher can present to his students a computer. The students then know what a computer is, however, they may not know how to use it properly. In addition, these students do not know the potentiality of the tool they have in hand. Conforming to Stetsenko & Arieivitch (2002), this means that there was no actual development. The teacher cannot only present the computer to his students. Along with the presentation, he should provide his students with proper exercises and tasks, so they can learn how to use the computer properly. For instance, the teacher can ask them how to turn on or turn off the computer. He can ask them to write a lab report by using the Microsoft Word or schedule their feedback sessions via Skype. There are many possibilities.

As a result, if the students learn how to master the cultural tools, for Stetsenko & Arieivitch (2002), this may be an indication that the students indeed developed themselves. This can be verified, because they advocated that “(...) *how specific activities in which learners engage, and the mental tools that they learn to use, affect the development of their minds is a question that has rarely been formulated, let alone satisfactorily resolved*” (Stetsenko & Arieivitch, 2002, p. 86).

This is another characteristic of the Vygotskian development: people’s improvement of their higher mental functions. This improvement is a direct result from “(...) *more elaborated forms of mental functioning (thinking, self-regulation, mentality) due to tools*” (Stetsenko & Arieivitch, 2002, p. 87). For Vygotsky (2004; 2007), as people develop themselves, their higher mental functions intersect with specific ways of internalization.

Consequently, their external actions are reconstructed into internal actions. Therefore, a sign of development is when people’s higher mental functions (verbal thought, logical memory, voluntary attention, etc.) become clearly distinctive features of their own beings. The more the people master the higher mental functions, the less they are dependent on their biological natures.

In addition, Kozulin (2003, p. 24) stated that “(...) *symbols may remain useless unless their meaning as cognitive tools is properly mediated to the child.*” Therefore, teaching needs to be meaningful to students’ goals. Otherwise, the students may comprehend part of their learning (or even the whole) as completely disposable. Consequently, little or no actual development may indeed occur. Therefore, for Kozulin (2003, p. 36), one of the main teachers’ roles is to make teaching meaningful to their students, even though their students may not comprehend them as meaningful at first.

Another characteristic of Vygotskian development is when people have mastered some cultural tools as well as higher mental functions. As a result, they can reconstruct these tools with the view of making new meanings and establishing new functions to them (Stetsenko & Arieivitch, 2002, p. 82). According to Vygotsky (2004; 2007), just learning how to master a certain cultural tool may not be a sure indication of development. If the teacher wants to verify if his students may really have mastered it, he should attest that his students can apply the cultural tool learned in different situations from those previously expected.

To promote development more properly, the creative writing teachers should consider the Neo-Vygotskian researcher’s concepts of development such as appropriate instruction (Shayer, 2010), learning conflicts (Lantolf and Thorne, 2003), learning tensions (Rey, 2008), agency (Lantolf and Thorne, 2003; Wertsch, 1998), cooperative struggle (John-Steiner, 2015), mastery of cultural tools (Stetsenko & Arieivitch, 2002) and their students’ goals (Kozulin, 2003). If they do that, they may help their students develop their creative writing in a creative writing course.

APPROACHES TO THE CONCEPT OF FANFICTIONS

Since the advent of the internet, fanfictions have become gradually more popular. Several researchers (Jenkins, 1992, 2007; Tushnet, 1997; Pugh, 2005; Thomas, 2006) have indicated that fanfictions 1) are usually fictional texts created by fans based on 'original' contents, 2) usually present connections between the fanwriting and popular culture, 3) their writers do not usually seek for financial recognition, 4) most of their writers write to fulfill their innermost needs and 5) they usually tend to challenge canonical stories (here understood as the 'original' content). I identify these definitions as the classic conceptualization of fanfictions.

One of the first theorists to conceptualize fanfictions, Henry Jenkins (1992), initially stated that fanwriting (sometimes also seen as a synonym of fanfictions) is a type of text composed by the ficwriters (writers of fanfictions) to be read, published and commented on a fandom (online fan community). In fact, this is one of the most current definitions for fanfictions. In addition, he also noticed that fanfictions are good examples of media convergence, participatory culture and collective intelligence.

By convergence, Jenkins (1992, p. 02) meant "(...) *the flow of content across multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media industries, and the migratory behavior of media audiences who will go almost anywhere in search of the kinds of entertainment experiences they want*".

In other words, in the world of media convergence, all the stories have opportunities of being written, divulged and read. In relation to participatory culture, he stressed that it "(...) *contrasts with older notions of passive media spectatorship. Rather than talking about media producers and consumers as occupying separate roles, we might now see them as participants who interact with each other*" (Jenkins, 1992, p. 03).

Jenkins (1992) further indicated that this interaction happens based on clear and unclear new set of rules. One of the clear rules is consumption which has become a collective process. In a consumer world, people have many opportunities of purchases. Among so many opportunities, people may not know which the best option is.

Still for Jenkins (1992), this is a clear example of collective intelligence (a borrowed term by cybercultural theorist Pierre Lévy). He highlighted that there is too much information today and, because of that, people usually get lost. Nevertheless, we can try to combine the information we have with other people to produce clearer information. For this reason, "(...) *collective intelligence can be seen as an alternative source of media power. We are learning how to use that power through our day-to-day interactions within convergence culture*" (Jenkins, 1992, p. 04).

The various combinations between fanwriting and popular culture have been one of the most recurrent research topics about fanfictions. Tushnet (1997, p. 665), claimed that "(...) *fanfiction, broadly speaking, is any kind of written creativity that is based on an*

identifiable segment of popular culture, such as a television show, and is not produced as professional writing”.

One of her main contributions to the studies of fanfictions was the identification of ficwriters’ preference for popular culture and artistic works which are not in public domain, which may involve copyright infringement. This has caused several problems such as lawsuits and the closing of some fandoms. Although she admitted that copyright may be a problem for ficwriters, they should be protected if any law is broken.

Additionally, Tushnet (1997) also attested that it is difficult to separate ficwriters from ficreaders, because they are usually both. In a more recent research, Jenkins (2007) tried to better understand the several distinctive relationships between ficwriters and their respective ficreaders.

In addition, Tushnet (1997) perceived that “(...) *many young people began reading stories on their own as a spontaneous response to a popular culture. For these young people, the next step was the discovery of fan fiction on the Internet, which provided alternative models for what it meant to be an author*” (Jenkins, 2007, p. 178-179).

Along with that, he noticed that ficreaders, especially teenagers, become ficwriters to fulfill their innermost needs. By innermost needs, Jenkins (2007) meant any type of desire, objective and/or interest: “(...) *they have a necessity of expressing themselves, an inner drive that makes them write*” (Jenkins, 2007, p. 175).

Jenkins (2007) also noticed that ficreaders do not only become ficwriters to fulfill their innermost needs, but because they are constantly encouraged, motivated by the fandom to read, share, comment and write fanfictions: “(...) *fandoms provide many incitements for readers to cross that last threshold into composing and submitting their own stories*” (Jenkins, 2007, p.179).

In relation to ficwriters, Pugh (2005, p. 25-26) perceived that they initially do not seek for any kind of financial recognition (Silverman, 2007). However, as their writing skills improve substantially, they become more open to the idea of selling their stories to publishing houses, and even signing exclusivity contracts.

To justify his observations, Pugh (2005) cited many famous examples of this process of fanwriting professionalization. One of his most recognizable examples is the British ficwriter Erika Mitchell (commonly known by her penname E. L. James). Pugh (2005) reminded us that she started writing erotica fanfictions based directly on Stephanie Meyer’s *Twilight* (2005).

Nevertheless, as soon as James reached some success on her own fandom, she changed Meyer’s characters’ names and renamed her own fanfictional stories to *Fifty Shades of Grey*. These ‘new’ fanfictional stories (turned into novel) were published in 2011. In 2012, James published more two novels: *Fifty Shades Darker* and *Fifty Shades Freed*.

All in all, she has sold more than 125 million book copies worldwide. In 2015, her first published book, *Fifty Shades of Grey*, was adapted into a financially successful movie.

This movie was directed by Sam Taylor-Johnson and screen written by Kelly Marcel. Sam Taylor-Johnson is the most profitable female filmmaker in history.

Furthermore, Pugh (2005) indicated that most of the published fanfictions are erotica-oriented. Although he is partially right, fanfictions are much more than sexualized stories based on some original content. To broaden this concept of fanfiction, Thomas (2006, p. 226) advocated that "(...) *there are different types of fanfic, for example, 'crossover' is the blending of ideas and characters from different stories, and 'slash' is the homosexual bonding between fictional characters.* Because of its variety, distinctive types of fanfictions attract distinctive types of ficreaders and "(...) *engender different kinds of fan culture and social norm*" (Thomas, 2006, p. 226).

There are many types of fanfictions nowadays: crossover, yaoi, yuri, fluffy, lime, darkfic, double drabble, and so on and so forth. However, one of the most important contributions by Thomas (2006, p. 256) was her claim that ficwriters do not only modify, transform the 'original' stories by expanding the universe they like, but they also write to meet their own needs, to fulfill their innermost needs (Jenkins, 2007): "(...) *mass media consumers and readers became involved in the shaping and reworking of media contents that satisfy their own demands*".

In other words, they use diverse types of materials from dominant media and reuse them "(...) *to serve their own interests, pleasures, and imaginations*" (Thomas, 2006, p. 257). In a more recent research, Jenkins (2007) focused on better understanding the profile of ficwriters. He carried out many interviews with them, however, he published one which, according to him, summarized clearly the ficwriters' concept about fanfictions and their constant innermost needs fulfilling:

What I love about fandom is the freedom we have allowed ourselves to create and recreate our characters over and over again. Fanfic rarely sits still. It's like a living, evolving thing, taking on its own life, one story building on another, each writer's reality bouncing off another's and maybe even melding together to form a whole new creation. I find that fandom can be extremely creative because we have the ability to keep changing our characters and giving them a new life over and over. We can kill and resurrect them as often as we like. We can change their personalities and how they react to situations. We can take a character and make him charming and sweet or cold-blooded and cruel. We can give them an infinite, always-changing life rather than the single life of their original creation (Jenkins, 2007, p. 256).

In addition, Jenkins (2007) believed that there is also a process of appropriation of the canon (a synonym of 'original' content) by the ficwriters. He claimed that many ficwriters do not only pay homage to the canonical story by rewriting it, changing thus solely some aspects of the canon. They sometimes help to delineate the canon (fandom) almost completely.

According to Jenkins (2007, p. 265), this happened because: "*Fans reject the idea of a definitive version produced, authorized, and regulated by some media conglomerate.*

Instead, fans envision a world where all of us can participate in the creation and circulation of central cultural myths". As a direct result, the canon (fandom) has been broadened enormously.

In the same vein, Thomas (2006) attested two distinctive ficwriters' reactions toward the canon: 1) their critical responses and 2) their identity play. Their critical responses do not only mean criticism from a literary standpoint, but it also means ficwriters' necessities to continue, conclude, as well as challenge a certain canonical story.

Nevertheless, Thomas (2006) highlighted that ficwriter's critical responses are usually imbued with their own sociocultural background, or what she coined as identity play: "(...) *fans of the text can take it and write in characters and plots that are relevant to their own identities and lives, giving them a voice in a text in which they might otherwise be marginalized*".

I agree with these researchers' conceptualization about fanfictions. However, I also believe that little has been researched about the structure of fanfictions. Structurally speaking, how can a fanfiction be differentiated from a fanzine? In fact, all these researchers' concepts about fanfictions could be easily applied to the conceptualization of fanzines.

Fanzines are also texts created by fans based on a preexisting content. They present connections between the fanwriting and popular culture. Their writers do not initially seek for financial recognition. They also write to fulfill their innermost needs and tend to challenge canon. However, there is an expressive difference between fanfictions and fanzines. The latter was created before the cybercultural era.

In my opinion, letters and emails are similar, but they are not the same textual genre. I believe the same can be applied to better understand the existent differences between fanfictions and fanzines. Most of its differences are present in their textual structuring. Fanzines came before fanfictions. They were usually written in paper and exchanged in letters. Its fandoms were very limited, and normally encompassed family members and closest friends.

Sometimes, the best fanzines were published on magazines. This explains its etymological construction: *fan + magazine* (fanzine). When published, consequently, their fandoms broadened. However, they are still more limit in comparison to the potential of the cyberculture (Lévy, 2009).

On the other hand, fanfictions are only published on online communities (fandoms). Although they may possess multimodal scripts (pictures, drawings, etc..) as fanzines do, fanfictions may also possess cybercultural scripts such as hypertexts, memes, memes, gifs, among others.

These scripts cannot be found in fanzines, insofar as they are published in the paper support. Along with that, the paratextual scripts (texts written about the main text) seem to influence more the writers of fanfictions than fanzines, due to the internet velocity. To better comprehend the immense potentiality of these scripts, see appendix 2 of this research.

Ficwriters publish their fanfictional stories in one minute and, in subsequent minutes, they are already receiving comments about their stories. These comments are usually embraced by the ficwriters, which make them change different literary aspects of their fanfictions. They do that specially to please their fanbase and maybe 'conquer' new ficfans (fans of fanfictions).

Therefore, ficfans demand fanservice, specific material added to fictional stories to intentionally please its audience, all the time. I identify these definitions as the ciberliterary conceptualization of fanfictions. Therefore, my concept about fanfictions entails the classic conceptualization and the ciberliterary conceptualization of fanfictions.

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