

Avaliação dialógica: desafios e perspectivas (Dialogical assessment: challenges and perspectives). Romão, J, E. (2011). São Paulo: Cortez. 160 pp. ISBN: 978-85-249-1771-4.

Assessment is a very important tool to observe the learning process. However, in Brazil, it is sometimes used in schools just to measure the students' knowledge, not to help them to learn, just to check what they already know about a subject. For this reason, it is important to [re]think how assessment can help students to learn during the learning process. In *Avaliação dialógica: desafios e perspectivas* (Dialogical assessment: challenges and perspectives), Romão discusses how assessment can really help the students learn during the learning process. He aims to discuss assessment not just as a one-sided tool, but also as a dialogical learning tool which allows both students and teachers to work together.

The book is divided into three parts: the first being about ideology in education and in the assessment context, the second about learning assessment and the third concerning dialogical assessment. The first part is divided in three chapters. In the first chapter, Romão asserts that the term ideology is present in all aspects of what concerns science studies. For this reason, to study a term considered so complex, the author says it is necessary to classify it into two perspectives: positivist and dialectic. The positivist perspective includes scholars that conceive science as something ready, organized and objective. For this group, objectivity is understood as a central matter. Here we have people who studied Marx and Comte's work. According to Romão, the positivist ideology might be used by teachers who seek to control of what is right and what is wrong in the educational context. They wouldn't accept other ways to see and understand reality. For the dialectic perspective, the statute of science is still determined by objectivity. However, this group takes into consideration the subjectivity because, according to Romão, the science is permeated by social and historical aspects. To reinforce his argument, Romão argues that every scientific study is a social fact because it always involves people.

In chapter two, there is a discussion about ideology and education. Here the author talks briefly about a problem that Brazil is now facing: the massification of the learning system in basic education. We can notice that some years ago there was a big expansion in public schools, probably because of the influence of the *Education For All* program. *Education For All* is a globalized plan which aims to cross geographical boundaries and ensure education to developing countries with the help of UNESCO, the World Bank and many other institutions. This program emphasizes educational quality and reduction of social differences. The expansion of the schools in Brazil sought to increase the number of enrolled students in basic education. However, there were not any concerns with the quality of this basic education. For this reason, we can now realize that many students who finished elementary school are not ready to enter university.

In chapter three, Romão focus on assessment and ideology. To do so, the author discusses eight myths related to assessment to demystify them; his objective with this discussion is to decrease the quantitative aspect of the assessment. The author concludes the first part

stating that assessment, seen in the traditional models, is a tool that reinforces the discrimination in classroom, grading and separating the students who learned from those who didn't.

The second part is called learning assessment and has two chapters: one is about assessment and the other, measurement and assessment. To define evaluation, in chapter four, Romão points out two models: one more traditionalist and objective, and other more qualitative. On the last one we can see students' self-assessment and peer assessment. The author argues that although these models are different, they are indissociable; both can coexist in a classroom context.

Taras (2005, p. 468), regarding these two kinds of assessment, argues that "[I]t is possible for assessment to be uniquely summative [objective] where the assessment stops at the judgment. However, it is not possible for assessment to be uniquely formative [qualitative] without the summative judgment having preceded it." Therefore, we can see that one model of assessment does not exclude the other one.

To discuss about measurement, in chapter five, Romão points out that to measure knowledge it is important to take into consideration aspects such as objectivity and validity, among others. However, Romão argues that other factors, such as social and historical context, can influence the assessment and that these factors need to be taken into account. So, the learning assessment shouldn't be based on only one measurable aspect.

In the last part of the book there is emphasis on dialogical assessment. In chapter six, the author defines dialogical assessment based on Paulo Freire's studies. Thus, assessment shouldn't be seen as a promotion, but as a process that takes into consideration the student's life out of the school. In chapter seven, Romão discusses the errors in assessment environment, based on Luckesi's work. According to Romão, the answers or even the performance of the students cannot be seen or treated as an error, the teachers should take lessons from it to help the student to learn more.

In chapter eight, Romão discusses some steps of the dialogical assessment, such as the need to inform the students about what is going to be assessed. According to the author, it is important to make clear to the students what is going to be assessed. Also, it is relevant to build the assessment tests or work with the students; or, at least, the evaluation measures. So, the students can become more comfortable and more confident in themselves. We can see that the author, in this chapter, brings the students to the learning assessment process. It is very important because when the teachers consider the students and their environment, they assess considering the learning process, not just to check the students' knowledge. Romão concludes his book arguing that the best way to ensure assessment is not used as a tool to exclude students is to take into consideration the two models of assessment: one that classified the students and one that takes into account the learning process; in other words, assessing to learn.

In this book, we notice that the author highlights the importance of not just evaluating the students to check if or what they learned. It is necessary to take into consideration the

environment they live in, otherwise the assessment at school is a tool of social exclusion. This book is recommended for all those who seek to better understand the process of educational assessment in the Brazilian context. The book lends a different perspective of assessment in a dialogical way. Thus, the teacher and the students can work together, seeking new ways to improve learning together.

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