PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM EDUCAÇÃO
EDUCAÇÃO EM FOCO | UEMG

O vitalismo queer da cibercultura: por uma pedagogia cultural[1]

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Resumo
Este artigo parte de investigação realizada no ciberespaço para o PIBIC 2020-2021 na Universidade de Brasília, por meio de uma observação participante em ambientes virtuais e redes sociais durante onze meses na pandemia do vírus SARS Cov-2, para refletir formas de operar Pedagogias Culturais produtoras de cultura na Educação em Cultura Visual. Com esse objetivo indaga formas em que a cibercultura produz visualidades. Este artigo amplia os dados com uma investigação documental de outras iniciativas nas redes de Instagram e Facebook que nasceram ou transformaram-se na situação de distanciamento social. A análise dos dados se baseia na concepção de Pedagogias Culturais de Henry Giroux; agenciamentos maquínicos de Gilles Deleuze e Felix Guattari, vitalismo queer de Claire Colebrook, além de discussões sobre emancipação, contravisualidades e criatividade. Se identificaram operações relevantes para Educação em Cultura Visual: as ações colaborativas como corpo, a aprendizagem autônoma, as operações transdisciplinares e a criação como variação latente.

Palavras-chave: Cibercultura. Educação em cultura visual. Pedagogias culturais. Vitalismo queer.

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Ciberculture queer vitalism: toward a cultural pedagogy

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Abstract
This article departs from an investigation on cyberspace for a Univeristy of Brasilia's PIBIC 2020-2022, through a participant observation in virtual learning environments and social networks during eleven months of the virus SARS Cov-2 pandemic, to reflect on modes of operating a Cultural Pedagogy, cultural producer in a Visual Culture Education. With that aim it inquires forms in which the cyberculture produce visualities. This article amplifies the data with a documental investigation of other initiatives in the social network of Instagram and Facebook, that were born or transformed on the social distancing situation. The data analysis is based on Cultural Pedagogies conception; machinic assemblages of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari; queer vitalism from Claire Colebrook, as well as discussions over emancipation, countervisualities and creativity. There were identified relevant operations for a Visual Culture Education: collaborative actions as a body, autonomous learning, transdisciplinar operations and creation as a latent variation.

Keywords: Ciberculture. Cultural pedagogies. Queer Vitalism. Visual Culture education.

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El vitalismo queer de la cibercultura: por una pedagogía cultural

Tatiana Fernández
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Resumen
Este artículo parte de investigación realizada em el ciberespacio para el PIBIC 2020-2021 de la Universidad de Brasilia, por medio de una observación participante en ambientes virtuales y redes sociales durante once meses de la pandemia del virus SARS Cov-2, para reflexionar formas de operar Pedagogías Culturales, productoras de cultura en la Educación en Cultura Visual. Con ese objetivo indaga formas en que la cibercultura produce visualidades. Este artículo amplía los datos con una investigación documental de otras iniciativas en las redes de Instagram y Facebook que nacieron o se transformaron en la situación de distanciamiento social. El análisis de los datos se basan em la concepción de Pedagogías Culturales de Henry Giroux; conformaciones maquínicas de Gilles Deleuze y Felix Guattari, vitalismo queer de Claire Colebrook, además de discusiones sobre emancipación, contravisualidades y creatividad. Se identificaron operaciones relevantes para Educación en Cultura Visual: las acciones colaborativas como cuerpo, el aprendizaje autónomo, las operaciones transdisciplinares y la creación como variación latente.

Palabras clave: Cibercultura. Educación de la cultura visual. Pedagogías culturales. Vitalismo queer.

Introduction

What have we learned from the production of visualities through cyberculture? How can this production resonate in the way knowledge is constructed in public basic education? If we admit that we are completely immersed in cyberculture, at different intensities and with different interests, it becomes necessary to study how the processes of self-management of learning are articulated in the cyber environment. During the years of the COVID-19 pandemic, from 2020 to 2022, we became guinea pigs of our own experiments and began to use, very frequently, the latest information and communication technology: social networks and video conferencing. We learned to deal with social distancing and deepened our activities through social networks. This investigation, therefore, analyzes how cyber communities operated to produce visualities remotely during the pandemic and what we can learn from them for formal and basic education.

Given these conditions, we articulated an investigation conducted for the PIBIC 2020-2021[4] program at the University of Brasília (UnB) during the pandemic, based on participant observation and complemented in this article with documentary research from other cyber spaces that were born or transformed during the social distancing situation of the pandemic, mainly on Instagram and Facebook. The investigation took place within the research project *Education in Decolonizing Visualities*, from the Department of Visual Arts (VIS) at the Institute of Arts (IdA) of UnB, whose central issue is to explore how forms of cultural pedagogy are established in formal, non-formal, or informal education, and in cultural spaces that impact their communities. It also investigates the roles of participants in these processes and how the distribution of the sensible occurs under their particular conditions. In this sense, we studied productive and emancipatory ways of operating in the construction of community knowledge, which can serve as a reference for the training of students in the Visual Arts Teaching Degree.

This article aims to identify and reflect on ways to implement Cultural Pedagogies that produce culture for Visual Culture Education, by observing and analyzing how cyberculture produces visualities. In this framework, the article presents in the first part Cultural Pedagogies and Visual Culture Education, in the second part it reflects on machinic assemblages and cyberculture, in the third part it analyzes queer vitalism and the creative turn, and in the fourth part it presents observations on the Vilarejo 21 community and the study of other initiatives during the pandemic. Finally, the article argues for a queer vitalism in Visual Culture Education as a culture-producing pedagogy.

[4] Institutional Program of Scientific Initiation Scholarships.

Cultural Pedagogy and Visual Culture Education

Cultural Pedagogies emerge from the convergence of Critical Pedagogies and Cultural Studies in the last decade of the 20th century. The former originates in the thought of Paulo Freire, primarily studied by Henry Giroux (2016) and Joe Kincheloe (2008) in the United States and Canada, and the latter from the Cultural Studies of the University of Birmingham in England, starting in the 1960s with Richard Hoggart and Stuart Hall. Giroux brings together Critical Pedagogy and Cultural Studies in Cultural Pedagogy (WEINER, 2001) because he has a political interest in the relationship between culture and education. Both converge in a practice that emphasizes the relationships between power and knowledge, as well as the relationship between pedagogical theories and practices and cultural production. David Trend (1992) conceptualizes Giroux's proposal as Cultural Pedagogy, also called Border Pedagogy (TREND, 1992; WEINER, 2001; GIROUX, 2005; 2011; 2012), as practices that consider pedagogy a form of cultural production, and at the same time, cultural production a form of pedagogy. For this reason, the study of visualities is of great relevance to these pedagogies. In this case, cinema, video, cartoons and comics, advertising, television, social networks, popular festivals, art, and everything that is part of visual culture respond to contemporary concerns, living in the tension between manifestations, products, and phenomena of visual culture that are part of education, as it is part of culture.

Due to the emphasis on the production of contemporary visual culture, art teachers in Brazil and other regions of South America work with forms of Cultural Pedagogy (MIRANDA et al., 2017; MARTINS and TOURINHO, 2014), even without theorizing these practices. In places far from urban centers, the school is a cultural center producing visualities because students are the generations that shape the world for themselves (CAMPOS, 2010). A curricular perspective that promotes Cultural Pedagogies is Visual Culture Education. Conceptualized by educators in Spain (HERNÀNDEZ, 2018), Brazil (DIAS, 2011), and the Anglo-Saxon world (FREEDMAN, 2003; DUNCUM, 2020), among other authors and countries, it is a curricular proposal with an expanded vision of Visual Arts Education. The integration of visual culture in art education does not seek to devalue art but rather to value other manifestations of visual culture by using the forms in which art operates. Art is part of visual culture, emerging from it and then feeding back into regional aesthetic traditions. This means that in schools, it is important to go beyond artistic manifestations in the study of art. Furthermore, Visual Culture Education values and centers studies on local visualities and the context of students, in line with Freirean pedagogy, to promote cultural production based on their own realities and experiences.

Visual Culture Education is a perspective that is not limited to vision as an optical phenomenon nor does it deal solely with the proliferation of images and signs. It expands to encompass the ways in which we see the world, and this happens with all senses connected. As Graeme Sullivan suggests, we could say that it is a proposal that moves "from a modern view of visual seeing to a postmodern view of visual knowing that shifts from the notion of the innocent eye to the interpretive eye, the eye that knows" (2010, p. 17, our translation). Therefore, the pedagogical practices of Visual Culture Education go beyond reading and rereading images: they produce visualities, that is, they produce culture. In this sense, the practices of these teachers open up to new contextual variables in the relationships between viewer, artist, and context, where everyone is a co-author and at the same time affected by these culture-producing practices. With the growth of information and communication technologies and image technologies, the domain of visualities has become relevant for both cosmopolitan communities and indigenous communities anywhere in the world.

Nicholas Mirzoeff (2011) observa que o conceito de visualidade se origina na ideia de controle visual, ou visualização, nas relações de poder entre os colonizadores e colonizados no século XVIII e grande parte do XIX. Visualizar é um controle político. A esta visualidade se manifesta o que ele chama de contravisualidade, ou o direito de ver e ser visto. Na contravisualidade as imagens ou, mais amplamente, as formas de ver o mundo, são confrontadas às visualidades instituídas nos sistemas de poder, como são os vazamentos de informação secreta que revela a ilegalidade do controle, ou eventos mediáticos que influenciam a opinião pública por meio de vídeos ou fotografias. As visualidades e contravisualidades são eventos políticos nas relações de poder que se expressam de diversas formas e em diversos meios, enquanto afetam as formas de ver o mundo.

Under these conditions, Cultural Pedagogies promote spaces for participation in the construction of visual knowledge with an emphasis on cultural production as pedagogy because they open up to a diversity of manifestations, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary relationships, different interests, dimensions, or objectives, and, above all, because they promote the creation of counter-visualities, often expressed by younger generations. Participation is the means to intellectual emancipation, based on the principle of the equality of intelligences. Students are conscious participants in collective construction and are responsible for themselves. This is a principle of decolonization: it is not the colonizer who grants emancipation to the colonized (BIESTA, 2010). The colonized decolonizes themselves in various ways, but any form of decolonization is an exercise in emancipation (territorial, economic, cultural) based on the equality of intelligence between different people. The idea of a ‘participant’ in the construction of oneself is a form of decolonization, without which there can be no equitable relationships. To what extent do students choose what to learn for

their lives and how they learn?

However, Paul Duncum (2020) argues that participatory action does not always contribute to democracy. Much of what is produced on social networks is based on false, mediocre, or repetitive information. Therefore, it is of great importance to maintain processes of critique and self-critique in Visual Culture Education. In any case, it is evident that a culture has been formed that learns for itself and through these participation networks. Duncum (2020) identifies autonomous learning as a "self-managed pedagogy" for learning on one's own. It is necessary to be mindful, as Gert Biesta (2006) warns, to distinguish autonomous learning born from the desire or need to learn, no matter how trivial or serious that may be, for self-construction from the continuous learning that is demanded of workers in digital formats of autonomous learning, to function efficiently in the labor market, which benefits only the capitalist system and not the workers, as individuals who learn.

Participatory action is not just nominal in study or creative groups. In the field of visual arts education, the concept of participation is often used to assess artistic works, and frequently, this is all that is evaluated. However, in artistic and educational terms, participation refers to the construction of oneself as a knowing subject that is, a creative participation (HELGUERA, 2010). Autonomous learning is only possible when the investigation or creation interests the student or when it intersects with their world experience. In this case, the study serves to construct oneself and one's world. Their participation occurs in the organization, research, and evaluation of their learning, in the determination of their objectives, and in the identification of their own needs and interests. No one can think for them. In this sense, participation is understood as a co-authorship with teachers, with other students, or with any group or community, as well as with interspecies relationships, multinatural beings, or with technologies.

Machinic Assemblages and Cyberculture

Co-authorship and participation in the entire construction of knowledge is a characteristic of autonomous learning. This has always been possible to varying degrees. We not only learn autonomously but also in a shared manner with others, when we teach one another. In the processes of learning and creating in art, autonomous learning is essential for opening "lines of flight" (DELEUZE and GUATTARI, 2002) in subjectivity. And we don't just learn from other subjects, but from other objects and conditions. Our bodies have learned from viruses that kill or sicken us, without us being consciously aware of it. What scientists learned from the COVID-19 pandemic was substantial, but our bodies learned in a different, more permanent way than through science.

Considering these relationships in the construction of knowledge is, in many ways, decolonizing because it does not establish value hierarchies among participants, it recognizes that the "self" does not end at the boundaries of the biological body (COLEBROOK, 2014, p. 12), and because the collective body is a subjectivity that traverses the individual body. These couplings between beings, and between them and their technologies, are what Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (2002) call *machinic assemblages*. The philosophers define machinic assemblages as subjectivities formed through the encounter between bodies, their collective enunciations, and the tensions between the stable and the fluid. That is, the life that forms in the encounter between living and static bodies, as happens between humans and their machines, or the encounter between species; the life that forms in thought and memory, producing the enunciations that these bodies articulate, and that operate incorporeal transformations; and the life that forms between the limits of rules, norms, stable models, and the fluid currents of change that cross borders and break rules. In contemporary times, these couplings occur with digital technologies to the point where we use our technological devices as extensions of our bodies. The fusion of the human body with information and communication technologies produces a subjectivity that changes culture: cyberculture.

It is evident that all culture changes as fortuitous or planned couplings occur between so many variables of bodies, expressions, events of change, and resistance, and with them, subjects and objects. Image technologies are the best example of how they are intertwined with the life of the human species. They originated in antiquity with the camera obscura and later with lenses. These are technologies capable of expanding our vision to macro and micro dimensions, allowing us the power to see beyond our biological limits. Cyberculture is formed amidst the potential explosion of image technologies associated with information and communication technologies, opening up a world of active participation in the construction of knowledge. However, participation in the creation of subjectivities comes at the cost of social control and the emergence of optical surveillance and control over everyone’s life. Nevertheless, counter-visualities are also produced in these spaces. Like all technologies, the internet and its virtual interfaces are neutral; they only do what communities want to make of them. Within it, cyberculture produces visualities and counter-visualities that directly affect the construction of knowledge and subjectivities.

We live in a state of immersion in technologies, enabling cyberculture. This cyberculture is integrated with three fundamental characteristics of contemporary technologies: digitization, for communication; interface, for sensory perception; and interactivity, for sharing. These are fundamental characteristics that stimulate human senses and desires, causing the processing of cultures to be “intimately connected to new mental habits that, according to the paradigm, lead to a

new way of acting" (SANTAELLA, 2013, p.19). New ways that shape the social and political realms in both the offline and online worlds, keeping pace with the speed of data flows. In this relationship, humans and machines maintain a feedback loop, expanding cyberspace and influencing human activity, while also creating friction in social organizations (SOUZA, 2015; SANTAELLA, 2003) because, in cyberspace, humans are freed from the barriers of the organic world, giving them the freedom to create and explore.

The possibility of constructing narratives in cyberspace enables the user to transport their personality into the digital realm, building visualities or appropriating existing ones, modifying them to suit their needs. A range of visualities is created that explore experiences and share ideas, transmitted on a global scale and influencing opinions and knowledge (SANTAELLA, 2013). In the dual action of operating within and sharing visualities, users end up contributing to changes in cultural productions and social organizations, since, like words, images are also communicational vehicles that stimulate the human imagination.

In the frenzy of changes in the digital environment, users adapt and modify the space, leaving both social and cultural aspects in a state of plasticity, molded by visualizations and interactions. These reprogrammable subjects, through their engagement with visualities, create new habits and lifestyles (HERNÁNDEZ, 2018; DUARTE JÚNIOR, 1995; CAMPOS, 2010). Hybrid creatures, they live both organic and digital realities, intertwining these two worlds, thereby expanding possibilities for personalities, opinions, and habits. A heterogeneous mix of cultural positions shared through networks. This heterogeneity disrupts uniformity, both culturally and intellectually.

In cyberspace, knowledge hierarchies become fragmented. Anyone can be a teacher, free to share their knowledge. And every inhabitant of cyberspace can use these explanations and/or navigate cyberspace, researching and experimenting with textualities and visualities in their various forms: illustrations, photos, videos, 3D digital models, etc. This action, combined with interactivity and sharing, gives the user autonomy in seeking, exchanging, and experimenting. Learning processes develop spontaneously through curiosity and circumstance, keeping pace with the unpredictability of cyberspace (HERNÁNDEZ, 2018). Thus, learning becomes possible through desire, which requires a critical construction capable of distinguishing information and thoughts, working through reflection-action-reflection so that the user is not merely a consumer of information but instead analyzes the world critically and influences the reprogramming of society, understanding various perspectives and developing their own stance on the complexities of both the organic and digital worlds.

Queer Vitalism and the Creative Turn

n open creation processes, such as artistic practice, the paths are formed as one moves forward, and they are equally spontaneous and chaotic. However, modern educational paradigms point to predetermined creative methods based on scientific studies. Postmodern educational paradigms establish competencies and skills related to creativity to be developed in students. In these processes, nothing is chaotic or spontaneous; everything must be controlled. Similarly, in the labor field, citizens are expected to be creative to increase the capacity and quality of capitalist production. In everyday life, people are expected to be creative to deal with poverty or to recycle the industrial waste that those responsible for its production do not acknowledge as their own. As a result, there arises a need to develop strategies to control creativity within educational systems. In the 20th century, many studies were conducted to find ways to measure and develop creativity in education. Today, creative capacity is relevant in every field of labor, but it is approached prescriptively and individually, as jan jagodzinsky points out when referring to this shift as the 'creative turn' (2010). In the last 50 years, the relevance of visual arts education has grown in this context because, from the modern Western perspective, it is considered the place of creativity par excellence.

But creation emerges from a void, a lack, something that does not yet exist and does not even have a name. It does not completely belong to a subject because it emerges within the machinic assemblages of subjectivity, which are collective and interconnected. Nor is it fully understood yet, because it is sensation. Creation responds to this lack and to the paths that open up in the process. These are always chaotic and unpredictable processes. What is predictable, ordered, and results from the knowledge of a praxis is not poetic, but useful—a distinction of emphasis rather than value. The useful does not create; it repeats what is already known through established steps and knowledge, sometimes taken out of context and stripped of meaning. This is the difference between the intention to investigate and the intention to manifest. The emphasis shifts. Creation, like investigation, opens itself to knowing what has no name yet. We can call this way of opening up to the unknown *passive vitalism*, as we will see later. Manifestation, on the other hand, is grounded in convictions that structure the rules of the game, norms, limits, and expectations, like artistic or political manifestos, which are part of collective enunciations. We can call this form of activism *active vitalism*.

For this reason, it is essential to observe how the media, technologies, and contexts which are always changing participate as variables in the creative process. Cyberculture brings together media, technology, and contexts (as was the case during the pandemic) that facilitate the creation of

visualities: practices, methods, techniques, and concepts are produced, which change the way we see the world. Cyberculture forms as a virtual territory of existence that crosses modern boundaries or structures, whether through coincidences or intentions. In doing so, it modifies bodies and the way subjectivities are constructed. For Jagodzinsky

> These interactive and cybernetic machines - not only the video camera and computer, but also audiovisual recordings and playback technologies - are the latest prostheses integrated into our bodies and minds. They have changed our perception of 'reality' by modulating the speeds and intensities that create the affective flow in our bodies. The Foucauldian machinic assemblage of the panopticon has now been reversed: we live in a *synopticon* where the many watch the few on the screen, and the few watch the many through surveillance (2010, position 474 to 548, our translation)

The interactive capacity of digital media, on the one hand, to provoke desires and emotionally affect, and on the other, to control—combined with optical surveillance technologies—leads Jagodzinsky to think that the synopticon becomes a perfect desire machine for designer capitalism. The 'creative turn' that contemporary times so emphasize, and that is expected from visual arts education, can blur the lines between work and desire, and between what is public and private,

> For this reason, visual arts education can no longer theorize perception "in terms of immediacy, presence, punctuality" [...] which is a phenomenological inheritance. This leads to a visual essentialism. Now, the interest in perception lies in how it is intensified, stretched, slowed down, sped up, expanded, condensed, and more, through contemporary interactive techniques (JAGODZINSKY, 2010, position 498 to 548, author's italics, our translation)

Cybernetic interfaces form an ideal synoptic system for total control of subjectivities or for creating networks of resistance to established power. For Indigenous peoples of the Americas, video has become a weapon of counter-visualities, and the Internet is the best and fastest means to raise the visibility of conflicts. For urban populations, cameras are weapons for defending against and attacking crimes and injustices in the struggle for power. These contemporary interactive techniques that jagodzinsky points out involve images and visualities in general. From these interactions, interesting encounters arise that create network variations without centers or linear sequences. The best metaphor is the World Wide Web itself, the WWW. Instead of a linear cause-effect relationship, there is an interconnected network that grows in all directions where things happen.

In cyberculture, the potential for variation is always present. This potential is creative. Colebrook (2014) calls this potential *queer vitalism* precisely because it holds the latent potential for variation. Colebrook associates queer vitalism with the idea of passive vitalism from Deleuze and Guattari: active vitalism is that of the "[...] idea that acts but is not – that acts, therefore, from the

perspective of an external cerebral knowledge" (1994, p. 213, our translation), and passive vitalism is "{...} that of the force that is, but does not act – that is, therefore, pure internal consciousness" (Ibid). The first, Platonic, identifies vitalism in the Idea, governed by reason and study. The second, Aristotelian, identifies vitalism in the potential of that which has no governance or predetermined end. For Deleuze and Guattari (1994), life is a plane of forces not determined by self-governance and control, but through unexpected encounters, deviations. Passive vitalism is that which happens in these uncontrollable deviations. In this way, the real and the virtual (the potential for variation) converge. For Colebrook, "passive vitalism is queer {...} in its difference and distance from already constituted images of life as necessarily fruitful, generative, organized, and human" (2014, p. 101, our translation). Furthermore, queer has the power to imagine things that the eye has never seen before because they are not part of its desires.

What Jagodzinsky calls positive vitalism is what Colebrook refers to as active vitalism. In this form of vitalism, "the subject makes decisions, gives meaning to life through various signifiers, categorizations, autobiographies, historical data [...]" (2018, position 1191, our translation). From the perspective of passive or queer vitalism, the subject deals with changes that affect and transform them, making their identity more malleable. But queer vitalism goes beyond, as Jagodzinsky (2018) argues, the bodies and their actions. He notes that Colebrook's concept of queer vitalism does not refer to breaking away from normativity but to the creation of differences that are not anchored in subjects but in affects: it is passive because there are forces (intensities) that enter into undecided relationships, from which the subject who makes decisions emerges. It is passive because the body is immersed in its environment, crossed by what affects it, by its attachments: "[...] the potentiality of queerification is what is vital. Life is queer in this sense, as it takes on all these potential differences that infinitely exceed and divide each body" (JAGODZINSKY, 2018, position 1199, our translation).

Thus, we can think that in cyberculture, there is a potential for queerification in the way knowledge is constructed. The desires that arise with communication and information technologies, and with images, are not produced by these technologies, but the technologies serve as an ideal medium for the formation of desires, which, as Jagodzinsky argues, already exist before the formation of the individual in their "genetic, political, social, metabolic, fantastic force" (2018, position 1199, our translation). The way social networks are used, monumentally transforming desires, merely responds to needs already inscribed in life, such as the need for belonging or socialization.

To reflect on autonomous learning in cyberculture, it is also necessary to understand that this is a new machinic conFiguretion emerging in contemporary times, demanding new ways of understanding creativity and the formation of visualities. This investigation studies a case from a

PIBIC research project in the undergraduate Visual Arts Licentiate program at VIS/IdA/UnB: the group *Vilarejo 21*. To broaden the contrast, this investigation observes documentary data from other experiences in the field of art and culture that were born or changed their ways of operating during the COVID-19 pandemic that affected the planet.

Vilarejo 21 and Other Pandemic Initiatives

Vilarejo 21 is a cybernetic artistic community geographically located in Brasília at a Space for Art, Creativity & Culture, and virtually connected on the Facebook and Instagram platforms[5] . It is made up of a collective of visual artists, anthropologists, art therapists, art educators, and administrators. The physical space is a studio dedicated to the sharing of artistic knowledge, both theoretically and, primarily, practically. The participant observation of the group's activities took place over eleven months during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic as part of the PIBIC research process. During this period, we followed the visual production workshops of the Vilarejo 21 community, which, at that time, shifted to the online network environment to continue its activities. Thus, the observation and interaction with collaborators and participants were carried out online.

It is considered an artistic-cybernetic community because it occupies both digital environments and tools, while projecting physical creation into the digital format through online interaction and participants' exhibitions on social platforms that value image and video. Physical and virtual meetings are promoted via social networks (Facebook and Instagram), with free registration, allowing for a heterogeneous community. The meetings are organic, without set dates or regular themes, and the proposals move between various techniques, movements, and philosophical reflections on art. Thus, the structure favors openness to variation, deviation, and chaos, but not necessarily to dissidence. As Jagodzinski (2010) suggests, in this case, perception is intensified, stretched, slowed down or sped up, expanded, condensed, or fragmented. This could hardly happen without the rhizomatic and interactive structure of cyberspace. The heterogeneity of fields converging into a community of art, creation, and culture, and the latent potential of activities and processes that unfold without any orderly prediction, seem in some way to imitate the chaotic structure of knowledge construction on the Web.

The workshops followed during this period were quite varied: *Proposed House, Dwelling,*

[5] Vilarejo 21 site web: <https://www.vilarejo21.com.br/>; Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/vilarejo21/>; Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/vilarejo21>.

Body; *Collage, Tear, Cut, Paste*; *Typography, Writing Design, the Art of Working with Text*; *Ugly Portrait, Beauty versus Ugliness*; *The Eye and the Camera*; and *Painting with What You Have, Pigment, Dye, and Binder*. In total, there were six online meetings, with durations ranging from an hour and a half to four hours, featuring theoretical introductions with visual and/or bibliographic references, followed by practical production.

The objective of the participant observation was to capture the context and space of experimentation, as well as the results of the processes; and to observe the flows and potential cultural blockages during the activities proposed by Vilarejo 21 in order to understand how visual arts can articulate a cultural pedagogy in the highly culturally dynamic environment of cyberspace. During the dialogical expository activities and the practical developments carried out in the workshops, it was possible to observe that the workshops encouraged the construction of narratives for understanding, denunciation, and action in relation to social changes (BULHÕES, 2011). Situations present in the activities of fellow participants, such as in the typography workshop, where the letter "J" is depicted with a mouth vomiting (Fig. 1), referencing the state of the Brazilian government, or in the *Proposed House* workshop, where a living room is transformed into a padded room (Fig. 2), alluding to the condition of the 2020 quarantine.

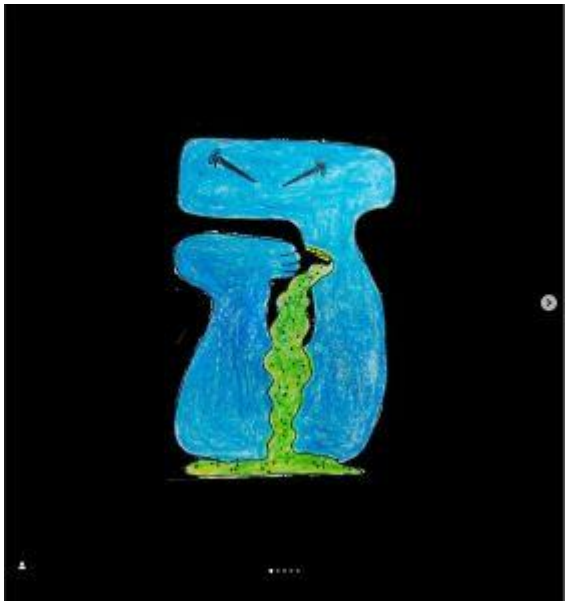

Figure 1. Letter J. Typography workshop participant. Vilarejo 21, 2020. Collection (of the author).

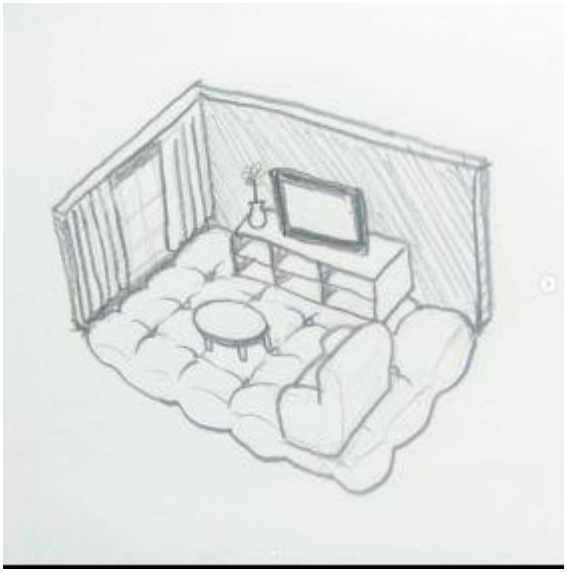

Figure 2. Padded Room. Participant in the *Proposed House* workshop. Vilarejo 21, 2020. Collection (of the author).

During the pandemic, the use of videoconferencing gained crucial relevance for life. Before that, its use was uncommon in society and education. In the case of *Vilarejo 21*, the online meetings broke down geographical barriers within the community. During this period, there were participants from Canada. The meetings were conducted using a navigation software that enabled the sharing of information and knowledge, going beyond dialogue and allowing participants to freely browse websites, gather additional information and images, overlap visualities, intersperse layers, and make communication more dynamic (BULHÕES, 2011). This gave users the freedom to act on the shared visualities whether debating ideas, using them as visual references, or incorporating them into their own productions.

This occurred in the *Ugly Portrait* workshop, where images collected from the internet were shared by the group for visual production. The challenges posed to participants created tensions that forced them to abandon precision in their drawing: using their non-dominant hand or drawing upside down. This activity led to discussions about the conditions of beauty in both the body and art, contributing to the construction of meaning in an act of visual reflection and "giving it a semiotic order" (CAMPOS, 2010, p. 113). A shared cycle of representation and the construction of sign architectures, which, once shared on social networks, extended beyond the circle of participants.

Additionally, we observed, as Ricardo Campos suggests, that users are consistent with their productions in the sense that they carry a historical, ideological, and social weight, acting "upon reality, continuously nurturing it, contributing to its metamorphosis, and in return receiving echoes

of these changes" (2010, p. 118). In the *The Eye and the Camera* workshop, a 16-year-old trans participant created a photographic work featuring a black-and-white montage of mysterious selfies. Upon presenting their work, the participant explained that the photographic process was a form of self-acceptance and a way to connect with others. This indicates that communication, perception, and sharing key characteristics of cyberculture contribute to the fluid construction of subjectivity in relation to and dialogue with visualities on ever-expanding social media timelines (ABREU, 2017).

We observed that at *Vilarejo 21*, the workshop proposals and activities were more focused on learning techniques and materials, with few aiming at critical engagement or introducing participants to antagonistic situations, which are commonly used in Socially Engaged Art (SEA), as noted by artist Pablo Helguera (2011). In SEA, participants are often involved in confrontational, critical, uncomfortable, ironic, or violent experiences. At *Vilarejo 21*, the situations leaned more towards dialogue and collaboration between participants, which are also common methods in SEA. However, the fact that the activities were conducted remotely, in cyberspace, and during the isolation of social distancing, fostered a transgressive thinking among participants, raising the need to question and adopt a critical stance. In the collage workshop, for instance, one of the participants used a transparent surface for a front-and-back artwork. In the layering of cut-out images, on one side, the participant combined the words "the shadows" with "Once upon a time in America," a black face sticking out its tongue, black arms outstretched with open palms, and in the background, bombs, a smile, and bare buttocks in black and white. This image evoked a reflection on socio-racial conditions in America, referencing the discussions around the death of George Floyd, an African American man killed during a police action, which sparked protests against racial violence and raised the *Black Lives Matter* banner in 2020. However, the critical reflection did not prevail due to the short duration of the workshops. The online pedagogical processes were more playful than critical. The time for reflection occurred mainly during the creative process of the proposed activities, as indicated by the images and artifacts produced.

Like *Vilarejo 21*, there are other online communities that either reinvented themselves or were born in response to the pandemic. These groups maximized the potential of cyberculture or were created out of the need for social interaction. They are generally cultural and activist initiatives that self-manage their learning. Teaching others or learning from others was widely used to foster interactivity. This is the case with the *Rede Urbana de Ações Socioculturais* (Ruas), an urban art and culture network from the periphery, in collaboration with the *Laboratório de Empreendimentos Criativos* (LECria) in Brasília; or the *Batalha da Escada* Rap group from the *Teatro de Arena* at UnB, also in the Federal District, which created the *Escada de Casa* through Instagram and YouTube. In

Brazil, graffiti groups such as the *Comité (Permanente) do Grafite* were formed during the pandemic and organized the 1st *Festival de Grafite em Casa* (VEIT, 2020). All these groups opened up online debates to reflect on issues ranging from politics to health. Among activism, art, and politics, the initiatives vary globally, but one worth mentioning is the Mexican collective "ellas.artes"[6], a visual arts diffusion and education platform with a gender perspective, formed in August 2019 on Instagram by Grécia Pérez, a professor at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). The project is supported by institutions like UNAM and the Creative Collective Program of the British Council. They offer courses and workshops for a community of creative women. These initiatives continue because the remote format expands the spaces for action.

Maria Amelia Bulhões' (2012) research highlights the existence of virtual micro-social networks in art in Brazil and around the world for decades. However, during the pandemic years, many more cultural communities organized themselves to continue operating virtually. It is evident, as artists Eva and Franco Mattes, creators of the first Net Art work *0100101110101101.org*, suggest, that "thanks to the pandemic, we are becoming 'extremely online'" (RYAN, 2020). Tina Ryan (2020) observes that Net Art can provide insights into the emotional, political, economic, and environmental advantages and disadvantages that have existed since the emergence of the Internet, and the implications of gathering in physical spaces versus cyberspace.

> Alone, together, we suffer our misfortune as we remotely witness disrupted relationships, broken careers, financial ruin, the dismissal of millions of people, from loved ones to complete strangers. Once this is over, those of us who remain will have to recalibrate the frequency of our online and offline lives, which requires thinking about the meaning and value of proximity - and distance - enabled by modern technologies" (2020, no page number, our translation).

The machinic configurations between machines, beings, and their circumstances create new ways of seeing. The potential to build cyberspace has been present for decades, but the pandemic revealed the depth and intensity of these machinic configurations. New ways of learning in a structure that has the potential for variation, such as cyberspace, led communities to develop greater mastery in navigating territories that were previously unexplored by the majority of citizens and communities. Today, it is possible to learn online things that we probably would never have wanted to learn had we not had interfaces for communication, sensory perception, and sharing within a network that can lead us down unexpected and surprising paths, affecting our will, our desires, and the realization that we

[6] Instagram ellas.artes:< https://instagram.com/ellas.artes?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>

don't know what we are capable of until we are capable (JAGODZINSKY and WALLIN, 2013), as happened during the pandemic.

The Queer Vitalism of Cyberculture in Visual Culture Education

The queer vitalism of cyberculture fueled the resistance of the collective and community body, which needed to maintain minimal connection with the social body during times when no one knew how long the adaptation would last. Communities with cultural, artistic, and political ties strengthened: many online conferences and courses were held, gathering participants from around the world for academic, cultural, and political discussions. There were so many that it became difficult to follow everything that artists, artisans, activists, academics, and people wanting to learn something were interested in seeing on the Web. Cyberspace became the world's *pluri-city*. The first thing we can learn from these experiences is that we are capable of collaborative actions as a collective body. It becomes possible to participate in multiple communities simultaneously and in different places.

Likewise, art in cyberspace reaches a larger number of observers, becoming available for interventions and discussions, and also brings closer those within the art circuits to engage and share with those outside, potentially breaking down hierarchies and social controls, bringing attention to what was previously kept invisible by the state of normality (BULHÕES, 2011), and promoting an emancipatory vision of teaching and learning. In this way, we can think, as Rancière does, that art creates “ruptures in the sensory fabric of perception and the dynamics of affections,” “changing frameworks” and “building new relationships” (2014, p. 64). Thus, cultural and artistic actions were extraordinarily relevant during the pandemic to highlight the capacity for autonomous learning.

The experiences observed in Vilarejo 21 and the study of other similar initiatives contributed to understanding how cultural pedagogy can be articulated in cyberspace and what operations produce visualities and counter-visualities. The pandemic situation heightened the observation of strategies and methods established in cyberspace for this networked self-learning and the chaotic growth that the queer vitality of cyberspace allows. Particularly in the field of creation, as Cultural Pedagogy, what we observed is a reconfiguration of the notion of teaching and learning as forms of self-construction in communities connected within cyberspace.

In the process of creation, the subject moves between and balances human rationality and emotion, exercising imagination, to break away from immutable rationality and consequently from control (DUARTE JÚNIOR, 1995). In this way, through imagining and creating, the individual problematizes and reprograms concepts. The use of audiovisual interfaces, images, and texts that are

more visual than verbal, opens up endless aesthetic possibilities. Interactivity promotes a transdisciplinary movement that integrates heterogeneous groups in creative activities from different fields of profession or study. Communities use these opportunities that open up at the same time as others close, such as social proximity. Some forms extinguish, while others survive differently from the experience of social isolation during the pandemic. It became clear that we did not know what we were capable of in the artistic field that works with time and social space. Just as cinemas, theaters, galleries, concerts, or traditional festivals were closed, new forms emerged that expanded public and political spaces in the post-pandemic period. The synoptic regime allows for greater exchange between communities while cultural practices and traditions are lost.

The queer vitality of communities in cyberspace, especially in the post-pandemic scenario, unleashed growth in the understanding of the capacity for community action that transcends physical space and distance. In an unplanned and unforeseen manner, technologies became integrated into forms of existence and learning processes. The experiences of these cybernetic communities show that the desire to learn happens in the process of autonomous learning, which is in itself a process of chances or latent variables that open up as one learns and trigger other constructions of subjectivity. With this, we can think that the queerification of visual arts education passes through the adoption of the queer vitality characteristic of cyberspace. What can we learn from the way these communities learn, as observed during pandemic times? We can identify operations that are relevant for Visual Culture Education in the basic education system: collaborative actions as a body, autonomous learning, transdisciplinary operations, and creation as latent variation. This concretely means more open and connected pathways of collaborative and community-based learning.

For Cultural Pedagogies, which take place mainly in Visual Culture Education (MARTINS and TOURINHO, 2014), communication, sensory perception, and sharing in creative contexts, as happens in cyberculture, are important. Not only through the use of digital platforms such as social networks and others, but also by adopting queer vitalism as a teaching methodology based on the arts. That is, a queer pedagogy. Autonomous learning is a form of self-governance and control, characteristic of active vitalism, but in cyberspace, it gains the power of variation, which allows for unexpected encounters, deviations, and mutations in unexplored universes. Cyberspace, therefore, is a potent space for learning in Cultural Pedagogies within Visual Culture Education, which was consolidated during the pandemic.

Final considerations

With this investigation, we identified queer vitalism as one of the main ways of operating in the production of visualities within a cyber-cultural community in Brasília during the peak of the pandemic. We observed that this community found ways to offer, more than just learning opportunities, spaces where participants could explore unexplored universes aesthetic universes of participation in the world, in the same way as with other initiatives in cyberculture. We reflected on the willingness of people to learn in this space during a painful period of social distancing and noted that these ways of learning allow for a flexibility of deviation that is creative not only in terms of new artifacts but also in new configurations of the self within the machinic assemblages. We could say that our bodies became "extremely online." We also saw that participation in the production of visualities can be banal and alienated in these contexts, but it also shows that creative processes, as potencies of variation, exercise an emancipated gaze toward oneself and the world. For basic education, this means that spaces open to autonomous learning, where participants integrate unexpected encounters into the configuration of their world one that is technological and cybernetic, where they learn (almost everything) they desire are spaces of aesthetic creation and exploration.

We argue here for Cultural Pedagogies in Visual Culture Education because it facilitates the transition between the models of active vitalism (or positive vitalism), which follows the modern, Western, and traditional education model, where everything learned is controlled throughout the entire system (GIROUX, 2011, 2012, 2021) and regulated in all its aspects for the social control of power; and toward passive vitalism (or queer vitalism), which opens up, as happens in artistic processes, to the unknown, to what is in a continuous process of transformation, and which recognizes the connection between beings, things, and their circumstances. Cyber communities constitute forms of learning in the model of passive (or queer) vitalism, which, being creative, are of interest to areas that study art in education or education in art.

As Colebrook (2014) argues, the body is not limited to the biological body. Cyberspace amplifies the creative potential of other territories of existence, but it also closes others. The SARS-CoV-2 virus, which disregarded human will or needs, forced us to learn and reinvent ourselves. The virus used passive vitalism to grow, expand, and mutate as many times as conditions allowed. We defeated it after almost three years, at the high cost of over 6 million deaths worldwide, many of them in Brazil, but we learned that we do not have life under the dominion of human will and that there are many things we do not know. Active or positive vitalism is part of how we construct life in society,

but today, in the face of all the challenges, it is necessary to open ourselves, with the same disposition, to the passive vitalism of latent variation for the creative turn

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