

Poster session 1

Art and identity construction in adolescence

Identity, exploration and possible self in late adolescence: the identification with art characters

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This study intends to analyse a specific aspect of identity construction in late adolescence, from the exploration and commitment dimensions individualized by Marcia (1980) and with reference to "possible self" models by Markus and Nurius (1986), recovered by Dunkel (2000). In the last researches late adolescence identity has frequently shown strong explorative aspects rather those based on commitment (Aleni Sestito, Parrello, 2000; 2001; 2002; Aleni Sestito, Menna, Parrello, 2003). In this explorative dimension, we want to analyse the possible role of the process of art character identification. Semi writes: "A fundamental function of the art is to promote us in the identification with other mental situations, with other human experiences (...). Adolescence is typically a period in which is necessary to explore new mental states, but is also a period in which is strong the sensation that these other states are still unknown. The art serves in this period (Semi, 1985, p.66).

The subjects who participated in the research were university students of both sexes (10 M; 42 F), aged between 19 and 20 years old. All of the subjects were asked to participate in the research work in a voluntary and anonymous manner. They were invited to compile a form consisting of two parts: the first asks for a choice of a character that caught their imagination and for a brief description of this character; the second asks for the identification with the same character and the narration of a tell from his point of view.

We made a first classification of selected characters in relation to different fields (comic strip, literature, painting, music, cinema). The content of the tells produced was analysed by way of the statistical analysis methodology of textual data put together by Reinert (1986), using ALCESTE software. The results are in course of elaboration.

What is art? The answers from Brazilian and Portuguese students

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The study presented in this poster intended to assess and compare Brazilian and Portuguese students' conceptions about art. In order to achieve this goal a brief questionnaire was developed, adapting and enriching an instrument created by Kindler, Darras and Kuo (2000). The strength of the comparison is reinforced by the employment of the same instrument in the two samples (Wang & Ishizaki, 2002). 158 students from the 4th, 7th and 8th grade of Brazilian basic education participated in this study. The preliminary data show a prevalence of an expressionist conception of art (art as expression of feelings, emotions and thoughts); painting is the form of art more mentioned (52,5%) and Leonardo da Vinci the most known artist (43%). At this moment we are collecting data in a Portuguese sample. We intend to refine the data analysis to include comparisons between the three groups (4th, 7th and 8th graders) and compare the data gathered in Brazil and Portugal. We will discuss the findings reflecting on how different cultural and educational contexts can influence the construction of knowledge about art.