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Mass Bricolage as a Source of Alternative Education

(Towards the Sociology of Education)

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Abstract: The Czech multimedia institution *Receptář* (The Book of Prescriptions) consists of several components: a TV programme (weekly), a journal (monthly), radio broadcasting (weekly), a club, a foundation, special events entitled days of *The Book of Prescriptions*, various get-togethers *etc.* In this form *The Book of Prescriptions* represents a remarkable sociocultural phenomenon whose main goal is to mediate an exchange of ideas, projects or know-how. The basic principle of *The Book of Prescriptions'* activities is *bricolage* – the concept/problem analysed by two great theoreticians: C. Lévi-Strauss and J. Derrida. With the aid of technology (TV, PC, *etc.*) *The Book of Prescriptions* changes *bricolage* into *mass bricolage*, an interesting feature of postmodern alternative non-formal education. Thus *The Book of Prescriptions* functions as a new type of educational institution and, as such, is a worthy subject of the sociology of education which searches for new alternatives of adult education.

1. Marginalised education as an alternative education

Marginalised structures of meaning are obviously distributed *marginally*, in no way by a dominant mass medium or a grouping of mass media. Marginalised ways of *education* are (obviously) distributed in the same way – *i.e.* marginally, in no way by a dominant mass medium or a grouping of mass media. However, a certain paradox has existed in reality: the awakening of intended meaning structures, their disclosure, publication and distribution is actually dealt with by a grouping of mass media, the media that are a distributor of the very opposite cultural codes of today, namely stereotypes of the mainstream of mass culture. Thus, a multimedia institution in relation to marginal coding and education is not a speculative fabrication but a Czech reality which has brought a marginalised project into life.

In the Czech Republic there operates a multimedia stimulator, moderator and distributor of (originally) hidden/unused and marginal educational codes; these cultural codes represent a typical product of alternative education; the activity of this multimedia institution means the implementation of a certain educational strategy; this educational strategy represents an alternative education strategy and it is developed on principles different from the those of the official educational strategy. This research, carried out two years ago, thus disclosed a universally applicable model of a highly democratic process of exchange of (originally) *marginal* ideas, knowledge, values and educational relationships, a model built on *modern* technologies and procedures but involving features of education, phenomena of a post-industrial and *postmodern* type.

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The multimedia institution called *Receptář* (*The Book of Prescriptions*) was the *subject* of this research. The *objects* of the research were concrete texts that came into existence within the framework of the implementation of this educational project. For several years this has resulted in continued stratified *bricolage*[1] which has been realised on the theme of a given educational strategy. The sense and objective of this *bricolage* is the disclosure of marginalised or hidden or unused (alternative) cultural codes, the distribution of which activates people (individuals as well as communities) through the mass media (*Receptář*) and mobilises major or minor human resources.

The connection of the *mass media* with *bricolage* gives rise to a new educational phenomenon – *mass bricolage*, which is hard to conceive in modern educational strategies.

What is surprising is the effectiveness of *Receptář*, which is reflected in several basic areas at which its educational strategy is aimed. For example, the relationship between the distribution of new cultural codes and the labour market is remarkably effective: *Receptář* functions here as a means of effecting (i.e. putting into effect) *the communicative transformation of cultural values into economic values*. By the continuous distribution of hundreds of ideas and items of knowledge of an alternative nature it has created *hundreds* of job opportunities, and with dozens of individuals it has inspired successful business activities. In this respect *Receptář* operates as an alternative educational institution of a postmodern/post-industrial type. ("Postmodern" signifies here "the cultural logic of late capitalism" or post-industrialism [Jameson 1991].)

2. Theoretical background and context

Theoretical sources of the research consist of ideas of structuralism (C. Lévi-Strauss) and neostructuralism (J. Derrida) on the one hand, and theories of alternative education (B. Bernstein, S. Aronowitz, H. A. Giroux) on the other.

Structuralist/neostructuralist positions facilitate the application of the very fruitful idea of *bricolage*, from the sociological dimension of radical and postmodern educational theses concerning essential social changes in the field of education.

The first thesis refers to the gradual transformation of knowledge, representing the contents of literacy, and later on the contents of education, into the means of exchange, that is into the goods. The conclusions of Baudrillard's "critique of the political economy of signs" [Baudrillard 1981] also apply to the area of education. At this point this process – the transformation of signifiers, structures/functions of signifiers/meanings – starts with the *separation of knowledge or the known from the knower*, and education and the educational project become literally an object of *market exchange*. Furthermore, they become a general equivalent of market exchange:

> "Market relevance is a new concept both of knowledge and of its relation to those who create it (…) Knowledge should flow like money to wherever it can create advantage and profit. Indeed, knowledge is not just like money: it is money. Knowl-

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[1]) In the theoretical part of the research, by connecting the outlined conceptions, *bricolage* was defined together with its function and sense in terms of education: *bricolage* is a process of disclosing hidden marginalised cultural codes which, by providing adequate intervention from outside, may change into an alternative educational project/process and may initiate the desirable impulses of social and cultural mobilisation of individuals, communities and regions.

edge is divorced from persons, their commitments, their personal dedication…"
[Bernstein 1993: 155].

This conformity to the market results in an acceptance of strategies of gradual transformation of education into vocational training. This strategy, however, also spreads into areas where it is not fully implementable. And that is another instance.

The second instance, then, is the *vocationalisation of education* and the decline of education as a means of spiritual edification. Bernstein comments on this:

"This orientation represents a fundamental break in the relationship between the knower and what is known. In the medieval period the two were necessarily integrated. Knowledge was an outer expression of an inner relationship. The inner relationship was a guarantee of the legitimacy, integrity, worthwhileness of the knowledge, and the special status of the knower. (…) Now we have a dislocation, which permits the creation of two independent markets, one of knowledge and another of knowers." [Ibid.: 157].

The third instance is the constitution of paradigmatic functioning of the so-called *privileged text* which is justified by various means. It always works, however, as a centre or an axis around which additional cultural codes entering the educational process gather. This privileged text (this centre) is then a criterion for the constitution of the two abovementioned instances. But it leads us to another theoretical thesis.

One goal of this research is to show how the alternative forms and ways of education presented by *Receptář* coincide with these theoretical presuppositions.

Radical pedagogical theory as well as postmodern education theory connect the issue of education with the issue of the position of an individual in the power structure of society. For example, Giroux suggests that "illiteracy is not merely the inability to read and write, but also a cultural marker for naming forms of difference within the logic of cultural deprivation theory"; this is so in the opposite case, literacy, "becomes a form of privileged cultural capital, and subordinate groups, it is argued, deserve their distributional share of such cultural currency" [Giroux 1989: 150].

This would mean, though, that the process of acquiring cultural competences through the mastering of the codes of these competences is always an adoption of privileged competences, and that other underprivileged competences do not even deserve to be referred to as "education". Such is the logic of this theory, and it is also affirmed by Bernstein when he says that "the basic question to be asked is always with reference to the privileging pedagogical text" [Bernstein 1993: 172]. From the viewpoint of this theory each literacy (and education in general) is actually a privileged text. For the term 'non-education' refers to underprivileged, helpless and marginalised groups and individuals gathered around underprivileged texts.

From this point of view alternative education is the process concentrated around underprivileged texts. The source of such texts in our research is *mass bricolage*. What is then *alternative education*?

An attempt to fully respect the sociocultural conception of education is obvious in J. P. Hautecoeur's definition of literacy [Hautecoeur 1994: 15], which this project will adapt as a definition of alternative education: "alternative education *may be considered as the semiotic process of playing with unprivileged codes (texts) to deconstruct and reconstruct meanings and strategies of communication*. It is a game that is reserved not only for specialists. In the pragmatic perspective of everyday communication, each participant

learns a certain number of the rules of the game and applies them. Trying to modify the rules or introduce new ones is the objective of cultural intervention." I would add that literature in the field of contemporary pedagogical theory argues this way too [Street 1993, Verhoeven 1994]. Such a conception of alternative education has a significant social dimension and moves the problem from the field of educational theory/practice to the field of sociology (or social and cultural anthropology).

The *objective of this research* was to survey the *particular work creation, distribution and acquisition of the alternative process of playing with unprivileged codes and texts* – as represented by the multimedia *Receptář* (*The Book of Prescriptions*).

3. Receptář (*The Book of Prescriptions*)

The activities of the complex institution called *Receptář* (*The Book of Prescriptions*) were the field and material of the whole research. In the Czech Republic (then still Czechoslovakia), this institution started in 1987 as a special TV programme for enthusiasts of various hobbies.[2]

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[2]) The *Receptář* (*The Book of Prescriptions*) educational project is the project of an institution that has two "pure" types of mass media – *television and periodicals* – and quasi-mass media, such as meetings, a club, exhibitions *etc.* The *Receptář* gradually changed into a more complex organism that included the television programme, a periodic magazine, *Klub Receptáře* (*The Book of Prescriptions Club* – which united its fans) with *R-Noviny* (the bulletin of the *Club*), *Nadace Klubu Receptáře* (*The Book of Prescriptions Club Foundation*), a book *edition* and a series of *activities* (*Dny Receptáře – Days of The Book of Prescriptions*) which take place in various locations and regions. The organisational structure of this institution is shaped by a TV programme (weekly), a magazine (monthly), a club and a club foundation (with its own periodical – but the club foundation was operating only during the period of this research). In addition, there is a telephone line which can be installed in every major municipal unit in the Czech Republic. The publishing institution (publishing house *RENA*) which focuses only on publications for the audience of *Receptář* is another, loosely associated but very important, organisational component. In total, the *bricolage* institution referred to as *Receptář* involves every week about 1.2-1.7 millions individuals (or small groups).

The *principle* that determines the shape of the whole educational project is quite simple: the team of *Receptář* personnel gathers information (knowledge, ideas, minor educational projects, know-how) which it receives in great quantity from enthusiasts. It is selected and distributed back to the audience, either in the overall scope (TV) or as far as special interest is concerned (to magazine readers), and purposefully (to club members).

Essential data concerning *Receptář*:

TV-viewers (weekly)	premiere minimum 1.2 million
TV programmes so far (August 95)	225
magazine readers monthly (approximately)	400,000
Receptář Club members	50,000
booklets and books	30
readership of booklets and books	200,000

Sources: *Receptář* archives; *Czech TV Reviews* 1987-1995; Interviews with P. Podlaha & K. Knotek (*RENA* Publ. House); *Receptář nejen na neděli* (The Book of Prescriptions not only for Sunday), Vols. 1 (1990)-6 (1995); [Hubík 1995].

Even though this institution also functioned from the beginning as an *educational institution*, its educational efforts were rather *implicit* and focused on the phenomenon called the *hobby*. The change in this institution's activities came after the political changes in 1989, and is connected with the establishing of the *Nadace Klubu Receptáře* (*The Book of Prescriptions Club Foundation*) which in its statute in 1992 drafted principles for the educational level strategy of its activities. Since then, the educational activities of *Receptář* have been *explicit, controlled, programmed*, and not only hobby-oriented. Furthermore, these activities are multi-media, not just uni-media as they were in the beginning (1987).

There is a mutual communication between an unspecified public, local communities, various individuals, hobby organisations, and so on, on one side, and *Receptář* on the other. It is directed mostly one-way (toward *Receptář*), and its purpose is the *mass exchange of selected information*. This information has a contextually pre-defined character – it is *bricolage* of both kinds (see Derrida's interpretation of Levi-Strauss's concept below). Information selection is done by the creators of the TV programme, magazine publishers, edition publishers, *Klub Receptáře* activists and organisers of *Dny Receptáře* (*The Book of Prescriptions Days*). The process can be simply drawn as follows:

Figure 1.   Information flow through *Receptář*
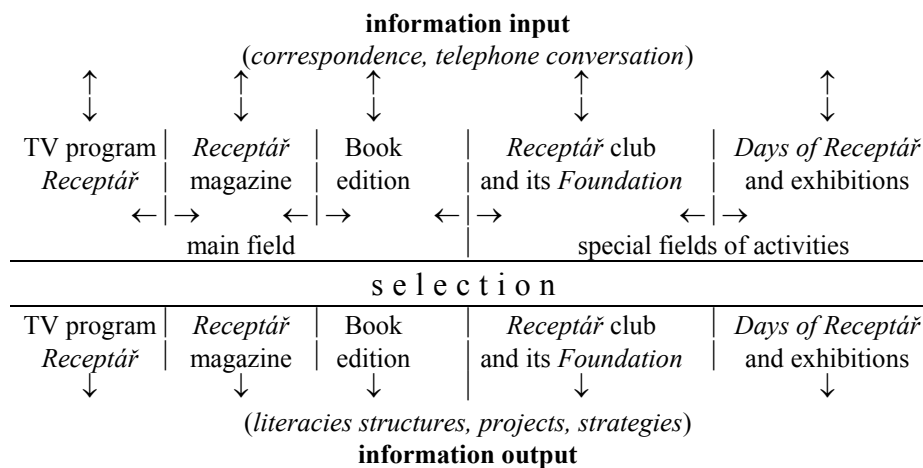
Source: [Hautecoeur 1994: 305].

4. Bricolage

This process is based on twofold principles analysed by C. Lévi-Strauss and J. Derrida as the principles of *bricolage*.

4.1 Lévi-Strauss-Model (*LSM*)

C. Lévi-Strauss introduces this word when he needs to explain the difference between mythical thinking and modern scientific thinking. He writes:

> "There still exists among ourselves an activity which on the technical plane gives us quite a good understanding of what a science we prefer to call prior rather than primitive, could have been on the plane of speculation. This is what is commonly called bricolage in French. In its old sense the verb 'bricoler' applied to ball games and billiards, to hunting, shooting, and riding. It was however always used with

reference to some extraneous movement: a ball rebounding, a dog straying or a horse swerving from its direct course to avoid an obstacle. And in our own time the bricoleur is still someone who works with his hands and uses devious means compared to those of craftsman." [Lévi-Strauss 1968: 16-17]

It is typical for *bricolage* that "it expresses itself by means of a heterogeneous repertoire which, even if extensive, is nevertheless limited. It has to use this repertoire, however, whatever the task in hand because it has nothing else at its disposal." [Ibid.: 17] Besides this

"the bricoleur is adept at performing a large number of diverse tasks, but, unlike the engineer, he does not subordinate each of them to the availability of raw materials and tools conceived and procured for the purpose of the project. His universe of instruments is closed and the rules of his game are always to make do with whatever is at hand, that is to say with a set of tools and materials which is always finite and is also heterogeneous because what it contains bears no relations to the current project, or indeed to any particular project, but is the contingent result of all the occasions there have been to renew or enrich the stock or to maintain it with the remains of previous constructions or destructions. The use of the bricoleur's means cannot therefore be defined in terms of a project (…). It is to be defined only by its potential use (…), the elements are collected or retained on the principle that they may always come in handy (…)." [Ibid.: 17-18]**3**

All the highlighted features of *bricolage* – deflection, play, means of a non-professional, limited means, unlimited tasks – can be understood as a task of the *Receptář* project. The characteristics of *instrumentality* and *anything can be used for everything* can then be understood as a defining of methods that can be used by those who want to implement the project of *Receptář*.

This means that the individual participants in the game called *Receptář* use alternative discourse creation as their programme. In this game, alternative means the same as "drawing from a limited world of instruments that is always within reach".

But Lévi-Strauss himself adds that "the difference is therefore less absolute than it might appear. It remains a real one, however, in that the engineer is always trying to make his way out of and go beyond the constraints imposed by a particular state of civilisation while the 'bricoleur' by inclination or necessity always remains within them. This is another way of saying that the engineer works by means of concepts and the 'bricoleur' by means of signs." [Lévi-Strauss 1968: 19-20]. A basic means for the "engineer" to get beyond the limits of a given set (of knowledge, methods etc.) is then called a *concept* (i.e. something with defined meaning), and a basic means for the *bricoleur* to reorganise a set

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3) For example, Derrida sums up C. Lévi-Strauss's thoughts as follows: "On the other hand, still in *The Savage Mind*, he (Lévi-Strauss) presents as what he calls *bricolage* what might be called the discourse of this method. The *bricoleur*, says Lévi-Strauss, is someone who uses the means at hand, that is, the instruments he finds at his disposition around him, those which are already there, which had not been especially conceived with an eye to the operation for which they are to be used and to which one tries by trial and error to adapt them, not hesitating to change them whenever it appears necessary, or to try several of them at once, even if their form and their origin are heterogeneous – and so forth." [Derrida 1978: 28]

(of knowledge, methods etc.) is on the contrary called a *sign*[4] (i.e. something "waiting" for meaning).

Consequently, any thing assumes any function in *bricolage* (or a sign assumes whatever meaning according to circumstances, purposes, context *etc.*), any instrument can become an object, or any object can become an instrument.

We can sum up as clearly as possible Lévi-Strauss's opinions of the differences between *systematically* functioning reason on the one hand and so-called *bricolage* on the other:

Figure 2.   Different characteristics of science and *bricolage* according to C. Lévi-Strauss

science		*bricolage*
straightness		divergence
specialisation		non-specialisation
unlimitation of instruments		limitation of instruments
anything has a unique function		anything can be for anything
concept as instrument		sign as instrument
creation through realisation of project		creation through reconstruction
inventive innovation		discovery innovation
discovery innovation		inventive innovation
system	?	play
play	?	ritual

Source: [Hubík 1995b: 63, Hautecoeur 1994: 310].

The task of *Receptář* activity is at first sight led by the basic working instrument to which Lévi-Strauss refers as a *sign*.

The alternative educational project of *Receptář* unequivocally invites us to reorganise, restructure and re-contextualise either the known grammars of various skills (know-how, institutions, strategies *etc.*), or to create new grammars (know how, institutions, strategies *etc.*).

The *Receptář* way is mostly a *bricoleur's* way. Originally and in most cases, it is characterised by terms[5] stated in the right column of the scheme stated above. These

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[4]) "Concepts thus appear like operators opening up the set being worked with and signification like the operator of its reorganisation (…)." [Lévi-Strauss 1968: 20]

[5]) The *content analysis* of *Receptář's texts* has unequivocally proved the character of the projects as projects based on *bricolage*. For instance, the *semantic formulas* of these texts are profiled by the expression *bricolage* (kutilství) in most cases, and they are structured according to functions that define *bricolage*: the suggested texts' key word is *nápad* (idea), and it is immediately followed by the word *kutil* (handyman) (or derived words). The structure of semantic formulas in projects according to a function, a new use of an old instrument or new use of a thing or material is absolutely essential; without respect to their oscillation in specific editions of the magazine or the TV programme it is possible to state that the appearance of semantic formulas structured in this way is more than 50%. Besides this: the *semantic portrait* of the *bricoleur* himself/herself is primarily built from activities of searching for innovations of all kinds until "the bricoleur finds peace", that is, until there still are things to reorganise and re-contextualise.

terms also define the *alternative discourse of education in a particular community*. By interaction with *Receptář,* this discourse transforms into an alternative educational project entering the *mass* exchange of further (similar) alternative projects.

The *Receptář* represents stratified *bricolage. The first level* of this stratification of the alternative educational *Receptář* project is *basic* and it is the *original and current medium of the whole project*. The *bricoleur* takes part in this level of the educational programme in both social roles – as the educator and the educated; it only depends on the phase of the semantic exchange whether one role is adopted or the other. On this level of events, it fully complies with Lévi-Strauss's ideas on *bricolage*, and with the views of postmodern educational theories on the approach to education and the role of educator/educated. For this level of an educational project, it is typical that education here "expresses itself by means of a heterogeneous repertoire which, even if extensive, is nevertheless limited. It has to use this repertoire, however, whatever the task in hand because it has nothing else at its disposal". The range of this level is determined by the interest of the *amateur* on one side and the necessary cultural codes carrier on the other.

In the *Receptář* texts, this *interpretation and implementation of LSM-bricolage* that is – I repeat – basic, corresponds with levels represented by the following slots: *Who knows – will answer* (and furthermore, *Who knew it, answered*), *The marketplace of ideas*, and *A mail full of ideas*. These texts represent approximately 25% of the whole number of themes, and their semantic structure is fairly simple: sketches, questions, answers, messages. Nevertheless, we must note that even on this textual level, which forms the basis of the whole project, the addressee finds significant information, and the *hidden* or *unused cultural codes* are revealed here as frequently as the second textual level.

Lévi-Strauss assumed that this type of activity and its carriers are only a "marginal" feature of an industrial society. There are approximately 60,000 members of the *Receptář Club*, and they mostly represent *bricoleurs* of the first type (but also of other types – detailed differentiation requires further explanation) – which represents approximately 0.5% of the Czech population (children included). This is by no means a marginal feature.

The content analysis of the texts, as well as the questionnaire procedures, have revealed that if the respondent takes part in a mass *bricolage* of the *Receptář*, he/she is usually motivated by an effort to obtain cultural codes of a smaller scope, for example,

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Here, we can add that the overall structure of the *Receptář* also defines its texts, especially by the *bricolage* optics. The approximately thirty page magazine, with 12 editions per year (since 1993, there are 40 pages; part of it is a special appendix "for the enterprising") which is divided into twenty-one sections. From these, eight sections are explicitly *hobby* themes oriented, and approximately one-sixth belongs to a 'do-it-yourself' information exchange. An identification of various communities' alternative educational discourses is, for instance, promoted by sections *Kdo to ví – odpoví* (Who knows it – will answer), *Kdo to věděl – odpověděl* (Who knew it – answered), *Pošta plná nápadů* (A mail full of ideas) or *Tržiště nápadů* (The marketplace of ideas).

These titles may raise a smile and doubts as to whether we can consider them to be alternative educational projects. Of course, not always. But the doubts will disappear as soon as we verify the effectiveness of such an information exchange in the field. As the empirical research revealed, the alternative *Receptář* projects were implemented at least once by approximately 50% of the participants, and approximately 10% of them have been motivated by these projects to some enterprise activity or to work which brought about savings [comp. Hubík 1995a].

knowledge that will help a person improve their flat/house, workplace, housework, work in the garden, or improve the equipment of tools and accessories.

4.2 Jacques Derrida-Model (*JDM*)

The structuralist step towards its *post-position*, that is towards the neostructuralist conception of *intertextuality*, does not allow such a simple idea of *bricolage* as Lévi-Strauss created. The play of mutual acts of differentiation which gives rise to the very possibility of the existence of text as text, and, consequently, any learning (which is only the reading of texts of the world) of a signal nature, cannot prove any fixed point, with the exception of the points which can be conventionally agreed on. The idea of a text which is independent of such intertextual play is absurd. This is why Derrida notes:

> "If one calls *bricolage* the necessity of borrowing one's concepts from the text of heritage which is more or less coherent or ruined, it must be said that every discourse is *bricoleur*. The engineer, whom Lévi-Strauss opposes to the *bricoleur*, should be the one to construct the totality of his language, syntax and lexicon. In this sense the engineer is a myth. A subject who supposedly would be the absolute origin of his own discourse and supposedly would construct it out of nothing, out of the whole cloth, would be the creator of the verb, the verb itself. The notion of the engineer who supposedly breaks with all forms of *bricolage* is therefore a theological idea, and since Lévi-Strauss tells us elsewhere that *bricolage* is mythopoethic, the odds are that the engineer is a myth produced by the *bricoleur*. As soon as we cease to believe in such an engineer and in a discourse which breaks with the received historical discourse, and as soon as we admit that every finite discourse is bound by a certain *bricolage* and that the engineer and the scientist are also species of bricoleurs, then the very idea of bricolage is menaced and the difference in which it took on its meaning breaks down." [Derrida 1978: 285]

Structuralist arguments are much more forcible though. According to Derrida – "in effect, what appears most fascinating in this critical search for a new status of discourse is the stated abandonment of all reference to a *centre*, to a *subject*, to a privileged *reference*, to an origin, or to absolute archia" [Ibid.: 286]. For us, the *privileged reference* or *absolute archia* is here *privileged educational text* or *privileged educational strategy*.

The process of creating alternative strategies of education, as well as the process of creating alternative education, is in *Receptář* de-centred in the above-mentioned meaning: from this point of view the whole active complex called *Receptář* has no centre.

The absence of a centre which consequently means also the *absence of orientation* of knowledge is, in my view, a *condition for essentially creative rational work*. I emphasise the *condition* so that there will not be a misunderstanding: it is not possible to shift the whole problem to one side – for example, to the side of *bricolage*. For both logical and practical reasons it is necessary to admit the existence of both of them. As for the logical reasons, Derrida has made a note, the benefit of which has not been taken yet:

> "There are thus two interpretations of interpretation, of structure, of sign, of play. The one seeks to decipher, dreams of deciphering a truth or an origin which escapes play and the order of the sign, and which lives the necessity of interpretation as an exile. The other, which is no longer turned toward the origin, affirms play and tries to pass beyond man and humanism, the name of man being the name of that being who, throughout the history of metaphysics or of ontotheology – in other

words, throughout his entire history – has dreamed of full presence, the reassuring foundation, the origin and the end of play." [Ibid.: 292]

In the light of these formulations the very problem of the "engineer" and the *bricoleur*, the scientist and the non-scientist, appears to be different. This difference between the types of learner and also the difference between the types of rationality can be obtained only within one of the two mentioned types of interpretation – that one which believes in the *centre* and in the *orientation* of the process of learning. Lévi-Strauss admitted this type of interpretation and did not abandon it: this is why Derrida addressed a "rebuke" to him concerning the ethics of nostalgia, the nostalgia for the old times of cognitive certainties of a paradigmatic cultural type.

I have said that for both logical and practical reasons it is necessary to admit the existence of both of them. In this sense Derrida concludes:

"There are more than enough indications today to suggest we might perceive that these two interpretations of interpretation – which are absolutely irreconcilable even if we live them simultaneously and reconcile them in an obscure economy – together share the field which we call, in such a problematic fashion, the social sciences." [Ibid.: 293].

From this it is clear that both Lévi-Strauss and Derrida are substitutes: the first for the first one, the second for the second one – together they represent the *both*. We can sum up as clearly as possible the opinions of both theorists as follows:

Figure 3.   Different characteristics of science and *bricolage* according to
C.-Lévi-Strauss
Centred, archic interpretation of science and *bricolage*

> **Either/or:**
> (science and/or *bricolage*)
> **LSM**

straightness	**or**	divergence
specialisation	**or**	non-specialisation
unlimitation of instruments	**or**	limitation of instruments
anything has a unique function	**or**	anything can be for any function
concept as instrument	**or**	sign as instrument
creation through realisation of project	**or**	creation through re-construction of event
inventive innovation	**or**	discovery innovation
system	**or**	play
play	**or**	ritual

Figure 4.   Different characteristics of science and *bricolage* according to
              J. Derrida
              De-centred, anarchic interpretation of science/*bricolage*

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Both:
(science and *bricolage*)
JDM

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straightness	**and**	divergence
specialisation	**and**	non-specialisation
unlimitation of instruments	**and**	limitation of instruments
anything has a unique function	**and**	anything can be for any function
concept as instrument	**and**	sign as instrument
creation through realisation of project	**and**	creation through re-construction of event
inventive innovation	**and**	discovery innovation
system	**and**	play
play	**and**	ritual

Receptář is also interested in **both**: *bricolage* and the *system* of solving various problems. It does so regularly and it also consciously mixes together both these ways – again on the basis of *bricolage* or on the basis of systematic engineering education. In this cultural complex together with Lévi-Strauss we recognize *bricolage* and educational *systematics* as two antipoles (*LSM*); in *Receptář* together with Derrida we recognise *bricolage* and systematics as "the coexistence of various in one" in that *obscure economy* (*JDM*).

The second level of the *Receptář's* educational project is – considering the genetic and logic issues – carried by the first level and is linked to it. In the *Receptář* texts, this *interpretation and implementation model of JDM-bricolage* corresponds with textual levels that are not precisely determined by slots or names of the thematic units, but they permeate the texts of the entire educational project. It is in texts, where Derrida's statement that "the engineer is a myth produced by the *bricoleur*" comes true: it is the texts that synthesise *scientific* knowledge with the *amateur's* ideas, in texts where there is not a symmetrical exchange of social roles of the educator and the educated, but rather of the roles of *engineer* and *bricoleur*. As we mentioned before, if "the engineer and the scientist are also species of *bricoleurs*, then the very idea of *bricolage* is menaced and the difference in which it took on its meaning breaks down."

The content analysis of the *Receptář* texts revealed that an expert (engineer, scientist, teacher) achieves the role of a *bricoleur* especially when there is a possibility of an improvement of the current cultural code by means of methods that might seem suspicious in the theoretical discourse, or are negligible problems in the particular field. Nevertheless, even unskilled, untrained individuals with detailed knowledge of the theme or a problem get into the roles of qualified experts. The range of this level is determined by the *bricoleur's* interest on one side, and the *engineer's* interest on the other side, while the relationship between them as roles is logically equivalent.

Thematically, the texts of the second model represent approximately 30% of the project. Intended projects are included and the semantic structures are of a higher level than in *LSM*. The texts usually include scientific elements or knowledge from expert oc-

cupations. Derrida's assumption of the *centre*, as well as Bernstein's idea of a privileged pedagogical text are missing in this model. The *bricoleur's* and *engineer's* positions are equal because when considering the strategy of the *Receptář* educational project, one cannot exist without the other.

The content analysis of the texts reveals that the *Receptář pro podnikavé* (*The Book of Prescriptions for the Enterprising*) TV show and a magazine appendix called *Receptář pro podnikavé*, or a part of it – a slot *Rozjedeme to?* (*Shall we start it?*) are an important platform for information exchanges of this type. The information exchange finds its practical implementors here, and many projects gathered by the semantic field of the *Receptář* have transformed into successful enterprising businesses. This type of *bricolage* proves that the pragmatic basis of an educational project, which could be understood as a *do-it-yourself* game at first, produces very complicated codes, for instance the production *know-how* that forms jobs, the actually implemented *know-how*.

At random, from the *Receptář For Every Day* magazine, we can find confirmation of the educational effect of this type of *mass bricolage*.[6]

The questionnaire procedures carried out on the Czech population revealed that from the number of people who follow one or the other form of the *Receptář* (which is, according to the survey, approximately 12% of the population), 68% have at some time implemented ideas from the semantic field of the *Receptář*, approximately 28% on more than one occasion. What is important – apart from the objective to "save" (material, time, people, *etc.*), there was an important objective to "introduce production" (from the presented 68% of respondents, approximately 18% answered in this way).[7]

Apart from these described functions that are carried by the two models of *bricolage*, the *Receptář* educational project has stimulated another very important phenomenon

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[6]) Fifty-six companies from all over the Czech Republic reacted immediately to information that a company that manufactures aids for handicapped people needed co-operation with other companies [*Receptář...* 1994, no. 2: 3].

After a radio broadcasted invitation with a description of tools needed by a manufacturer, there was an immediate reaction from a company that took over its production and distribution [*Receptář...* 1994, no. 5: 51].

After an invitation to manufacture more complicated working tools, there was an immediate reaction from various companies who were interested in the production [*Receptář...* 1994, no. 1: 33]. Such cases are common, see for instance [*Receptář...* 1994, no. 2: 37; no. 11: 37].

These facts not only reflect a system of *offer-demand*, as it might seem at first sight. The step that precedes the offer is substantial, that is the formation of the *bricolage* result and its position in the semantic field of *Receptář*. Usually there is a further exchange of information, the reason being to change and improve the result of *bricolage*. The presented examples – and there could be hundreds more of them – document an important issue: this type of *bricolage* forms jobs, extends the job market and enterprise, and by this it mobilises individuals and groups.

[7]) It is interesting to compare these facts with the results of the research project implemented by W. Leirman in 1993-1995 in 16 European countries (including the Czech Republic), that is known as *Eurodelphi*. A tendency towards the vocationalization of adult education has been unequivocally confirmed by this project: the factor of "technology and labour" has been connected with education as the most important, similarly within the fields of "unemployment and the organisation of labour". In other words, the *fields* that adult education can contribute to the most, are, according to the respondents (who were experts), the fields of technology and labour [see Leirman 1995: 4].

– that is attempts at imitation among those who originally created and used its semantic field. I have found at least *two attempts* to draft and implement an analogical semantic field, but most likely there are more of them. The foundation of *Vzdělávací spolek uměleckých řemesel* (*Educational Association of Art Crafts*), as well as the foundation of *Spolek pro kutily-řezbáře* (*Association of Bricoleurs-woodcarvers*) are not creations of multimedia institutions, but are translations of the basic formula of literacy strategy that the *Receptář* uses, into "the field" where it acts as a new focus or transmission point [*Receptář*.... 1994, no. 1: 35; no. 7: 37].

5. Postmodern dimension of mass bricolage: (modern technology) *times* (neo-medievalism)

The *Receptář* educational project combines modern and pre-modern cultural codes in an interesting way, which is shown by means of an outstanding combination of modern (industrial) and pre-modern (traditional) modes of thought, and finally action. For *bricoleurs* from models *LSM* and *JDM*, H. J. Silverman's views on the postmodern in general are completely true, as well as Lyotard's views on the postmodern creator of work. According to Silverman "postmodernism does not open up a new field of artistic, philosophical, cultural, or even institutional activities. Its very significance is to marginalise, delimit, disseminate, and decenter the primary (and often secondary) works of modernist and premodernist cultural inscriptions." [Silverman 1990: 1]

In models *LSM* and *JDM*, the *bricoleur* only "reads modern texts" (for instance some *privileged text*), with his own eyes, as J.-F. Lyotard describes it:

"A postmodern artist or writer is in the position of a philosopher: the text he writes, the work he produces are not in principle governed by pre-established rules. (…) Those rules (…) are what the work of art itself is looking for." The postmodern creator is "working without rules in order to formulate the rules of what will have been done" [Lyotard 1987: 81].

In other words, this can be described as a *desire to rediscover the wholeness of labour and its product – a work* (as postmodern discourse does under the theme of *nostalgia*).

However, materiality will be more useful. B. Bernstein expressed materiality better:

"It may well be the case that a new manual handicraft, artisan industry could emerge, with its own commercial outlets, reviving apprenticeship and even guild-like organisations: a neomedievalism. It is also possible that there will be an expansion of the cultural field, of its agencies and agents" [Bernstein 1993: 157].

We can state that it fully perceives events in models *LSM* and *JDM*: it rehabilitates non-modern ways of thinking, non-modern cultural codes and non-modern tools and combines them purposefully with modern ways of thinking, modern codes and modern tools. This intertextual fact (which is impossible in "official" modern education) makes mass *bricolage* a typical postmodern phenomenon in the social field of education.

The *Receptář* activities are a good example of the end of universal reason and universal education which was realistically summarised by Z. Bauman by means of his simple characteristic of postmodernity: first and foremost, it is the

"*pluralism* of cultures, communal traditions, ideologies, forms of life or language games (…), or the awareness and recognition of such pluralism. Things which are plural in the postmodern world cannot be arranged out in an evolutionary time-sequence, seen as each other's inferior or superior stages. Neither can they be clas-

sified as right or wrong solutions to common problems. No knowledge can be assessed outside the context of the culture, tradition, language game, etc., which makes it possible and endows it with meaning. Hence no criteria of validation are available which could be themselves justified out of context. Without universal standards, the problem of the postmodern world is not how to globalise superior culture, but how to secure communication and mutual understanding between cultures" [Bauman 1988: 225-226].

It is indeed the best characteristic of the *Receptář* as a postmodern, alternative educational institution.

Unfortunately, the scope of this work does not allow me to attach a rich appendix describing basic cases of those two ways of creating educational strategies which led towards both creating jobs and producing new goods. At the same time these two matters – *creating jobs and producing goods* – comprise one of the functions of the two approaches (*LSM, JDM*), in which *bricolage* has the sovereign position. I can refer here to the results of my own research and state that *those two types (LSM, JDM) of transforming cultural values into economic values today mean hundreds of proven jobs and dozens of new production procedures and new commodities on the official markets* of labour and commodities. They also mean hundreds of jobs and thousands of new production procedures and new commodities on the *alternative market* of labour and commodities which has been traditionally well-developed in the Czech Republic. It is logical that alternative types of education and alternative types of educational strategies create an alternative type of market, and *vice versa*.

8. Conclusion

By linking mass media and bricolage, there develops a new educational phenomenon – mass bricolage, which is difficult to imagine within modern educational strategies.

The *Receptář* acts as the *alternative educational institution* of a postmodern and post-industrial type that offers people an education in the classical meaning of the word (edifying) as well as in the modern meaning of the word (vocationalized).

The *Receptář* alternative educational project is unusual. It really is a project *for everyone*. Ten to fifteen percent of the adult population, thousands of ideas and implemented smaller projects, many ideas from the *bricoleur's know-how* have transformed into successful enterprising projects, hundreds and hundreds of minor messages that improve everyday life, basic and higher means of enlightenment – all this forms the semantic field that is here *for everyone*.

The implementation scheme of the *mass bricolage educational strategy* is based on the following steps:

1. The creation of an institution that disposes of two or three types of *mass media* (TV show, periodical, or radio).

2. The creation of a *network* of information suppliers from communities and groups outside the mainstream of educational activities.

3. Initiating a *mass bricolage* on various levels that will develop automatically by selecting semantic structures determined for exchange.

Over a period of five years, experiences from the Czech environment proved that a particular educational project can quickly become a profitable project, which is very relevant as far as educational possibilities are concerned.

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