



Opinion

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# Consuming Information Versus Understanding, Deciding and Acting



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## Opinion

The child, or the animal (which some insist on calling irrational because they do not apprehend the subtlety of the processes, as is often the case in situations similar to the following example) who realizes that the object that attracted their attention did not cease to exist because it was hidden behind anything that stops him from seeing it, took a huge conceptual leap in the way he conceives the world in which he is integrated. The ability to extrapolate from some partial information to design the whole in a relatively correct and adjusted way is a manifestation of intelligence. An intelligence that is not the mere accumulation and / or unfolding of pre-established algorithms ("the right answer" to the "question asked", as so often done in teaching - which some confuse with education), but the ability to develop responses adjusted to circumstances (always particular, although they can be systematized in large groups), based on information that is never complete. Contrary to what some (people and institutions) thought (past, because although there are some living specimens, such beings have long since ceased to exist - following a consequent strategy defined by the classic expression: "seek to know more about less, until to know everything about nothing").

Artificial Intelligence already achieves surprising results, but still, almost always, at the expense of the "digestion" of massive doses of raw (or almost) information, which makes us think that the (competitive) man's role may now be to structure knowledge and information in an appropriate way, creating structural tools appropriate to the purposes in view (which, of course, also implies defining these purposes). A man who would become (conditional, therefore, given the still existing dominances) a mediator and manipulator of knowledge with which he builds coherences and elaborates conceptions, just as the child in the

example presented above does. Contrary to what it still is, that is, an accumulator and conservator of information, as shown by the different ways in which it is evaluated (in teaching, in professional careers, in the erudition shown that so often seeks to disguise the lack of culture, in the weight given in the image to camouflage the lack of content...). Therefore, it is not enough to have knowledge, or in its "raw material" form of information. It is necessary to generate "finished products", consumables efficient in the different uses that we can give them. And, as is done with the other raw materials (mineral, vegetable, etc.), restructure and give coherence to the different functions that have to be fulfilled in order to, in an efficient way, we insist, to have usable and useful "finished products" (two necessary conditions). What it means to think and make sense of a chain that goes from production to final consumption (and its effects), understanding the need for a functional and consistent global strategy. This means, for example, that the functions of Systematics (composed of Nomenclature: the meaning of terms and their meanings and signifiers, and Taxonomy: the classification of the treated phenomena) are fulfilled. See the importance for knowledge development of figures like Lineu, Mendeleev, Lavoisier, and so many others).

We live in times when, given the available means (at all levels), the ability to distinguish and select contributes more to a good performance than the possession of means and resources, that, today, in general, are easily accessible. The preponderance of culture (ability to relate) thus overlaps erudition (ability to expose vast knowledge).

Allow us just one (apparent) banality - "the whole is not the mere sum of the parts". The before mentioned child, extrapolating, conceives and builds worlds from the information he has, in a

knowledge that he will tend to test, experimenting, in order to correct and adjust not only the conclusions he draws and, which is not less important, he also seeks to learn from the mistakes made, refining the strategies used to think the world (a process that, we hope, he will run throughout his life, allowing him the pleasure of exploring, living, and not being a mere imitator of social fashions, which he would perform in second-hand). Moving from an actor (who follows a script presented to him) to an author (who interprets and builds) the change is profound and has enormous implications. Still at the level of the small example of the child mentioned, we stated above that the elaboration of global coherences that are successively being tested and tuned.

a) As epistemology indicates (not in its positivist form and privileging the limited/ local, and for that reason it was also called "logical empiricism", the rigor of the process overlapping the value of the conclusions), with authors such as Einstein, Popper, Kuhn, Ian Hacking, and many others who removed the sense of the absolute that defends authors but hindered pragmatism in applications, fostering useless knowledge (see, for example, Jean-François Revel);

b) As shown by the knowledge of the functionality of vision - which is an overlap of information from different sensors / stimuli that are then interpreted (which leads to paradoxes and visual illusions; and also, to their manipulation in painting, architecture, etc.);

c) As Margaret Donaldson shows us in the exploration and the study of multiple aspects of children's minds - which began in the 70s of the last century, today a classic of the theme with multiple followers in different areas of knowledge.

And the examples would not end, moreover in line with what Einstein defended (already at the beginning of the last century) about the importance of considering the triple relationship: phenomenon / signal / observer. Which leads to an exponential increase in perspectives as man is a direct part of the phenomenon. Considering the "production chain" that we have indicated above, it is essential that, in addition to local coherence, special attention is also given to global coherences (in the different globalities that can be considered) that start to constitute new test fields and, therefore, new visions, evaluations that help (with their criticism and appreciation) in the search and increase of the capacity to be precise and rigorous, a precious help to increase competitiveness, with the respective costs. This is the position we defend and with which, naturally, we look at our work, as we come to expose in relation to a globality consisting of a set of articles in which we have exposed some of our work.

### Analysis of the coherence of "a globality"

We have exposed in isolated articles (an imposition of the forms of editing) on closely related topics such as sport, health, education, leisure, and some of its implications. Now these

different activities of man (always the same man, of course) are difficult to relate because not only do they have different institutional frameworks, different evolutionary processes, different strategies and operating modes and... their own cultures. In a very succinct way we will say that sport (due to the results of competitions) and health (due to pain or malaise and, ultimately, death) are operational situations that are under constant scrutiny and the divergences between discourse (the theory) and the "praxis" become immediately evident. Leisure, on the other hand, if supported by efficient marketing actions (which are not limited, therefore, to mere advertising) or by fashion (or "fashions"), can present the most diverse forms and expressions, in which the objectives can only be achieved (which is not small) in the user's imagination. As for education, with results that often aim at goals that are only realized after two or three generations, it admits the most blatant of demagogies and ideological ramblings (with serious costs but disguised for a long time - unless there are ways of evaluating more efficient and realistic than those that exist today and, possibly, supported by a functionality of man in which it is possible to answer the question "how does man learn and why?")

In this way, sport, health, leisure and education, fields with very different institutional frameworks, although in terms of discourse they are closely linked, such as all of them using the tool sport as a mean of action, in an integration that has never really been done, which shows the weaknesses existing in the conceptual framework (see what we've mentioned above about Systematics, one of the least consolidated aspects in this problem).

A world of conflicts of conceptual frameworks that can be seen from a pessimistic point of view as an obstacle and a setback that must be avoided or, on the contrary, as the possibility of playing with a few more dimensions, such as adding the radio, or the radar, or even the satellite image, to visual contact for the navigator or the military in combat. It does not allow you to win, but it increases the chances of success because it increases efficiency in fulfilling the mission. In fact, the same is true on science, which in a pragmatic way is limited seeking to provide knowledge (which sooner or later will be useful - but still we have to consider at what cost, in order to be even pragmatic) that will allow us to reduce errors and / or opens up possibilities that would otherwise be ignored. [note: some, less pragmatic, try to make science a world of liturgies, a refuge for disabilities, or even incompetence (but a provider of "careers") ; or a vanity fair for those who cannot find better ways to "occupy time"]. We believe, however, that aggregating health, sport, education and leisure in the same "globality" can be useful because these activities of the same man have complementary functions and that even the conflicts generated highlight contradictions, levels of evolution and strategies that reveal dysfunctions otherwise difficult to identify. And that in addition to a common market (in a complementarity of different specialties, of course), it is possible

to have a conceptual framework in which the different necessary skills are contemplated so that a rupture, in the Kuhnian terms, can be claimed as we have just shown. We are, therefore, in line with the strategy followed by the child mentioned at the beginning of this article. What we now seek to illustrate, here in a still restricted framework (some articles), but where, we believe, it already shows that a global strategy can be expressed, not only conceptually but also to support an operational framework.

### Seven articles, a consistency

In [1] we argue that sport, if served by interpretive conceptual models with the necessary consistency, can be a powerful tool for working on the development of man. This is in a general framework in which the different functions (the arch image - the closing stone, the arch stones, the lateral support and the ground support) are structured in a coherent way and supported in their complementarities. It is a conflict with millions of years old but which today, with the powerful means (which increases the possibilities and advantages, but also the risks) that we have at our disposal, it is required not only greater "rigor" and "precision", but also coherences that provide better cohesion and more consistent management and intentionality with better orientations (when the speed of the vehicle increases the quality of the floor must improve and the driver must look further; or we must find helpers for the driver's function, and expand his capabilities).

"The causes, the motives, will naturally give rise to the consequences, the effects, which these causes have. It is basic. It is, therefore, about the causes that we must act to modify the consequences. It may seem trivial, but huge confusion revolves around this theme" in [2]. The amount that we ignore is not just in the space of the defined areas of knowledge. The interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary spaces are full of "holes" that must be covered in order to slide. Now the tendency is often to hide the holes so that they cannot be seen. What does not prevent us from falling into them, quite the contrary we are no longer able to avoid them. We increase the risk; we don't lessen the consequences. And the coordination of the different functional areas that we certainly must define, organize and manage cannot be overlooked or even, as is often, rejected. "The frame of reference (framework) must be seen not only in the spatial limits (the frame) in which it is 'framed' but also in the boundaries treated within it, the image (the picture). The dimensions used in the observation of the phenomenon Man also influence how we can understand and explain this phenomenon..." in [3]. "The new possibilities that we are offered allow us to go far beyond what we would have been able to do even a few years ago. It's a whole world that presents itself, a different world, a new world" ... But "things don't fall from the sky". In addition to working (some still only want jobs), it is necessary to produce. However, productivity does not depend solely on good will. It is necessary to organize and create the necessary / possible structures. You have to have the imagination...

and the desire to create the new, leaving the "out of date" routines, letting "the machines" do the work they already are able to do, but, perhaps above all, having the fun and pleasure of taking risks and the humility of trying new paths. But how?

"The interpretation of phenomena, any phenomenon, depends on the used framework of reference" in [4]. Many of the concepts and ways of acting that we still use today were built in a different frame and context than the one we live in today, which is certainly different from what we will face tomorrow. Tomorrow, not to say, tonight. The conception of man must change too. It no longer corresponds to the knowledge we have today and to the needs to which we must respond, such as in education, leisure, health, sport. It is no wonder that most of the concepts and ways of acting we have now are out of date and that their use is not only inefficient, but also a risk factor.

Within their term of use they may even have been very useful and have provided great services. It is more of a danger to avoid, being overshadowed by the advantages they offered and not realizing the changes that have taken place could have changed everything. Or to do precisely the opposite, to change everything fearing the past and because something new has appeared and is in fashion.

We live in challenging times. But a challenge is the basis of any sport. Sport can be (is) a unifying tool in fields such as health, leisure, education, creating an integrated performance space in which the functions that these different areas seek to perform start to work in a coordinated way and structured in such a way as to be complementary and not conflictual (but naturally competing, since the competition is healthy). "The efficiency with which any work / production can be made depends on the available tools (material or conceptual). This does not mean that 'the master' (in the sense of a specialist, an expert, in a current framework of reference - and not of 'craftsman' with quality in an empirical framework) can blame the instruments for the lack of quality of his work / production. But without quality instruments the cost (in time, effort, energy, etc.) of the achievement is undoubtedly higher." So, as we've mentioned in [5]: "We should seek to improve the processes (processes are tools) we use regarding three consequences:

- a) Increase the quality of the product (the activity and its domain);
- b) Increase safety and efficiency of services.
- c) Increase the quality and, consequently, the recognition and prestige of the professionals responsible for its orientation and management."

Reviewing and restructuring the frames that we use, as well as their components, partitions and respective overlays is essential. We leave some pointers on how to do it in relation to sport and

health. "Currently, the problem is no longer measuring, not even measuring with precision (and evidently rigor), but also with the necessary (costs are important) precision and objectivity..." in [6]. Sport seen in the light of existing capabilities is no longer, at the level of explanation and understanding of the phenomenon, a set of generalities supported by the work of millions of extremely dedicated people who have been empirically looking for solutions and trying ways to solve problems that they did not always have identified the contents and issues involved.

The use of knowledge from study areas of similar phenomena did not always satisfy the needs for efficiency that exceeded the costs and risks incurred by those who, through practice, sought to overcome difficulties and achieve results that had guessed advantages and possibilities, but who had not always formalized the issues that were at its base, nor the effects that could be obtained, perhaps with less sacrifices and risks. "The perception, understanding and explanation of a phenomenon can be changed by measuring relevant indicators for some of its variables." This statement seems a banality. But it is not. - In "Concretizing Minimum Times In Sport and Health" (in press). Measuring in a conscious and deliberate way requires knowing what to measure, how to measure and why to measure, that is, to have an intentionality and hypotheses / explanatory models of our understanding of the phenomenon. We thus become aware of the

conjectures we want to build or refute, thus producing science. We exemplify in this way what we advocated at the beginning of this article with the child example: the need to make conceptual leaps in the way in which to conceive the world in which we are integrated, responding to challenges that more than can be expressed, is felt and assumed. We believe we have opened the doors to a path that will be worth taking.

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