

The celebration of luxury on the covers of school notebooks

A celebração do luxo nas capas de cadernos escolares

La celebración de lujo en las capas de cuadernos escolares

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Abstract *This study analyzes how the segment of school products has adopted the theme of luxury consumption in the universes of fashion and technology. To do so, the research uses the notebook covers of the collections Turma da Lala and Pop Fashion from Credeal as its body of study. The understanding reach, therefore, is that the covers are part of a complex plot set up on the industries of toys, school supplies, and communication that calls the teenager to use the notebook not for its pragmatic use.*

Keywords: *Consumption; Luxury; School notebook; Semiotics.*

Resumo *O estudo em questão analisa como o segmento de produtos escolares tem se apropriado da temática do consumo de luxo, nos universos da moda e da tecnologia. Para isso, a pesquisa tem como corpus as capas de caderno das coleções Turma da Lala e Pop Fashion, da Credeal. Compreendemos, então, as capas como integrantes de uma trama complexa, que aproxima indústrias de*

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brinquedos, material escolar, comunicação, e interpela a adolescente a fruir o caderno não pelo seu uso pragmático.

Palavras-chaves: *Consumo; Luxo; Caderno escolar; Semiótica.*

Resumen *El estudio analiza como el artejo de productos escolares se ha apropiado del tema de los consumidores de lujo, en el mundo de la moda y de la tecnología. La investigación tiene como contenido las capas de cuaderno de las colecciones “Turma da Lala” y “Pop Fashion”, de la firma Credeal. Entendemos las capas en el medio de una compleja trama, que se acerca de las industrias de juguetes, útiles escolares, comunicación y interpela al adolescente a disfrutar del cuaderno no por su uso pragmático.*

Palabras-clave: *Consumo; Lujo; Cuaderno escolar; Semiótica.*

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Introduction

This article has the objective to analyze how the segment of school products has taken on the theme of luxury consumption, especially when it has to do with fashion and technology. The body of study is the covers of the notebooks Turma da Lala and Pop Fashion from the company Credeal.

A return to the etymological origins of the notion of luxury or a look into Western history will show that some defined luxury as light, as something that illuminates or brings shine. “From the Latin word *luxus* or *luxu*, which meant excess in general or even indulgence of the senses, the word luxury also holds a familiarity with the notion of luxury: exuberance, wealth, voluptuous life” (OLIVEIRA, 2010, p. 40). The author discusses the difficulties of conceptualizing the term luxury, taking into consideration the meanings attributed to the word in the past and in the present, “since the possibilities of analysis are multiple as are the views about it” (OLIVEIRA, 2010, p. 41). Therefore, the suggestion is that luxury be understood in its dynamic, in full movement, as a heterogeneous concept and that has a relative nature.

We know that in the history of mankind, in every specific age, societies legitimized and gave new significance to the many different forms of the elements of luxury, technological artifacts, and symbols of power. Allerés (cited by OLIVEIRA, 2010, p. 70) says that the appearance of modern luxury occurred in the eighteenth century “with the emergence of a bourgeoisie concerned about imitating the uses of aristocracy.”

The technical development brought by the industrial evolution in the seventeenth century caused modern luxury to emerge. From there, the personal satisfaction of the individual took on its sensual dimension in contrast to the social differentiation instrument. With the arrival of the twentieth century, a new superior class becomes socially and economically important due to their professional activities. “Often cultivated, it selects uses and acquisitions due to its deep desire for a ‘lifestyle’ in accordance with its desires of personal satisfaction and of belonging to a social clan, synthesis of a personal history, of aspirations and dreams, fantasies” (ALLERÉS, cited by OLIVEIRA, p. 70).

However, even if the relationship between luxury and the rise of the bourgeoisie is identified as a predominant factor of its expansion, the concept of luxury continues to be transformed and gain in complexity with the other social changes. Their meanings are marked in the history of Western society since the time when it was the privilege of few and of the highest social classes, passing through the emergence of the market economy and the production of goods in the formation of mass culture and of the means of communication and what is today called a consumer society. Historically, according to Rocha and Pereira (2009, p.73), it is “[...] in the last year of the nineteenth century that a vision of consumption begins to be built by the cultural and social perspective.”

In this sense we are interested in understanding how currently luxury consumption has been appropriated by a segment that, although not belonging to what you might call a luxury item—the segment of school products—it begins to use year after year strategies that approach it, especially in the discursive construction of the notebook covers.

The following items have been especially taken into consideration as support for analyzing notebook covers: a) a group of authors that were part of the publication of Intercom 2010, bringing together research on youth, culture, new communication technologies, consumption, and education; b) the discussions of Lipovetsky (2007), Rocha, and Pereira (2009, 2010) on the constitution of luxury; and c) the theoretical and methodological reference of discursive semiotics.

Since 1960, the discursive semiotics has been solidifying in the theoretical, methodological, and analytical propositions of modes of construction and apprehension of the meaning by the subjects. Its proposition is to be dedicated to the study of the text in order to understand “[...] what it says and what it does to say what it says” (BARROS, 2011, p.7).

By text, semiotics means any finished product endowed with meaning, be it verbal or nonverbal. A notebook cover is therefore a plastic text that can be analyzed with the apparatus of plastic semiotics. Understanding the plastic text as visual language, as other languages it is

biplanar, which means that it is made up of an expression plane and a content plane.

To address the visual language, the plastic semiotics proposed by GREIMAS (2004), FLOCH (2004), and OLIVEIRA (2004) presents a methodology that considers the compound expression plane composed of four formants: the chromatic, which refers to the color; the eidetic, related to the form; the material, which gives embodiment to the two formants commented, since the first dimensions listed are related to the material; and finally the topological, which brings together the presentation of the three formants based on the distribution and the position they occupy in a given space. It is possible that each of these categories will lead us to one or more units—depending on how they are used—of the content plane (Oliveira, 2004).

Turma da Lala

On Credeal's website, the company presents the Turma da Lala notebooks: "The Turma da Lala girl is always super connected with her friends. By mobile phone and social networks, she is part of the digital generation" (TURMA, accessed on July 26, 2013).

According to the semiotic theory (2011), the description is the first step in observing the details of a text. The richness of the description allows us to analyze each specific element and make the relationships between the terms of the text in order to reach the entire meaning. On the notebook covers observed, we have the image and verbal figurative elements and the plastic elements that organize all of the text.

We can see that the verbal text and the articulated visual text complement each other. The figures of the Turma da Lala notebooks introduce girls between 9 and 12 years old: three are white with short black hair, blond hair, and long brown hair. And there is one dark-skinned girl with long brown hair. What changes is the color of the eyes, but the physical traits of the face and hair type are the same. They have adornments such as a pendant with the initial "L", bracelets, earrings, lace, a ring, and other items of adornment for hair. They use make-up, sometimes with

lipstick, sometimes with lipstick and blush. They have pink and blue colored hair strands.



Figure 1. Turma da Lala
Source: Turma (accessed on July 26, 2013)

The female figures, because they have big eyes, hair with sharp and colorful lines, among other characteristics, end up resembling the aesthetics of manga and anime, which is the name given to the Japanese cartoons that are circulating widely in the media and therefore known by the teenage audience.

Also taking up space on the notebook cover we have technological devices such as an iPad, iPod, laptop, and cell phone. Other figures make up this discursive construction and the figures present in it such as hearts, balloons, stars, pencils, musical notes, magnifying glass, and flowers. The technology items are of the brand Turma da Lala. The character Nina, for example, wears a pendant with the letter “L”, stressing that she is part of the gang. These strategies value the Turma da Lala collection, which uses a little star as an element of its brand and that is spread throughout the spatiality of the notebook cover. The composition

of these images sets the figure of a universe of young girls in which the happiness that adorn the faces is connected to technology, beauty, music, denoting that with these modal objects—which are objects of consumption—conversation, fun, and connectivity are made possible and, why not, imply in success.

In the verbal field, giving support to the theme of consumption, we have the introduction of the name of the girls, which are mixtures of a Portuguese first name and a last name in English: Bia online for you; Lala love in the internet; Nina favorite playlist—but the emphasis lies in the phrase displayed on the iPod: Let's have fun; Tati always connected friends.

The names, which are actually nicknames, reinforce the strategy of getting closer to the girls who are potential buyers of the notebooks. The cursive writing of the names is also an approach strategy as it is a personal brand. The use of technological terms in English serves as a surname of their identities.

The image of a pencil “My first letters” in the upper left-hand corner of the notebook is decontextualized in both form and content from its proposal since little is shown of “first letters”. Despite the name “My first letters” refers to children, as shown in the other image and verbal elements, the first letters of these receivers are minimal and mostly in English.

While we know that today young people also live with the traditional media, on the covers there is only the possibility of the virtual media, hence an erasure of written language and of other modes of communication such as the actual printed medium by which the cover of the notebook is presented.

It should also be pointed out that the plastic elements on the expression plane, corroborate to strengthen the girl's universe and the celebration of technology. The presentation of the name “online” brings the plastic of pixels. The colors pink and purple predominate, pairing with the female universe. They also contribute to an aesthetic of excess since two mechanisms can be noticed: the background elements

with more saturated colors and the foreground with more vivid colors. Topologically highlighted by using the foreground are the figures of the Turma da Lala girls. However, sharing the space with a strong highlight is technological equipment. The eidetic composition of the female figures confirms the verticality of the support itself, the notebook, and also the components such as rectangles, stellar shapes, and balloons at the background of the figures creating scenarios to demonstrate interaction with technology. We can notice this feature on the verticality of the bodies of the girls and on the arrangement of elements, one below the other (example: heart, Lala, Love; in the verticality of the pencil; in the verticality of technological devices). This sequence of verticality, from the top down, reiterated by the composition and direction of the plastic elements present in it, has a direction indicating the technological devices. As to the form of all the elements, the rounded shape is the prevailing one. And for the materiality of the notebooks, using glossy materials gives prominence to them.

The senses

With these descriptions one can notice that the Turma da Lala girls are contemporary girls, digital native and happy with the relationship they have with technology, which is shown not only by their functional and pragmatic use, but as an extension of their bodies, of their identities. The girls shown here do not use technology because of its function, but to show what they own; to show off the devices. So what is being promoted here by Turma da Lala is not the use itself of technology, but as a condition of ostentation to be noticed. This stance deviates from the pragmatic logic of use and gets into the field of symbolic values of belonging. This is very clear in the notebook cover of “Lala Love in the internet” when the girl has her arms on the laptop, which is only a prop of support that actually in a figurative and discursive way forms the base that sustains her.

The discourse produced in these notebooks presents in a clear way what Santos (2010) calls virtual neo-tribalism. The idea of the tribe can

be seen in the name themselves of the Turma da Lala notebooks. In a way, the Portuguese term *turma*, not only reinforces the notion of tribe, but it also indicates the idea of a group of classmates. According to the author, the tribes differ

[...] by their affinities and survival needs, thus building a cultural identity. The punks, the ravers, the goths, the valley girls [...] no matter what the affinity is, deep down there is the need for survival and social distinction, even if it is fleeting (SANTOS, 2010, p. 75).

It can also be noted on the notebook covers analyzed that the Turma da Lala children of the first letters need to have this knowledge that is already built in from birth: the new technologies, knowing English, and non-linear thinking.

Another point discussed by the author based on Levy is that the spaces experienced by the virtual tribes are multiple and provide simultaneous experiences. And for Maffesoli (cited by SANTOS, 2010, p.75), emotional bonds are “[...] essential conditions of existence and formation of the tribes.” Moreover, the spaces shared by the tribes are spaces of sociality, and is “understood as a momentary state in the social life of a group defined by a feeling wellness and by the self-recognition as a group of relatives” (MAFFESOLI, cited by SANTOS, 2010, p.76).

The center of communication is no longer its operative and functional value. [...] Communication is not necessarily initiated to say something or to express content. [...] The being-together of the tribes is a key concept for understanding forms of communication in post-modernity. In this way, the new media is a key element to be considered in the communication action, which should be rethought as a space of sociality, [...] in which pleasure, emotion, and affection are the ties that bind and give meaning to the social existence (MACHADO, cited by SANTOS, 2010, p.85).

As we approach these premises to our object of analysis we also realize the existence of these ties of affection on the notebook covers through the heart figures, the availability to chat with friends, and the way that the girls embrace or lean on the technology devices. They come across

as friends, as an extension of their bodies, as a possibility of never being alone. Being connected is a guarantee of making contact at any time with one another. Interestingly, because the figures of the notebooks show these girls alone, surrounded only by technology, the possibility of contact celebrated is only virtual, the pure possibility at some point to come to be together face-to-face.

We notice too in the discursive proposal of the covers of these notebooks what Everardo Rocha and Claudia Pereira (2010) call the “self-absorbed state” of people. The authors challenge us to watch people walking on busy sidewalks or streets and notice how they are concentrated on their smartphones, iPods, etc., causing their looks and steps to be oblivious to the world around them.

According to Rocha and Pereira (2010, p. 382), technological devices, “[...] beyond their implicit utilitarian quality of exchanging information, [...] provide another symbolic quality that permeates the ideas of connectivity and sociability.” These devices are symbolic assets that synthesize “[...] in an exemplary manner the distinctive values in a consumer society that, as such, is based on inequality, differentiation, but that also establishes a very particular logic that includes, excludes, and classifies people and things” (ROCHA; PEREIRA, 2010, p. 382-383).

They also talk about the idea of being young in this contemporary world and show how the discursive constructions of advertising associate a youth image not with the juvenile universe, but also with adults and the elderly in order to sell electronics, hotels, health insurance, mobile operators, cars, and many others.

The very skills and logic of the youth universe such as speed and the ability to do several activities at the same time should also be pointed out. “The linear text expands to hypertext. [...] It is as if the fragmented world of modernity also stopped to be described linearly to be perceived as a hypertext” (ROCHA; PEREIRA, 2010, p.388).

The research of Rocha and Pereira points to six core values present in the constitution of young people: “fragmentation, ambivalence, affection, authenticity, gregariousness, and questioning”. These values were

also found in the discursive composition of the “Turma da Lala” notebook covers.

As to the **fragmentation**, it is revealed in the loose and non-linear way that the figures are arranged in the notebooks. The plastic and figurative elements are together enabling and enhancing the same space, which is characteristic of a hypertext aesthetics. So this is life in contemporary times, the ubiquity afforded by technology extrapolated the concept of time-space. With electronic devices we can be within the school’s physical space, but we can also from inside the classroom operate appliances that take us to other places and conversations.

As for the **ambivalence**, we know that young people are constantly expected to act as young people, but also as adults; to enjoy their free time, but also be productive; of having fun, but also to study. However, in the Turma da Lala notebooks, we have only the establishment of free time and fun, contradicting the very pragmatic function of the notebook that should by itself call for the notion of time to study.

Regarding **affection**, there are several elements that relate to this state: the heart, the little flower, friendship, predisposition to be “always connected” to satisfy the other relationship, and ready to listen.

The **authenticity** is made clear by showing the ways of being, the front look of the girls who do not hide their preferences and lifestyles, posing happily with the testimony of their names and surnames.

The **gregariousness** encompasses the entire notion of tribe, of being together, sociability, notions explained above and that are reinforced by introducing the term “turma” (group of friends) in the collection.

Interestingly, the notion of **questioning** was not observed in these notebook covers. Is a critical spirit missing in these young people? That said, we understand that it is up to the school to promote the following questions: who has an interest in the aesthetics of fragmentation of tastes and information? Who has an interest in the difficulty to unify information? Who has an interest in promoting the subject “always connected” and “online for you” if, despite being always connected, has difficulty in making connections and cohesions? Who has an interest in building a

subject off-center, without memory? In this sense, it is up to the school to reflect critically, promote the pedagogy of the media and new media, and recover what has been lost and forgotten in the lines, between the lines, images, and in the sounds of the so greatly celebrated hypertext.

Lastly, we go back to the way technology occupies a central role on the covers of the Turma da Lala notebooks. On this point, Rocha and Pereira (2010), when comparing the behaviors of the different groups (higher class and lower class) in their relations with technological equipment, they found that luxury can be understood in different ways. For the upper-class groups, distinction and luxury are the present and the innovation that the devices can provide, not necessarily the price. As for the lower class groups, it means to be able to connect and expand their gregarious potential of being able to be a part of a group, or “to be present in the democratized world by information is to ensure sociability” (ROCHA; PEREIRA, 2010, p. 400).

For the authors,

[...] the gadgets put themselves beyond the operability and their practical use. [...] In fact, their true operation is found in the transmission of status. The prestige of the gadgets among young people stems from a greater access to technology that amplifies the potential for sociability. [...] The symbolic logic of youth in the contemporary context regarding consumption is to make use of technology with sociability as a reference center (ROCHA; PEREIRA, 2010, p. 401).

In addition, the multi-functionality and speed afforded by the technology, with presentation of information, images, and links, have the temporality desired by young people who are eager, want dynamic things, want to do everything at once, and inhabit spaces in a ubiquitous manner. This is what is shown in the Turma da Lala Collection. The purpose of the notebook, as a space of here, is to write and also to connect with the spaces of there, of elsewhere. The notebook can be compared to the technological devices as it seems to be a mediator between the school and other worlds, not necessarily educational.

Pop Fashion

The company Credeal, on its website, presents the Pop Fashion line of notebooks:

The Pop Fashion Collection is already a reference for the girls that are tuned in and connected. It continues to make great success with its looks and links with the largest urban centers of fashion, shopping, and consumption in malls and stores in big cities. They follow it, become fans, and add it to their favorites (POP, access on July 26, 2013).



Figure 2. Pop Fashion

Source: Pop (accessed on July 26, 2013)

In order to approach the universe of interest, we started with the description of the four notebook covers of the Pop Fashion Collection.

The set of procedures taken were also followed in order to study the Turma da Lala notebooks.

When the notebooks are placed side-by-side, we can notice that each cover shows a teenager with a given profile. The first profile found is of a white-skinned teenager with long blond hair. Another profile is a white-skinned teenager, short blond hair, light eyes. There is also a dark-skinned girl with long brown hair and light eyes. The other one has brown skin and long black hair. They have the same physical trait: slender body, slim, with sharp curves, and straight hair. They use made-up, sometimes with blush, lipstick, have marked eyes, and their fingernails have a polish with various shades of red.

In each cover, there are certain prominent figures. One of the strategies to highlight the figures is the number of times they are repeated. We have a cover full of figures belonging to the world of makeup such as pots of various shapes, sizes, and colors. One simulates the space of a closet or shop that on the one side brings footwear and accessories and on the other, dresses and blazers. The other cover, similar to the previous one, simulates a closet or store, but the distribution of products (shoes and handbags) is different. The other one shows jewels to adorn the background where the teenager is drawn.

When we visualize the covers together we get the feeling of walking through a mall or going through a hallway filled with shops. We walk into a makeup store; next we are looking at clothing, footwear, and accessories; followed by another store that offers footwear and accessories, and finally we come to a jewelry store.

The covers also come with mirrors, displays, hangers, lamps, armchair, and a neon sign. Many of them appear on more than one cover and this way leave even more explicit the universe to which they relate.

Thus, from a figurative universe made up of so many female consumer goods, the modal object to reach beauty, luxury, and still allow to be fashionable, are these articles present on the cover. What is highlighted is vanity, sophistication, and an abundance on the theme of consumption.

Regarding the expression plan, starting with the chromatic, pink permeates all compositions, bringing through the symbolism of color the female universe. The girls wear clothes in the colors of black and white; brown, blue, and black; black and beige; light blue. The environments of the stores, however, are sometimes greenish, sometimes pink, sometimes blue and red, sometimes purple and lilac. By analyzing the colors present on the female figures and those exposed in the environments, we found that the wealth of colors lies mainly in another axis: the consumable items. So this is the contrast: lack of color vs. explosion of color, which marks the relevance of consumer items in contemporary society. They color not only the environments, but the subjects present there. The exception that is found is in the jewelry store where there is less color variation, greater predominance of white and lighter colors, such as the pink lining the wall that is a backdrop for the gray busts used for showing the collars.

As for the distribution of the elements in the space of the covers, which is the topological category, at the foreground there is a sort of bar accompanied by the plate where it is written “Pop Fashion” and the brand of the notebook manufacturer “Credeal”. The plate’s position is in the foreground, with a gradient that gives the idea of lighting, showing us that it has to do with a store window. In the front are the signs that identify the shops, and especially the profile of the consumers expected. They will also identify, in the future, the subjects who will purchase these notebooks. It should be pointed out once again that the identification is done in English with the terms “Pop Fashion”, which is a public selection strategy since it requires knowledge of this foreign language, though minimal. The expression can denote both the pop fashion itself, as well as those who use the products of this fashion and thus gain visibility and become popular.

In the background, the female figures are accompanied by mirrors, displays, and consumer items such as makeup, shoes, clothes, and jewelry. There is a detailed organization of the products in the stores distributed sometimes as circling the teen, sometimes on both sides, and

sometimes on one side and in the background. In the background there is also a mirror and shelves. With all of this, the covers make an atmosphere of consumption evident.

Also regarding the topological, the female figures occupy predominantly the center position in the images, even if their body is facing a mirror to the side, or is slightly to one side admiring a jewel, or with legs slightly to the left trying on a shoe, or especially on a pink carpet, taking up indeed the center as if on a fashion parade. To reiterate a spatiality that resembles a scene of a consumption environment, a store, the use of perspective gives depth and highlights the female figure.

In relation to the eidetic formant, the curves and the rounded shapes reside in female bodies and give them sensuality. Other than that, the drawings are in the shapes of the products. On the other hand, the straight lines are present to enhance the depth of the spaces, as already mentioned. Verticality is marked in the compositions, especially in terms of the female characters. Lines and light fixtures are also used to mark this verticality, which reinforces the lanky, overly thin body. The slim body, but with curves and volumes, gives the value that this particular type of body has today. It is a flexible body, seductive, accepted, desired, and desirable. The straight lines of the shelves evoke the idea of flawless organization of the consumer items and a concern for an environment set up for sales.

Bringing all these clues together causes us all the more to go down the path of the senses that today make up the covers of notebooks.

The Senses

The path to describing the covers leads us to delve into the universe of the senses from three perspectives: a) the subjects who are on the covers: adolescents, b) the space they inhabit: the shopping mall, c) the action they perform: consumption of luxury.

Who are these adolescents? Do we not know them from elsewhere? Have we not seen them before? This long, straight blond hair, light skin, thin, lanky body with large breasts and buttocks, tiny waists?



Figure 3. Barbie Fashion Mosaic / Totally Spies / Pop Fashion

Source: production of the authors

As a child, what girl was not given a Barbie doll? Certainly she was or is the oldest friend, tuned in with fashion, owner of a vast wardrobe always under renovation with a sculptural body and elegant posture. This body and the attributes related to it are for Oliveira (accessed on July 15, 2013), a powerful object of value, “[...] one whose possession is the ultimate goal of a subject” (FIORIN, 2011a, p. 37).

Barbie, just as the figures on the notebook covers, likes the shopping mall atmosphere and has fashion as one of her favorite subjects, so much so that “Barbie Fashionist” was launched. Any resemblance therefore among Pop Fashion adolescents and Barbie is far from coincidental.

The American cartoon *Totally Spies* has as protagonists three teenagers, spies, living in Beverly Hills. Their slim, thin bodies with accentuated curves resemble the Barbie look and, as we analyze the profile of the spies and *Pop Fashion*, there is another similarity: the trait of the Japanese anime.

Besides this aesthetic, the shopping environment is also common to both the spies and *Pop Fashion*. In contrast, the non-place of the two groups of adolescents is school. The theme of consumption also involves these adolescents. In the case of *Totally Spies*,

Consumer goods in the figure of contact lenses, mirrors, umbrellas, belts, lipstick, bags, etc. are the modal objects of the plot that will help ordinary girls to turn into heroines. This question seems central because the

enunciator, when defining the figure of consumer products (lipsticks, mirrors, purses, boots, etc.) with functions other than the usual ones, presents them as products that are worth much more than their appearance; they are 'friend' products that save them from complicated situations: consumer goods are there to transform them and to save them! (PIROLA, 2006, p. 97-98).

Barbie, the Totally Spies, and Pop Fashion lead us to consider that one discourse is impregnated with the other. Fiorin (2011b, p. 32) comments: "The interdiscursivity is the process in which they incorporate thematic paths and/or figurative routes, themes and/or figures of a discourse inside another." Thus, the discourses that emphasize the body, vanity, consumption, fashion, and luxury come to us from various texts: a doll, a cartoon, notebook covers, among others. This plot is revealed, however in a very complex way with threads that meet and form an intricacy in such a way that different fields—toys industries, school supplies, communication—call out to the contemporary adolescent.

So, returning to teenagers who burst out from the covers of Pop Fashion notebooks. They live in the present, are vain, wear makeup, parade lean and voluptuous bodies and revel in consumer environments.

Going back to the research of Rocha and Pereira (2009) about young people, it points to a set of values outlined in the covers studied. We will focus on three: ambivalence, authenticity, and gregariousness because they seem to be the most powerful in the analysis.

The notion of **ambivalence** can be noticed because we have teenagers with the power of consumption in situations of consumption, however, is this power the result of their own work or of their parents? Two faces coexist: the power of consumption vs. financial dependence, so in the first position they would be adults, in the second, children.

As to **authenticity**, the characters use consumable items to be authentic and display this by showing themselves with lipstick in hand, in front of the mirror; sitting surrounded by various pairs of shoes, thus making explicit their attitude. The composition of the covers also points

as to one of the strategies to achieve authenticity is to have in hands the Pop Fashion notebooks.

In the Brazilian context, the luxury items and services most sold are fashion; beverages; watches & jewelry; cosmetic, and hotels (EXAME cited by ROCHA; PEREIRA, 2009). From this, when discussing where the Pop Fashion adolescents meet, we can notice that two of them are in fashion stores—clothes, shoes, and accessories, sophisticated spaces with elaborate decoration as can be seen due to the combination of wallpapers, lighting, mirrors, for example. One is in a makeup store and another in a jewelry store, both environments also exquisite. In short: luxury consumption is outright declared on the covers.

Lipovetsky (2007) points out a metamorphosis in the relationship with luxury with the softening of the criticism turned against the excesses of luxury. “Everything is shown as if the luxury had lost its ability to cause resentment, open hostility, a desire to strip the rich” (LIPOVETSKY, 2007, p. 327). Amid this ambience, there is a slip in the understanding of luxury so that we are in full “[...] time of legitimacy and of mass democratization of the desires of luxury [...]. In our society of hyper-consumerism, it is no longer about combating privileges by taking assets from the rich as much as it is to have access to them with the purpose of private emotional joys” (LIPOVETSKY, 2007, p. 328).

It is also of our interest to go down the path of understanding luxury with the intention of particular, personal, intimate enjoyment. According to Lipovetsky (2007, p. 327), it has to do with “Living the luxury for yourself instead of displaying it.” The great driver, therefore, is the “[...] satisfaction that [it, the luxury] provides (a sense of eternity in a world given over to the transience of things), and not because it lets you show off status” (Charles, 2007 p. 26).

The four “Pop Fashion” adolescents, alone, on each of the notebook covers, experience this moment of pleasure: they smile and show happiness in the company of items of consumption. The mall is the privileged place where the action takes place and that is where the tribe meets—Barbie, the Spies, the Pop Fashion. The covers therefore touch on the

concept of **gregariousness** because they bring the longing to be part of a tribe.

Sarlo (2006) argues that the malls around the world have a similar look. This knowledge of what is a mall, the brands present there, their organization, generates comfort and safety to the subject, making it a space that is not foreign, a familiar territory. So to bring in the world of the shopping malls on the cover is to highlight familiar territory. This relationship with the mall and with the consumption ambience is so intense that in the documentary “The Child, the Soul of the Business” (2008), reveal that children would like to live in shopping malls. Could it be then that the cover makes it possible for the teenager to carry a picture of its world?

Final Considerations

According to Baccega (2010), the communication and education fields are privileged locus of the formation of social senses. For us, inseparable fields, since education and communication, whether in formal or non-formal contexts, participate in building the forms of sociability of the subjects. These are pregnant with discourses, concepts, and values that, in turn, feed again the practices experienced.

The intersections approaching the Barbie doll, the Totally Spies cartoon, the Pop Fashion notebooks reveal the power and intensity of the discourses that they have in common. They are highlighted, just as in the discourses, and in various ways surround the adolescent. They circulate with such intensity that there is great possibility of contributing to sediment vanity and to the point of making consumption, luxury, and fashion something natural.

It is no wonder that this intersecting goes further. Is not Turma da Lala a preparation for the adolescent to become part of another tribe, becoming Pop Fashion in the future? The consumption and mastery of technology, the presentation of these items with enthusiasm, with a vital function in the context in which they are, as part that defines identity,

can cause the girl to keep her interest over the years in luxury consumption with variations that lead her to the world of Pop Fashion.

Baccega (2010, p. 444) describes consumption as a pillar of our contemporary times and warns that its knowledge is indispensable since consumption is directly related to

[...] communication through the discourse of ads, media, word of mouth, the promotion of the material goods/symbols produced, etc. with education, formal or not, because that is where expertise on the subject can be built so as to form citizens that relate reflexively with it.

On the other hand, Costa (2010) reminds us that one of the educational efforts of today is to not interpret the phenomena of mass culture and the internet only for what becomes materialized in its contents, but one also has to observe the dynamics itself of this industry that is sustained by the intensity of the flow of information. According to the author, “the profusion of images, each seeking to be more spectacular, leads to oblivion. A society without memory results in the disconnection between information and experience, and as a consequence also the overexcitement of images” (COSTA, 2010, p. 365). In light of this, he defends education for the media, which “presupposes permanent exercise of deciphering the codes of language and the study of the functioning of media supports whose purpose is to change the state of desensitization and of tolerance with symbolic violence” (COSTA, 2010, p. 365).

If we carry on about this intersecting that makes discourses to circulate so strongly with adolescents and if we consider even the hypothesis of naturalization, of sedimenting these discourses, it makes it urgent to think about strategies that can cause estrangement. One possible way is opened by the education of the sensitive, as presented by Greimas (2002) in his book *Of Imperfection*. Oliveira (2002) emphasizes that the value of this dimension is an important contribution of the study. He also highlights that Greimas brings a new dimension to aesthetics by bringing it to everyday life, which is now considered a space necessary for building the sensitive.

Education therefore has a central place since it can promote the encounter with these various objects. A powerful encounter capable of favoring the denaturalization of the look and thus allow the object to recover its depth. Education can bring contributions through investments that allow the apprehension of the world, and also of ourselves, and to broaden the understanding of the objects that surround us.

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