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# EDITORIAL

On this occasion, it has been considered appropriate to divide the Editorial section into three parts: the first refers to general issues related to scientific activity, journals, metrics, impact index, quartiles, etc.; the second part is descriptive-explanatory about growth and aspects of importance on the positioning of the Journal Sophia in the scientific community of recent times; and the third part presents the publication No. 35 of the Collection.

## General issues related to the scientific activity of journals



This section briefly explains some aspects related to the scientific activity in which we are involved and which is linked to the publication of scientific journals, so it is necessary to bear in mind that the quality of any scientific publication is measured and evaluated, for which there is a variety of metric indicators that determine its acceptance, validation or rejection in the scientific community. Thus, “scientific production is measured and evaluated according to a series of criteria related to the number of papers published and the number of times in which they have been cited” (Mondragón, 2017, p. 1). The criteria measured include: ‘the number of published works; the total number of citations received; the number of average citations per published work; the number of significant published works; the number of citations of the most cited published works’ (Mondragón, 2017, p. 1).

As generally known, publications with impact are considered to be those that are indexed in certain databases, in portals of information that determine measurements on the recognition and quality of the information and/or content that is published; thus impact indicators (or indexes) measure the incidence that a journal has had in the scientific community based on its acceptance verified by the number of citations that articles have received in a given area, which gradually leads to comparisons, a kind of hierarchies, to the definition of “rankings between journals and reflects the relevance of each title in the thematic field in which it is included” (Mondragón, 2017, p. 1).

Likewise, it is necessary to consider that there are currently several tools that allow to know and calculate the impact of scientific journals, including:

**Journal Citation Reports (JCR)** covering a wide range of publications from more than 200 different disciplines, “the impact factor is calculated annually by the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI), it is an essential tool to know the impact and influence of a Journal in the global research community” (Mondragón, 2017, p. 1), is consulted from the Web of Science (WOS) platform. The impact factor with JCR is not permanent due to the annual update it makes; an interesting aspect worth mentioning is that a journal can be located in more than one thematic area and in each one can have a different impact factor.

According to Mondragón (2017), the impact factor of a journal in JCR is calculated based on the average number of times in a year the articles published in the previous two years have been cited, thus considering the following: “the total number of citations received in the previous two years divided by the total number of articles published in those two years” (p. 1).

**SCIMAGO Journal and Country Rank (SJR)** which was presented as an “alternative tool to JCR,... analyzes the publications indexed in the Scopus database, of Elsevier publishing, from 1997 to date,... can be consulted from the Scopus platform, for payment, or from SCIMAGO Journal and Country Rank-SJR” (Mondragón, 2017, p. 1), like the previous one, the same journal can be located in different thematic areas and have a different impact in each area of knowledge.

The impact index in SJR is made taking into account the information provided by Google “to order its search results (Google PageRank), so not all citations are worth the same, but the value depends on the position occupied by the journal that cites” (Mondragón, 2017, p. 1), so that “the weighting of citations is made according to those received by the citing publication... for the calculation, citations to documents published in the journal itself are eliminated” (Mondragón, 2017, p. 1).

In addition to the impact factor or index, another relevant aspect in relation to the publication of the journals is the issue of quartiles, an aspect that is considered in both JCR and SJR. The quartiles are characterized by ordering the journals from highest to lowest taking into account the index or impact factor, these are: “Q1, a group made up of the first 25% of the journals listed; Q2, a group that occupies 25 to 50%; Q3, a group that positions between 50 and 75%; Q4, a group that is located between 75 and 100% of the ordered ranking” (Mondragón, 2017, p. 1).

Other important indexes are: **Scielo**, bibliometric indicators for Spanish health sciences journals, developed by Ibero-American institutions. **Latindex**: Regional online information system for scientific journals in Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal, an initiative led by the Autonomous University of Mexico that offers a series of editorial characteristics established through the application of editorial quality criteria. **Google Scholar Metrics**: offers the metrics applied in Google Scholar and publishes a ranking of scientific journals

Another component to keep this in mind is that referred to the h-index of journals and authors. It can be stated that the aforementioned H-index “was created by Jorge E. Hirsch in 2005... is also useful to measure the scientific production of countries” (Mondragón, 2017, p. 1). The calculation of the H-index, “proceeds from ordering from highest to lowest the scientific articles according to the number of citations they have received: the H-index is the number in which the order number coincides with the number of citations” (Mondragón, 2017, p. 1). Likewise, it is necessary to evaluate the contribution made by Google Scholar Metrics, same as for the calculation of the h index:

...includes Google Scholar journals that have published at least 100 articles that have quotes;...to evaluate the journals, Google Scholar Metrics has relied on the H-index and has created the metrics called h5 Index and the Mean-h5. Currently, they compute the citations received in the last five years, complete prior to the year of performance of the metric... (Mondragón, 2017, p. 1).

Metrics are based on citations of all articles indexed in Google Scholar up to a certain date, hence:

Google Scholar offers a ranking of journals according to the language in which they are edited: it is the top of the 100 main publications, the 100 journals that have the greatest impact in each language, which are listed by their h5 index and their h5-average. Currently, it does not allow to group and sort journals according to their country of publication (Mondragón, 2017, p. 1).

## Growth and Positioning of Sophia Journal: Collection of Philosophy of Education in the Scientific Community

Once important points have been made about scientific journals, this section focuses on the growth and positioning of Sophia Journal in the scientific community. Thus, in mid-2021, Sophia: Collection of Philoso-

phy of Education is accepted in Scopus, one of the most important and prestigious databases; at the end of April 2023, we received the news that our journal is one of the seven Ecuadorian journals in the Scopus database, from Elsevier Editorial that manages to enter the classification of Scimago Journal & Country Rank; that the impact that Sophia has obtained in the scientific community allows it to be placed in the quartile two (Q2) of the impact factor; and that this progress makes it the first and only Ecuadorian journal that leads the scientific and academic production in the country, as shown by the data detailed in table 1.

Table 1  
SJR impact factor



	Title	Type	↓ SJR
1	Retos(Ecuador)	journal	0.259 Q3
2	Iconos	journal	0.214 Q3
3	Sophia(Ecuador)	journal	0.211 Q2
4	Granja	journal	0.181 Q4
5	Revista Ecuatoriana de Neurologia	journal	0.152 Q4
6	Bionatura	journal	0.126 Q4
7	Revista Politecnica	journal	0.120 Q4

Source: <https://bit.ly/3PWUTkF>

In the Journal Citation Index (JCI) of Web Of Science (WOS) of June 2023, it is found that Sophia's impact factor places it in quartile three (Q3), within the category Education and Educational Research, accreditation that highlights the incidence and quality of publication worldwide in the field of philosophy in general and philosophy of education in particular, aspect detailed in the following table.

**Table 2**  
**Journal Citation Index**

JOURNAL CITATION INDEX (JCI) BY WEB OF SCIENCE								
Journal name	ISSN	eISSN	Category	Total Citations	2022 JIF	2022JCI	JCI Quartile	JCI Percentile
Sophia: Philosophy of Education Collection	1390-3861	1390-8626	Education and Educational Research	59	0.3	0.41	Q3 31.33	510/742

Regarding JCI, following Parodi (2023) it is important to make some clarifications, considering that “according to Clarivate (2023), the main collection of Web of Science (WoS), the WoS Core Collection, is the result of a constant process carried out to guarantee that each journal is in the right collection” (p. 1). In this sense, Clarivate considers three essential pillars: objectivity, selectivity and dynamics; and evaluates 24 quality criteria and four impact criteria of the journals, so that, according to Parodi (2023), those journals that meet the 24 quality criteria referred to above:

...are indexed in the Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI), and,... those that also comply with the latter are indexed in what Clarivate calls its “flagship”: Science Citation Index Expanded (SCIE), Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) and Arts & Humanities Citation Index (AHCI), as appropriate... (Parodi, 2023, p. 1).

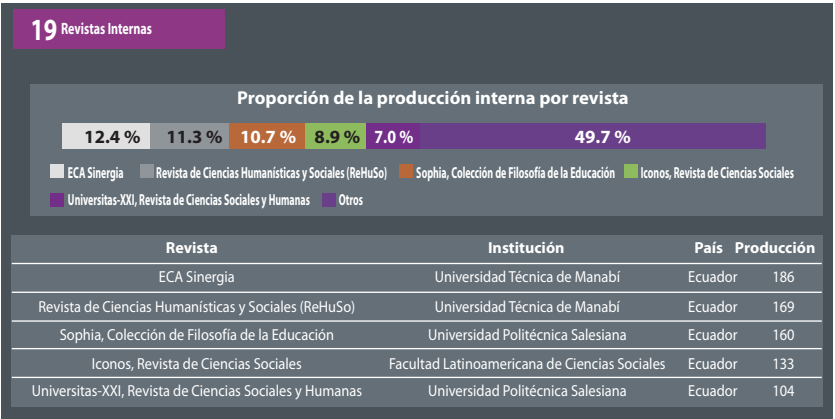
As for Parodi (2023), until 2020, only “the journals included in SCIE and SSCI received an Impact Factor (IF) and were included in the Journal Citation Report (JCR). In 2021, Clarivate incorporated the calculation of the Journal Citation Index (JCI), a standardized citation index ... designed to complement the IF” (Martin Szomszor, 2021, quoted by Parodi, 2023, p.1), it is understood that the ultimate aim tended to transparency scientific production and to promote recognition of the quality of journals by positioning them at the highest standards assessed by Clarivate, “...giving them greater visibility and allowing them to compare with “sources of scientific publications ... more consolidated ...belonging

to SCIE and SSCI]’ (Martin Szomszor, 2021 cited by Parodi, 2023, p. 1). As Parodi (2023) points out, ‘from June 2023, the IF is calculated for all journals in the WOS main collection’ (p. 1).

This implies that “the emergence of the JCI, the IF has been and continues to be the index of impact par excellence within the scientific and academic community, even going, ..., to govern exclusively quality evaluations” (Parodi, 2023, p. 1). Hence, in the words of Parodi (2023), “... democratization represents a step towards transparency, giving greater visibility and prestige to articles published in journals belonging to ESCI and AHCI” (p. 2).

In addition, in the scientometric indicators of Ecuador presented by Redalyc, there are 19 internal journals, of which Sophia: Collection of Philosophy of Education contributes with 10.7% of the internal scientific production at the country level, as shown in the following table:

Table 3  
Proportion of scientific output by journal at the country level



Source: Redalyc (2020). Redalyc Scientific Information System. Network of Open Access scientific journals. Version 5.0 | 2003-2023. <https://bit.ly/4398rwn>

The growth of the journal Sophia in the scientific community has been significant, as can be evidenced in the level of acceptance demonstrated through social and academic networks expressed in the following table:

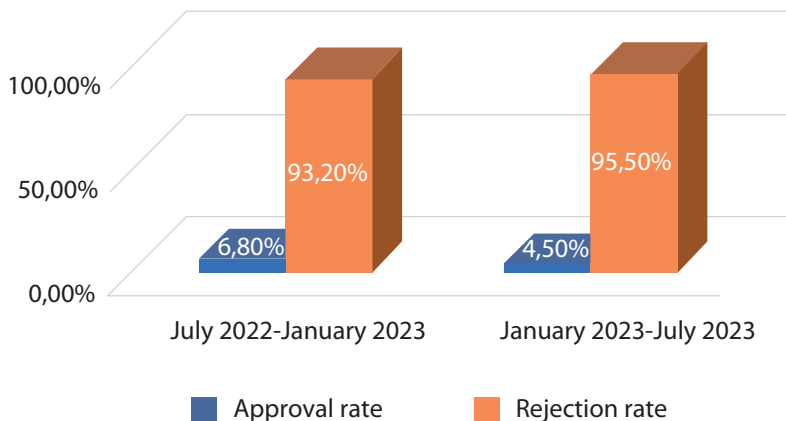
**Table 4**  
**Sophia: The Philosophy of Education Collection**  
**on Social and Academic Networks**

Sophia Journal: Philosophy of Education Collection			
Followers on Social Networks January-June 2023			
SOCIAL NETWORK	FOLLOWERS JANUARY 2023		FOLLOWERS JUNE 2023
Facebook	23583		23933
Instagram	1016		1093
Twitter	1069		1145
LinkedIn - business account	10		169
Reach in Social Networks period January-June 2023			
Metric	Facebook		Instagram
Scope	322537		6178
Visits	5741		254
Sophia in Academic Networks			
Network	Number of citations (26 June 2023)	Index h	Index i10
Google Scholar	6520	37	123
Academy. Edu	476 and 16,807 views in the last 30 days		

Source: Own production.

This has allowed that in recent times the massive and exponential entry of manuscripts related to the central theme of the call and a high percentage of documents related to the miscellaneous section of the journal has increased. The increase in documents requires the fulfillment of rigorous processes of preliminary reviews, modifications, complementations prior to the evaluation process by international reviewers, issuance of reports that according to the verdict, entail new processes of review and application of changes prior to the pre-selection and final approval of the document, this explains that in the period July 2022 to January 2023, there was a rate of 6.80% of approved documents and a rate of 93.20% of rejected manuscripts. Likewise, in the period between January 2023 and July 2023, the rate of approved documents reached 4.50% and the rate of rejected documents stood at 95.50% respectively, which is shown in the following graph:

**Figure 1**  
**Manuscript approval and rejection rates**  
**(July 2022-July 2023)**



Source: Own production.



The journal evaluation process follows a rigorous, systematic and organized process of pre-evaluation, review, evaluation and decision-making on each of the manuscripts submitted to the journal. The structure of the document must comply with all the aspects established in the guidelines of the journal located in the section **Guidelines for authors** (Aguilar, 2019a) located in the following link: <https://sophia.ups.edu.ec/index.php/sophia/about/submissions> (here is the template for the manuscript; the regulations and also the presentation / cover letter).

The route taken by each document is as follows:

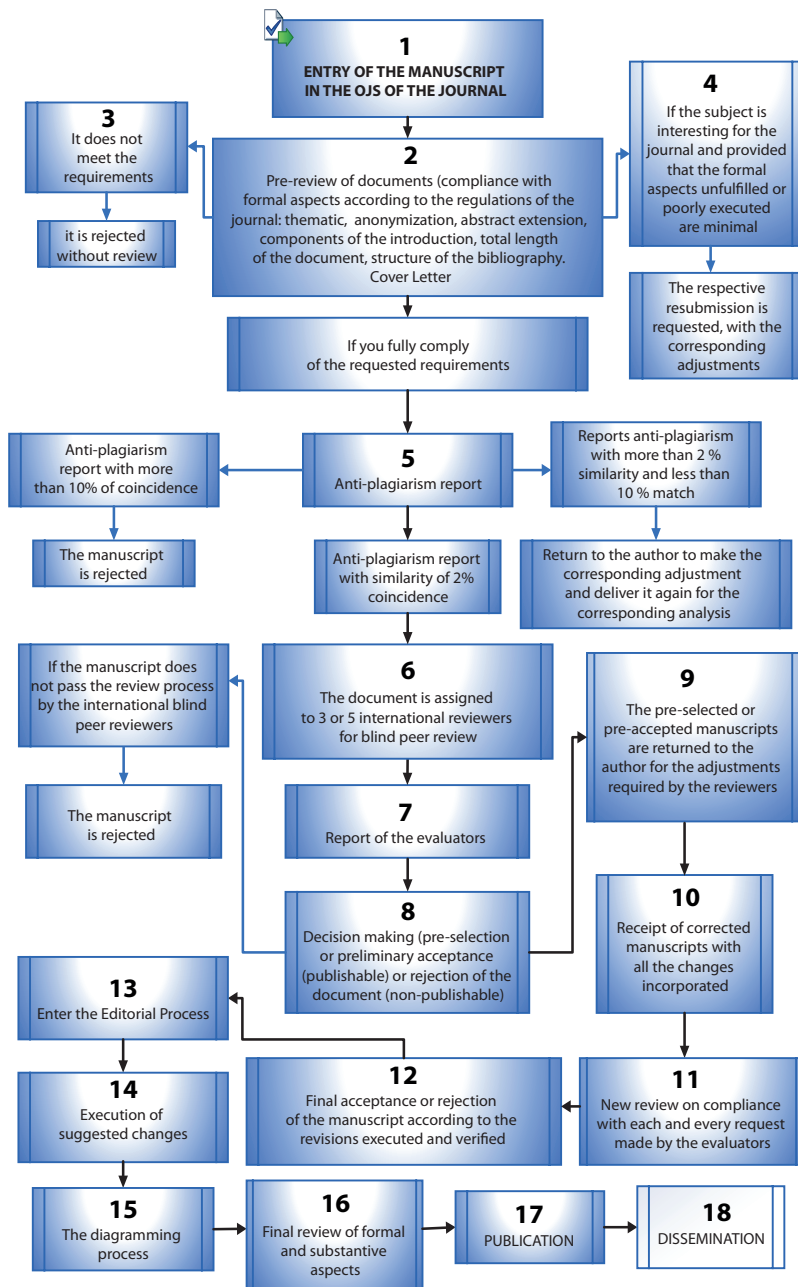
1. Entry of the manuscript in the OJS of the Journal (according to the requirement of the journal located at the link: [https://sophia.ups.edu.ec/pdf/sophia/docs/Chequeo\\_previo.pdf](https://sophia.ups.edu.ec/pdf/sophia/docs/Chequeo_previo.pdf) (Aguilar, 2019b).
2. Pre-review of documents (compliance with formal aspects according to the regulations of the journal: thematic, anonymization, abstract extension, components of the introduction, total length of the document, structure of the bibliography. Cover Letter with all the required aspects (includes the assignment of rights, the declaration and the metadata).
3. It does not meet the requirements, it is rejected without review.



4. If the subject is interesting for the journal and provided that the formal aspects unfulfilled or poorly executed are minimal, the respective referral is requested.
5. Anti-plagiarism report with similarity of 2% coincidence goes to review by blind peers. Document with similarity up to 10%, return to the author to make the corresponding adjustment and deliver it again for the corresponding analysis. Documents with a match rate higher than 10% are rejected.
6. Document with similarity equal to or less than 2%, the document is assigned to 3 or 4 international reviewers for blind peer evaluation.
7. Report of the evaluators. The evaluation criteria suggested by blind pairs (reviewers) of the manuscripts are as follows:
  - a. Accept this submission
  - b. Publishable with modifications
  - c. Send it for Review
  - d. Send it to another publication
  - e. Unpublishable
  - f. View comments
8. Decision making (pre-selection or preliminary acceptance (publishable) or rejection of the document (non-publishable).
9. The pre-selected or pre-accepted manuscripts are returned to the author for the adjustments required by the reviewers.
10. Receipt of corrected manuscripts with all the changes incorporated.
11. New review on compliance with each and every request made by the evaluators.
12. Final acceptance or rejection of the manuscript according to the revisions executed and verified.
13. Enter the Editorial Process.
14. Execution of suggested changes.
15. The diagramming process.
16. Final review of formal and substantive aspects.
17. Publication.
18. Dissemination.



## Process of receiving, reviewing, accepting and publishing manuscripts Magazine Journal



## Presentation of the publication N. 35 of the Collection

We are pleased to present our readers with the publication number 35 of the Sophia Journal: Philosophy of Education Collection.

In this opportunity, the core of the reflections revolves around the *Philosophical currents and their incidence in the pedagogical orientations*, in such virtue, it exposes interesting aspects on the contributions of various theories, approaches, trends, epistemological perspectives and philosophical methods for understanding the educational reality, its foundation, its meaning, the processes and pedagogical events; there are some elements of the philosophy of dialogue, of kantism, of Marxism, of hermeneutics, of technology, of structuralism, of personalism, of vitalism and their contributions to the current pedagogy that have been given in this intellectual space for reflection and debate.

This publication of Sophia aims to become a seed for the construction of new ideas and philosophical proposals on the educational phenomenon and the processes it implies. Thinking and talking about *Philosophical currents and their impact on the pedagogical orientations*, leads to the need to philosophically rethink the different real and contextual problems that education, current pedagogy and its main protagonists go through to propose alternatives from theories, categories, doctrines and thought currents to develop among other aspects:

The cognitive functions of the human being, ... to enhance logical-abstract structures, ... to reflect on didactic strategies for the development of mental operations in the learning subject, with a view to achieving the consolidation of an integral and integrated subject (Aguilar, 2017, p. 46).

It is necessary to consider that one of the challenges of today's education is to promote the development of cognitive skills to enhance students' research, analysis, problem-solving and consequent decision-making, for which philosophical knowledge becomes essential to face today's complex society and its dynamism, in which "economic vision prevails over other ways of seeing and understanding the world" (Aguilar, 2010, p. 151). It is undeniable that in these two decades of the 21st century, there has been a diversity of problems and circumstances that force to think and act differently, also that "everything has been complicated in tune with the spread of the network society, a complex and multidimensional society" (Aguilar, 2010, p. 151), emerging situations that also affect educational institutions, particular didactics, pedagogies and subjects that make up the new scenarios that seem to eliminate procedural



dynamism, lock subjects and dilute them in the mass causing them to lose their roles.

Despite the current situation, the subject remains of vital importance to give meaning to the new society and for this, philosophy provides a set of categorical tools to bring to praxis, and transform its own world and the society in which it is, always bearing in mind that, “the subject forms his own mental image, elaborates concepts, generalizes what is observed and builds a system of symbols that projects and communicates to others; in this process both attention (as a selective process of perception) and memory (as a means of identifying and interpreting) intervenes” (Aguilar, 2010, p. 157).

Hence, the philosophical currents and the representative figures of them that have emerged over time will continue to contribute to understand the being and the educational task and to redirect the pedagogical action. Philosophical currents such as idealism, stoicism, epicureism, realism, skepticism, dogmatism, relativism, scholasticism, humanism, subjectivism, empiricism, rationalism, criticism, pragmatism, historicism, phenomenology, existentialism, positivism, structuralism, language philosophy, Marxism, vitalism, biologism, raciovitalism, etc, make important contributions to the understanding of educational fact.

The ten articles approved in this call belong to this scenario, they aim to respond to the various problems that arise according to the new social, economic, political, cultural, human and educational requirements. Questions such as: What are the implications of Philosophical Currents in education? How do Philosophical Currents contribute to Pedagogy and its problems? What are the outstanding tasks of Philosophical Currents for Education? What are the philosophical methods that contribute to pedagogical action? What are the advantages, limitations and challenges of Philosophical Currents in education? Can there be a pedagogical orientation without a philosophy that supports it?, find alternative answers in the pages of this publication.

In the central theme of this publication, the following manuscripts are found:

*Hermeneutics and Technology as a salvific dialogue for current pedagogy*, written by Leopoldo Edgardo Tillería Aqueveque, from Chile, presents the controversial thesis that the dialogue between hermeneutics and technology is decisive to safeguard an original pedagogy for a free and responsible citizen. In this sense, the author resorts to the hermeneutics of Heidegger's facticity, as an interpretative structure that reorders the sense of the notions of technique and technology, in turn, he suggests a peda-

gogy focused on the primitive and more authentic way of understanding oneself. The researcher points out the need to understand the relationship between technology and pedagogy based on philosophical hermeneutics.

The article *Contributions of Socratic Maeutics to Dialogical Education*, written by Carlos Alberto Vargas González and Dora Patricia Quintero Carvajal, from Medellín, Colombia, explains that education has a vast history that has made it go through different epistemological, pragmatic and ontological positions, a situation that has enriched its theoretical and practical acquis. The authors state that *one of these current foundations of education is philosophical thinking about dialogue*, which as for the editor has been considered an important methodological strategy in the teaching-learning processes of recent times. The aim of this manuscript, according to its writers, is to propose some elements for dialogic education from the study of Socratic Mathematics, in order to recover and resignify the importance of the question and the ability to ask oneself in the educational processes and in the daily life of today's society.

On the other hand, the document *Thinking Pedagogy as Psychagogy in the Last Foucault*, presented by Juan Emilio Ortiz Leoni from Argentina, states that the ideas of Michel Foucault have had a great influence in the sciences of education and that studies about the disciplinary society have become an inescapable reference to think the dynamics of the current school institution; however, he considers that this influence is often reduced to its critical and deconstructive approach, without adequately elaborating the propositional aspects and constructive influence that this theory can offer. He analyzes some key concepts of Foucault's late thinking: *regime of truth, practices of the self, psychagogy and paresis in order to identify their importance and their application in the educational task*.

The article *Education, Writing and Existence in Miguel de Unamuno*, built by Francisco de Jesús Ángeles Cerón, from Santiago de Querétaro, Mexico, explains the contributions of the philosopher as an educator and as a writer, in this sense it proposes to analyze two fundamental issues: the work of education and the work of writing. The author states that both the professor and the writer can teach by making their way through language, helping each other.

In closing this section, the manuscript *Kantian Perspective on the State and Education*, written by Agustina Ortiz Soriano of the State, Michoacán, Mexico, analyzes the position that education and the state holds in Immanuel Kant's practical philosophy, for whom education is established as the essential task of humanity, not in vain pointed out that man can consider the art of government, and the art of education as the most



difficult discoveries, the process by which the human being becomes human by Education begins. The author considers that for the Kantian proposal to be promoted from educational institutions, it is necessary to rethink the task and role not only of parents, but also of the State in the educational sphere and orient it according to the parameters of cosmopolitanism, an approach that is presented as an imperative social need, and at the same time, as an inalienable task.

The miscellaneous section includes the following contributions:

The article *Possibility of a realistic pedagogical constructivism*, presented by Santiago Tomás Bellomo, from Buenos Aires, Argentina, approaches the discussion about the ability of our intelligence to access the knowledge of reality itself, for this he goes to Piaget who, to say of the writer, “revolutionized the history of psychology and pedagogy from his scientific discoveries relating to the way in which the human being knows”. However, by his own philosophical inclination, his pedagogical constructivism was strongly rooted in immanentist philosophical traditions, to such an extent that the association between pedagogical constructivism and anti-realism constitutes a kind of common place and a certain dogmatic thought. The author intends to demonstrate that this association is not the only possible alternative and rather considers that it is possible to justify pedagogical constructivism from realistic positions, provided that some assumptions that modernity has installed not very critically in educational and philosophical circles are reviewed. In this sense, the review of the notion of representation, conceived according to the Aristotelian tradition and *aggiorized* by the contributions of constructivism, allows us to open a path of conciliation between pedagogical constructivism and a type of realism that is both robust and plural, as Charles Taylor suggests.

The document *Analysis, Classification and Philosophical Foundations of Critical Thinking Models*, written by Angélica María Rodríguez Ortiz, Juan Camilo Hernández Rodríguez, Ana Milena López Rúa and Valentina Cadavid Alzate, from Manizales, Colombia. After conducting an analysis of the different meanings about critical thinking, they propose to identify constituent elements of critical thinking to classify them in models according to their purposes and conceptual analysis, carried out from the analytical philosophy.

In the same line of reflection, is the document *Use of paradoxes as didactic resources that develop critical thinking in students* by Rafael Félix Mora Ramirez, from Lima, Peru. The author considers paradoxes as didactic resources that can help the development of critical thinking

of the student during his training. The author begins the analysis making a clarification of the concepts of fallacy and reduction to absurdity; then analyzes a list of paradoxes with the aim that they can be used in a classroom, among them are the paradoxes of Achilles and the Turtle, Galileo, the Hilbert hotel, Tristram Shandy, Protagoras, etc. He finishes the document with the explanation of the affective and emotional aspect that students experience when facing such problems.

The article *Armando Hart and his methodological keys for teaching Marxism*, written by Yenisey López Cruz and Lídice Duany Destrade, Santiago de Cuba, continues. The authors highlight Hart's contributions as fundamental to revalue Marxist thought, critical thinking and the ability to question the contemporary world. The authors aim to reveal the methodological keys identified in Hart's thought as essential for the interpretation and use of Marxism as an educational resource. The essential keys found by the authors are the recognition of the anti-dogmatic essence of Marxism, eclecticism as a theoretical-methodological instrument to think and do political praxis, the determining role of material production, the importance of spiritual life as an essential subject of political life, the relationship between culture and politics, and the recognition of the relative character of all knowledge associated with political and social processes.

Finally, the manuscript *Student Perception of Discrimination and Racism in Higher Education*, elaborated by Patricia Cecilia Bravo Manceiro, Tania María Guffante Naranjo and Martha Yolanda Falconí Uriarte, from Riobamba, Ecuador. The authors analyze the students' perception of discrimination and racism in higher education. The question that guides the study is: What perceptions do students have about discrimination and racism in the university context? The researchers argue that racism is considered an ideology that naturalizes inequality and that takes as a basis biological particularities to establish situations of social differentiation. The authors consider that the main sources of discrimination are: ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, socio-economic situation and/or disability.

It is expected that the diversity of ideas presented in this volume will generate new questions and guidelines for the structuring of alternative proposals and projects that contribute to the personal and social growth of the human being.

Thank you for being part of our editorial project!



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Floralba del Rocío Aguilar-Gordón  
Editor-in-Chief







# HERMENEUTICS AND TECHNOLOGY

## AS A SALVIFIC DIALOGUE FOR CURRENT PEDAGOGY

### Hermenéutica y tecnología

### como un diálogo salvífico para la pedagogía actual

LEOPOLDO TILLERÍA-AQUEVEQUE\*

Universidad Bernardo O'Higgins (UBO), Santiago de Chile, Chile

Universidad Tecnológica de Chile INACAP, Temuco, Chile

[leopoldo.tilleria@inacapmail.cl](mailto:leopoldo.tilleria@inacapmail.cl)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5630-7552>

#### Abstract

The paper puts forward the controversial thesis that the dialogue between hermeneutics and technology is decisive to safeguard an original pedagogy for a free and responsible citizen. To this end, it uses Heidegger's hermeneutics of facticity as an interpretative structure that reorders the meaning of the notions of technique and technology hitherto hidden in tradition. It is suggested that the original relationship between hermeneutics and technology would reveal itself as a salvific relationship for a pedagogy centered not on how to instruct the citizen as to what he should or should not know, but on the primitive and most authentic way of understanding himself. A more proper consideration of the connection between technology and pedagogy, if it is to be effectively based on a philosophical hermeneutics such as the Heideggerian one, should be able to execute what could be called a "hermeneutic shift", i.e., it would be the phenomenological relationship of the human being with technology that would determine the scope, directionality, and relevance of any educational approach. Inopportunely, it wonders whether it could be Plato who shed light on Heidegger's uncovering task of inverting the poles between technology and the world, and, by the same token, determined a hermeneutics of facticity in which poetic uncovering would pave the way towards a salvific pedagogy of the original thought.

#### Keywords

Understanding, interpretation, pedagogy, being, technique, technology.

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\* Doctor en Filosofía por la Universidad de Chile, ha publicado decenas de artículos de filosofía en diversas revistas especializadas de Chile, Ecuador, Perú, Argentina, España, Costa Rica, México, Brasil, Colombia, Venezuela y Paraguay. Sus principales líneas de investigación son la Estética, la Ontología Contemporánea y la Filosofía de la Tecnología.

### Resumen

El escrito plantea la controversial tesis de que el diálogo entre hermenéutica y tecnología resulta decisivo para salvaguardar una pedagogía originaria y al servicio de un ciudadano libre y responsable. Para ello, se vale de la hermenéutica de la facticidad de Heidegger, como una estructura interpretativa que reordena el sentido de las nociones de técnica y tecnología hasta ahora oculto en la tradición. Se sugiere que la relación originaria entre hermenéutica y tecnología se revelaría como una relación salvífica para una pedagogía centrada no el modo de instruir al ciudadano respecto de lo que debe o no debe saber, sino en la forma primitiva y más auténtica de comprenderse a sí mismo. Una consideración más propia de la conexión entre tecnología y pedagogía, si ha de fundarse efectivamente en una hermenéutica filosófica como la heideggeriana, debiese poder ejecutar lo que pudiera llamarse “giro hermenéutico”; es decir, sería la relación fenomenológica del ser humano con la tecnología lo que determinaría el alcance, la direccionalidad y la pertinencia de cualquier enfoque educativo. Inopinadamente, se interroga si pudo ser Platón quien arrojó luz a la tarea desocultante de Heidegger de invertir los polos entre tecnología y mundo, y, por lo mismo, determinó una hermenéutica de la facticidad en la que el desocultamiento poético allanase el camino hacia una pedagogía salvífica del pensar originario.

### Palabras clave

Comprensión, interpretación, pedagogía, ser, técnica, tecnología.



## Introduction

It may be wrong to say that pedagogy is a problem that has emerged as a socially visible or relevant issue only in the contemporary era, not even in the Renaissance, a period when the arts and sciences seem to want to recover a part of their lost selves in a hell promoted by medieval theocentrism.

Plato—particularly in the *Menon*, but also in the *Protagoras* and in *The Republic*—poses the fundamental question about pedagogy and its moral and political performances. However, the concern of Socrates' disciple does not seem to be the pedagogical method itself in these dialogues, or the technique that should lead the teaching of a certain knowledge, but simply the answer to the question about whether or not it is possible to teach virtue, that kind of divine electron that made the Greeks deviate. So, indirectly, what Plato does is, whether he wants to or not, to scrutinize the myth about whether or not virtuous action can be learned theoretically or by practice, or whether, on the contrary, it is not at all teachable, and therefore would be nothing more and nothing less than a gift from the gods.

Plato himself, as for Socrates, must be allowed to give the answer in the dialogue he holds with a doubtful Menon:

[...] virtue would not be given by nature and it is not taught, but it results from a divine gift. Those who receive are not aware of it, unless, among political men, there is one capable of turning others as politicians (*Men.* 99e-100a).

What should be understood from Plato's final reasoning at the near end of the dialogue? In the interpretation of this work and putting the conclusion of the Platonic Socrates into metaphysical context, nothing more than the idea that virtue does not constitute a teachable matter (by way of concept, technique or practice) ... unless a kind of potter of behavior emerges in the city with the capacity to make other men virtuous.

In Plato's words, that capable man is the politician, the sage of the city who possesses the technique of emerging the virtue of the common and crude man, who is no more and no less than the teacher. Thus, the Platonic argument about the possibility of forging virtue in men as a social and political practice—surely the most prevalent of all—is subordinated to a strange way of understanding pedagogy, one that, to paraphrase the philosopher of the Academy, essentially requires a relationship of mutual comprehensibility between the “politicians” and the “aspiring politician.”

Taking the idea to the contemporary era, it could be surmised that this political-pedagogical dimension that guarantees a minimum clarity about the world between educator and educator, or between philosopher and disciple, or between politician and aspirant, in short, between common human beings, seems to be hermeneutics, in particular, the hermeneutics as Heidegger understands it (2002), i.e., as a phenomenology of *Dasein*, and, in this sense, as the original task of the interpretation of the original (p. 60). This connection of Plato's observation on pedagogy -as a method that forges virtue- with the need to guarantee a minimum comprehensibility between men who will put into practice such a virtuous phenomenon, i.e., with the hermeneutics itself, is encountered in the present times, however, with a spur that usually transforms into an ontological barrier almost indestructible, as lucidly expressed by Heidegger himself in *The Question concerning Technology* (1954).

Such a spur is none other than technology.

This work, based on brief philosophical research that has attempted to unravel the still current question about the relationship between technology and pedagogy, is framed in the necessary thematization of education as one of the essential aspects of human knowledge. The method that has been used has turned out to be the same hermeneutics, which in one way or another has become the object of inquiry itself. Specifically, the article aims to discuss in what sense Heidegger's hermeneutics could be considered an effective way of elucidating a pedagogically authentic role of technology, suggesting as a main hypothesis that the metaphysical dialogue between hermeneutics and technology could constitute an urgent response to the challenges of current pedagogy.



Firstly, the sense of hermeneutics in Fribourg view will be addressed and how this method would allow to speak effectively of a connection with technology. Next, we will discuss the hypothesis -secondary in this paper- of whether technology could be understood as a bastard of pedagogy. The last section will develop more extensively the idea that Heideggerian hermeneutics and technology require a dialogue that could be called salvific for contemporary pedagogy, i.e., a dialogue frankly inexcusable.

## Heidegger's hermeneutics and his technological occupation

The project of *Being and Time* (1927), the fundamental work of the young Heidegger, is far from a text on modern technology. The German thinker has said that it is a work that traces an endless question that is confused with the beginning of the thought of the Greek man. It contains the fundamental question that human beings could come to ask themselves: the question of being, in particular, the question of being of man.

However, this radical interrogation of the existence of man — it must be added, in the world — seems to act as a precondition for the explanation of practically all the questions that human beings may come to ask in their relationship to things.

The *Dasein*, therefore, not only questions himself and his self, but, very carefully, questions himself at the same time for his mysterious relationship with the rest of the things (objects, tools, artifacts) of the world. This epistemic attack of *Dasein*, according to Heidegger, will only be possible through a hermeneutics [*Hermeneutik*] that in no case should be understood as that interpretation [*Auslegung*] that merely takes knowledge of the understood, but, quite the contrary, as the assessment of the possibilities projected in the own understanding (León, 2009, p. 272).

What must be understood, with the Heidegger of *ST*, is that the *Dasein*, i.e., the human being that contains in his being a relationship of being with his being, has as existential mission to come to understand himself from his own existence. And this existence, always carried on in a world populated by intermundane entities and other *Dasein*, can only be a scattered existence in the middle of the technique, from where the *Dasein*, who struggles for his own understanding [*Verstehen*] in his character of one more of the entities of the world, shows himself as incapable of ceasing to be such an other than one *of the world*, without avoiding his ontological proximity with the technical artifacts in his existential modality of being-in-the-world. The *Dasein*, then, moves unflinching in the middle of the technical body.

However, the pivotal thing here is that this irreversibly being, in the middle of the technical environment, forces *Dasein* not to a theoretical or merely logical type reflection on this technique, but a kind of pragmatic onslaught that requires a certain finalist orientation in the framework of this intermundane perspective, or, as mentioned by Messkirch, based on the way of being of the occupation [*Besorgen*].

The *Dasein* interprets the world as a technical action and not as a pure reflective theoretical act. It is therefore a question of the pragmatization of a very special worldly hermeneutics which, in the end, will allow *Dasein* to determine the world itself as his particular factual way of life. This understanding is hermeneutic because the touchstone of the ontological consideration of this observation of *Dasein* corresponds to his walk along the delicate line that separates a proper act from an improper one.

Indeed, *Dasein* develops his relationship with the world's entities from his search for a state of property that has eluded him since his first vital impulse. As León (2009) says:

When the object does not fit the mental mold, then, what is required is to choose another mold that makes correction, i.e., the right understanding of the object. It could be said that the task of understanding is always hermeneutic in the sense that it presupposes in all cases a *Vorhabe*, a prior knowledge, a pattern acquired in advance of the act of knowledge (p. 272).

Thus, the operation of the *Dasein* could be interpreted as a certain self-discovery. If the *Dasein* has reached this state of impropriety in an ultranatural way, i.e., from his state of ontological alienation [*ontologische Verfremdung*] or throwing, or, in other words, immersed in everyday life, the exit of this vital cover-up becomes a difficult task that can only be achieved by taking the decisive step towards the dimension of property, i.e., reconstituting his relationship with the intermundane entities in the original mode of an execution demand. As De la Maza says (2005):

The common thread of the hermeneutic view is what Heidegger calls "formal indication" (*formale Anzeige*) [...]. Formal indication is a concept that does not have a material content. How you refer to something is not determined by a set of ontic features of the thing you designate. It is not a concept capable of being filled by the presence of the thought object by an intuition, according to Husserl's terminology. But it also does not mean complete emptiness [...]. It is only intelligible in the behaviors by which it is exercised. In the formal indication, there is a call to exercise the concept as a condition of the hermeneutic process of interpretation or of making explicit the possible content (p. 126).

This means that Heideggerian hermeneutics would act virtually as an epistemic funnel, in the sense that the ontological direction by which the world is looked at and in which the entities that aspire to be put in such a look are defined through it. If a metaphor were to be made with respect to this hermeneutics of facticity, the kaleidoscope figure would seem the most accurate.

The young Heidegger will designate *Dasein*'s interpretation of his own mobility in the world, in principle, as an interpretation centered on his downfall. It would be a movement oriented to glimpse the alienation that affects himself, and that, therefore, only leaves him in a possible original self-understanding. As suggested by Bedoya (2014), this categorical determination, which Heidegger calls *ruin*, is presented as a cardinal determination in the explicit conception of life:

However, for Heidegger, this ruinous movement, articulated in its own sense, is specifically, despite its declared relevance, only a categorical moment of [...] facticity. With this, the interpretation of the ruin that has been sketched throughout these pages presents an ambiguous character [...], since, although this is an inevitable way of concealment, according to the young teacher of Freiburg, it may be capable of an overcoming that to some extent depends on living one's own life (p. 106).

It is useful to recover the Heidegger's analysis regarding *Dasein* as the fundamental entity that originally implies his being-in-the-world. Indeed, in the lessons of the winter of 1929/1930, known as The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics (FCM), and without abandoning the notion of *Dasein* as the entity that is determined by the structure of *care*, i.e., as a *Dasein* occupied of an anticipate, being-already, and in-between, Heidegger proposes to develop an analytical of the *Dasein* anchored in something similar to a regional ontology.

The German philosopher is concerned to clarify how occupation, as a cardinal phenomenon of *Dasein*, could become radically conditioned by an ontology lacking the vitalist impulse that determines the very existence [*Existenz*] of *Dasein*. In ST Heidegger (2002) he said that: "Being-in-the-world essentially cared for, [...] it has been possible to conceive as *occupation* [*Besorgen*] being in the middle of the mind at hand, and as *request* [to be] with others, as coexistence appearing in the world" (p. 214). In spite of this ontological threat to *Dasein*'s phenomenology that would be a characterization of this being-in-the-world centered on a certain phenomenology of the artificial, or, of the machine or of the pure technology, Heidegger will not renounce a philosophy of the world as a whole.



In other words, what the philosopher of the Black Forest does by means of this hermeneutics of facticity is to provide *Dasein* with a solid argumentative formulation that, passing through a kind of ontological filter determined by the role of the useful (of the machine, of the technique or of the technology) in his mundane relationship with *Dasein*, corroborates not only the idea of the structure of care as the whole constitution of *Dasein*, but, in a very special way, that this idea to the possible artificial paths of the world of the *Dasein* implies paradoxically the staging from the hermeneutics of facticity itself.

This is what León (2009) refers to with the idea of original cover:

Heidegger argues that hermeneutic of self-interpretation is essentially determined by the fact that factual life is given in a distorted way, as it is always covering itself up. This cover is as original as the news that the original life has of itself. It is not an absolute cover-up, but a kind of disfigurement. That is what makes understanding possible. The problem with hermeneutics is to find an interpretation that dissolves this original cover. The hermeneutics of facticity begins by questioning hermeneutics to understand the being of the factual life (pp. 274-275).



What Heidegger has done in this first stage of his philosophical meditation -long before his radical and original question about technique-, is nothing other than to hermeneutically glimpse a threatening horizon in which *Dasein* could be capped, limited or condemned by the ontic conditions of his existence under reality.

This clarification has come precisely from the research of the *FCMs*, in whose notion of machine design seems to have been embodied. The technical world and the technological world to which *Dasein* is confronted, and which years later Heidegger will call *Gestell*, can be glimpsed in the proto-organic clarity of the phenomenon of the artificial. And this is not surprising, since in the same *ST* the philosopher already warned about this ontological imposition [*ontologische Zumutung*] coming from the very nature of *Dasein*:

Substantiality becomes the fundamental determination of being. Corresponding to this shift in the understanding of being, also the ontological understanding of *Dasein* enters the horizon of this concept of being. The *Dasein*, like any other entity, is also *really there* (Heidegger, 2002, p. 222).

Such technical-technological closeness requires a framework of a place in which the possible pragmatic relevance of the encounter between *Dasein* and this complexity of techniques and technologies (which is be-

fore the circumspective view) is determined in its own way, not by a spatial dimensionality, but necessarily by the phenomenon of occupation, i.e., by the forefront of the ontological experience of the property [*Eigentlichkeit*] of *Dasein*. This is, as effectiveness [*Faktizität*] of existence. As López (2021) envisioned: “Heidegger’s is not linked to a return to a supposed pre-technological natural life, but rather to find an authentic way to inhabit the world” (p. 151). This means that he has decided to transform the original sense of hermeneutic activity. This will no longer be conceived as a mere technique or art of interpreting texts, but as the heart of existing.

Flórez states (2005) about this conceptual movement of Heidegger:

[...] the path of hermeneutics is charted by understanding. With Heidegger comprehension ceases to be an accessory method to understand what appears obscure in the first moment, and becomes the fundamental characteristic of being-in-the-world. The task of epistemological legitimization of the sciences of the spirit, which once constituted the central point of hermeneutical reflection, is taken to the background with the conception of temporality as a fundamental feature of *Dasein* (p. 117).

As for Heidegger, it could not be otherwise. It should be remembered that *being Dasein* the entity that translates the very facticity of life, or more acutely, “[...] what is only in his Day and precisely in it; in his “there” every time, today” (Bercian, 1992, p. 437), the Heideggerian research, if it really seeks to understand the sphere of the experience in its intentional character, cannot replicate the circular deductive method of the tradition, not even the phenomenological model of its master Husserl.

The hermeneutics of Heidegger’s facticity must be a method characterized by the same existential determinations that affect the phenomenology of *Dasein*, pretending, as the German thinker states, that the method of unveiling the ontology of *Dasein* must be driven by the very way of being of this interpretation.

Ledesma (2021) says:

Phenomenology shows that life not only unfolds in the form of an intuition of real objects (perception), imaginaries (fantasy), ideals (judgment), etc., but also, as Husserl showed, in the form of intuitions of the categories of such objects [*kategoriale Anschauung*] and, as Heidegger adds, in the way of an intuition of the sense of the relationship between life and objectivity (lived / experienced) and of life with itself, in other words, in the way of an intuition of the sense reflected in the experience, intuition that he calls *hermeneutic intuition* [] [*meneutische Intuition*] (p. 247).

Another way to understand this intricate maneuver of *Dasein* is to corroborate that he understands only what he has already understood, resulting in a necessary circularity, since understanding himself is essential to *Dasein*, i.e., manifests itself as an existential structure of the being of the “there” [Da] (Pole, 2001, p. 82).

This radically interpretative activity of *Dasein*, shown by *ST*’s analytics, questions the continuity that the Teutonic philosopher will impress upon what could be understood as a certain phenomenology of the technique, a dimension strangely not discussed by the scholars of the young Heidegger. Moreover, all the totalizing meditation regarding the reaches, threats and impacts of the *Gestell*, are justified ontologically due to this kind of clivage in the hermeneutics of facticity, which represents the possibility of a distorted apprehension of the horizon of the *Dasein*. In this regards, León (2009) will propose:

Heidegger argues that the hermeneutic movement of self-interpretation is essentially determined by the fact that factual life is given in a distorted way, as it is always covering itself up. [...] It is not an absolute cover, but a kind of disfigurement. [...] The problem of hermeneutics is to find an interpretation that dissolves this original cover (pp. 274-275).

The philosopher Rivero Weber (2001) proposes, in terms of interpreting the world hermeneutically would be in Heidegger nothing more and nothing less than having a certain intimacy with him: “*We understand* it by the mere fact of being in the world: *we understand* why our way of being in the world, our stay in the world, consists in that: in understanding the world in which we live in a pre-theoretical way” (p. 91).

It was just stated that the path towards absolute analysis of the *Gestell* was possible only to the extent that Heidegger’s hermeneutics had a new way of seeing, understanding and being in the world. The argument, of course, is ontological, and has to do with the way in which this danger, which will finally represent in the late Heidegger the essence of the technique (in its much-discussed sentence), paradoxically adopts, in accordance with the ontological attributes of *Dasein*, a unitary structure of “being in the world”. It follows that what is new in Heidegger “[...] consists in seeing the being that we are as a being that is already in a basic ontological connection with the world, which guarantees a certain epistemological contact with it” (Rivero Weber, 2001, p. 92).

Thus, hermeneutic analysis will literally transform not only the way of being in the world of *Dasein*, but above all its way of knowing it. It is forced to live with the technical-technological determinations of



Globalization. Such an idea of overcoming the technical-technological is designated by Heidegger as *Gestell*, a sort of structuring mentality—it would be better said, claustrophobic—that does not allow *Dasein* to be free in the way of accessing the originality of being. The understanding of the world as *Gestell* limits it, defines it precisely in its technological potentialities [*technologisches Potenzial*]. Indeed:

What the device does is to make the machine do things [...] it is a system that is prepared to generate certain responses to certain inputs. This relationship between inputs and outputs is based on disposition. But, in turn, the device also disposes us to establish one and only one concrete relationship with it (Luna Alcoba, 2003, p. 60).

So the *Gestell*, i.e., the panorama of a world automated by calculating forces, turns out to be the essence of the technique. What remains now is to determine in what sense such a technical-technological structure could be considered a god or a demon. This ontotheological ambivalence seems to have an answer in the notion of bastard.



## Technology as a pedagogical bastard

If understanding technology, within the numerous possible definitions, as the science of the artificial, i.e., as a product of the human being devised with the intention of acting in his reality and modifying it according to his needs and interests (García-Córdoba, 2010, p. 16), then an approach that conceives technology as a device subordinated to a certain pedagogical approach will be naive.

What must be demystified is the version that establishes, very in relation to the challenges, problems and impacts caused by COVID-19 in educational structures worldwide, that pedagogical strategies succeeded or failed according to the way the technology was implemented in their respective platforms or repositories, beyond the approach or educational model it had occurred.

If going back to Heidegger, but particularly his perspective of the technical-technological mode that *Dasein* faces in modernity -a trace that, as said, is easy to follow in his text *The Question about Technique*—it is difficult to consider what is called technology, according to the secondary hypothesis that titles this section, as a bastard of pedagogy in a more general or even platonic sense. And this, as much as they insist on pointing out, as Amengual (2001) does, that epistemically pedagogy would

correspond to a discipline whose purpose is to specify certain techniques or technologies with a view to the purposes of education:

Undoubtedly, innovative technologies are technological works and as such, they are cognitive systems that give foundation for the construction of physical instruments or tools and for elaborating intellectual processes for using such tools. It is therefore necessary to distinguish physical instruments from knowledge systems that provide the basis for their construction and use (p. 8).

Gómez (2008) goes much further in an anachronistic idea of technology, suggesting the preparation of a kind of technological tool that strengthens or optimizes an orthodox concept of teaching-learning process:

All these assessments [...] demonstrate the need for continuous and permanent training [...] on the support of technological means in the development of their educational activities in which it is necessary to train users of these means [...] (p. 79).



Finally, there are approaches in which technology, as Educational Technology, would form a discipline by itself, practically without borders, neither from the paradigmatic nor from the interdisciplinary point of view, precisely with a view to the role focused on innovation, or at least with an important consideration of this concept so prevalent in universities that interact in the digital age.

This is what can be inferred from Prendes' observation (2018):

[...] the analysis of educational innovation supported by technologies draws us a space for practical application of Educational Technology that has no borders, a context in which Educational Technology supports its practical action and that in recent years appears linked to developments in telematics, computing, digital technologies, and networks. Educational Technology must be seen as an integrating discipline of knowledge that supports real innovation processes with technologies at any level of education and in relation to formal, non-formal and informal contexts (p. 8).

However, a more proper consideration of the connection between technology and pedagogy, if based effectively on a philosophical hermeneutics such as Heideggerian, and not on one of a religious or philological character, should execute what can be called "hermeneutic shift", insofar as it would be the phenomenological relationship of the human being with technology (with the technical or technological use available in the

field of what is immediately at hand) that epistemically seems to determine the scope, directionality and relevance of any educational approach.

Now, if one of the most recognized modern treaties in the field of the philosophy of education is followed, as is the text *Pedagogy* (1803) of Immanuel Kant, it is found in it a true system of education and the way to achieve it. True to his purpose of providing an unrestricted architectural form for each of the problems that bedevil reason (be it this political, historical, practical-moral, religious, aesthetic-teleological, gnoseological or legal), Kant does not hesitate to propose a scheme that encompasses in detail the prescriptions that modern man must apply almost in a catechistic way, certainly under the control of the State and its laws, but above all under the imperative of freedom and individual will.

Such synopsis is as follows:



*A) The general culture of the faculties of the spirit*, different from the special one. It aims at skill and perfection; it does not teach the pupil, but strengthens the faculties of his spirit. It is:

*a) or physical*, within which everything rests in exercise and discipline [...].  
*b) or moral*, it is not based on discipline, but on maxims. [...] He must always understand the basis and derivation of acts by the idea of duty.

*(B) The culture of the faculties of the spirit*. To this belongs the culture of the faculties of knowledge, of the senses, of imagination, of memory, of attention and ingenuity, as regards the *lower faculties* of understanding [...] (Kant, 1803, p. 17).

Seen in this way, education would be in Kantian view a mechanism that will allow society to achieve its purpose empirically, to the extent that the whole individual is prepared and fully instructed, even if education constitutes the biggest and most difficult problem that can be proposed to man (Kant, 1803, p. 3). And here comes a question that should be answered, if the idea is to argue that technology could not be the bastard child of pedagogy, simply because from a hermeneutic reception technology, technique or techno-science are, in fact, epistemic devices of universal scope and not artifactual applications at the service of a certain educational curriculum.

In fact, and following Kant's position on the idea of pedagogy, it is education itself, contrary to how it could have been assumed, which is defined as a technique and not as that model called to solve dogmatically or politically the cultural problems of a certain society or a part or elite of it. This is how Kant himself put it (1803):

Education is an art, the practice of which has to be perfected for many generations. Each generation, provided with the knowledge of the pre-

vious ones, can constantly carry out an education that develops in a proportional way and according to a purpose [...]. All education is an art, because man's natural dispositions do not develop by themselves (p. 3).

So, the reasonable thing is to go back to Plato. Indeed, if one notices in his comments about the role of pedagogy in the formation of people, it may be noted that both in him and in Kant what it is all about is forging a virtuous citizen - in the words of the Greek philosopher - or a responsible citizen - in the words of the Prussian philosopher. In both, moreover, education is coincidentally considered a *techné*, an art at the service of a higher good, which is none other than the consolidation of a State of good and exemplary citizens.

Virtue or responsibility, then, become from the perspective of both thinkers in the *thélos* of education, of an education that turned into a *techné* model for the rest of the activities that seek to cultivate the mentality of a free and virtuous citizen. Thus, education would be for Plato, and following Ballén (2010), a propaedeutic for the conversion of the human being into a just citizen and fit both to govern and to be governed:

For the Athenian thinker, education is not just any formation but one that prepares man from his earliest childhood for virtue, which makes him eager and loving to become a good citizen, who knows how to govern and be governed with justice (p. 53).

In other words, Plato's education introduces into the human being a higher way of life through the knowledge and practice of virtue, which in its highest degree will correspond to the access to the idea of Good. Good citizenship in the Greek philosopher seems to be rational knowledge of what it means to be a good citizen.

Returning to the perspective of the last Heidegger in relation to the danger that the *Gestell* represents as a "false uncovering" (of being) — or, in the words of Amaya (2015), as a framework with various functionalities that allows ordering, showing, supporting something, being functional, putting order, fitting, gathering various elements (p. 60) — it can be argued that in no way could the world of technology even be housed in the avatars of certain educational models. On the contrary, it is the same concept of education or pedagogy, of that space dedicated to the forging of citizen values in free and contemporary man, who seems to be trapped in this structure of "calculating thinking" (Ulloa, 2018, p. 11).

The following observation by Hernández (2020) is therefore worth considering:



One need only look at various situations in the contemporary world to reaffirm Heidegger's thesis: globalization, education, wars, the flow of information, entertainment, professionalization, advertising, political campaigns, etc., are currently strongly influenced by technology in such a way that an attempt to renounce it would not only be nonsense, but simply impossible (p. 44).

Next, it will be seen that the key that would allow a person to make his way through this technological war would be nothing but the meditative thinking itself glimpsed by Heidegger.

## Hermeneutics of facticity and technology as a possibility of a saving dialogue for current pedagogy



In his celebrated dialogue *The Republic*, Plato uses the allegory of the cave to illustrate to his disciples what is the technique of education.

As known, this story tells the fierce struggle between *doxa* and *episteme*, between darkness and light, between ignorance and knowledge; finally, between our demons (appearances) and our gods (essences). However, it is wrong to state that the purpose of Plato's Academy was simply the strengthening (gymnastic, rhetorical, musical, logical, mathematical) of those chosen or accepted.

Plato's educational philosophy was starkly political. He had to face the specter of the pseudo-education of the sophists and, therefore, show himself as deeply reforming all those vices that took the citizen of Athens away from other higher ends or, rightly, that brought him closer to an irreversible corruption.

In the Words of Valiente (2015):

Considering education as a transformative and changing instrument of human thought, could have been one of the reasons that led Plato to propose a reform of it in ancient Athens, as the only way for recovering a state in decline and corrupted, supported by democratic ideals that only reflected the division and latent ethical-political disease of its citizens [...]. The Platonic pedagogical model sought is the harmony of the human soul through an ironclad ethical-political education; [...] that acquires the virtue that corresponds to it (p. 42).

This comment goes right to the heart of Plato's pedagogical theory. It highlights the issue of the harmony of the soul in relation to a body that moves amid the problems of the political world. The soul, in this way, would be a kind of rudder that would contrast the rales of the physical



organ, ruled by sensations of the most diverse nature. The compass of this rudder—analogously, the GPS of this plasticity that the soul requires to lead itself along the virtuous road to the *zôion politikón*—can only be pedagogy as a technique, as a master key for accessing human virtues. As Aguilar points out (2011):

[...] it must be said that the ultimate foundation of education and technology lies exclusively in man, since we cannot speak of education, nor of technology without a social historical subject situated in a context in which he thinks, generates, transforms, builds and acts (p. 134).

In the framework of the hermeneutics of facticity, Plato's cave bears remarkable similarities with the calculative structure of the Heideggerian *Gestell*. Although both ideas respond to very different ontological configurations—both coincidentally, with the presence of a divine halo debated to the fullest by commentators—it must be agreed that the possibility of the *Gestell* acting as a kind of technological cave regarding the most authentic decisions of *Dasein* ceases to appear as a simple analogy to become an anticipation of a more primitive and original unveiling.

It seems that only by working hard to get out of the technological cave in which the *Gestell* has cornered him, is it possible that *Dasein* is heading towards an educational action primarily free and responsible, or, more in tune with the truth of the being. Thus Rivero Weber (2001) asserts: "When Heidegger speaks of heeding the call of being, he refers to the fact that we cannot understand what it means to be something - and not simply to be nothing - if we do not stop at certain fundamental questions" (p. 95), i.e., by not dwelling on them, we have come to relate to the world profanely.

In the long run, the technological habitat is not really the world of the artifact or the mere technological entity. The expression "world of technology" has its core in the word "world", in the sense that what defines the path of the *Dasein* or of the man chained in the platonic cave is nothing but the meditative thought capable of unraveling the plot and the threat of the *Gestell*, keeping as anchors the freedom and the light, extremely expensive words to Kant and Plato, as seen.

In this regard, Heidegger himself (1983) says in *The Question of Technique*:

Freedom governs the free in the sense of the enlightened, i.e., of the unconcealed. The event of uncovering, hence, truth, is what is in the closest and intimate kinship with freedom. All unveiling belongs to a shelter and veil (pp. 93-94).

And the similarities follow. In what sense? Not, of course, in the case of making the ontologies or gnoseology of one or the other thinker equivalent, a task incompatible with the very postulates of the hermeneutics of facticity, but resolutely in the case of revealing a dimension of the human being that until now had remained strangely hidden in the event of *Dasein*. This dimension or censorship of contemporary man is, of course, that of duty, or the distressing world of ethics.

A careful reading of *The Republic* allows to realize that Plato's educational intention is none other than that of representing the importance of education for the subsistence of the State. There is something akin to an imperative for the citizen to permanently assess the way of education he is molding his lineage (a good analogy would be that of the blacksmith like Hephaestus). This mandate is to not be carried away by common, by chance or by simple instructional delay. In Heidegger's nomenclature it would be said by the chatter [*Gerede*]. It is stated in *The Republic*:

First and foremost, the god commands the rulers to be nothing so good guardians and nothing so intensely guarded as that metal which is mixed in the composition of the souls of their children [...]. And if any of these [his own sons], in turn, are born with a mixture of gold, or silver, after valuing their value, they shall ascend them among the guardians or the guards, respectively, with the idea that there is an oracle according to which the State shall succumb when guarded by a guardian of iron or bronze (*Rep.* 415 b-c).

Custody, guardian, oracle... Are not these fundamental concepts of *The Question concerning Technology*? Is it not Heidegger himself who provocatively asks the reader about the end of this text with the following sentence: "For this [unveiling] allows man to intuit the highest dignity of his essence and enter it" (Heidegger, 1983, p. 102). And further on: "But what does the glance at the constellation of truth help us? We looked at danger and saw the growth of the savior" (Heidegger, 1983, p. 104).

Although not wishing to platonize Heidegger, it is unacceptable to avoid the interpretative concomitances of both philosophers regarding the final value of a possible hermeneutics of destiny as an unfulfilled path of *Dasein*.

It is not *Dasein*'s technological mode, or even his status as a project in the middle of the technological entity that warns of the interpretative confluence between Heidegger and Plato. What matters is to corroborate to what extent a "strong" interpretation of the *Gestell* as a hegemonic mode of technical reason over de-oculting meditation would allow, *noles*

*volens*, to access a possible reception of an essence of the technique beyond mere calculation or mere educative education.

The answer, hopefully connected with the Athenian philosopher, is given by Heidegger (1983) in the last pages of his book on technique: “The poetic brings the true to the brightness of what Plato calls in the ‘Phaedrus’ τὸ ἐκφανέστατον, which more purely shines. The poetic transessence [durch-wessen = transcends] to all art, to all concealment of the present in the beautiful” (p. 106).

Is it possible that the poetic, that which originally Heidegger says, seems to be destined to the salvation of the primitive maneuver of the unconcealment of the being, is also the area in which technology (the *Gestell*’s “death row”) maintains a mysteriously true relationship with the being, and, therefore, with the essence of man?

Could Plato be the thinker who shed light on Heidegger’s unveiling task of reversing the poles between technology and the world, and thereby determined a hermeneutics of facticity in which poetic unveiling paved the way to a saving pedagogy of original thinking?

For now, it is possible to stick to the very possibilities that *Dasein* has provided to unravel his surrounding world, or as Heidegger puts it so precisely in § 32 of *ST*, to refer to the interpretation [*Auslegung*], understood as the possibility of development proper to the project of understanding. Hermeneutically, then, and as Avila observes (2016):

In the original understanding, the *Dasein* “knows” what happens to his power-being and recognizes its possibilities (*ST* §31). “The projective character of understanding constitutes the openness of the there of being-in-the-world as the there of a power-being” (*ST* §31, p. 169). And as soon as he understands, he projects his being towards possibilities (*ST* §32). In this sense, “the *Dasein* can be understood immediately and regularly from his world” (*ST* §26, p.149) (pp. 100-101).

Thus, this immediate understanding of *Dasein* by itself, from his world, is impossible even to conceive without the triple condition of the asking. And, from it, the path from pre-comprehension to comprehension (the original direction of the hermeneutic circle) would reflect nothing but the original path from darkness to light, from the mind to the being of the entity, from the *Gestell* to the unobtrusive thinking.

## Conclusions

- Based on the structure of the hermeneutics of facticity, i.e., in the radical reformulation of ontology carried out by the first Heidegger, a more original understanding of the factual-historical relationship between world and technology is reached. Indeed, it seems that the role that each of these concepts plays in Heidegger's *Lebensphilosophie* makes the *Dasein*'s own world of life turn, in the sense that the technological phenomenon, founded on the ontological tension displayed by the *Gestell*, is imposed not as a pure and simple technological entity, but as a mode of ontological convertibility of the own *Dasein*.
- The fact that the same hermeneutics is revealed as the most obvious way of access to the facticity, shows that the possibilities of phenomenology as ontology could determine the phenomenon of the formation of *Dasein* anchored in its primitive relationship with the *Gestell*, and, destined to the event appropriating the present of truth.
- Pedagogy, as an intrinsically formative act, and based on Plato's reasoning regarding the necessary link that should exist between knowledge, protection, and model in the universal task of training a virtuous citizen, becomes a virtual technique at the service of a free and responsible citizenship.
- Paradigms, approaches or educational models, whatever they may be or pretend to be, must be understood as a sequel to a certain way of being in the world, the one that —the late Heidegger anticipates us— has its prequel in the possible clarification of the essence of the technique in the consciousness of modern man.
- The original relationship between hermeneutics and technology—with an ontological nod to Plato and an epistemic-political nod to Kant—has unexpectedly revealed itself as a saving relationship for a pedagogy centered not on how to instruct the citizen about what he should or should not know, but on the primitive and more authentic way of understanding himself.



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# CONTRIBUTIONS OF SOCRATIC MAIEUTIC TO DIALOGICAL EDUCATION

## Aportes de la mayéutica socrática a la educación dialógica

CARLOS ALBERTO VARGAS GONZÁLEZ\*

Universidad de Medellín, Medellín, Colombia

cavargas@udemedellin.edu.co

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9746-6058>

DORA PATRICIA QUINTERO CARVAJAL\*\*

Universidad de Medellín, Medellín, Colombia

dpquintero@udemedellin.edu.co

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5633-2424>

### Abstract

Education has a vast history that has made it go through different epistemological, pragmatic, and ontological positions, enriching its theoretical and practical heritage. Philosophy is, among others, one of the sciences in which education has supported to think on its being and doing. Especially, one of these currents basis is the philosophical thought on dialogue, which has helped to strengthen the trend of dialogical education both from its contribution and from its criticism, aspects inherent to philosophical reflection. However, this trend of education has not sufficiently considered the position of Socratic maieutic in its reflection. For this reason, this article aims to propose some elements for dialogical education from the study of Socratic maieutic, for which a qualitative approach and hermeneutic methodology is used. The main results of the research show that dialogical education broadens its horizon from the Socratic assumptions of maieutic in two aspects: in the first place, maieutic invites to recover the question and the ability to ask oneself, and, secondly, it demonstrates that knowledge, to be significant, must be a conquest and discovery of the student himself mediated by dialogue with himself, with others and with the other.

### Keywords

Maieutic, Socrates, dialogue, dialogical education, truth, question.

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\* Doctor of Philosophy, Master of Management, Public Accountant and Theologian. He is a research professor in the Public Accounting Program of the University of Medellín and a member of the accounting and public management research group.

\*\* Master in Finance, Specialist in Tax Management, Public Accountant, Business Administrator. She is a research professor in the Public Accounting Program of the University of Medellín and a member of the accounting and public management research group.

### Resumen

La educación tiene una vasta historia que la ha hecho transitar por diferentes posturas epistemológicas, pragmáticas y ontológicas, situación que ha enriquecido su acervo teórico y práctico. La filosofía es, entre otras, una de las ciencias en las que se ha apoyado la educación para reflexionar sobre su ser y su hacer. Especialmente, uno de estos sustentos actuales es el pensamiento filosófico sobre el diálogo, que ha ayudado a fortalecer la corriente de la educación dialógica tanto desde su aporte como desde su crítica, aspectos inherentes a la reflexión filosófica. Sin embargo, es evidente que esta corriente de la educación no ha considerado lo suficiente la postura de la mayéutica socrática en su reflexión. Por ello, este artículo tiene como objetivo proponer unos elementos a la educación dialógica desde el estudio de la mayéutica socrática, para lo cual se utiliza una metodología de enfoque cualitativo y de corte hermenéutico. Los principales resultados de la investigación muestran que la educación dialógica amplía su horizonte desde los supuestos socráticos de la mayéutica en dos aspectos particulares: en primer lugar, la mayéutica invita a recuperar la pregunta y la capacidad de preguntarse, y, en segundo lugar, demuestra que el conocimiento para ser significativo debe ser una conquista y un descubrimiento del propio estudiante mediado por el diálogo consigo mismo, con los otros y con lo otro.

### Palabras clave

Mayéutica, Sócrates, diálogo, educación dialógica, verdad, pregunta.

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## Introduction

Education is a science as old as the human being, and hence it has different perspectives in different times to achieve its goal. Education is continually relying on other sciences to bring them into the teaching and learning process, a situation that has enriched its theoretical and practical acquis.

One of the horizons from which the educational reflection has been nourished is that of the dialogue, a wide historical and epistemological position, since it is a topic of interest from different aspects of the thought such as psychology (Vygotsky, 1993) and philosophy (Buber, 1977; Gadamer, 1998; Habermas, 1992; 1999; Rawls, 2006; Taylor, 1993). From the point of view of philosophy, Plato's way of writing is classic, and in many cases his writings were done through dialogues, where one of his main characters was Socrates. Currently, from the philosophical point of view, there are three tendencies around the theory of dialogue, which are dialogic ethics, phenomenological tradition and hermeneutic tradition (Velasco and Alonso, 2009).

Education has benefited from these different strands of philosophy as far as dialogic reflection is concerned. In dialogical education, however, not enough attention has been paid to Socratic Maieutics. This does not mean that the Socratic "method" is totally forgotten in the learning process, as shown by the relevance given to it by Bakhtin (1981, 1984) in his thinking. Evidently, there have been both theoretical and empirical



research that account for the application of Socratic dialogue in formal education, showing its benefits and limitations (Sullivan *et al.*, 2009) and reflections on how to improve teaching and learning with Socratic educational strategies (Giuseffi, 2022a). However, little is studied in maieutics in education, and particularly in education or dialogic teaching.

This may be due to the fact that the Socratic method is not considered by some as really dialogic (Matusov, 2009), although this vision, if analyzed carefully, may be unfair with the nature of the Maieutics (Giuseffi, 2022b), without ignoring with it, as Bakhtin (1984) argues, that the Socratic dialogue was increasingly becoming Plato more in a way to share a monological vision of reality, the Platonic one, losing its objective.

However, this work does not intend to justify whether or not Socrates used the method properly, because it is well known that Socrates is known by the ethnographic role of Plato (Matusov, 2009), since he left nothing written, which is why the Socratic maieutics is transitioned from the intentionality of Platonic thought and worldview, particularly the conception of truth as Heidegger (2007) states in his book *On the essence of truth*, where he deals on the parable of the Cavern and the fruit of Plato, from his lessons of the winter semester of 1931/132 at the University of Freiburg.

Therefore, this research focuses on Socrates' description of the maieutics in Teeteto's dialogue (Plato, 1988), because, although it is common to speak of the socratic maieutics in a general way, it is in this text that its meaning and scope are explicitly exposed, as the scholar of the ancient philosophy Marcelo Boeri asserts in his introduction of the translation he makes of this dialogue (Plato, 2006). Once this description is made, it is intended to indicate the contributions of this Socratic method for current dialogic education.

This discussion is relevant given the new challenges that brings the knowledge taught to learn, because one of the ways the human being learns is through dialogue and it is precisely Socrates one of the thinkers who emphasized this way of teaching through his art maieutics. Today, it is required that education focuses its efforts on aspects that can be recovered from Socratic Maieutics, such as the promotion of critical thinking, since maieutics generates the ability for students to question and rigorously analyze knowledge. It also promotes communication skills, as this method motivates the student to express their ideas and views on a particular issue. Likewise, it fosters respect and empathy, because the diversity of points of view is valued to build together the truth.

The aim of this paper is to propose some elements to dialogic education from the study of socratic maieutics, using a qualitative approach

and hermeneutic cut, i.e., the main documentary source will be, on the one hand, the text of Teeteto, taking as a guide the translation made by Álvaro Vallejo Campos published by Gredos editorial (Plato, 1988), without neglecting other interpretations such as that of Marcelo Boeri (Plato, 2006) and that of Cornford (2007). In turn, this study is hermeneutical, particularly Gadamerian (Gadamer, 1998), starting from the conversational position to enrich horizons, i.e., it will enter to dialogue dialogic education with the socratic maieutics trying to find elements that this can contribute to that one.

The text has the following structure: some theoretical references of the philosophy of dialogue, of dialogic education and of the socratic maieutics are discussed; after that, the elements of the socratic maieutics that can expand the horizon of reflection of dialogic education are shown.



## Theoretical framework

In order to contextualize the contributions made by the socratic maieutics to the current discussion of dialogic education, it is necessary to delimit what is understood, firstly, by the philosophy of dialogue, secondly, by dialogic education and, finally, by socratic maieutics. Therefore, in this section, these concepts are developed using primary and secondary sources of the main thinkers involved in the development of these categories.

### *Philosophy of dialogue*

The philosophy of dialogue has had an increasing boom, without ignoring with it that the category is not new in philosophy, since it is well known, for example, the role that dialogue occupied in Plato's philosophy. Therefore, today we speak of a "re-emergence" of dialogue in philosophy, due to the reflection based on the dialogue of thinkers such as Habermas (1992, 1999) in his theory of communicative action, Gadamer (1988) in his thought on conversation and Rawls (2006) in his theory of justice.

González (2012) says that there is an idealization of this category not only in philosophy, but also in other human sciences and in the pedagogical, therapeutic and organizational intervention procedures. However, there is no "systematization" nowadays of this category, which is why Mendes-Flohr (2015), when analyzing the contemporary reception of Buber's philosophy, speaks of dialogue as a trans-disciplinary concept.

However, without ignoring the various aspects regarding this aspect of philosophical thought, it can be generalized saying that the phi-

losophy of dialogue is centered on the nature of the dialogue itself and the role of it in human life through communication and interaction. This thinking is based on the idea that the human being is a relational being.

Another issue that explain this category is its etymology, since the concept dialogue has the Greek particle *lóma* (*logos*), a rather controversial and polysemic term. However, as García Peña (2010) says, it is not possible to fall into the historical injustice of translating this word into Spanish for “rationality”, a translation that has prevailed in the West. It cannot be forgotten that it was Aristotle (1988) who argued that the human being is a being endowed with *logics*, i.e., capable of language, with all that this concept implies, which, among other things, refers to the person in its entirety and is what singularizes it making it different from other beings.

Dialogue has borne this historical injustice of translation as “rationality”, that is why Buber (1977)—considered one of the fathers of the philosophy of dialogue, not because he would have been the first to use the category, but because he was one of the first to argue the dialogic principle in the human being—argued that dialogue must be rethought, because this is not an accidental question to the person, but it is the one that makes it what it is and what it can become.

Buber argued that there were two ways to understand dialogue. On the one hand, according to the Jewish philosopher, there was the technical dialogue used as a means for a certain purpose, for example, in a commercial negotiation or in a political debate, without ignoring that it can also be used in the relationship with people, where an impersonal relationship is given and is treated as an object from which useful information can be obtained, without recognizing the other itself. On the other hand, there is the authentic dialogue, which comes from the meeting of two people open and willing to let themselves be transformed by the encounter. This type of dialogue “I-You” requires openness and disposition, overcoming the drawbacks of selfishness and objectification of the other as a mere instrument. Therefore, this type of dialogue gives real relationships, as long as it promotes empathy and mutual responsibility.

This Buberian conception of dialogue has influenced different fields, within which is the field of education, and which is relevant for the subject of this research, because the other in education should not be taken as an instrument, but must be recognized in their own circumstances, hence requiring the participation of teachers and professors with an attitude of openness to let themselves be carried away by the unexpected paths to which the authentic dialogue leads. These assumptions, among others, have encouraged dialogic education, which is the topic that will be discussed below.



## Dialogic education

Dialogical education reflects on dialogue from different points of view of knowledge to think about education both in its being and in its doing; therefore, the discussion about its origins goes from one side to the other. What is true, as argued by Mercer *et al.* (2019), is that dialogic education has its roots in the tradition of oral education, which is why Socrates is often credited as its creator. However, there are those who consider, like Maturov (2009), that the Socratic rather than dialogic practice was coercive and intimidating, and therefore could not be classified in dialogism itself.

When talking about the first explicit approach to dialogue in education, the Brazilian Paulo Freire (1970) is considered as a pioneer, since he proposes a dialogic theory of education, which has made him worthy, according to Fernández-Cárdenas and Reyes-Angona (2019), to be the most influential thinker in the historical development of dialogic perspectives in education in Latin America.

It is evident, then, that dialogic education is not an indigenous construction, since, according to Gutiérrez-Ríos (2017), there is influence from different thinkers. However, Lyle (2008) argues that the influence of Vigotsky and Bakhtin in any discussion that focuses on dialogue-based learning is undeniable, so these thinkers are references when addressing dialogic discussion in education. The literature alluding to these thinkers accounts for this.

In addition, as Asterhan *et al.* (2020) recall, dialogic education receives interest from other areas such as psychology, pedagogy, ethnography, linguistics and philosophy, which is reflected in the literature resulting from research on this particular subject (Maine and Čermáková, 2021). Indeed, the natural consequence of this proliferation of reflections on dialogic education is that there is a need for systematization.

Consequently, all this has led to attempts in recent decades to systematize dialogic education through works such as Burbules (1999), showing dialogue as a form of pedagogical communication; Wells (1999), based on the concept of the near development zone of Vygotsky; Mercer and Littleton (2007), who highlight the importance of dialogue for the intellectual development of children; and Alexander (2006), who highlights how dialogic teaching harnesses the power of conversation to stimulate children's thinking.

Likewise, we cannot ignore the joint efforts to deepen the subject as is the *International Handbook of Research on Dialogic Education*, directed by Mercer *et al.* (2019), as well as the publications of magazines dedicated



to reflect on this topic as *Dialogic Pedagogy: An International Online Journal*. All this accounts for the relevance of dialogic education today.

Particularly, a seminal reference on the subject is Alexander (2006; 2010; 2018; 2020), who assures that there is no single and consensual definition of what dialogic education is, which is consistent under the assumption of the liberality of dialogue. However, the author argues (2018), that there are elements that intertwine with a reasonable coherence from different perspectives of thought such as psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic, neuroscientific, philosophical and pedagogical. Therefore, trying not to limit that it is a characteristic of every definition, he argues that dialogic education connotes “a pedagogy of the spoken word that is manifestly distinctive based on widely accepted evidence and on discourses and assumptions that have much in common” (Alexander, 2018, p. 562).

Additionally, in a text where he talks about the essential points of dialogic education, Alexander (2010) clarifies three things of what dialogic education *is not*. Firstly, he argues that dialogic education is not only about speaking and listening, but also takes into account the integral approach of teaching and learning, based on research on language, learning, thinking and understanding. Secondly, he clarifies that it is not just communication skills. Finally, he asserts that it is not only a teaching method, but also a professional approach and perspective that requires a rethinking of techniques, the relationships that exist in the classroom, the balance of power between the teacher and the student and the way in which knowledge is conceived.

Indeed, the current interest in this educational approach is undeniable, reaching radical positions, such as Matusov’s (2009), who holds that all education is dialogic, for which it is required to differentiate between the ontological and instrumental approach in dialogic education. In this sense, it is important to remember the maxim of the German philosopher Gadamer (2001), who stated the following: “I believe that one can only learn through conversation” (p. 529), without claiming that he is a representative of dialogical education in the terms set out here, but who is, undoubtedly, a reference from hermeneutics when addressing the topic of dialogue.

It is also important to emphasize that this dialogic current in education is a direct criticism of the monological perspective, proposing a whole paradigm shift, becoming a challenge, according to Yang and Wang (2022), for traditional education based on the monism of meaning, the argument of authority and the hierarchical relationship between the teacher and the student.

Its effects are strong. As mentioned by Alexander (2020), there is evidence of how and why dialogic education is good for students and teachers and has been shown, according to Omland and Rødnes (2020), how conversations manage to create better scenarios of learning and reasoning, all based on the psychology of education according to which social interactions have an important role in learning (Yang and Wang, 2022). However, the problems of dialogic teaching (Sedova *et al.*, 2014) cannot be ignored either, especially when it is taken solely as a method (Alexander, 2010) or as an instrument (Matusov, 2009).

### *Socratic maieutics*

The description of Socratic maieutics will be taken from the Teeteto de Plato dialogue (1988), since according to Silva Irrarrázaval (2007) it is the work where more details are given about this art (τέχνη) of Socrates. It is necessary to know that this dialogue, as Zucca (2022) argues, is one of the most discussed and controversial in the Platonic *corpus*. Also, from the literary point of view, authors such as Vallejo Campos (2020) and González (2022), consider that this text is difficult to interpret, both from the dramatic point of view and from the philosophical point of view. However, thinkers such as Apicella (2021), Mársico (2021) and Romanina (2020) assert that it is a consensus of the Platonic dialogue, as questions knowledge (ἐπιστήμη), even Gerena (2008) says that Plato has abandoned his explanation from ideas and questions the approaches he had made to the subject of knowledge in previous dialogues such as the Menon or in works such as the Republic.

Therefore, it is important to note that Socrates' explanation of maeutics is within the framework of the question of why knowledge is. It is this question that opens and closes, in a way, the explanation of Socratic Maeutics, and it is significant that it is precisely in this dialogue on knowledge where the art used by Socrates to bring forth the truth is explained, which is an interpretative lens that must be left behind when addressing the subject of Maeutics in Socrates.

Socrates describes his intellectual midwifery art in the following fragments of the Teeteto: from 148e to 151d (Plato, 1988), fragments which in turn will be divided into five parts as follows:

*i. 148e. Evidence that Teeteto is pregnant:* After Socrates encourages Teeteto to find a definition of what knowledge is, he says the following to him: "I assure you, Socrates, that many times I have tried to examine this question, hearing the news coming to me from your questions. [...] I have

not ceased to be interested in it” (Plato, 1988, p. 186). From the above, Socrates observes that Teeteto is suffering from labor pains because he wanted to find a definition of what knowledge is. The philosopher asserts that Teeteto has the fruits within him: “You suffer the pains of childbirth, Teeteto, because you are not sterile and you carry the fruit within you” (Plato, 1988, p. 186).

This fragment shows that the art of maieutics, according to the Greek philosopher, starts from the assumption that the interlocutor is pregnant, i.e., has *the possibility* of giving birth and knowing, a situation that is not common to all people, since not all are pregnant. In addition, the figure of pain and fertility cannot be neglected, i.e., giving birth to knowledge implies, on the one hand, the capacity for gestation and, on the other hand, suffering to discover the truth.

*ii. 149a. Revelation of Socratic art:* Socrates tells Teeteto that he possesses the same art as his mother’s, he claims that he is Fenareta’s son, who is a well-known midwife, claiming that he practices this same art, and that it is something that many do not know about him, which is why they point out that it is absurd and perplexing to men. He insists on asking Teeteto not to reveal to anyone that he possesses this art.

In this part of the dialogue Socrates confesses Teeteto his art of maieutics, comparing it with his mother’s, i.e., helping to give birth. The confession made by the philosopher that few know his art, whose ignorance is the cause of the astonishment he causes in many of his listeners, is not a minor detail. In addition, the request of not telling anyone, shows that not all interlocutors are prepared for this.

*iii. 149b-150a Characteristics of midwives:* Socrates describes the art of midwives by highlighting particular characteristics: they cannot be pregnant or be of childbearing age, they are not exercised by those who are infertile, “because human nature is too weak to acquire an art in matters of which it has no experience” (Plato, 1988, p. 188), they can give drugs to speed up labor or to make pain more bearable, they help give birth to those who have a bad birth or cause abortion when they consider it more adequate, and they are skilled matchmakers because they know which man and which woman can unite to have the security of fathering the best children.

The characteristics of midwives are conditions for any application of maieutics to teaching, i.e., in this case, the side of the one who holds the art of helping to give birth to the truth and avoid opinion or error. One of the aspects that cannot happen so quickly is *the experience* of the person who exercises this art: you must have suffered the pains of giving birth to knowledge to help others do the same.





*iv. 150b-151b. Socrates describes his art:* Start by making the following comparison:

My art of giving birth has the same characteristics as that of them [midwives], but it differs in the fact that it assists men and not women, and examines the souls of those who give birth, but not their bodies. Now, the greatest thing in my art is the ability it has to test by all means whether what begets the thought of the young is something imaginary and false or fecund and true (Plato, 1988, p. 189).

In addition, he also maintains that he is sterile in terms of wisdom, and that for this reason he is accused of questioning others and that he does not answer any of the questions put to him. So, he says, no one learns anything from him, but what they do is find in themselves the beautiful knowledge they have acquired. It also detects which soul is not pregnant and cordially suggests that another person orients it. In addition, those who give birth to ghosts and not real fruits, make them aware of it by discarding what they gave birth to, even though it costs them anger, as it happens to midwives with mothers. He does so, he asserts, “because I am not allowed in any way to grant as true what is false, nor to have the hidden truth” (Plato, 1988, p. 173).

This fragment is crucial in the text because Socrates emphasizes his analogy on the characteristics of midwives and their art, ensuring that the most relevant thing of maieutics is to contrast in various ways whether the knowledge of their interlocutors is true or not. This is goal of maieutics, i.e., to serve as a “curator” of the knowledge that is given birth, for which it is necessary to be faithful only to the truth, which can bring with it dislikes that must be willing to face.

*v. 151c-151d. Invitation to Teeteto:* Socrates urges Teeteto to surrender to him to help him give birth, which is why he has to strive to answer everything he asks him, and not be angry if the philosopher considers that any of his statements do not obey the truth, because it is his duty to do so as midwife of the truth, since he is not “allowed to be forgiving with the false or obscure the true” (Plato, 1988, p. 192). After explaining the midwife’s art and his art of giving birth, he returns to the topic by asking Teeteto about what knowledge is.

Once the explanations of what is maieutics are made, the Greek philosopher returns to the topic of dialogue on knowledge, for which his interlocutor can spare no effort in answering all that is asked, i.e., the art of Socrates is in dialogue, so that his Teeteto can give birth to the truth.

The analysis of Socratic thought regarding the art of maieutics and what is dialogic education today serves as a platform to put in critical dialogue what Socratic art can contribute to this dialogic discussion in current education, which will be discussed in the next section.





## Contributions of maieutics to Dialogic Education

Despite the criticism that the Socratic method receives as a possible source for dialogic education (Matusov, 2009), it is considered that, based on the description of maieutics as an art expressed in the Teeteto dialogue collected by Plato, there are reasons to consider some points for dialogic education. On the one hand, it is relevant the art of asking what is evident in maieutics as a contribution to education, especially in the current era so marked, on the one hand, by instrumentalism and the argument of authority, and, on the other hand, by the eclipse of which the question is object in a way by Heidegger (1962) when he asserted that the question about the being was fallen into oblivion.

On the other hand, maieutics is enlightening because it recalls the protagonist role of the student in the learning process, because with this method students realize their potential (Muslikh *et al.*, 2022). In this sense, the contributions of the Socratic Maeutics to dialogic education that are highlighted in this section are, first, the recovery of the art of asking questions, and second, the memory that it is the student who builds and travels his own learning path.

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### Maieutics retrieves the question and the art of elucidating.

One of Socrates' merits is his ability to ask questions so that his listener could mention what was inside him. But this was not just a linear question-and-answer view. Socrates sought that his question aroused uneasiness (perplexity and amazement) in his listener, i.e., that the question aroused elucidating. The Greek philosopher says to Teeteto: "Surrender to me, I am the son of a midwife, and know this art by myself, and make every effort to answer whatever I ask you" (Plato, 1988, p. 192). It is evident that one of the ways to give birth to the truth is through the question.

Therefore, a first contribution of Socratic maieutics to dialogic education is to recover the question for the student to ask. Asking leads immediately to wondering, awakening that natural desire to know of which the Stagirite spoke beginning his *Metaphysics* (Aristotle, 1994). But it must be clarified that to know necessarily requires a question of substance, since "the question is reflection in action. What is it that raises that reflection? It seems to be linked to desire or intention" (Marcel, 1957, p. 144). This statement made by the existentialist philosopher Gabriel Marcel shows how the fact of asking is the way to reflection. The formulation of a question from the Socratic point of view is intended to try to

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internalize a certain topic in order to reach the truth; however, Marcel also states that the fact of asking, of reflecting, is linked to the intention of knowing the subject, which, according to Aristotle, is natural.

Thus, it can be assured that the question is part of the very essence of man. Philosophy is the daughter of the question. The classics knew that it was much more important to formulate a question than to formulate the answers themselves, because, in a way, every question is anchored in itself as part of the answer. Obviously, man is the only being able to question himself. Now, questioning is not something spontaneous—as one might think when claiming that it is common to every human being—but is a *human reaction*; a rejection or opposition to the evident or the everyday. The question is always the daughter of human dissatisfaction. The argument is simple: if the person experienced that the immediate and the obvious fully satisfied his desire, the questions would not fit and would not be necessary.

Indeed, the question is opposing what is given to the eye. Man, as a being dissatisfied by nature, will always wonder, this is clearly stated by Ranher (1979) in the following terms:

The infinite horizon of the human question is experienced as a horizon that goes farther the answers man is able to give himself. Man may try to leave in peace the terrible infinity to which he is exposed by asking, out of anguish at the terrible and may abandon what he knows and is familiar with; but the infinity in which he is framed penetrates also his daily action. In principle, man is always on his way. [...] man experiences himself as the infinite possibility, he always questions again in theory and in praxis every achieved result, he always moves in a wider horizon that opens to him without limits (p. 51).

The depth of the formulation of a question can be clearly seen here, even, according to the Rangerian argument, it reveals man's desire for infinity, no matter how convincing an answer may be, it is never fully satisfied. Along the same lines as the German theologian, Heidegger (1962) argued, from philosophy, the following:

All asking is a searching. Every search has its previous address that comes from what you have been looking for. To ask is to seek to know "what is" and "how is" an entity. Seeking this knowledge can become an "investigation" or release and determine what you ask. The question has, as to "ask for..." its reason. All "ask for..." is somehow "ask..." When asking is inherent, in addition to what you ask, a thing to which you ask. [...] What is interesting about this [the question] is that the question "sees through" itself from the first moment in all directions of the aforementioned characters of the question itself (p. 14).



A simple glance is sufficient to corroborate that no person escapes the ability to question himself, which may be hidden, and, to this extent, man is—as can be inferred from the heideggerian statement—a being in a permanent state of *search*, because every question throws into the future to try to *find* “something” that is equivalent to the greatness of the question. This could be said of all sorts of questions. Therefore, it is obvious that many questions are immediately satiated as such. But it is alluded, in a more general and therefore more humane way, to the ability to ask oneself. This ability is in continuous relation with the existential sense itself.

Therefore, the teacher has the task not only to ask for the dialogue to flow with and between students, but also to encourage their students to ask and, consequently, undertake that dialogue with themselves, that dialogue which, according to Gadamer (1998), Plato called to think, and which also Feuerbach (1975) reinforced in the following terms: “Man thinks, i.e., talks, speaks to himself” (p. 51). This is in line with dialogic education that does not intend to teach what to think, but mainly challenges to think (Teo, 2019). Indeed, it is not that the student is a passive subject waiting for someone to give birth to him, but that he also begins to dialogue with himself. For this reason, the challenge of education, from the perspective of Maieutics, is not limited only to a transmission, but also to awakening an interest in the interlocutor to know from his own worldview.

In this sense, the socratic maieutics reminds dialogic education the importance, first, of asking questions, and, second, of generating the capacity to ask questions, which is a very complex challenge nowadays because the human being satisfies his main needs with immediate things, such as, for example, consumption (Cortina, 2002), to the point of adding one more entry to the paraphrase of the fortunate Cartesian expression, arguing that “I consume... then I exist” (Cortina and Carreras, 2003).

Therefore, according to the Socratic Maeutics in dialogic education it is necessary to generate disagreements in students (labor pains). It cannot be forgotten that those who relate to Socrates, the philosopher argues, “suffer labor pains and are full of perplexity at night and in the day” (Plato, 1988, p. 191). The Socratic ability to baffle his interlocutors is something that is common in his different dialogues, whose characteristics, as Teeteto says, is “astonishment” or “stunning” (Plato, 1988, p. 202). Consequently, students must be confronted with their own truths and opinions, because at that very moment when the person enters that internal conflict between the real and the possible, between what is and what could become, is when the question arises and emanates the reason that Camus (1973) referred to: “One day the “Why” arises? And it all starts in



this exhaustion tinged with wonder. ‘It begins,’ that is the important thing” (p. 132). It is precisely this beginning that leads to the discovery of truth, which is what will be discussed in the next section.

### *Maieutics remembers that the student builds his own learning path*

The role of Socrates was to mediate, so he boasted, on the one hand, that he knew nothing, but, on the other hand, that those who related to him discover great things:

So, I am not wise in any way, nor have I achieved any discovery that has been engendered by my own soul. However, those who deal with me, although some seem very ignorant at first, as soon as our relationship advances, all make admirable progress (Plato, 1988, p. 190).

This is related to the Platonic way of conceiving truth as de-concealment or de-veiling.

Heidegger (2007), in his commentary on the parable of the Cavern and the Teetetus, expressed that “something true is a *ἀληφές*, something not hidden” (p. 22). Likewise, according to the Greek language, one of the meanings of the word truth is *αλήθεια*. Etymologically, the prefix “a” nullifies the denial of the root, which comes from the verb “*lantano*”, which means to hide; therefore, at risks of reductionism of any translation (Vargas-González, 2022), the truth is de-concealment, i.e., the maieutics helps to remove the veil of what the interlocutor has hidden. Indeed, what Socrates does is not tell what the truth is but mediate, so that his interlocutor discovers for himself and with his own efforts what is true. Therefore, learning in this case is its own conquest, which comes from within, which is why it is a learning that leaves its mark.

In this respect, the socratic maieutics is enlightening for dialogic education, especially because one of the great challenges of education today is meaningful learning, i.e., learning that does not violate what the person is and knows. From the perspective of maieutics, it is proposed that it is the student, through dialogue, who builds his knowledge, reason for which it is a conquest, the result of his own effort, and therefore learning can have, in addition to content, meaning.

However, it is evident that nowadays many people, especially those who are in the process of learning in formal education, are limiting themselves to receiving information without questioning themselves, i.e., they are giving up the reflective dimension, accepting what others say as truth, and settling for the explanations of reality given by others, falling into a common grayish uniformity, what José Ingenieros (2008) called mediocrity.

Therefore, in this aspect, maieutics has the challenge of bringing to light the truth (Doerr-Zegers, 2022), since its role is not to inform or transmit, so marked in traditional education, but to help uncover (unhide) through the art of dialogue, i.e., the teacher is a mediator and not the one who transmits knowledge. In this case the protagonist is the student who discovers and builds by himself thanks to the dialogic interaction with himself, with the other (the other students and with his teacher) and with the other (the world).

In maieutics, truth is constructed through dialogue. The dialogue presupposes an *ethos* oriented towards the truth (Vigo, 2001) and towards the recognition of the other as a valid interlocutor (Vargas and Cortés, 2017). There is one commitment to the truth and to the other. It is important to note that human beings create realities in dialogue with others. But the dialogue is not only given with words spoken or written, which would be a very narrow vision of the *logos* that moves man, vision that is the result of that historical injustice that is made with the Stagiritica when interpreting lightly the expression of the human being as a being endowed with *logos*. It cannot be forgotten that *logos* are manifested holistically in humans (Panikkar, 2003), even in silence, since, as Yourcarnar (2013) would say, “all silence is made of words that have not been said” (p. 31). The human being *is said* in everything. Not surprisingly, Heidegger (2000) asserted that “language is the house of being. Man dwells in his abode” (p. 11).

Therefore, a true dialogue is a challenge to the argument of authority because the teacher is not the one who possesses the truth but helps to discover it through the environment conducive to dialogue. Bakhtin (1984), commenting on the Socratic dialogue, asserts that “the truth is not born nor found within the head of an individual person, it is born between people who collectively seek the truth, in the process of their dialogical interaction” (p. 110).

Indeed, Socratic maieutics reaffirms the need to rethink the argument of authority, so marked in traditional education, and which, undeniably, has been a mechanism of power and alienation. According to Bakhtin’s interpretation (1981), the Socratic dialogue has a subversive view of authority. When education is based on the argument of authority, it easily becomes a meaningless education, and therefore leaves no imprint. In contrast, in maieutics the main actor is the student, who discovers by his own effort knowledge and therefore is an autonomous learning. One of the merits of maieutics is that it helps to give meaning to knowledge to the extent that the student is the one who creates and co-creates knowledge.



In this sense, one of the merits of maieutics compared to traditional education is that the student goes his own way and does not assume as true something because another says that it is true. As Nietzsche (2001) warned: “No one can build you the bridge by which you must walk on the current of life. No one except you” (p. 28). It is this autonomy deduced from the maieutics that makes the learning has meaning for the student and is his own conquest and not something that comes from outside. In maieutics, learning is autonomous and not heteronomous and that is why you can talk about meaningful learning. A passage from Plato (1986), criticizing the lyrics, gives an account of this, when he assures the following:

It is forgotten what they will produce in the souls of those who learn them, neglecting memory, since, noting what is written, they will reach memory from outside, through characters other than from within, from themselves and by themselves. So, it is not a memory drug you have found, it is a simple reminder. Appearance of wisdom is what you provide to your students, which is not true. Because having heard many things without learning them, it will seem that they have a lot of knowledge, being, on the contrary, in most cases, totally ignorant, and difficult, moreover, to try because they have ended up becoming apparent sages instead of real sages (pp. 403-404).



## Conclusions

There is now greater consensus that the teaching process is not limited to the transmission of content and learning to receive it (Reznitskaya, 2012). Velasco and Alonso (2008) argue that the interaction between the student and the teacher in traditional education has not been equitable neither in terms of time, since the teacher has more privilege when expressing himself, nor in terms of quality, because the relationship is always asymmetric. For this reason, a paradigm shift is required not only theoretical and ontological, but also pragmatic, i.e., that it really takes place in educational practice and goes beyond scientific research, and it is here where Socratic maieutics can hold ground for dialogic education, since it was an art that helped many to build knowledge in its time, despite the criticisms.

In order to understand the contribution that maieutics makes to dialogic education and not fall into anachronistic injustices, it cannot be lost from the interpretative view that Socratic maieutics is circumscribed within the Platonic worldview, which has demarcated intentions and widely analyzed by research. One of them is the conception of truth, which according to González Arocha (2021) is quite complex in postmodernity,

due to the appeal to fragmentation and weakness in thought (Ramírez *et al.*, 2013). However, Alexander (2019), speaks of dialogic pedagogy in the world of post-truth, and Schutijser De Groot's (2022) exposes how to face post-truth from a neoaristotelian foundation of education.

On the other hand, based on Socratic philosophy, there is a call to recover the great human questions and not only the technical and instrumental questions so marked in traditional education. Education, in many scenarios, has been dedicated to transmitting and cultivating knowledge that, although valuable, is not enough for a human being crowded with existential searches that are not exhausted by the technical and scientific answers. Education seems to relegate in many contexts, as Frankl would say (2015), that man is in search of permanent meaning, and not only of knowledge. In fact, to take a specific example in the university field, a profession is a life choice that responds to a search far beyond some knowledge that will enable the world of work or science.

This may be due to the rule of instrumental rationality in education in the teaching and learning process that is increasingly orienting instruction and training to develop or strengthen competencies, which is leading to have technically very competent people, but with a great debt to *the sense* of what *they do* and what *they are*, relegating this search only to basic and middle education because it is not within the training plan.

All this can be countered by an adequate vision of dialogue in education, without ignoring today's dialogic crisis, argued, among others, by Gadamer (1998) and Ratzinger (1970). This implies that dialogue is not considered an instrument, since a question that must be overcome in dialogic education is to think of language as a tool, because all instruments become oppressors, and Freire (1970) remembered that one of the characteristics of dialogue is to be a transformative art, because "there is education where there is dialogue" (Vergara Henríquez, 2022, p. 171).

All these risks are, in a way, counteracted by the Socratic experience of Maeutics in dialogic education, as described in this research, because, on the one hand, it helps to recover the art of the question and the existential sense of asking, and, on the other hand, it collapses the verticality of the argument of authority in the spaces of learning, looking for more symmetrical and horizontal relationships that really generate significant knowledge capable not only of technically forming but also of throwing those existential questions that remind the student that he is an avid being of sense.

Obviously, with issues that are applications of techniques, for example, with professions that have a high instrumental component in their





*work* rather than in their *being*, the proposal of maieutics may have more limitations, because, for example, when what is required is to apply a rule or the guidelines of a regulation in a learning scenario, it is more challenging to carry it out. For this reason, teachers play a very important role in maieutics, with their willingness to listen, something quite forgotten, and which is essential for recognizing the other as a valid interlocutor. Therefore, in any scenario, even in the most technical, teachers must promote scenarios of dialogue, an issue that in many cases is not an easy task, because, in socratic terms, the soul unveils with language, and nudity always generates shame.

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# THINKING PEDAGOGY AS PSYCHAGOGY IN THE LATE FOUCAULT

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## Pensar la pedagogía como *psicagogía* en el último Foucault

JUAN EMILIO ORTIZ-LEONI\*

IECH-CONICET, Rosario, Argentina

[juane\\_ortiz@hotmail.com](mailto:juane_ortiz@hotmail.com)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7213-3265>

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### Abstract

The ideas of Michel Foucault have had a great influence on education. Studies on disciplinary society have become an unavoidable reference for understanding the dynamics of the educational institution. However, this influence often remains limited to his critical and a deconstructive approach, without adequately exploring the propositional aspects and constructive influence of his theory. This present work is based on the hypothesis that Foucault's latest studies provide a solid conceptual framework that goes beyond mere criticism of power relations, offering relevant insights applicable to the field of education. Following this line of thought, the current proposal will explore key concepts from Foucault's late thought, including the regime of truth, practices of the self, psychagogy and parrhesia. These concepts will help trace the importance of Foucault's latest work in relation to educational tasks. This work invites us to demonstrate the power of philosophy, not only in questioning entrenched structures but also as a motivating force for ethical transformation processes and possibilities for invention within individuals' life fabric. In summary, the argumentation will demonstrate that Foucault's interpretation of both stoic philosophy and cynicism, through the notion of parrhesia, provides clear guidelines that can be applied to pedagogical work and the teacher-student relationship.

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### Keywords

Foucault, education, pedagogy, relation of self, psychagogy.

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\* Professor and graduate in philosophy from the National University of Rosario. Doctorate in Philosophy from the same institution. IECH-CONICET Doctoral Fellow. He worked as an administrative employee in the Judiciary of the Province of Buenos Aires. He currently teaches philosophy classes at the secondary and higher levels.

### Resumen

Las ideas de Michel Foucault han tenido una gran influencia en las ciencias de la educación. Los estudios acerca de la sociedad disciplinaria se han convertido en una referencia ineludible para pensar las dinámicas de la institución escolar. Sin embargo, esa influencia a menudo se reduce a su enfoque crítico y deconstructivo, sin elaborar adecuadamente los aspectos propositivos y la influencia constructiva que su teoría puede ofrecer. Este trabajo parte de la hipótesis de que los últimos estudios del filósofo brindan un marco conceptual sólido que va más allá la mera crítica hacia las relaciones de poder, aportando intuiciones relevantes para aplicar al campo educativo. Siguiendo esta lógica, en la presente propuesta se explorarán algunos conceptos claves del pensamiento tardío de Foucault: *régimen de verdad*, *prácticas de sí*, *psicagogía* y *parresía*. Estos conceptos permitirán rastrear la importancia de los últimos trabajos de Foucault para pensar la tarea educativa. Dichos trabajos invitan a considerar la potencia de la filosofía, ya no solo para cuestionar las estructuras sedimentadas, sino también como una fuerza motivadora de procesos de transformación ética y posibilidades de invención para la trama vital de los individuos. En síntesis, la argumentación permitirá mostrar que la interpretación que el filósofo realiza tanto de la filosofía estoica como del cinismo —a través de la noción de parresía— proporciona pautas claras para aplicar al trabajo pedagógico y a la relación docente-alumno.

### Palabras clave

Foucault, educación, pedagogía, relación de sí, psicagogía.



## Introduction

This work arises from the author's doctoral research on the late work of Michel Foucault and his experiences as a teacher at the secondary and higher levels. The combination of both activities has allowed identifying that Foucault's latest studies offer relevant elements to reflect on education. However, it has also been observed that its application is little explored and studied. The main objective of this work is to contribute to this line.

Michel Foucault's influence on pedagogy is well known. The philosopher developed a critical approach that has contributed to understanding the dominant assumptions of modern normalist education. His studies about disciplinary society have become a *typical ideal* reference (in the Weberian sense of the term) to think the foundations of the school. These ideas have been pivotal, since they have made it possible to question hierarchical and normalizing pedagogical modalities that reproduced the prevailing power structures. However, this influence is usually reduced to its critical and deconstructive aspect without being able to adequately size the proposed aspects and the constructive influence of his theory. For this reason, this paper starts from the hypothesis that the latest studies of the philosopher provide a solid conceptual framework to exceed the criticism towards power relations, developing relevant concepts to extend to the educational field. In these studies, the philosopher favors a turn on his previous work that allows us to think about the func-

tion of truth, not only as a denunciation of the effects of domination, but also as a motivating force of transformation processes for the vital essence of people. There is an experiential dimension that Foucault finds in the ancient philosophy and that is opposed to the pedagogical modality heir to the modern tradition. The philosopher's interpretation of both Stoic philosophy and ancient cynicism allows to frame this distinction. Hence the importance of studying these concepts and their feasibility to improve current educational practices.

Based on the above, the work presents the following structure. Firstly, it will show the way in which the Foucauldian reflection on power has impacted educational studies. Then, this critical dimension will be articulated with the turn propitiated by his last studies, exposing some of his main concepts: *regime of truth*, *practices of the self*, *psychagogy* and *parrhesia*. Based on these, the idea is try to extract clear guidelines to apply to the pedagogical work and the teacher-student relationship. Also, to offer some suggestions to extend these philosophical assumptions to current teaching.

## Foucault's Influences on the Pedagogical Discourse

The influence of Michel Foucault's philosophy in the educational field is indisputable. His ideas have become a *typical ideal* reference to think of the school as an institution and its effects on the social fabric. Foucault's theory has at the same time made it possible to understand and question the rationality, objectives and aspirations of the modern school<sup>1</sup>. Thus, the impact of the philosopher on pedagogy can be traced in two well-defined aspects. Firstly, from his ideas about the link between knowledge, power, and normalization, and secondly, in relation to his description of the disciplinary society. Both aspects are closely linked and have contributed to promoting various movements and renovations in the settled web of educational practices (among others: legal, criminal, mental health, social assistance, etc.).

In broad terms, Foucault could be placed in the spiritual universe of thinkers who promoted pedagogical *reproductivism*, among whose main exponents are Althusser, Bourdieu and Passeron. Indeed, as Puiggrós and Marengo (2013, p. 71) indicate, these thinkers have highlighted the role of education as part of the ideological apparatus of the States and as a reproduction instrument of social structures in the hands of the dominant sectors. While Foucault will maintain his objections to the notions of ideology and structure as will be shown below, he shares some developments

typical of the French scene of the 60s, which tended to think of social institutions as strategies aimed at increasing power and domination<sup>2</sup>.

Beyond this coincidence, Foucault is irreducible. It is not easy to classify him in any school of thought, an issue that he resisted permanently. To analyze the impact of his ideas on education and to evaluate the importance of the last section of his work, it is necessary to briefly review the relationship that the philosopher established between knowledge and power. To make a brief characterization of the archeological-genealogical thought of the author is not a simple task, but it could be said that the French was a thinker who tracked historical traits outside of any *a priori* essentialist, either transcendental or transcendent. Following this line, he has emphasized the importance of maintaining a historicist apriorism that, through a thorough analysis of historical archives, allows us to recognize what he called *speech*. By that term, the philosopher referred to a regime of truth under which, in a specific time, the game of the true and the false, the normal and the abnormal, the acceptable and rejectable, etc. is thought. The historian Paul Veyne, friend and close collaborator of Foucault, synthesizes in a very didactic way the implications of the notion of *speech* in Foucauldian reflection. Veyne says:

Speeches are the spectacles through which, in every age, men have perceived things, have thought and acted; speeches are imposed on the dominant as well as on the dominated; they are not lies invented by those to deceive them and justify their domination. 'The regime of truth is not simply ideological or superstructural; it has been a condition of the formation and development of capitalism' (Veyne, 2014, p. 37).

Thus, the notion of discourse refers to a relational logic of analysis that ties together what is thought, what is believed and what is done in a society. For Foucault, the effects of discourse unfold independently to a superstructural position. The central thing here is that a certain conception of truth leads to the foundation of a duty and, therefore, to the deployment of practical actions on the conduct of others. For this reason, power is not only coercive, it is not limited only to imposing and suppressing, but it is affirmative. In Foucault's terms: "what makes power to be accepted, is simply that it does not weigh only as a force that says no, but in fact goes beyond, produces things, induces pleasure, forms of knowledge and produces speeches" (Foucault, 1992, p. 193). Thus, being founded on this regime of discourse, power relations are articulated with the beliefs that individuals make about the ends towards which they should lead their lives<sup>3</sup>. As Foucault suggests, power is thus defined as an



action exercised on another action, and becomes visible in attempts or the likelihood of conducting another behavior (Foucault, 2001, p. 253). Thus, the famous link between knowledge and power, a knotting initially developed by Friedrich Nietzsche, which Foucault was responsible for deepening and extending into new fields. In this sense, any idea about a necessary origin of the entity conceals effects of dominance that must be unveiled and questioned. At the origin of things lies nothing but the folly or chance of certain struggles. The problem is that this origin - relational and haphazard - is often lost sight of. Consequently, the effects of those events are naturalized and function as unquestionable truths.

Foucault shifted his theory of power from what was initially thought in more warmongering terms (his own Nietzschean period) to a government of liberties<sup>4</sup>. However, the underlying methodological and ontological question, which is tied to knowledge and power, and which explains the consolidation of a duty according to the demands of a regime, remains relatively constant in Foucauldian concerns. For this reason, in one of his last courses, Foucault stated that the eminent task of his philosophical commitment is to show the lack of need for all power:

If the great philosophical course consists in introducing a methodical doubt that puts all certainties on hold, the small lateral and counter-lane course I propose is to try to intervene in a systematic way, not because the suspense of all certainties, but the lack of need of all power, whatever it may be (Foucault, 2014c, p. 99).

Now, this historical and relational analysis led him to show the knots between knowledge and practices for different times, highlighting that knowledge, subjects, institutions, laws, ways of punishing and educating, are not transhistoric entities, but effects of socio-political relations in a given time. This way of reflection implies a method that tries to start from the inheritance of modern knowledge, but to exceed it and generate new inventions from it. The dichotomies generated by modernity, such as the exclusionary relationship between individual and community, normal and abnormal, etc., deserve to be rethought.

For this reason, Foucault (1996, p. 109) proposed a way of reflection that could think about the reciprocal relations that occur between the axis of knowledge, the axis of power and the axis of ethics. Through this method, the philosopher has described in an unparalleled way what he called *disciplinary society* in which the main institutions that still govern our life experience emerge. Organizations such as the State, prisons, schools and mental health institutions have emerged during this period

analyzed by Foucault with a specific objective: to promote the control and docility of individuals and populations. While in the Middle Ages political regimes were indifferent to the meticulous control of individuals and did not mind killing or dismembering them when they challenged the power of the monarch, the new capitalist production regime will require the care and proliferation of life, as well as strict control of the times, actions, and capabilities of people.

Thus, a set of institutions that aim to increase the knowledge and organization of the faculties of the person to achieve their normalization and effective insertion in a society arises. Following this logic, Foucault calls these methods disciplines that allow the careful control of the operations of the body, which guarantee the constant attachment of the forces and impose a docility-usefulness relationship” (Foucault, 2009, p. 159). The school will be among the main institutions that have this purpose of forming the necessary *habitus* to capture the energies of the person. It can be said that Foucault has managed to highlight the strategic nature of the institutions and their link with certain political relations. The philosopher has succeeded in ensuring that the intentionality of power that lies in the functioning of these institutions is considered.

From there arises the great impact of his work to think about educational issues, an influence that can be seen in two well-defined aspects. The first is a description of these institutions for a better understanding of their objectives and strategies. The sociologist Tenti Fanfani (1999, p. 44), for example, uses Foucault as a *typical ideal* reference to understand the emergence context of the school institution through which the educational phenomenon is concretized in modern Western societies. And the other aspect refers to its critical imprint, because analyzing historicity in the knot that make up knowledge and power, Foucault’s philosophy has managed to move naturalized budgets of pedagogical discourse. As Adriana Puiggrós and Roberto Marengo (2013, p. 79) argue, Foucault provided “from his methods, both archeological and genealogical, a logic of theoretical production and a possibility of settled and naturalized practices of social life among which are educational practices”.

Nevertheless, while considering the movements promoted by Foucault’s theory, Inés Dussel (2005, p. 183) traces some aspects in which his ideas have generated a new crystallization or stabilization. His theory about the political nature of institutions and knowledge has become a kind of *cliché* or commonplace used without properly sizing all its implications. Consequently, the Foucauldian position regarding power rela-



tions has led to a certain paralysis in the face of educational action that has been commonly interpreted as a pedagogical abstention:

To claim that the teacher always exercises power over the students, that the exams are disciplinary institutions and that authority always involves a danger led some to pedagogical abstention or to suspect any and all intention to educate. Even if suspicion about the motives that lead us to educate is well founded (as Philippe Merieu ironically points out in *The Option to Educate*), it would be worth stopping and thinking if what Foucault was proposing was an abstention (Dussel, 2005, p. 186).

This paper will try to develop from this idea proposed by the author at the end of the quote. Next, Dussel mentions a famous interview by Foucault in which the philosopher points out that it is necessary to distinguish power relations from domination relations. The former concerns forms of influence that are not bad in themselves. According to this logic, Foucault points out: “I do not see where evil lies in the practice of someone who, in a given game of truth and knowing more than another, tells you what to do, teaches you, transmits knowledge, communicates techniques. Rather, the problem is to know how these practices will avoid the effects of domination” (Foucault, 1999, p. 413). The aim will be to take this line a step further and think around the ideas of the last Foucault in order to show that his theory not only rejects a pedagogical abstention but suggests an effective method to relate it in a transformative way with knowledge and educational institution.



## Education and the Real Regimes

One of the main contributions of the last Foucault aims to establish a new relationship between the individual and the truth. While in his previous reflections the philosopher was oriented to a description of the power effects generated by truth, here there is a small twist that, without ignoring the material and political dimension of knowledge that intends to enhance the modification produced by truth in individuals and society. In the course he taught in 1980 entitled *The government of the living* (2014c) Foucault coined the concept of *allergy* to refer to the relationship established between government and truth. This concept is similar to the category of *speech* as defined above. Through this idea, Foucault will insist that the task of government does not depend so much on utilitarian and normative mechanisms but is closely linked to a more general regime of truth. The notion of *regime of truth* allows us to consider that the bond

of government is not based solely on laws, prohibitions or ideologies that condition a subjective entity established beforehand. On the contrary, a regime is constituted through a set of legal and political relations that are immanently intertwined with the life of the individual. Here we can see that relation between knowledge, power and ethics characteristic of Foucault's last texts and on which the argument of this work will revolve. For this reason, the last section of Foucaultian work is oriented to think about a new relationship of the individual with the truths that constitute him. What is interesting is to notice the dynamics of a complex and circular process that leads to reflect on the interrelation between some legal typologies, the formation of individuals and the conformation of interpretation matrices of reality that are established as a framework of dominant transparency to appreciate reality. Foucault accounts for this process when he describes how people are bound to a specific way of reproducing certain truths:

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This regime of truth, by which men are bound to the need to manifest themselves as objects of truth, is linked to political regimes, legal regimes, etc. In other words, the idea would be that, from the political to the epistemological, the relationship to be established should not be in terms of ideology, nor in terms of utility. It should not be done through notions such as law, prohibition, repression, but in terms of regime, of regimes of truth articulated with legal-political regimes (Foucault, 2014c, p. 125).

Thus, there is a submission to the force of truth that does not originate in the positive content of knowledge, but functions as an underlying assumption or a framework of transparency that becomes too familiar. In this point, it is not a logical deduction that connects premises and conclusions within a reasoning, but rather the acceptance of rules that are not problematized, similar to what happens with a statement of faith. It is in this constitutive dimension of truth that the actions of government are deployed.

This conceptualization of *truth regimes* has great relevance for pedagogical reflection. Indeed, educational action is one of the main social mechanisms involved in the consolidation and reproduction of such a regime. The issue is that there are paradoxes that are usually the reason for reflection of the theorists of pedagogy. Education must prepare to enter the labor market but must at the same time develop a critical awareness of the excesses, challenges, miseries, and inequalities caused by a given productive system. It must also train citizens to perform in society, following criteria of respect for morality and current legislation, but, at the same

time, it should develop critical minds against a dogmatic and exclusive morality and encourage people to cross limits on it. As Álvarez González (2006) points out, the task of educating is always deployed from a world view, a category that could compose effectively with the notion of *regime of truth* in Foucaultian terms. The problem is that such a worldview may reinforce prevailing views. For this reason, as the author points out, educating with justice involves doing so from the permanent interrogation of this vision and the institutions responsible for giving it concrete form:

The worldview we are in tends to coincide with the worldview we choose, but such coherence is not indispensable. The educator can break with the vision in which he lives and not under a perspective that goes from worse to better. In short, the world visions are not because there is a discourse that supports it; instead, there are educational practices that reveal its emergence and persistence. For this reason, it is not enough to have a world view in our strategic plans. We need to review the practices of our institutions (Álvarez González, 2006, p. 106).

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The question that arises is which tools and concepts must be used to base interventions in this regard. As will be shown below, the latest studies by Foucault offer tools to perform scans and modulations for this purpose. His entire philosophy aims to show the historical contingency on which these world views are based. The difference is that, in his recent studies, Foucault seems to emphasize not only the critical dimension towards naturalization, but also the possibilities of constitution of individuals. The same rationality that can show the lack of need for all power and the historicity of all identity, can guide ways of life and stylization of existence that live up to that truth. In this sense, the reflection on the *techniques of self* and *psychagogy* offer methodological richness to think on this purpose. Given their importance to transform the link that the individual establishes with the truth, it is possible to make relevant modulations to think about educational phenomena.

## The athlete of the event: a way to rethink the link with knowledge

As mentioned, Foucault's latest studies aim to establish a new relationship of the individual with the truth. His interest in classical philosophy offers innumerable proof of this situation. For the ancients, the knowledge of the world was not intended to gather objective and instrumental information to provide themselves with the knowledge of the world. When

defining the arts of existence in antiquity, Foucault establishes differences with the pedagogical modality that is established in modernity. Unlike this conception, in antiquity, knowledge and information about the world were thought as factors capable of promoting transformations in the relationship of the individual with himself. The ancient art of living proposed a change in the experience modality of the subject, a question that is distinguished from a purely utilitarian know-how. Foucault Says:

Nowadays, no one would dare to write a book about the art of being happy, the art of not letting oneself be carried away by anger, the way to have a quiet life or achieve happiness, etc. (...) There is undoubtedly an art of behavior in societies like ours, but it has completely lost its autonomy. Now, these models of behavior are, of course, invested, disguised within the great, imposing and massive pedagogical practice (Foucault, 2020, p. 43).

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There is a reason why Socrates claimed that those engaged in philosophy could not commit acts of injustice. This reason was related to the fact that knowledge about the world must transform our attitude towards it, generating changes both individually and collectively. Following this logic, Foucault points out that in the Greco-Roman *culture of the self* when the relationship between subject and knowledge is raised, it is discovered: “the need to modify the knowledge of the world in such a way that assumes, for the subject, in the experience of the subject, a certain spiritual form and value for the salvation of the subject” (Foucault, 2014, p. 304).

In his course at the *College de France* in 1982 entitled *Hermeneutics of the Subject*, Foucault analyzes Hellenistic philosophy in detail to show this difference with modern knowledge. Knowledge there acquired the dimension of a kind of transformative exercise, able to stimulate the autonomy of the individual, to promote a self-made with that knowledge and to connect it intimately to the singularity of each one. This autonomy does not imply losing the dimension of the relational links with others, since conceiving an entity in this way is impossible in the perspective of a thinker like Foucault.

The concept of *Athlete of the event* synthesizes very well this practical dimension that enables the link with knowledge. In the following, readers will notice how interesting is the conceptualization about the athletic dimension that was linked with knowledge. Through the *meditations* of Marcus Aurelius, for example, Foucault analyzes that the art of living in ancient times was assimilated to a sporting art or an art of struggle. Fou-

cault says: “The art of living is more like struggle than dance, in the sense that you always have to be on guard and stand up against the blows that fall on us and suddenly” (Foucault, 2014, p. 308). And a little further down he describes the *athlete of the event* as follows: “In essence, the athlete of ancient spirituality must fight. He must be prepared for a struggle in which his adversary is everything that can come to him from the outside world: the event. The ancient athlete is an event athlete” (Foucault, 2014, p. 308). For this reason, the connection with knowledge was conceived as a *work on itself* and aimed to strengthen an *Event Athlete*, an individual capable of developing rational behaviors that allowed him to overcome different adversities:

What is this equipment (paraskeue) made of? The equipment which must be provided, and which makes it possible to respond as soon as necessary and by means which are both simpler and more effective, consists of *logoi* (speeches). By *logoi*, it is not enough to simply understand an equipment of propositions, principles, axioms, etc., that are true. One must understand discourses as they are materially existing statements. (...) the athlete is, therefore, the one who provides himself with phrases that are actually heard or read, remembered, repronounced, written and rewritten specifically by him. They are the lessons of the teacher, the phrases he heard, the phrases he said, that he said to himself (Foucault, 2014, p. 309).

Here, it is necessary to clarify that another essential presupposition of modern knowledge is to assume that subjectivity is a kind of entity given beforehand. The French typifies this assumption as a “Cartesian moment” (2014, p. 36), since, according to Descartes, the subject was the only thing that could remain alive in the sea of doubt. At this point, Foucault seems to be interested in the practices of the ancient self, through which it is possible to notice that the fact of lacking essence, does not prevent the relationship of the self from being stylized and cultivated in the best way possible. For this reason, the study of the ancient *practices of the self* allows to show some possibilities of constitution and transformation of individuals. Unlike the pedagogical modality that establishes modernity, in the ancient arts of existence “it is about allowing the individual to acquire a certain ontological status that opens a modality of experience qualifiable in terms of tranquility, happiness, beatitude, etc. Modification of being, transition from one ontological status to another, opening of modalities of experience” (Foucault, 2020, p. 47). Thus, everything seems to indicate that in this conceptualization carried out by Foucault, the link



with knowledge points to an ethical shift that is fundamental and aims to question the truths and forms of valuation naturalized by the individual.

For this purpose, it is sufficient to analyze the way in which the Frenchman recovers some philosophical exercises proposed by Marcus Aurelius to take some distance from certain forms of hegemonic valuation. The Stoic proposes to decompose some highly valued elements. There are forms of assessment that are made from delirium and excessive imposition, generating in the subject the attachment to a false unity that translates into a kind of spell that dominates it. The recovery of this exercise of stoic deconstruction seems to be a key point in Foucault's reflection, since it combines a decomposition in singularities that recalls the archaeological-genealogical procedure but enhancing its role in the transformation and the reasoned constitution of the individual. Foucault comments:

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We touch the things; we reach their heart, and we go through them in their entirety in such a way that we can see what they are. So, we can strip them down and see from above, see from the top down what little value they have, what cheapness they have. And so, we can get rid of the spell by which they threaten to capture us and captivate us. Exercise has the same goal: it is about establishing the freedom of the subject through that top-down look that we are going to direct at things, that allows us to go through them from side to side, reach their heart and show how invaluable they are. In this passage, Marco Aurelio says: it is not enough to apply this method to things, we must also apply it to our lives and to ourselves (Foucault, 2014, p. 295).

In this fragment, those relationships mentioned above are clearly observed: knowing the world applied also to itself to achieve more autonomy. Note that the idea that guides the fragment points to a use of philosophical knowledge to guide a work of diminishing relations of domination. These reflections allow showing a more proactive dimension of the Foucaultean approach, able to contribute to concretize the proposal of Flores and Villareal (2021) who have noticed the link between self-care and pedagogy in the last Foucault<sup>5</sup>.

It is evident that the work of the last Foucault is aimed at questioning the hermeneutics of a subject given beforehand—more typical of the Christian and then modern worldview—to conceive a constitution process of subjectivity related, mainly, to the ancient ascesis. Through these ideas, the link between knowledge and power that Foucault had realized in his more traditional writings is expanded. As Edgardo Castro points out (2016), Foucault moves, in his last texts, from an analysis of the truth of power to enhance the power of truth and what can be produced from it.



However, this allows to clearly appreciate the amount of interesting and pedagogically relevant remarks made by Foucault in the previous quotations. Through the practice postulates of the Stoic self, the philosopher invites to use various traditional exercises of reading, writing, and listening to the words of a teacher with a transformative sense, i.e., to promote a more elaborate constitution of the person. The materiality of the discourse also constitutes a suggestive invitation to appropriate the knowledge and use it. We do not prepare to follow the norm or to follow what a teacher says, nor do we prepare only to respond to the utilitarian requirements that the world of work poses us. We prepare ourselves first of all for a life, with its good and bad things, with its unsolvable questions and its borderline situations. Through this route, it is possible to radicalize the singularity itself as a point of excess over attempts at normalization. The concept of excess indicates that subjectivation is an irreducible ground for normalization and a propitious space for a singular constitution of the individual. This topic has been extensively studied in the framework of Foucault's studies. The French philosopher Potte Boneville (2007), for example, invites us to think of the category of subject in Foucault as a kind of irreducible fold influenced by the norm, but not totally determined by it. Subjectivation would be a process without subject and at the same time subjective:

The word “yes” is decisive here. By being designated as “yes,” the moral subject is well distinguished from a “thing.” And yet he does not refer, in French, to a “I” that would constitute his foundation; nor does he come to an I, which would give him a finished form and allow him, finally, at the end of his training, to separate himself from the historical context. (...) Subjectivation is, then, a practice, a *praxis* in the Aristotelian sense; praxis through which the “yes” never gets to be subjectivated (Potte Boneville, 2007, p. 219).

Following this line, the Spanish philosopher Fernando Fuentes Megías (2021) argues that this reflection on the techniques of the self enables a pedagogical reading of the last texts of Foucault. In fact, it allows to think that those points of criticism that the philosopher identified as strategies to exercise power over others, can be, at the same time, spaces to exercise an education as an ethical constitution of the subject:

The idea that there is a set of self-complementary techniques to the domination techniques that Foucault had studied in *Vigilant and Punishing* among other places, contributes to support a pedagogical reading of his work. A central element of any educational relationship is the

guide, the undisputed protagonist of every possible poetic education. The Foucaultean categorization of relationships between subjects turns the concept of government into an alternative to that of domination, allowing the opening of a workspace to the ethics of self-care (Fuentes Megías, 2021, p. 232).

According to these ideas, Foucault's perspective can contribute to the teaching of philosophy courses - both in secondary and higher levels - by appealing to this strategy. Thus, philosophical reflection is not necessarily limited to criticism and distortion of the obvious. It can also point to an exercise of transformation and formation of new relationships with oneself and others. There is a comparable dynamic between those who read, write and listen and those who practice sports, and therefore, in philosophy there are questions of the order of an experience rather than the contemplation of entelechies. Showing this ethical shift from philosophical knowledge can be a very attractive resource capable of resignifying the hackneyed path of mere content transmission.

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## The relationship between pedagogy and psychagogy

Thus, in the previous fragments there were many tools typical of traditional pedagogy such as reading, writing, listening to the teacher, but that acquire a renewed idea when thinking from the methodological openness (regarding the modern worldview) mentioned above. All these reflections lead Foucault to show a situation comparable to that which is evident with the function of philosophical knowledge, knowledge of the world and the *techniques of the self*. Just as in ancient times, philosophy was far from being a contemplation element of the entities, the pedagogical exercise went hand in hand with the exercise of *psychagogy*. This concept refers to the use of knowledge that goes beyond the mere transmission of skills and knowledge about the world and points to a transformation of the individual. Following is a fragment of Foucault through which it can be seen the way in which the philosopher relates pedagogy and *psychagogy*:

If calling pedagogical, therefore, the relationship consisting of endowing any subject with skills defined beforehand, I believe that it can be called "psychagogical" the transmission of a truth that does not have the function of providing any subject with any of skills, etc., but of modifying the way of being of that subject to which we are directed. (...) In Greco-Roman antiquity, in the psychagogical relationship, the essential weight of truth, the need to say truthfully, the rules to which we must

submit ourselves when saying truthfully, to say truthfully and for the truth to produce its effect - namely, the mutation effect of the way of being of the subject - falls essentially on the teacher, the director, and even the friend or in any case the adviser (...) Truth and obligations of truth are on the side of the teacher. That is true of any pedagogy. It is in ancient pedagogy, of course, but also in what we might call ancient psychagogy. In this sense and for this reason, ancient psychology is very close to pedagogy (Foucault, 2014, p. 388).

The fragment shows several elements that can only be mentioned briefly, but that allow to have a notion of the still unexplored richness of the last Foucauldian texts to think about educational issues. First, a function of truth appears as a producer of effects in the individual. If the connection between the previous quotations is considered, it may be seen that these effects will no longer be understood solely as the action of a normalizing power on life, but as a way of stimulating the practices of freedom as opposed to naturalized valuations. As Gallo and Espinel (2021, p. 8) point out, such practices make it possible to regulate power relations to avoid domination states. Likewise, an emphasis on another traditional element appears, i.e., the role of a teacher, which is no longer reduced to a role of indoctrinator as could be deduced from the description of the *disciplinary society*, but which exercises an important task when it comes to increasing the possibilities of freedom of individuals.

But beyond the strictly political question—which is always present—it is possible to raise some hypotheses about the use of Foucauldian ideas for the transmission of knowledge. At this point, perhaps we can think of some parallel between Foucault's *psychagogy* and that famous idea of the ignorant teacher proposed by the philosopher Jacques Rancière (2002). For both, the emphasis would not be on the transmission of objective, innocuous and indifferent knowledge for the life of the person — which on the other hand would only reproduce the teacher's perspective — but the key is to promote a transformation process of the individual who learns, so that he can be interested, and, most importantly, turn knowledge into a vital guideline for his own life, an issue that exceeds the utilitarian dimension of knowledge. It is touching the example presented by Rancière from the experience of a young man—Jacotot's son—who possessed limited abilities for studying, but who learned Hebrew instead and became an excellent lithographer. Commenting on this example, Rancière states: "Hebrew, was never helpful for him, only to know what the best gifted and most informed intelligences would always be ignored. It was not Hebrew at all" (Rancière, 2002, p. 14). Note that in



the final sentence of the quote, we can observe this change of perspective that puts the very object of knowledge in the background, to highlight the consequences produced by the process of acquiring it. In other words, knowledge can serve to live because people are animals capable of producing concepts.

One of the last texts written by Michel Foucault is a beautiful reflection that shows the vital dimension of conceptual production: “Forming concepts is a way of living and not of killing life; it is a way of living in a relative mobility and not an attempt to immobilize life” (Foucault, 2012, p. 265). It can clearly be seen the athletic dimension that Foucault wanted to rescue from the relation with knowledge and that even, in the previous example, is combined with a recognition of the singularity of a person. Knowledge also makes sense from the singular plot of the person who exercises it and makes it his own, reason for which it cannot be said that a teacher can transmit a universally utilitarian or meaningful knowledge but must consider the characteristics of the person and be tested on a case-by-case basis. I think that the change from utopia to heterotopia suggested by Foucault (1999, p. 435) could be traced, a topic eloquently studied by the authors Gallo and Espinel (2021, p. 8) in education.

Indeed, the Foucauldian perspective enables an educational process that renounces utopias as ultimate ends and that is predisposed to enable heterotopias, i.e., atypical spaces, indefinable by their non-essentiality, but localizable by their singularity, where everyone can transit in their own way through the paths that enables contact with knowledge. That does not mean a person can walk through those spaces without someone else’s guidance. Both the role of the teacher and the guidelines offered by curriculum designs can be crucial aspects in this process of stimulating *psychagogical* effects.

## Importance of Psychagogy in the Digital Age

These ideas offer philosophical assumptions capable of guiding pedagogical intervention in multiple fields of knowledge. When I started teaching philosophy at a technical school, I decided to ask its principal — who, in addition to being an engineer, has a degree in education — what he thinks is the importance of humans in technical specialties. He pointed out to me that the most important thing, in his view, was to develop skills that were not only geared towards repetitive and uncritical technical production, but also to foster joint work and creativity. The world of work



requires being able to operate creatively with technical knowledge, rather than becoming an inert gear of the production system. The two issues are highly relevant. Hence, the importance of the ethical shift generated by knowledge reappears, a process that could be worked even from the technical knowledge if the philosophical approach with which they are addressed is adequate. Indeed, much of the humanistic, social, and pedagogical reflection of recent years has been devoted to thinking rigorously about the impact generated by digital media. The use of these devices has radically changed traditional ways of communication and interpersonal relationship. This is a complete proof of the changes generated by the relation with some knowledge. Therefore, leaving aside the debate of whether digital media are good or bad - since, according to Rancière, centrality is not placed on the object in question - there can be no doubt that its virtuous use can develop if taking a dimension of that psychagogical relationship with knowledge.

In this sense, it is noted that *psychagogy* as derived from the philosophy of the last Foucault allows recognizing an irreducibility point of educational intervention. The digital media has generated many questions in the field of pedagogy: what is transmitted today when the objects of knowledge are already mostly on the Internet? What is the role of the teacher when it seems that digital media is on its way to offer tools to become self-taught, and what is the role of education in this context?

Through a very recent text, Inés Dussel teaches us that the pandemic has generated interesting questions to think about the future of education and its uniqueness in the face of the advance of digital media. The Covid-19 contingency revealed both the usefulness of these means for education, as well as inequalities in access to them; it provided clarifications on which devices are usually useful for education and which are not. Dussel's (2021) diagnosis is balanced and abandons binomial judgments about the media—i.e., for or against. It recognizes their presence in the educational task but points out that there are irreducible issues of it. What the pandemic proved, even with all the things it challenged and even renewed, is that education continues to require spaces, processes and human relationships that can never be emulated by the digital media. The author says:

Google is launching a seminar and a program called “*The Anywhere School*”; I rather think that it should encourage a movement to the contrary, which affirms that school is always about making a place, not necessarily physical, that organizes an intergenerational meeting with specific knowledge, which is not done in public transportation or being



connected all the time to the cell phone. Hopefully, awareness of the hard work of sustaining all this, of its social relevance, and of the need to live up to that work and collective energy will persist (Dussel, 2021, p. 137).

In this context, Foucaultian philosophy is fully valid, since establishing a *psychagogical* relationship with knowledge is also one of the tasks of educational institutions. Education must explore ways of stimulating *psychagogical* processes. Consequently, it is very important to rethink the philosophical approaches, objectives, and dynamics of the educational task. In the age of information, this whole question of the athletic dimension of the relation with knowledge and the ethical shift that it can generate constitute some basic assumptions for the formation of human beings.

For this reason, it is so urgent to show that knowledge transforms and that it has effects on the subject. The case of digital media has been mentioned, but one could also think, among others, of mathematics. The philosopher Alain Badiou mentions the transformations produced in Georg Cantor's subjectivity by the discovery of the infinite. And Badiou himself (2010, p. 121) uses these mathematical ideas to rethink philosophical ontology and develop a theory about the subject. Says Badiou:

Having offered rigorous proof that the set of rational numbers—fractions—is numerable, and thus that those numbers, contrary to all our immediate intuition, are no more 'numerical' than natural integers, he exclaims 'I see it, but I do not believe it!' (Badiou, 2010, pp. 121-122).

Consequently, to show that something is not being learned because it is commanded by parents, the norm, the productive system or anything, in short, to show the "athletic" possibilities of ethical involvement, personal and social transformation that knowledge can generate is a task of education. In other words, we must never lose sight of the fact that the education is a way of exercising the power that can derive, both towards the transformation of the present and towards domination forms that cancel out the possibilities of freedom.

## Parrhesia and pedagogy

From the above, it is possible to give a more concrete look of the way in which education could be articulated to promote dynamics capable of stimulating ruptures and promote the invention of new forms of life.

At this point, it may be thought that education always depends on a state, a political project, and even, at present, on the strong influences of



business. So, to what extent can education be said to be emancipatory and not limited to delivering a truly functional discourse to certain sectors? Listening to the teacher, in the end, does not imply a way of submitting to the truthful utterance of another? And taking into account what was discussed at the end of the previous section, what is the uniqueness of this truthful saying that promotes education in the proliferation of multiple places of broadcast of information speech?

The concept of *parrhesia* can help us think about these questions. It is Foucault's latest works. *Parrhesia* comes to fully manifest the power of truth in the constitution of the subject and in the transformation of a regime. Parrhesia promotes speaking frankly, allowing to show a way of articulating a true discourse capable of offering a point of dissent against the prevailing forms of life. As Foucault states (2017, pp.118, 231) this discourse unfolds to the fabric of current devices and valuations, and has a kind of *parrhesistic pact* between the person who tells the truth and who must show willingness to listen to it:

Parrhesia covenant consists on: the prince, the leader, the one who possesses power but does not know the truth, addresses the one who possesses the truth but does not have the power and tells him 'Tell me the truth, whatever that truth, you will not be punished' (Foucault, 2017, pp. 118, 231).

Therefore, it is possible to show two conceptual modulations that can be extracted from there for the purposes of this paper: the first aims to think the relations between education and politics; the second refers to the interactions that occur between students and teachers in the classroom.

Previously it was analyzed how in Foucault's last texts the power of truth is oriented to promote the critique and transformation of the individual. In the aforementioned *Hermeneutics course of the subject*, Foucault (2014, p. 246) states that the most important point to think political resistance is in the relationship of itself with itself. The issue is strictly logical. Based on the strategic and microphysical analysis of power -typical of Foucauldian investigations- the relation of the self constitutes an essential node in the whole conformed by the questions of government and power relations:

Which simply means that, in the analysis of power-governmentality-government relations of self and others-the relationship of self to itself constitutes a chain, a plot that is there, around these notions that we must be able to articulate, I think, the question of politics and the question of ethics (Foucault, 2014, p. 247).







In the courses entitled *Government of itself and others* (2014 b) and *Courage of the Truth* (2011), Foucault will fully address this relationship expressed in the quote. Returning to Plato's action against the tyrant of Syracuse, he will describe the role that philosophy plays in the face of politics. The reality of philosophy does not lie in telling politics what to do, but in encouraging an exercise of constant and permanent friction, which systematically reminds of the lack of necessity in the exercise of power. This method, as suggested, leads to show ways and inventions not yet thought out. In his last reflections the philosopher will insist much on the relation that make up knowledge and power, those discourses of truth that show the historical emergence conditions of that relation, enhancing the possibilities of autonomous and singular constitution of individuals. For this reason, philosophy must promote an ascesis, i.e., a proper *self-government* capable of motivating a *truthful* speech to politics. The agent who intends to perform a *psychagogical* act in the other, must give account in himself of a way of life that accompanies that claim:

To be an agent of truth, to be a philosopher, and as a philosopher to claim for himself the monopoly of *parrhesia*, will not mean only that one pretends to be able to enunciate truth in teaching, in the advice he gives, in the speeches he delivers, but that he is effectively in his own life, an agent of truth. The *parrhesia* as a way of life, the *parrhesia* as a way of accompaniment, the *parrhesia* in the life of the philosopher are constituent elements of that philosophical monopoly that he claims for himself (Foucault, 2014b, p. 327).

In Foucault's analysis (2014b, p. 327), Socrates appears to typify a way of exercising *parrhesia* based on the coherence of a philosophical life taken to the limit, which poses an irreducible distance to political power. But, at this point, one must be careful. Foucault does not fall for the neo-liberal nonsense of apoliticism and neutrality. On the contrary, politics and philosophy are irreducible instances, but they tend to a necessary relationship. Therefore, each one must be irreducible to be real and serve the other. In this sense, Foucault states: "The question of philosophy is not the question of politics, but the question of the subject in politics" (Foucault, 2014b, p. 326). *Parrhesia* is closely linked to this *truthful saying* that philosophy wields to politics:

Philosophy will present itself as possessing the monopoly of *parrhesia* insofar as it manifests itself as an operation on souls, as psychology. And instead of being a power of persuasion that convinces souls of everything, it is presented as an operation that must allow them to distinguish the



true from the false and give, by philosophical paideia, the necessary instruments to make that distinction (Foucault, 2014b, p. 311).

The episode that best typifies the parrhesiastic attitude and that Foucault interprets with great mastery is the classic encounter between King Alexander the Great and Diogenes the cynic. There, a philosopher challenges the investiture of a king without more foundation than his own courage and asserting a radically ascetic way of life assumed as true. The challenge provokes the wrath of the king who for a moment thinks of eliminating the philosopher, but then predisposes himself to listening and transforms himself. The saying of Diogenes constitutes a *psychagogical* saying that points to the transformation of the other. Diógenes does not give political advice, does not give advice about ways to be king, does not offer any psychological or coaching theory to legitimize his authority in the head of people and conduct it properly. What Diogenes does is to perform a *psychagogical* procedure closely linked to questioning the effects of a *regime of truth* that operates on the individual. The cynical philosopher operates from the presupposition of the absence of the need for power; he merely points out to a ruler the difficulties entailed by his imposture and the defects that are always linked to the regal character “inclination for pleasure, the appetite for riches and disorderly ambition in political life” (Foucault, 2017, p. 234).

From the above ideas, a pedagogical reading of the concept of *parrhesia* as recovered by Foucault can be made. First of all, it should be clarified that not all educational action can typify within the implications of the parrhesiastic *truthful saying*. Often, content aligned with specific skills must be taught. But it is also true that any educational action must at the same time concern for reflecting on the visions of the world in which the plurality of knowledge (technical, professional, humanistic, etc.) is used and applied. Even within the field of technical and digital knowledge, it is possible to explore various uses and applications capable of confronting, questioning and trying to move the commands of the dominant common sense. On the other hand, it is true that any education must contribute to strengthening the ethical and moral standards required by a society, but it must be able to enable, at the same time, criticism of those principles and promote the invention of better, more inclusive, pluralistic and diversity-adjusted ones. In this sense, it is evident that the educational task consists in exercising a *psychagogical* role to the politics for which the notion of *parrhesia* becomes important.

Much of the educational task is directed to question the implications of a *regime of truth* that organizes the knowledge and criteria of



government that develops an authority. That does not mean assuming rebellion without cause or believing that education has nothing to do with politics. It involves, perhaps, using that irreducible character of *truthful saying*, to provoke, arouse, stimulate and motivate in others some questions that confuse him and lead him to rethink his more spontaneous actions. To that end, the pact of mutual listening between the poles of the relationship must be accepted as a necessary and indispensable condition for that true word to have an effect.

This task cannot be accomplished without appealing to the smallest plots in which power is played, i.e., the knot formed between the government of itself and of others. For this reason, the pedagogical reading of *parrhesia* also occurs in the interaction between teachers and students. As argued, the parrhesiastic role of the teacher is closely linked to the *psychagogical* function that he can develop. Hence, it is also necessary that the task of the teacher is nurtured by some of the characteristics that presupposes the truthful saying of *parrhesia*. Motivating the transformation of others can only be done from a coherent position with respect to what is assumed as the desire to educate the other. The saying of *parrhesia*, as seen in the fragment cited above, is not limited to the function of teaching and counseling, but is assumed in an integral way, in the life of the person and even in the philosopher.

Foucault points out: “Parrhesia as a way of life, Parrhesia as a way of behavior, Parrhesia even in the very essence of the philosopher, are constitutive elements of that philosophical monopoly that he claims for himself” (Foucault, 2014b, p. 327). Gallo and Espinel (2021) mention the incoherence of a teacher who imposes on others what he is not able to do for himself:

It is curious that the teacher who invites reading, studying, occasionally abandons studying and reading, being always busy and loaded with emergencies forgets what makes him a teacher: studying (Gallo and Espinel, 2021, p. 52).

It is true that such emergencies are often due to the need to run from one side to the other to guarantee a decent wage. This is a political issue that goes beyond the ethical dimension and should guarantee the conditions for it. It is possible to see another dimension of the *parrhesiastic covenant*. The *psychagogical* action of education has as an inescapable condition, which is the investment of social resources for its maintenance. But leaving aside that aspect for a moment, it is desirable that a teacher can question how to exercise his role as coherently as possible.



Another aspect that derives from the above, again refers to the dimension of the transmission of knowledge. What is being transmitted? The *parrhesia* shows once again (with Rancière) that something is really taught that is not known. At this point, Diogenes does not transmit objective world knowledge, but makes critical remarks that lead the other to modify the relationship with himself, to take care of himself and to take a more elaborate and less idealistic awareness of his own position. In another work it has been suggested that *parrhesia* helps to assume the irreducible plot of one's own desire (Ortiz, 2022). This modulation of the concept can also greatly help the pedagogical task. While there are subjects in which the content is relevant (teaching to use a rasp, or a lathe, or teaching what law says, or parts of the human body), no teacher can believe himself capable of teaching everything related to a subject. But also, as mentioned before, nobody can know the possibilities of invention and appropriation that a subject can do with that which he is trying to teach himself. The educational task is simply to try to generate some connection between knowledge and what it can generate in the vital and singular plot of a person. In this sense, the notion of *parrhesia* can effectively compose with those concepts of pedagogy that aim to act by contagion, stimulation, and interest, rather than by the imposition of contents. This concept of contagion to think about the transmission of knowledge is from the Argentinian philosopher and educator Jorge E. Noro: "The classroom is a place of tension and dialogue, not propaganda. It is not a question of indoctrinating, imposing, forcing to repeat, or even of conquering (if this implies some kind of violence on the thought of the other), but of sharing, of contagious, of participating of the same common knowledge" (Noro, 2013, p. 18).

It may be necessary to make some distinctions, since the teacher seems to be the figure of authority within the classroom and the *parody* always circulates from the one who has less power to the one who has more. Recently, however, it has become apparent that the old links of disciplinary authority are becoming increasingly horizontal. Often it is the teacher's task to challenge the impositions of a majority common sense, which is why he must use the Socratic resources that aim to question what the other believes he knows, assuming the risks inherent in that situation. But often, there is also no shortage of teachers who continue to stand on a very high ground of truth and accept no other *truthful saying* than that which they themselves may utter. Here comes another dimension of the *parrhesistic pact* that perhaps can be thought of as a basic

approach to regulate classroom exchanges so that the experience can be mutually transformative.

## Conclusions

This paper has traced the main topics of the philosophy of the last Foucault and its possible relation with educational practices. The task was complex, since it involves exposing an author with a very deep production and drawing a link with the pedagogical discourse. For this reason, a brief but rigorous tracing of the main concepts has been carried out, trying to point out the point at which they are linked to more traditional aspects of pedagogical studies. Clearly, each of these topics can lead to other developments that can deepen, modulate and extend the suggested linkages. The emphasis of this paper has been to point out the methodological and practical torsion that Foucault operates towards his latest studies. The recovery of ancient philosophy leads him to outline a way of thinking about a relationship with truth that is no longer understood solely from the point of view of domination. This twist allows us to complement his studies on power, which have had such an impact on the pedagogical discourse, showing not only the possibilities of deconstruction offered by philosophy, but also the effective possibilities of transformation and constitution of this method. The central thing of this operation was put in the concept of *psychagogy*. It marks a counterpoint with an essentialist pedagogy that does not question about the historical and relational condition of the agents involved in the educational process. From this point, *psychagogy* appears as a bet so that the person, in his contact with knowledge, can stop being what it is, enabling possibilities of invention and stylization in his own vital plot. The preceding arguments have shown that this concept can be extended to pedagogical practices without this implying their total denial. Stoic philosophy, as interpreted by Foucault, allows us to offer intuitions to transform the traditional pedagogical work (reading, writing, listening to a teacher) into elements of involvement and transformation of the person. Finally, parrhesia provides a solid conceptual reference for thinking about a link between teachers and students outside the submission that modern pedagogy implied, while also providing precise suggestions about the position of the educational institution regarding politics.



## Notes

- 1 In this development, the sense and importance of Foucault's influence in the pedagogical field can be observed.
- 2 In their characterization of reproductivism, the authors Puiggros and Marengo make a statement that could typify the spirit of many of the Foucaultian texts: "The expansion of the school system seems to be more addressed at consolidating the capitalist mode of production or the perpetuation of the relations of domination than at the service of the democratization of society and its transformation into a different system not at the service of the exploitation of the labor force" (Puiggros, Marengo, 2013, p. 71).
- 3 As Paul Vene suggests, "So what is power? Foucault, incidentally, had no devilish idea about him. Let's lay out a grand-scale ideal kind of power. It consists of the ability to drive not physically the behaviors of others. It is the most common thing and the best shared thing; there is power in the family, there is power between two lovers, in the office, in the workshop and in the one-way streets. Millions of small powers form the society from which individuals form the loop" (Veyne, 2014, p. 105).
- 4 In this sense, Álvarez Yáguez points out: "That is why freedom always plays a role in power relations. There can be no radical and simple opposition between power and freedom, since on the one hand the power to exist has to do so in a field where not all actions are determined" (Álvarez Yáguez, 2016, p. 93).
- 5 In a work that addresses the relationship between subjectivation and power in its link with education, Graciela N. Flores and Ximena M. Villareal state: "there is space in education for the care of oneself and especially of others, that is the primary responsibility in the pedagogical link, as philosophers of education like Cullen or Mellich, among others, have raised. As for self-care, the Foucauldian approach proposes a lifestyle that opens the possibility of resisting the powers in the complex social fabric. Foucault (2012) considers that it is possible to invent 'other possibilities' of life, understanding that the fundamental task of our time is to dismantle the construction mechanisms of subjectivities and perform a type of action that rejects the subjectivation that has imposed for centuries Western culture" (Flores and Villareal, 2021, p. 17).

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# EDUCATION, WRITING AND EXISTENCE IN MIGUEL DE UNAMUNO

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## Educación, escritura y existencia en Miguel de Unamuno

FRANCISCO DE JESÚS ÁNGELES-CERÓN\*

Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro, Santiago de Querétaro, Mexico

[francisco.dejesus.angeles@uaq.edu.mx](mailto:francisco.dejesus.angeles@uaq.edu.mx)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1167-0822>

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### Abstract

During the long life of the writer and thinker Miguel de Unamuno, there were two tasks that he never left aside: his work as an educator and his life as a writer. Both were fundamental parts of his thought since he sees those as central to understanding the mystery of the existential characteristics of the man. The aim of this paper is the in-depth analysis of two main themes: the work of education and the work of writing in the thought of the Basque thinker. For this analysis, the scriptural work of the Unamuno was deeply investigated, considering that his ideas regarding education and writing are contained both in his poetic work and in his correspondence. Likewise, works by authors specialized in Unamuno and his thought were used to complement the ideas. It was possible to map the ideas of the Basque thinker to arrive at one of the central ideas of his thought: Both the educator and the writer can only teach what they are, that is why their work is no other than that of poetizing life, making its way through language, narrating oneself and helping others find their voice.

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### Keywords

Education, writing, Unamuno, poetics, thinking, language.

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\* Doctor of Hispanic Studies. Language, Literature, History and Thought by the Autonomous University of Madrid. Graduate and Master in Philosophy from the Autonomous University of Querétaro. Professor and researcher at the same University. Member of the National System of Researchers of Mexico, level I. Author of several books on modern philosophy and Hispanic philosophy and literature.

### Resumen

Durante la larga vida del escritor y pensador Miguel de Unamuno, hubo dos labores que nunca dejó de lado: su trabajo como educador y su vida de escritor. Ambas partes fundamentales de su pensamiento ya que las entiende como centrales para comprender el misterio de la particularidad existencial del hombre de carne y hueso. El presente trabajo tiene como objetivo el análisis a profundidad de dos temas principales: la labor de la educación y el trabajo de escritura en el pensamiento del pensador vasco. Para este análisis se investigó a profundidad la obra escritural del vasco universal, tomando en cuenta que el grueso de sus ideas entorno a la educación y a la escritura se encuentran contenidas tanto en su obra poética como en su correspondencia. Así mismo, se utilizaron trabajos periféricos de autores especialistas en Unamuno y su pensamiento para complementar las ideas. Mediante la investigación, fue posible mapear las ideas del pensador vasco para llegar a una de las ideas centrales de su pensamiento: Tanto el educador como el escritor tan solo pueden enseñar lo que ellos mismos son, es por ello por lo que su labor no es otra que la de poetizar la vida, abriéndose paso a través del lenguaje, narrándose a uno mismo y ayudando a otros a encontrar su voz.

### Palabras clave

Educación, escritura, Unamuno, poética, pensamiento, lenguaje.

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## Introduction

Education and writing are two conjunctural aspects in Miguel de Unamuno's thought. The great writer practiced both the work as an educator (outside the university since 1884 and as a university professor from 1891), as the work linked to his literary consolidation since his first intellectual youth (he published his first novel in 1897). At the same time that he practiced these two activities, he reflected on them, however, he did not write (nor did he intend to do so) a treatise on education or a systematization of aesthetics or scriptural practice. On the other hand, his entire work is transversally implied by a meditation exercise on what it means to educate, as well as on the meaning of writing in the midst of a convulsive time like the one he lived. It creates a major problem, which offers the task of tracking and ordering the ideas Unamuno had about education and writing, as they are two valuable examples of his task as an intellectual. Therefore, this article aims to present a philosophical review that critically reconstructs Unamuno's assessments of education and writing, as well as their implications on the realization of existence.

In this way, it defends not only Miguel de Unamuno's pedagogical and scriptural reflection but its validity in our time, to contrast the statements that come from the institutionalization of contemporary educational practice. Therefore, this article will present and analyze the reasons through which the Basque philosopher links education with the vital realization of the individual. Above all, it does not associate pedagogical

cal work with the objectives of any disciplinary specialization, much less with labor finalism. This text uses a methodology of documentary analysis from the perspective of philosophical hermeneutics that continues the dialogue with the texts from the questions they raise.

The article is structured as follows. Firstly, the paradox will be addressed as a method of thinking of the Spanish philosopher, analyzing how the affirmation of opposites allows him to consolidate a particular idea of education. Subsequently, we will reflect on the fact that when practicing the work of educator, Unamuno will also find reasons to see in the literary the vital accomplishment of his mission as educator, especially because his writing is a form of opening to the other (including the other that is in the self). Subsequently, an analysis will be presented around the reasons that lead Unamuno to consider writing as a pedagogical exercise and as a means to affirm individuality (both the author and the reader). Finally, we will consider the value for our time of Unamunian reflection that links education and writing in the realization of the existence of man.

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## The paradox as a figure of Unamunian thought

Both in his private and family life in his rented house on Calle Bortadores, as in his public life during the nights in the “Novelty” of Salamanca, Unamuno represented different Migueles, but there were two who characterized him: the one that identifies Unamuno as a writer and the one that allows seeing him as an educator, because the general lines of his thought converge in both facets. There is something Don Miguel never gave up: writing and trying to educate while he did so. He did not do so at the height of public prestige and prosperity, nor did he do so in exile or in the whirlwind of the beginning of the civil war, in which he may never have understood what role he should play. For Unamuno, education and writing were two activities in which he gave himself completely, but in which he also put his entire conceptual universe at stake, since both were reasons for his praxis, because he could not understand writing without a didactic background, nor education without appealing to his craft of writer. The reason for this lies in the fact that, for him, both education and writing (if they are not two different ways of naming the same thing) are central to understanding the mystery that supposes the existential particularity of man.

As is well known, for Unamuno, the question of existence cannot be raised from an absolute conceptual sufficiency. And likewise, noth-

ing similar can be done when it comes to understanding what education means or what writing means. Though Unamuno did not systematize too much (at least not since the break with the scientific rationalism he had a torrid and then disenchanted youth romance), there were especially a couple of issues on which he never had the slightest temptation to systematize, namely writing and the study of education. All the approaches he had on these two topics were without appealing to the abstract *per se* and rather through the invocation of the most universal that every man can experience, which is his own individuality.

Therefore, it will be from the first person and from the irreplaceable experience that is known to be finite, that Unamuno will raise the questions concerning these two activities of which he was a true apostle. On the one hand, both in terms of the immeasurable work of education, as well as in terms of the unfathomable task of writing. Especially because, as stated above, at the center of all Unamunian thought is the affirmation of the flesh-and-blood man, *the one who is born, suffers and dies, above all dies*. For from that non-transferable experience of finitude and having discovered the presence of realities such as love and death, or freedom and the desire to persist—which resist the conceptual traditional logical truths—Unamuno will find the unwavering experience of paradox as a constant vital reality. So, it will be the methodical paradox, the Unamunian guide when he stops not only to practice his work as a writer and educator, but especially when he sets out to reflect on what education consists of and what is the ultimate sense of writing.

It can be said that the paradox is practically the figure that allows to understand the way in which Unamuno feels and argues. But it is also what he hopes to achieve as a result of meeting with his reader. This is stated in his essay “To my readers”: “I am satisfied with arousing ideas in those who read to me, even though these ideas are contrary to what I expose and defend” (Unamuno, 1966b, p. 391). It is clear that rather than inviting one to join a doctrine, what Unamuno intends is to gestate ideas in those who can read him. The Spanish philosopher’s emphasis on the human sense of contradiction is undoubtedly associated with his tragic view of existence. As he notes in several parts of his work and probably following Pascal on it, no act of rational intelligence can synthesize the abysses and contradictions of human existence.

Perhaps because of this, Unamuno resorts to paradox as a figure to make explicit our way of advancing in the tasks of thought. Especially because in the face of the vital agony discovered by the consciousness of finitude, the paradox appears as a form of pendulum that makes existence

a swing between opposites when the effort is undertaken to understand some fundamental question in existential matter. The path (method) that Unamuno follows when he thinks is the encounter (and even clash) between opposites. Therefore, he constantly warns in the aporetic nature of questions that human reason cannot answer by a syllogistic reason.

Therefore, the paradox understood as a way of Unamunian knowledge (Gordo, 2012, p. 171) implies assuming agonism as the basis of his philosophical proposal. Without forgetting that the Basque thinker understands by agony a constant struggle that is irreducible and unsavable for human reality. Above all, because it implies the recognition of plurality when an epistemic way of resolution is sought for some problem. In such a way that the paradox, in effective terms, discovers in the contradiction the richness that one finds in seeking meaning and observing that the tragedy of life consists precisely in an irreducible complexity that, nevertheless, also seduces us. Because, as Manuel Pérez López has learned when talking about possible Unamunian relativism, the paradox consists in “the idea that, being affirmed and denied at the same time, preached of itself and at the same time of its opposite, [while] maintaining in both cases a comparable degree of veracity in relation to our perception and experience of reality” (2003, p. 65).

Unamuno's thought allows us to find a certain philosophical-dialectical link that sees in the paradox a constant attempt to avoid the limiting impositions of positivist rationalism (which fascinated Don Miguel in his youth) in the exercise of deep meditation. For abandoning that feverish enthusiasm that he felt for logic after finishing his studies in Madrid, he finds in his maturity (from the publication of *Love and Pedagogy* of 1902, for example) a measured and delicate reflective game that identifies in the the paradox, the maximum tension of the possibilities of the spirit. Subversive provocation against any dominant system of conventions is constant in the execution of the *level*. And for this reason, it is constantly based on the paradox, not to propose some other substitute certainty but with the aim of affirming the value of uncertainty.

Thus, it is possible to speak of the paradoxical method in Unamuno. Although it may sound absurd to speak of method in the case of the Basque philosopher because of his untimely thinking, we cannot forget the primal meaning of this notion. If understanding it in a strict sense as a *path* (even especially in a spiritual sense), one could hardly find a better example than Unamuno to illustrate in what sense both educate and write are activities that are a method, especially because their exercise necessarily implies a path of paradoxes. Gemma Gordo has even spoken of the



“paradoxical-pedagogical method” in the case of the educational thought of Unamuno (2012, p. 170). Therefore, it can be said that in what can be read from the work of the Spanish philosopher, existence is in itself the praxis of a methodical paradox. This means that it is also an unwavering and non-transferable experience of the contradiction that is making its way. And that perhaps it is the only one to which man has access, who finds himself in the ontological precariousness of knowing that he is an individual condemned to finitude. And it is precisely from the pages of *On the Castism*, Unamuno (1958) has spoken of this method when he writes:

[...] The complete truth is usually sought in the middle just by the method of removal, *via remotionis*, by excluding the ends [...] It is better, I think, to follow another method: the alternative affirmation of the contradictory ones; it is preferable to emphasize the strength of the ends in the soul of the reader so that the medium takes life in it, which is the result of struggle. Be patient, then, when the rhythm of our reflections twists to one side, and wait until its undulation to twist to the other and let the resulting one occur in its spirit, if it succeeds (p.171).

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One world can be, among many other things, the philosopher of paradox. He never usually presents himself as a thinker of resolved problems or who comes to tell us how difficult the journey was until he found a definitive truth or certainty. He is not a philosopher of finished epistemic models. He is always a thinker who is on the road, who speaks from the crisis, who is making his own way by walking. Therefore, when Unamuno refers to education, we cannot expect him to give us a pedagogical explanation for the formation of man, just as we could not expect (we would do badly!) that when it comes to writing, Don Miguel offered in his reflections a manual of prescriptive poetics in which he taught us how to assemble pieces as a watchmaker who describes the tasks in his workshop. No way. Otherwise, neither education nor writing would be part of a vital poetics. However, in the case of Unamuno, it is very clear that the human being is not a finished entity, but that existence is something that constructs in the road while listening to the other and thereby enabling the understanding of himself.

And language plays in it a transcendental role, since as Joaqui and Ortiz point out, “as a basic condition of human existence, that makes it a being in the world, that speaks and that also listens, which totally forms it” (2019, p. 188). Don Miguel de Unamuno is not unaware of that. Therefore, for him education through writing brings together two facets of the same ontological experience: that of forming an existence through paradox. Thus, in the following section, the idea of Unamunian education will

be explored as an exercise of formation rather than information, which therefore leads to a vital poetics (an existential formation).

Immersing ourselves in language reminds us that all men are always the first man because the world begins to be from us and even against us, but never without our participation. That is why the world always reveals itself to us as something new, especially when it adopts in its own structure the figure of a revolution against what we believe. Hence, Unamuno's position in relation to education is linked to what the former Rector of the University of Salamanca understands by the exercise of thought through the practice of paradoxical pedagogy. If something characterized Unamuno's work as a thinker was his eagerness to move away from any form of dogmatism, whether scientific or religious, to the extent that it might be possible to reconstruct the itinerary of Unamunian thought in an antidogmatic key. All his disenchantments with the various schools of thought lie precisely in a dogmatic suspicion: the crises of faith, the crises of his confidence in reason, the crises within his political positions (going through socialism, republicanism, traditionalism...), always linked to that dogmatism that Unamuno identified in every position in which there was no possibility of doubt and coexistence with the different and even the opposite.

Although accepting the experience of living the contradiction, of assuming positions and paradoxical affirmations at the epistemological level, are precisely the first touchstone in Unamunian reflection on education. Which is linked to the problem of language as a means to open oneself to the understanding of the world and to know our place in it. Language is linked to the problem of cognition, as well as to all the ontological implications that result from it, since, as Vivas points out, "Organizing thought correctly depends on the structuring that is made of language" (2016, p. 71). And this is going to be done specifically in the idea of education that is forged within Unamunian thinking. It is therefore necessary to clarify what such ideas consist of.

## Education in Unamuno as an existential realization

Unamuno constantly remembers that going linguistically through the world (through writing, for example) allows us to organize our idea of the world and opens up the possibility of poeticizing it as well. The Spanish philosopher raises the need for a pedagogy that instead of affirming our supposed certainties *a priori*, undermines the foundations of our first





statements to avoid a dogmatic formation and also to enable a new organization of thought through language. This also allows Unamuno not to close to the fact that an education like this necessarily involves pain. It is the pain involved in the effort to look at the world from another beginning: from the beginning that the world has precisely around someone else. This allows Don Miguel (and of course this has a lot to tell our time) to distinguish between learning and playing. Especially because this reflection allows him to criticize the educators who found learning in the game, thus distorting those two activities, since, although he values both, he considers that each one can have its place:

[...] trying to make them learn while playing, the game ends up being turned into teaching. We seem to be scared to teach kids how hard work is. And that is where they learn by playing, which always ends when they play to learn. And the teacher himself who teaches them playing, he plays to teach. And neither he teaches, nor they learn anything worth it (Unamuno, 1902, p. 718).

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Unamuno holds the cultivation of both the body and the intellect, but he believes that teaching must distinguish from play in both respects. Above all, as far as teaching is concerned, the body must be sought in the same intensity as the spirit, for it confers upon them mutual influence. That is why Unamuno does not consider physical education as a curricular structure of the game but as a form of teaching that influences the formation of the character of those who participate in it, providing value. Now, when teaching is reduced to play, he assumes that even the biggest harmed is to play (Unamuno, 2016, p. 257). For Don Miguel, courage is a discovery that occurs precisely because of the experimentation of limits, because of the “effort” that characterizes every form of education. Above all, because the Spanish philosopher understands “the security that gives knowledge of his own forces or faculties [...] Value is the force ruled by reason, recklessness and force ruled by imagination” (Unamuno, 1999, p. 100). This is just a paradigmatic sample of the methodical paradox, because what it is in every teaching exercise is just to experience one’s own physical and intellectual abilities, until they are brought to their maximum tension. This is where a very fertile experimentation of the opposite occurs: when the body and the spirit have the lightness of what was thought uncritically perpetual. Unamuno does not think education is pain-free. While it is clear that an era like ours, so eager for effective ontological anesthesia and makeup almost any form of pain, will find this statement shocking.



But what is imagination but the answer to a state of affairs that hurts us? For Unamuno, imagination is as an instrument that makes available an unsuspected series of cognitive possibilities, even as regards character formation. Firstly, because it identifies in it the knowledge that makes evident a true exit from itself, especially because in imagining we necessarily move away from any preconceived dogma. And similarly, the Imagination is the tool that hinders us to the possibility of feeling in our own flesh the pain of the other. Because by breaking the barriers of self and putting ourselves on the path of the infinite other possibilities of being, the tragedy of life that characterizes the existential concept of Unamuno shows us that concern for the other is present even before the famous and documented crisis of 1897. And it is in this sense that we must understand perhaps what the Spanish philosopher says he will do after the publication of *The Kingdom of Man* (although he never gets to publish that story while he was alive):

[...] Anyway, when I release *The Kingdom of Man*, he says, I will pour all this into that anarchist sermon. I am not afraid of that name, the enemy of every violent means, of every war, of every revolution, of every dynamite. Someone has called me a conservative anarchist; whatever, another mystic anarchist. I accept any nickname, although I do not feel classifiable insect, who can put a pin through the basket, with its label, and so nail it in the cork of the entomological box. I am me, like every kiosk, gender apart. And my progress consists in Unamunomize me (Unamuno, 2017, p. 585).

Already in 1896, the Spanish philosopher postulates a first form of this concept which he will call egotism. It is a network of ideas that delineates its well-known spiritual anarchism and is related to a discovery of otherness that starts from the recognition of the self as the best way to approach the neighbor, whom it identifies as another self. For by then, to become unamunomize consists in delving into the tragedy of one's own existence in order to become twinned with others, in the form of a kind of mystical anarchism. That is perhaps why even when it refers to faith (before 97), he notices in it a creative faculty that links with the effervescence mood that stimulates the "holy imagination". He explains them in a letter dated November 1896, addressed to Francisco F. Villegas:

[...] I am not an anarchist in the bestial way, nor even in the way of Co-rominas, I am the way we are the ones who more than practically have poetry, as Tolstoy is, as poor Nietzsche was, as the mystics have been. I abhor all violent acts, I hate war, and I believe in revolution. I am a

conservative anarchist, you know it, actually socialist and of the most temperate (Unamuno, 2017b p. 590).

Imagination is the pendulum on which Unamuno's oscillatory intellectual mechanism is sustained. For this reason, he assumes himself as the living image of transcendental anarchism. Perhaps even echoing a Pascal heritage, which he always considered a spiritual brother, which is confirmed when reading his work, the passionate inclination towards thinking with and from the extremes. From the unpublished notebooks of youth, it can be identified that a typical Unamunian way to avoid any dogmatic formulation is to affirm the existential condition that clings to the extremes without ignoring the abysses. And this applies as much to science as it does to religion. In the *Untitled Notebook* (written around 1891), it is possible to find an example of what is stated here, when considering faith, a counterrational faculty, Unamuno underlines the creative value and which is put at risk because faith succumbs to dogma when transforming itself into religion. Miguel de Unamuno assumes that the fundamental task of an intellectual is to keep alive the scientific spirit, which is characterized by focusing on the spirit while entering full agitation. This is why Tanganelli points out that the Spanish philosopher configures the constant crisis as his most radical *modus vivendi*, and assumes it, moreover, as a style of thought. But it is more than that: we are facing the very genesis of their educational conception. This is passionately expressed in a letter he wrote to his friend Pedro de Múgica in June 1896:

[...]If you preach something that you believe to be purifying, idealizing, dignified and pure, you will immediately bring it down, make it dirty, understand it to the gross, make it progressive and turn it into a riot. It makes you want to become mystical, retreat to a hermitage and contemplate your belly button until you fall into a sweet hypnotic dream. Sleep! I've been thinking for a long time that what our society craves is to sleep and nothing more than to sleep, that they let it rest a little, a stop in the path of progress, a period of calm and mental digestion (Unamuno, 2017c, p. 560).

Just before the 97 crisis, Unamuno has already settled in a rejection of all forms of systematization: whether it is literatism or an arid and formal scientificism. Perhaps he finds in both the same model of attempt to systematize *a priori* the existence. He, on the other hand, seeks to assert individuality in a forceful way. That is why he even renounces writing his novels under the same aesthetic paradigm of realism that prevailed in his time (Ángeles Cerón, 2019, p. 36). In such a way that it breaks aesthetic



and rhetorical schemes to give life to a form of scriptural expression that preempts the modernist novel in several ways. Especially because the presence of the first person and the irreducibility of individual reality are perfectly evident in his novels.

The reason for this, although it can be easily guessed, is revealed by Unamuno in the letter he sends to *Clarín*. That is why the importance of Unamuno's epistolomania has always been pointed out. Because in his letters he offers not only coordinates for the reading of his own texts but also some of his most vivid and untimely reflection. The words that will be quoted below are more than the result of a rhetorical outburst and allow us to observe the consolidation of Don Miguel's most original thought. His attention is totally directed to the "deep within" and that is why he points out to his correspondent what are the concerns that occupy his spirit at that time:

[...]Forgive me for speaking about myself," he writes, but I know nothing but about myself or others, their selves, their guts. I am more interested in men than their things, and rather than understanding these, I want to feel those. There is no mystery more terrible than that of the impenetrability of bodies and souls (Unamuno, 2017, p. 571).

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But what does Unamuno aspire to as an educator if he is relentlessly trying to avoid dogmatism? The answer seems to be found in the profound transformation suffered by Don Miguel between 1894 and 1897, since a deep spiritual *metanoia* is evident at this time, which extends to various areas of his thought and his own life. By then, his intellectual position is completely antidogmatic, in aesthetic, religious, scientific or moral sense (Unamuno, 2016, p. 612). And it is from this position that he consolidates his thinking through a conceptual framework that allows identifying his own style that influences his way of exercising ideas (including those concerning education). This trilemma can be stated as follows: "knowing to ignore"-"knowing to want"-"eternal resignation/temporary non-resignation". The "Holy Imagination", as Unamuno calls it, harbors creative faith and has a dynamic and fundamental place in this triad. One must educate to "know how to ignore": that is the only possibility that a formation will not then transform into induced dogmatism.

Since the very youthful writing of *Notebook V*, he notes that "Doubt is the beginning to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2016c, p. 44). In this way, it is possible to clearly elucidate the starting point of the philosopher of Unamuno. At that moment, he declares the importance of knowing how to ignore, and it is at that time that Don Miguel identifies that he

only goes out looking for what we recognize we have lost. Therefore, it is not trivial to point out that two years later, when he was writing the *17th Notebook*, Unamuno will note that “the principle of science is the knowledge to ignore” (2016d, p. 826) because the Spanish philosopher would have already consolidated doubt as a way of knowing.

It is this genuinely passionate approach to problems that Unamuno conceives as the fundamental teaching that must contemplate any form of education. It is not a question of passing on stoning sentences or unquestionable sentences that must be repeated until exhaustion. Rather, it is about learning to hesitate, suffering the “savory pain” of fighting one’s doubts, and not just veiled appeals to authority that confirm my supposed certainties. And this is expected from someone like Miguel de Unamuno, who in the *17th Notebook* noted “[...] Who will give me peace to my soul if my soul is born for war?” (2016d, p. 16).

But how should one teach one to know how to ignore? How to educate in the methodical paradox? There is no other way than the example. For this reason, he will affirm “that the best work that a man can bequeath to his brothers is his life as an example and as a vision” (Unamuno, 2016, p.1015). Perhaps never has it been possible to conceive of educational work as an apostolate. Because that good example of learning to live knowing how to ignore and not only wanting to know but especially knowing how to want, must come not only from characters or recognized figures, but especially from the master of being a man, because it serves as a model to the disciple with whom he lives daily.

[...] This is how the society must be prepared to fulfill its mission properly and fully, Unamuno says; and this also seems a great means of education, which should not be forgotten by educators. The good example is for the little ones much more profitable than all theories (Unamuno, 1995a, p. 216).

Because education is conceived by Unamuno as that exercise in which a model transmits the confrontation with reality by mimetic without the scaffolding of concepts that aim to offer us a linear image of the world that is not such. Because Don Miguel considers that the good example in the practice of knowing to ignore and wanting to know is the only mechanism to make the methodical paradox an inexhaustible affluent of ideas. For this reason, for him, education is more than an exercise of knowledge transmission, a practice accompanied by a way of life. It cannot be forgotten that Unamuno does not refer to educational practice as most officials of the ministries of education do nowadays, who have



mostly not stepped on a classroom in their entire lives. Don Miguel de Unamuno was a non-university professor from 1884 to 1891, and from his experiences as a teacher he even wrote in 1889 an article entitled “The precepts of the law of the school teacher”, which contains very interesting precepts around what Unamuno conceives as the daily practice of a perennial and transcendental vocation (Unamuno, 1995b, pp. 236-238).

The content of the text makes total sense when remembering the intellectual itinerary of Unamuno, which accompanied his evolution as an educator. The *Notes between Bilbao and Madrid* are a testimony that allows us to identify a long-matured apology of passion when it comes to thinking and teaching. In the first pages of that booklet the Basque philosopher states: “Many ponder my talent. What I know is known by many and many, there are people who know more than I do; but none has more heart than I do or know how to feel more than I do.” In this way, Unamuno showed a statement that he will never abandon and that we find as the sap that gives meaning to “The precepts of the law of the school teacher” which aims to want to know.

Unamuno has already experienced, by the time he writes the *Notes between Madrid and Bilbao*, enough spiritual and epistemological crises to constantly expose in various notebooks that hypothesis according to which, there is no greater teaching than that of knowing what to want. Hence, this booklet written around 1891 and contemporary of the Decalogue of teaching, is at the same time an “intellectual portrait” of Unamuno, a very clear explanation of what he understood since then by teaching. This is why the notebook titled *Notes between Madrid and Bilbao* is a real testimony of the constant crisis that exists in the youthful thought of Unamuno. This is a first moment in which the exhaustion of the purely intellectual way to solve problems experienced by Miguel can be documented. On the other hand, it is also a notebook that allows us to date the appearance of two new instruments of thought for Unamuno: introspection and passion. This is how it is possible to read it when, for example, the passage quoted below is mentioned above:

[...] How sad is the company of books! The book is silent, it says nothing, it is cold and dry, you have to force it to show you its secrets and only leaves the void behind it. / Know, know a lot, know more, more and more! This has been my dream, this is still. But what is the reason to know so much? No! To want, to want much, to want more, more and more and to know what you want. The greatest science is that of wanting, and knows more the person who best knows what to want (Unamuno, 2016a, p. 70).



In his commitment to passion, the Basque philosopher moves away from the figure of the cabinet philosopher and the library educator. Don Miguel de Unamuno presents the key to what he understands by thought and what should guide every educational exercise: “The greatest science is that of wanting,” he said, and “knows more the person who best knows what to want.” That is why he concentrates his efforts on recovering what he has said in the precepts for practicing teaching. To teach to know how to love is essential to love the disciples and to love the profession. For Unamuno, the exercise of thought reaches its peak in teaching. That is the place where the possibility of transforming thought into work takes place. That is where it really starts to exist. Because to teach is then to give oneself, to carry out an exercise of self-donation as an existence in transit and in full construction. Therefore, for him education is not essentially a transmission of contents but the loving exercise of a shared ontological opening. This is why he states that the true principle of knowledge is to know how to ignore. The question is precisely the vehicle on which existence unfolds from an exercise of shared indigence: which takes place between teacher and disciple and cannot occur without the assistance of both.

For this reason, for him education is linked to the scriptural exercise. If the binomial “master”-“disciple” reveals the uncertainty of existence, it will be another binomial, the one composed of “author” and “reader” that ontologically explains that Unamunian notion of existence where precisely exist is “to work”. According to the Rector of Salamanca, writing is a work in ontological terms: it means recognizing that existence is always being done and the exercise of materializing it to paper is the most certain existential consolidation. If in the unpublished notebooks of youth he has said that the fundamental triad of thought lies in “knowing to ignore”- “knowing to want”- “eternal resignation/temporary non-resignation”, this conceptual transition is only understandable to Unamuno himself in that magisterial exercise that takes place in writing. It is in the non-place of the word that existence unfolds as a kind of “temporary non-resignation”. Therefore, an analysis of the way in which the Spanish philosopher understands writing as education that results in the formation and affirmation of an existence will be presented.

## Writing as a means to make an existence

An important part of what Unamuno understands by teaching is sufficiently clear when approaching his notion of “author”. This is especially because, for him, existence is complete: because there is only one who

works and there is no one who works more than the one who writes for the fundamental purpose that Don Miguel finds in teaching: being ferment for the soul of others, giving reasons to doubt and question, rather than transmitting some finished vision of reality. In fact, when questioning his way of conceiving literary art, one immediately notices that what he thinks about the figure of the “author” is intimately linked to his conception of the “reader”, and that in all cases an existential dimension that he wants to make evident transcends them. He is convinced that literature is an exercise in giving oneself: it is a living mutual giving that takes place thanks to the spiritual nourishment in which the literary work is transformed. For Unamuno, literature is the vehicle in which the souls of the author and the reader are given entirely. Therefore, writing is intimately linked to education. This bond that unites these two realities is as much of an aesthetic character as of an ontological and moral character. This is the reason why for him, there is a determining parallel between the author-reader and teacher-disciple binomials, since we are talking about the confluence of the different existential tragedies that rethink, through literature, the drama of being.

Unamunian “pedagogy” and “demagogy” are the conceptual tools with which education is conceived as a mission in which the ontological drama discovered in one’s own existence is transmitted. Because the author who educates with his texts in which he has poured the deepest of his soul, writes ultimately to immortalize himself. And not especially through answers or dogmas that he imposes on the other, but in a particular way, sharing his doubts and fears, his desires and hopes: his hunger for immortality. This is the most radical sense of Unamunian egotism, because when writing one tries to get out of an existence by linking oneself with the “spirit of the reader” than only when one’s own drama meets the “spirit of the author”. Therefore, it is not surprising that Unamuno, postulated a scriptural conception with ontological ideas, since he notices in writing the most risky and lively way of the exercise of teaching, while the spirit of his “readers” is fed through the reception of the most characteristic spiritual features of his own being. As Unamuno notices a mimetic dimension in education, so he also finds it in writing, with whose practice it is observed that both teaching and writing are conceived as the contagion of a mission, as a *trans-mission*.

This reinforces the importance of the concept of “work” in Unamuno. Both teaching and writing involves acting, because they are two ways of realizing existence where the ontological link that arises plays a decisive role in every exercise of surrender that operates in transmission.



Both the “author” with his “readers”, and the “teacher” with his “disciples” experience a mutual and loving becoming through *trans-mission*. According to Unamuno, a person does not teach and does not write if does not transfer a mission. Therefore, it is particularly important that education and writing can only occur in harmony with the other. It is about the emotional becoming that serves as a pendulum between “intrahistorical subjectivities”, since in that horizon opens the “historical subjectivity of the author”, who through writing in which it *is given* is also making his own existence by *donating*. This is the transcendence of the notion of Unamuno’s work that links the teaching profession with writing. There arises a spiritual relationship that mediates between the “author” and the “reader” in the same way as it does between “teacher” and “disciple”, which acts as a “remedy” for the *discontinuity or ontological indigence* that is the starting point of existence.

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For Unamuno writing is the vehicle of understanding the temporal conception of existence. But this is discovered by man through the eternal struggle of opposites that becomes evident in these concepts: a) “eternity of momentaneity” and b) “*momentanization* of eternity” (Unamuno, 1958, p. 661). While these expressions are common for those who know finite and hungry at the same time of immortality. With the experience of the “eternity of momentaneity” Don Miguel points out that the historical world supposes the eternalization of certain moments of human existence, which, due to their density and sense, deserve to be removed from the intrinsic death in every moment. Meanwhile, with the experience called “*momentanization* of eternity”, he demonstrates that this eternity requires, as a counterpart, an inert conception of temporality. However, beyond the *ontological discontinuity* implied by both conceptions of time, there is an obvious—albeit partial—continuity of “intrahistorical subjectivity,” since this is—and will continue to be—the ontological foundation of “historical subjectivity.” However, these two experiences of man’s temporary and finite existence are clarified and understood as tensions of being through writing.

Unamuno maintained this concern both in his published work and in his rich and inexhaustible epistolary. But if looking at his public work, the text entitled *How a Novel Is Made* stands out. It is an exercise in which he paused thoroughly to think about existence as a pending reality that is only realized effectively in that exercise of surrender to the other that is perfectly represented by the scriptural practice and the practice of the magisterium. Although this is precisely so, because these two forms of work demand the contest of otherness. In this work of 1927, the Salamanca rector affirmed



that what has been said and not experienced is left aside in a text; therefore, literature must be lived so that it does not crystallize:

[...]What is called in the literature production is a consumption. The person who writes down his thoughts, his dreams, his feelings, consumes them, kills them. As soon as a thought is written, expressed, crystallized, it is already dead, and it is no longer ours. History, the only thing alive, is the eternal present, the fleeing moment that is passing, and literature is nothing but death. Death that others can take life. The person who reads a novel can live it, revive it—and the person who says a novel tells a story—and the person who reads a poem, a creature—a poem is a creature and creation poetry—can recreate it (Unamuno, 1958, p. 829).

And these ideas are expressed by Miguel from the considerations of another concept mentioned in his work, namely that of the philosopher-poet, where the best version of what he understands by “author” is crystallized. This was stated from one of his booklets, the one traditionally titled *Philosophy II*. In this text, while he was consolidating himself as a philosopher-poet (let us not forget that if Unamuno wanted to be remembered somehow it was precisely as a poet), Don Miguel expresses:

[...]Science is the reconstruction of the fact, mental reconstruction, the better reconstructed the more bound and organized to others, more as part of a whole one and complex, science is more perfect. / The reproduction of the poet or the descriptive painter is not in essence different from that of the thinker; there are degrees in reproduction. Hence, a thinker is a poet, and a poet is a thinker. / The thinker reproduces the fact in the abstract because he does not individualize it or add anything to it, the poet adds to it something of his own to objectify it and individualize it. Difference between art and science (Unamuno, 2016e, p. 9).

Unamuno clarifies in this valuable fragment the deep reasons that made him reflect on the various forms of art. Once again, the reader can realize how it is that the philosopher knows that the scientific spirit is totally linked to the poetic attitude. But they distinguish themselves precisely in the fact that the poet leaves all of him in his production (and that is one of his goals), while the scientist seems to be able to do without it. Nevertheless, the shared desire to open new paths for introspection and reflection on the environment lead Unamuno to consider that the only distance that exists between art and science is the individualization degree of the problem demanded by the artistic gaze, which is always called to create. Therefore, when Unamuno writes *Philosophy II*, it is clear that the poetic exercise is central when thinking about education. In this

regard, Paolo Tanganelli notes: “The philosopher knows how to represent in the abstract: his knowledge is rational, it is *epistemic* valid in any situation. The poet, on the other hand, has to add “something of his own” to concretize the fact, he has to renounce precisely objectivity to objectify it” (Tanganelli, 1998, p. 109).

This is important in the same way that real life has reached Unamuno in such a particular way on his reflection on the work of the poet and the artist and even what he thinks about philosophy and the work of the magisterium, which will be permeated since then by the experience of concrete existence. As said, even lightning rods are connected to the earth and the case of Unamuno is not the exception. For this time in which he writes *Philosophy II*, Don Miguel has arrived in Salamanca and besides continuing to work on booklets that remained unpublished until recently, he writes constantly in periodicals. Two things stand out especially in Miguel’s intellectual life: on the one hand, there is the fact that Unamuno will become a teacher of Greek language and literature, and on the other hand, he also stresses that the polemic tone will shape most of his texts. And although with the own nuances of each publication, it is from those particularities that the Spanish philosopher sets himself to the task of writing for different audiences.

This is one of the reasons why Miguel de Unamuno, when addressing the work of the writer, moves away from the prevailing paradigms both aesthetically and professionally at the level of his time. Hence, the enervated criticism that receives, for example, literary realism, which is the most accepted form of writing in its time. He always relates the aesthetic genres of writing with a way of understanding the world, and realism seems to him the most dogmatic of all because he puts a straitjacket on the “holy Imagination”. Unamuno insists on circumscribing literary realism in an *episteme* that does not assume the unrepeatable of existence and that is the fundamental problem. Individualizing an object is for Unamuno, from the notebooks of youth, the work of the artist and the poet, so that a real poet, a writer who deserved such a title would not write “literature” from the “naturalist-realism”. The difference is that “The thinker reproduces the fact in the abstract because he does not individualize it or add anything to it, the poet in order to objectify and individualize it adds something of his own to it. Difference between art and science” (Unamuno, 1891-1892, p. 9). Therefore, the Unamunian reflection coincides with the importance of emphasizing that, as Gutiérrez-Pozo (2023) has mentioned, “Life is the foundation of knowledge. Thought then cannot be understood as mere intellectual activity. Thinking is basically a vital



exercise” (p.168). So, we ask why we do not know something that reminds us of the creative value of ignorance and even the very foundation of the scientific spirit. Hence, teaching should consist of asking questions, which is also the central task of writing, as Unamuno conceives it throughout his literary career.

For the author of *Niebla*, writing is a privileged way of educating insofar as it involves the exercise of the construction of existence (both his own and others), since the position of a new episteme is assumed with the appeal to various narrative resources (such as the inner dialogue or the flow of consciousness). It is an episteme that tries to overcome the limits of objective knowledge that rests on algorithms that cannot embrace individualization and the contradiction that is normally in existence.

The Unamunian theory of the novel is especially committed to this that has been exposed. It warns in the genre of the *novel* the possibility of recovering at the narrative level and in the entities of fiction what the existence of the flesh-and-blood man experiences. Hence, the Basque philosopher writes in the “Epilog” to his novel *Don Sandalio, chess player*, that “Every poet, every creator, every novelist — to never create is to create—, by creating characters he is creating himself, and if he is born dead, he lives being dead” (Unamuno, 1930, p. 26). For Don Miguel, the exercise of novelty coincides with bringing into language the particular and unrepeatable appreciation of concrete existence; for this reason, he finds that “The greatest historians are the novelists, the ones who most engage themselves in their stories, in the stories they invent” (Unamuno, 1930, p. 25). Because Unamuno is thus distant from the alleged objectivity of positivism that he talks about or his first philosophical youth. The personal and intellectual problems put in crisis that paradigm and positioned him in such a position that by 1933, when he published this text, made him argue that “there is no more true truth than poetics, that there is no more true history than the novel” (Unamuno, 1930, p.25). This is more than just a play on words devised by Miguel de Unamuno. His vision as a writer is keeping his impression of the narrative dimension of reality. Therefore, he constantly appeals to the topic of the *theatrum mundi* to account for the structure of the real and when he reflects on the novel is no exception:

[...]Every poet, I mean, every creator, even the Supreme Poet, the Eternal Poet, even God, who, by creating Creation, the Universe, by continually creating it, poematizing it, does nothing but create Himself in his Poem, in his Divine novel (Unamuno, 1930, p. 26).



This is why for Miguel de Unamuno to *exist is to poetize*. In that sense, the act of writing novels is a way of prolonging existence. Unamuno's justification for writing this way lies in the fact that he has decided, he says, "to write for my readers that I have modeled at the same time that they have modeled me" (Unamuno, 1930, p. 26). It is a statement that places the author, his reader and fictional entities on the same plane, which says a lot about the Basque writer's conception of the novel. So much so that he even notices that his readers recognize and look in his novels the same thing that he does. This is how he expresses it in that "Epilog" to *Don Sandalio*, at the same time that he takes advantage of a new opportunity to separate himself from the realistic novel. Don Miguel therefore writes:

My readers, mine, do not seek the coherent world of soap operas called realists—is it not true, my readers? —; my readers, mine, know that an argument is but a pretext for a novel, and that this novel remains, the whole novel, and purest, most interesting, most novel, if the argument is taken away from it [...] They are not my readers from whom, when are going to hear an opera or see a film — sound or not — they buy the argument first to know what to stick to (Unamuno, 1930, p.26).

The Spanish writer recovers in this text that poetic consciousness that led his work in several moments but that comes to verbalize fictionally in *Niebla* and that, in the case of *Don Sandalio*, chess player is confirmed. Unamuno puts on the same plane the novel and existence not only by the appeal to a metadiegetic narrative resource. In a particular way, this shared plane is because he warns in this new way of noveling that breaks the epistemic and aesthetic paradigm of realism, the possibility of presenting existence as it is given factually in man, i.e., without argument. This is why he emphasizes the refusal not only to cover up from the argument, but also points out the distance that his reader establishes in relation to a narrative aesthetic that does not represent the incoherence and contradiction of existence. For Unamuno, to novel is the scriptural exercise of poeticizing according to the individual and diverse experience of living. This is where lies the fundamental link between education and writing in Unamuno's thought. For neither action is understood but as a work, and it cannot be done without being given to others.

Likewise, in the "Prologue-epilogue" that he wrote in 1934 to the second edition of *Love and Pedagogy*, Don Miguel concentrates on meditating on the reasons why he opts for innovation and experimental writing. Unamuno then defines his way of noveling as "Dramatic stories, full of intimate realities, entwined, without reality, without backstage or realisms



in which the true, eternal reality, the reality of personality is often missing” (Unamuno, 2017d, p. 52). That is precisely what *bullets* are about. And on that path he travels his journey as a novelist, which he glimpses lacking any argumentative and based on the representation of the various intimate realities: “I have continued to develop,” he says in that reflective text, “with perhaps more peace, but not less pain, the visions of these ‘deep caves of sense,’ as mentioned by St. John of the Cross” (Unamuno, 1958, p. 970). Because it is precisely like caves of sense that Unamuno thinks his novels. He precisely points to the particular and living inquiry that man has flesh and blood or fiction to realize his existence. Because to be, as with the characters of Unamuno, to live, ones must assume the painful trajectory of being in the world with no argument to follow. This is the Unamunian *dictum* according to which the principle of knowledge is to know how to ignore: to live is to know how to ignore. For Don Miguel de Unamuno the writer carries out a sublime task: the task of sculpting himself and the task of giving himself existence. That is the greatest task for the poet. It is in this way that the drama of existence is transferred, or better yet, extended to the novel. That is why Cerezo Galá has said that, for Unamuno, “being a poet is equivalent to existing originally as an architect of himself” (Cerezo, 1996, p. 553).

Therefore, for Unamuno, education itself consists in writing a novel: the novel of the existence of the disciple-reader. Because if education is to write a novel, it means assuming the inquiring nature of knowing how to ignore the one that the man who has discovered his vital indigence cannot give up, especially because education really wants to seek wisdom without any dogma. And there is no greater example of this than to find a novel that dispenses with any argument. This is Unamuno’s claim to novel, because with the construction of his entities of fiction he intends to bring to the narrative that same indigent condition of existence that is not updated by means of a coherent algorithm, but in the very act of narrating. This is mentioned by the writer himself when he says in the article “The Selection of the Fulánez” (1905): “The poet, if he really is, does not give concepts or forms; he gives himself” (Unamuno, p. 838). The Spanish philosopher conceives the act of writing novels as an exercise in which existence gives itself, with all its doubts, its mysteries, its unclarified interiors, and its pending episteme under construction. Philosophy is useful for this, not to access answers but to bring the spirit to its greatest tension with the experience of the world, which we understand to the extent that we poeticize it, i.e., to the extent that we become in it with each action. This can be seen, for example, in the same “Prologue- Epilogue” of *Love*



and *Pedagogy* when Don Miguel writes: “Sentiment, not the rational conception of the universe and of life, is better reflected than in a philosophical system or a realistic novel, a poem, a prose or a verse, a legend, a novel” (Unamuno, 2017d, p. 297).

The reason why Unamuno claims this is very clear. The *nivolist* in him stems from the recognition of the importance of individuality. He equates the realistic novel with the philosophical system that dispenses with the intimate reality and that is why he insists that the feeling of the whole universe and of life is best expressed in a novel (thus, without any epithet). Does it mean that what Unamuno is opposing to *the* realistic novel is the novel itself? As paradoxical as this might sound, the answer is affirmative. Unamuno is preparing in theory and in practice a narrative model that can emerge as an aesthetic and epistemological opposite to the realist-naturalist novel. Paul Olson, on *How a Novel is Made*, has insisted that Unamuno’s writing can be defined as an agenda that culminates in an “anti-novel” (Olson, 1970-71, pp.186-199).

Therefore, when trying to think about Unamuno’s writing style, one cannot do without the questions of even ontological order that precede his work as a notable literary figure. Above all, because in his writing, he condenses all the way that has taken him there, both intellectually and personally. And it is perhaps in that transformation that he is suffering from his first intellectual youth that makes him change his vision about literature and his practice as father of fictional entities. Because this idea Unamonian idea, according to which writing novels consists in not following an argument, fits perfectly with an ontological principle that Don Miguel ends by maturing in *The Tragic Feeling of Life*, where he points out that “to be is to work and only exists what works, what is active, and as a work” (Unamuno, 1958, p. 274). For this reason, he conceives his characters by granting them an ontological status such that his existence consists precisely in working. They are active as long as they are active and activity.

However, also on the other hand, Unamuno knows that, if one day it is to exist with complete truth, it must be assumed as part of an existence of a body of flesh and blood or fiction. Because men attach importance not to the representation of an idea but to the encounter with another existence (this is plagued by ideas, passions, contradiction, and activity). Luis Álvarez Castro has also referred to this topic: “Unamuno doubts that ideas can survive if they are not embodied in a personality that lends them their warmth, since what is only real—what works—are individuals, not ideas” (Unamuno, 1913, p. 292). Therefore, there is no teaching without a teacher and therefore there is no teaching that can be

understood as such without the presence of another person. This is precisely the objective of Don Miguel: that his novels are both the means of subsistence of his ideas and the vehicle in his magisterium, because it is not a mere representation of his own but of the person and the reflection of the reader who as a result also seeks to make an existence.

Therefore, the Unamunian writing style, when referring to his novels, acquires a greater dimension. When Don Miguel meditates on the style, he stops to reflect on elements that transcend the aesthetic of writing and that links it especially with education. In such a way that when thinking on Unamuno one cannot separate with a conceptual standard the diversity of interests of the Basque philosopher, which are condensed in the Unamuno discovery of being able to emerge a pedagogy through the novel. This is not a mere tool that can represent a cluster of ideas and communicate them, but rather it involves the exercise of *transmission* in its highest sense: the exercise of sharing a mission.

While it is true that Unamuno never offered a concrete definition of what literature was for him, he did offer constant reflections on what he might consider his opposite: literatism. It is this series of notes and references that allows us to weigh Unamuno's writing style from its own context. Because Miguel de Unamuno identifies in the midst of literatism a sterile aestheticism that he recognizes as an intellectual evil of his time. Recovering Miguel's contributions in this regard also allows us to better assess the construction of his style as a novelist, as well as the reflection he makes on his writing practice. Above all, in authors such as Unamuno it is difficult to interpret the first order: the one that arises from the overlap of his work as a writer, the reflection that he makes about himself and the public construction of his personality. However, it is important to note that what Unamuno exposes in the different prologues in which he theorizes about the novel is logical, at least, with what he also exposes in loose articles that he published throughout his life, and in which he departs from the aestheticism that he considers sterile. While there will always be a discussion about an author's sincerity when writing for his audience and even more so when explaining something about his own work, it is also true that authors can be known essentially by their words.

Unamuno's reflection on what he conceives of as literature will be permeated by his rejection of barren aestheticism. This is seen in an article from 1901 entitled "On the defensive", where he offers a highly characterized portrait of literature, the image with which he identifies the opposite of true literature, in the same sense in which he opposed to the realist-naturalist novel he calls without any epithet, simply novel.





Unamuno wants to distance himself from that literatism he says: “I know nothing meaner than our literary world. Most of our writers have the effect of atheist priests; they are priests of a cult in which they do not believe” (Unamuno, 1993, pp. 300-301). For him, literature consists of a profane aestheticism, or as Álvarez Castro says, as “the sacrilegious cult perpetrated by ministers who lack faith and yet arrogate to themselves the possession of artistic truth” (Álvarez, 2005, p. 58). And it is that this figure is parallel to that of the pedagogue who does not believe that he is forming an existence when he teaches. So, the uneducated pedagogue is practicing a sacrilegious cult as well.

However, it is important to note that Miguel de Unamuno is not oblivious to the latent danger that any artistic creation may carry some form of literatism. Especially when improving the technique or think about aesthetic innovation *per se*. Perhaps because of this, he strives to distinguish the notion of “style” with all the formation of a literatism. This is observed when reflecting on the former and makes it clear that style is a defining (if not *the*) trait of the writer’s personality (Unamuno, 1998, p.35). For this reason, those who lack a true personality and are only appearance, are prevented from accessing the sublime work of doing the work of poet. For Don Miguel, the figure of the literary creator is the result of an existence that makes an effort to become itself and that warns its true vocation to live in that struggle. For this reason Unamuno states that “there is no good or bad style, but to have it or not to have it” (Unamuno, 1924, p. 38), to the very extent that there is no good or bad personality, but that one has or does not have it.

The same happens to the educator. No good or bad style to educate according to Unamuno. You just have or you do not have the style to educate. What is the reason for these ideas? That the professor, as happens with the writer, does not have to teach but what he himself is. The exercise of transmission is that of the apostolate who testifies by involving his own life in it. Unamuno mentioned in the unpublished booklets as well as in the correspondence years before the spiritual crisis of ‘97, a deep interest in the individual personality, both at the level of writing and in the field of teaching. Because one cannot make a collective existence, but rather what one can do is appeal to concrete individuality: both in what corresponds to who is given and who receives. Unamuno is so interested in the individual existence that if recalling the letter addressed to Francisco Fernández Villegas on November 12, 1896, Unamuno insists that it does not matter that he is qualified as “another anarchist mystic”, and that, although he accepts any nickname, what interests him most is that his



progress as an intellectual, as a writer and as a man is known to consist more in “Unamunonize him increasingly” (Unamuno, 2017a, p. 585).

Likewise, in most of the texts that Laureano Robes compiled under the title *Around Style*, Don Miguel returns to the topic that necessarily links writing with personality, to the point that Unamuno’s voice seems to resonate addressing a novel writer saying “When taking the pen, be yourself, that is the rule”. In teaching, Don Miguel would throw a similar precept, as seen in the decalogue he built around teaching. “When teaching, be yourself, that has to be the rule.” For the Basque philosopher:

[...] style is not done. You’re born with it or you are not born. What happens is that sometimes it takes time for you to find your style. The person takes time to find himself, to discover his own personality (Unamuno, 1924, p. 39).

That is why not everyone can teach, nor can anyone really write. Both are difficult donation exercises. Because for Unamuno, the real creator, the real poet, is distinguished from the stylist (both in writing and education) because the existence of the poet (the real writer and the real teacher) consists in poetizing life. That means that it opens the way to the possibility of narrating itself through language in the same way that it does when it struggles to exist. Therein lies the background of this ontological aesthetic of Unamunian writing. Because in the sap of writing and in the work of the magisterium, there is an epistemological question that points to the very problem of existence, which involves making a life in a world that is difficult, that is not simple, but that can always try to stay one day longer in being.

Unamuno elevates to absolute value the writing that is magisterium and the magisterium that works as the writing. In both exercises the drama of his existence and personality is observed. These are two actions that undoubtedly show how education is for Unamuno a poetic action. Any aspiring educator could well like these words of Don Miguel de Unamuno that come from his “Poetic Creed” (written in 1907), and where is stated: “Think the feeling, feel the thought / [...] what thought is, do not doubt, the sense” (p. 200). This Unamunian “Creed” reaffirms among its verses the relationship between personality and the style of teaching when thinking of education as a way of making an existence: “Do not take excessive care of clothing / sculptor, it is not your task, /do not forget that never more beautiful / than naked is the idea” (p.200). Education, like writing, as Unamuno thinks, accompanies the disciple-reader until necessary. Because the writer-educator should not be frightened by the possibility of living without certainties, since it is also good to suffer difficulties.



## Unamuno versus current education

Unamuno's spirit was always combative, and when it came to education it was no different. On the contrary, he wanted to be constantly in the debate about what he considered important for the human formation of the citizen. Unamuno is certainly an interesting counterpoint when it comes to weighing the value of the technocratic and utilitarian education that dominates our time. Especially because Unamuno does not conceive education as an essentially professionalizing exercise, but as a mission transmitted that shares the deepest concerns that man can have. Because, as reviewed in these pages, education does not consist in the impersonal teaching of a method or a technique but rather in the personalized exercise that accompanies the individual in an integral way until it strengthens his own personality. When he insists that his main objective is to "unite" more and more each day, he is pointing out the central task of his pedagogical idea: carrying out the vital project of the human being based on its non-transferable characteristic.

In his famous essay "Inside", written at the beginning of the 20th century, the Spanish philosopher expresses in a specific way the way in which the one who intends to educate must act: "Communicate with the soul of each one" (he says), and not with the community" (Unamuno, 1966a, p. 951). In many ways, this contrasts with the education of our time. In the contemporary era, systems of training by competences prevail, which transmit skills for pragmatic purposes, and which evaluate the appropriation of knowledge in a standardized way. Above all, because the emphasis is placed, in particular, on the value of teaching for work purposes. To a large extent, the institutionalized education of this time is conceived as a certification exercise of the qualification for work.

This neglects the freedom of teaching and research at universities, for example. It favors the teaching of techniques and methods that allow to standardize a professional performance (more than paying to the disciplinary deepening), in favor of any pre-programmed pragmatic finalism (Restrepo, 2015, p.137). This is further supported by the fact that both the funding needed to fulfill the obligations (academic and labor) within the universities, as well as its budgetary justification, has led to a condition that ends up being suffocating for the attempt to preserve freedom and political, academic and ideological autonomy when it comes to defining the spirit of teaching.

Unamuno, on the other hand, thinks that teaching (through writing, but also in the university faculty) is just the opposite of any dogmati-

zation and standardization exercise of individuals. Education is for him a liberating power. And there is a contrast with the current education that usually thinks about certifications before listening to the other, and in assimilation by synthesis, rather than in the affirmation of difference. While Miguel de Unamuno conceives education as an exercise that is closer to analysis than to the systematic enunciation of conclusions. Especially because he is in favor of the scientific spirit but is wary of any dogmatic tendency of science. He prefers doubt and the creative value of uncertainty, rather than the aridity of some purported certainty.

In the face of much of the individualistic education that can be found in contemporary times, Unamuno opposes a pedagogy that, based on individuality, recognizes the otherness as another self. Starting from the cultivation of the individual personality of each man through language, he advocates a social conception of the individual and his necessary education in society. Thus, in his reflection, he emphasizes the sense of the community in the educational formation of citizens, since as Gemma Gordo (2012) has said: “Unamuno always believed in the importance of education for a country and in the possibilities of regeneration that could come from it” (p.176).

Therefore, the value of Unamuno’s educational thought is and should be high in a time like the one we go through. Because it defends the freedom and individuality of teachers and disciples, but it does not confine them to a kind of existential solipsism. Rather, it recalls that freedom is lived in a social context of true openness to the other, without prejudice to the contradiction and the dispute in the public space. Because he pretends that education avoids as much as possible the empty formalisms, and perhaps for this reason he opts for literary writing to go beyond the classroom and continue with his passionate pedagogical exercise, making his voice a kind of scalpel of his own and other soul.

## Conclusions

It is evident that Unamuno warns his most felt vocation in the profession of educator, especially because he does not identify the activity as a labor exercise subject to educational reforms that are institutionally promoted. Rather, it is conceived as an educator of individuals, because he considers them the inescapable background of the only collectivity he trusts: people. Therefore, his work as an intellectual and his exercise as a public character are facets of his own ministry as an educator. Above all, because he does



not separate the mission of commenting and discussing ideas from the mission of promoting the formation of an ethos. Therefore, teaching is, for him, a task that is consolidated as it transcends the classrooms.

For this reason, his specific vocation as an educator makes him realize that the deep formation of the person is linked to openness, to listening, to the affirmation of otherness. Therefore, his deep concern for individuality causes him to move away from a dogmatic exercise, and rather, he believes that education should consist in fostering creativity that precedes all forms of dogma. This is something that is clear in his texts, in his articles and novels as in his vast correspondence.

For Don Miguel de Unamuno, it is clear that an educator cannot inhibit himself from human problems, but rather, delves into them as a further practitioner of the very complex existence. Therefore, in contrast to all the boom of the supposedly automated training, he opposes training through writing, which is another way of manifesting and practicing interest in others.

Hence, his writing is pedagogical in the written sense. Because it does not offer finished ideas, but rather invitations to think about the deepest human conflicts. And it does so, moreover, assuming a literary style that leads the reader to be himself, who seeks and pretends to find the formation of his own idea of himself and his place in the world. Just as when someone moves through the fog and if it does not stop, the light is made and everything that leaves us absorbed is gradually unveiled. But it is only possible with the personal involvement of the person who reads and who learns.

This is precisely what he insists on saying that his writing and his public exercise as an intellectual is aimed at the affirmation of individuality (of his own and that of others). As stated in this article, there lies the didactical exercise of the writer that offers ways to face the doubts, avoiding the syllogism, the treaty and the systematization, and betting instead on the cognition that makes possible the literary language, especially when it is offered as a cultivation of the spirit in which the reader approaches the question that arises to him as if he were peering into the abyss of his spirit. Because Unamuno does not prevent his reader from the vertigo of doubt, but rather promotes the discovery of creativity that holds uncertainty.

Therefore, Unamuno does not separate those two vocations, the educator and the writer. The writer who fulfills his task of promoting the spirit who earnestly seeks an answer to the conflicts of existence is the one who is truly educating. And those who educate by opening up to their disciples the ways that language offers us as means of understanding oth-

erness and one's own personality are those who are on the road to being a real writer. Therefore, there is in Unamuno an example of understanding writing as an education that aims to influence life formation. Above all, because as mentioned in this article, both writing and education are for Miguel de Unamuno ways to make a deep donation of himself.

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# KANTIAN PERSPECTIVE ON THE STATE AND EDUCATION

## Perspectiva kantiana sobre el Estado y la educación<sup>1</sup>

AGUSTINA ORTIZ-SORIANO\*

Universidad de la Ciénega del Estado de Michoacán de Ocampo

Sahuayo, Michoacán, Mexico

aortiz@ucemich.edu.mx

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6562-3258>

### Abstract

This paper analyzes the role of education in the practical philosophy of Immanuel Kant. This paper analyzes the position of education and the state in the practical philosophy of Immanuel Kant, for whom education is established as the essential task of humanity; hence, he pointed out that, that man can consider the art of government, and the art of education as the most difficult discoveries, being education the process by which the human being becomes human begins; that of civilization and culture, intrinsic elements in the sphere of education, which is the basis of the development of people, and of humanity in general, for which the theses on education in the text of pedagogy must be reviewed, suggesting that the cosmopolitan educational project is the best way to promote an education that tends towards the universal good.

However, in order for the Kantian proposal to be promoted from educational institutions, it is necessary to reconsider the task and function not only of parents, but also of the State in the educational sphere and guide it according to the parameters of cosmopolitanism, a philosophy that is both offered as an unavoidable duty and as a pervasive social need. The definition of cosmopolitan education is presented as a method of human growth that enables the identification of beings with moral and legal personality in each of us.

### Keywords

Education, cosmopolitanism, pedagogy, humanity, inclusion, State.

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\* PhD in Education, Master in Humanities, with a specialty in Political Philosophy, Master in Education Sciences, Bachelor of Philosophy. Full-time Senior Research Professor attached to the Bachelor's Degree in Educational Innovation and the Master's Degree in Education Sciences, at the University of La Ciénega in the State of Michoacán de Ocampo, Mexico. Member of the National System of Researchers of the National Council of Humanities, Science and Technology, Mexico.

### Resumen

Este trabajo analiza la posición de la educación y el Estado en la filosofía práctica de Immanuel Kant, para quien la educación se establece como la tarea esencial de la humanidad, no en vano señaló que, “el hombre puede considerar cómo los descubrimientos más difíciles, el arte del gobierno y el arte de la educación”, que es con la cual inicia el proceso por el cual el ser humano se hace humano a saber; el de la civilización y la cultura, elementos intrínsecos en la esfera de la educación que es la base del desarrollo de las personas en particular, y de la humanidad en general, por lo cual las tesis sobre educación en el texto de la pedagogía deben ser revisadas, sugiriendo que el proyecto educativo cosmopolita es la mejor vía para propiciar una educación que tienda al bien universal.

Sin embargo, para que la propuesta kantiana sea impulsada desde las instituciones educativas, se requiere replantear la tarea y función no solo de los padres, sino también del Estado en la esfera educativa y orientarla según los parámetros del cosmopolitismo, una filosofía que se ofrece como un deber ineludible y como una necesidad social generalizada. La definición de educación cosmopolita se presenta como un método de crecimiento humano que posibilita la identificación de seres con personalidad moral y jurídica en cada uno de nosotros.

### Palabras clave

Educación, cosmopolitismo, pedagogía, humanidad, inclusión, Estado.

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## Introduction

The philosophical system of the Kantian corpus mentions knowledge, morality, law and politics, but it lacks an essential piece of Kantian philosophy: *pedagogy*, which is part of the universal Kantian cosmopolitan project, and is within the works of practical philosophy, as it determines a set of postulates on the configuration of the human being and his action in the world, for which the educational process, which involves strong morality, is not only important, but is inescapable and essential for the development of humanity.

The aim of this paper is to analyze the perspective of the philosopher of Königsberg regarding the importance of education, pointing out the main processes to follow, pointing out roughly, discipline and instruction, as well as the importance of the State's position regarding educational institutions, since education, according to Kant (1803/2003, p. 35) is established as the essential task of humanity, for that reason he said that man can consider the art of government and the art of education as the most difficult discoveries; in this sense, the responsibility of the State for the education of the people will also be reviewed. It is in pedagogy (1803/2003, p. 96), that Kant points out that, “for the public authorities and for the cosmopolitan, it is pivotal to know an institution because from it emerges a radically new organization of human affairs”. The foundations for a pluralistic and tolerant coexistence are established from cosmopolitanism.



Given the current different educational systems, in which it seems that the field of education has yielded to the field of educational profitability, forgetting the essential task and function of education, it is urgent to review the process by which the human being becomes human, i.e., that of civilization and culture, intrinsic elements in the field of education that is the basis for the development of people, but, because the issues of education are assumed mainly by the State, we must review the obligation and competence of the State for matters related with education. It is urgent to return to the essential task of education and, above all, to demand from heads of State a genuine commitment to education, since it is through education that we determine the type not only of citizen, but of human being that we want to have.

The methodology implemented is bibliographic review since it supports the technique and the treatment of information, favoring the references to the classical works of Kantian thought, which made possible the approach of the topic. The instruments used were phenomenological and hermeneutic method, whose objectives are to describe and interpret the essential structures of the discourse. The text is structured with a central theme: the considerations about education in Kantian philosophy, of which sections are articulated that address two axes of analysis, the first of them addresses the following question: What is to be understood by cosmopolitan education? the second section is about the importance of cosmopolitanism in public education, or towards the construction of a cosmopolitan education.



## Considerations about Education in Kantian Philosophy

The issue of education is one of the major issues that continuously affects humanity as a whole and poses challenges. The so-called Kantian “major works” have always received greater attention, and some no less important writings have been left aside, such as the compilation of the notes on Pedagogy (1803/2003). Kant did not see this printed work and it was edited from the class notes he gave to the students at the University of Königsberg. However, since many ideas reappear in published works and in reflections, it would be possible to rely on them. Above all, there is a thesis to Kant (1803/2003) that returns continually, which must be authentic and states the following: “The project of an education plan must, however, be done in a cosmopolitan way” (p. 36).

Kant begins the text of *Pedagogy* (1803/2002), stating that: “Man is the only creature to be educated” and defines education as: “care (sustenance, maintenance), discipline and instruction, together with training” (p. 29).

Due to the size and nature of the domains that man must face, Kant sees education as one of the greatest challenges; moreover, it is certain that he will be in contact with other human beings who are *ends in themselves*, and whose freedom and autonomy cannot be violated or transgressed, but in which they must be influenced at the same time to civilize and moralize them, as he points out in the text of *Anthropology in a pragmatic sense*.

A tree that grows in the open field usually arches and twists, while in the forest it will grow very straight, because it cannot spread its branches, because other trees steal the sun and dispute the space [Kant, 1798/2007, p. 130].

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The figure of the unsociable sociability (*Ungesellige Geselligkeit*), appears again in the discourse, as that interaction between men in which the same opposition offers the possibility of refinement and development of the provisions that nature has conferred on them.

How, then, should such perfection be fostered, and from what side can it be expected? There is no other path except education. It must be adapted to all purposes of nature and society, both civil and domestic. However, the education we receive at home and in school is still very poor, both in terms of cultivating talent, discipline and indoctrination, and in terms of character formation according to moral principles [Kant, 1764/2002, pp. 70-471].

Education is presented as a dialectical process, since for Kant (1803/2003) “it teaches something to man and, in part, it also educates him”. From this point arises the Kantian thesis that postulates education as an art, because it is not the result of an immediate action, but has a long process. In addition, it should be noted that ‘it is not by working alone with men how natural provisions can be developed’ (p. 36).

Since the human being is not the only being on earth, he has to be constantly in relation and correspondence with others, and in order to achieve a minimum degree of communication and intelligibility, he must know the assumptions under which they move and rule. As a society, we have to have a common goal and work towards society or humanity as a whole. Kant (1803/2003) points out that it is undeniable efforts towards the education of people, as it is the safest and most reliable way to remove them from barbarism and savagery and asserts that “only by education

can man become a man” (p. 31). This is the seal that pedagogy imprints on humanity.

The human being cannot act merely by impulses, as it would remain on the same plane as the other species; education is one of the basic criteria of differentiation among living beings. Kant (1803/2003) points out that, “for this reason only men are those who educate men, this task cannot be performed by anyone but by the human gender, which must gradually take out of itself, with its own effort, all the natural provisions of humanity” (p. 32).

Nature has conferred man various provisions such as law, morality, freedom, etc., which should have as a guiding axis, as a guideline, because reason is unique to human beings, not instincts or impulses, characteristics that are shared with other animals. As Kant points out (1803/2003), “reason is another provisions that man must develop and perfect” (p. 35).

But a man needs a reason of his own, he does not have any instinct, and he himself must build his behavior. But since he is not ready to do so immediately, but comes uneducated to the world, it must be built by the others (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 30).

It is required that man be educated to develop these *natural provisions* and using them in the deployment and use of his freedom, would consider the structuring of a behavior plan, which considers others, but at the same time responds to the needs and demands of people. (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 31).

However, education is a long process that accounts for the participation of multiple generations. This is because, as a result of our limited number, we depend on the wisdom of our ancestors to move forward. By our finite nature, we need the knowledge of our ancestors to move forward. If there was no way to do that, we would be going around in circles to always respond to and solve the same problems and meet the needs of men in the same way; so, our position would never change, there would be no progress. In Kant (1803/2003, p. 31), education covers discipline and instruction, and it is not possible to find an end point in it. It can therefore be said, in general, that the goal of education is “the development of natural dispositions”, and it is achieved by parents, who seek the adaptation of children to the “present world, even if it is corrupted” (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 33).

Kant establishes four levels through which man must be educated: (1) discipline, (2) culturization, (3) civilization (or prudence), and (4) moralization (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 38).

Education is presented as one of the tasks given *a priori* to man, which must be deployed among his fellow human beings and, specifically, with his children.

This duty necessarily also results in the right of parents to *guardianship* and training of the child, while not yet having the use of his or her bodily limbs and understanding, in addition to nurturing and caring for him or her, educating him or her *pragmatically*, so that in the future he or she can support and earn a living for himself or herself, as *morally* [Kant, 1787/1999, § 29. p. 281].

Kant (1803/2003) argues that: “*discipline* turns animality into humanity, therefore it must be merely negative, since it subjects man to the laws of humanity, and this is what will make men feel its coercion, so it must be done early” (p. 30). Kant does not adopt a moralistic attitude, he speaks sober cognitive language and not so much a normative one, thus avoiding a hasty morality. Cognitively, he says that when the child is young he learns better the issues to be governed, but he does not attach him so much to morality, since Kant points out (1803/2003, p. 80), that it is not wise to talk to children about something that for them would not yet have a meaning in their subjectivity.

It is important to point out the relevance of discipline at an early age, as it subjects man to the laws of humanity and begins to make him feel his coercion, but Kant points out (1803/2003, p. 38), “this must be done at an early age, because later it is very difficult to change man”. Education must respect freedom, as long as it does the same with others.

*Cultivation*, for Kant (1803/2003, p. 38), “includes instruction and teaching which provide a certain ability which is the possession of some faculty by which the proposed ends are attained.”

Regarding *civilization or prudence*, Kant (1803/2003) argues that “prudence indicates that it is necessary for man to adapt to human society in order to be loved and have influence. Here emerges a certain type of teaching called *civility*, which requires good manners, kindness and prudence” (p. 38). In this area of education, parents should take special care and interest, while:

They cannot destroy their son as an *artifact* of their own (since such a being cannot be endowed with freedom) and as a property of their own, nor can they abandon him to his fate, because they brought not only a being into the world with him, but also a citizen of the world [Kant, 1787/1999, § 28, p. 281].



As for *Moralization*, Kant (1803/2003, p. 38) states that “man must not only be skilled for all purposes but must also have a criterion according to which he chooses only the good ones”. These ends are those that each one necessarily approves and that, at the same time, can be ends for all.

The doctrine of the *Critique of Practical Reason* method of Kant [1788/1989, p.159] is also concerned with this task by developing not moral philosophy, but *moral education*, so that the teaching of ethics offered in many countries could learn from it.

Two main areas can be distinguished in education: the development of natural arrangements and the implementation of art in its broadest sense. The first one represents the formation of man himself, his configuration, the second one is reflected in teaching and instruction. The question then arises: to what demands must the formation of man, nature or civil society respond? The answer is to both, as they must be taken into account for education, a primary rule in the formation of civilized man.

## The role of the State in education

In general, there are two figures in charge of the education and instruction of men, namely parents and the State. Parents “commonly seek only to bring their children forward in the world”, Kant (1803/2003, p. 36). On the other hand, there are *alternative educators*, the rulers, in terms of how they organize the state and society, how they structure the model of education they want for the people, for citizens or future citizens.

On the basis of the creation of an educational structure or plan is the old discussion of who should take care of education, as well as the expenses it generates, the people (individuals) or the State (the public entity of government)? As Kant (2004, 2004) points out, “people believe that the expenses of the education of the youth do not belong to them, but to the State” (p. 128).

Kant points out in *The Metaphysics of Customs* [1787/1999] that “Education is an absolute natural duty of parents” [General Comment. Paragraph D, p. 330]. Although the process begins at home — and is therefore the responsibility of parents — it is worth noting that this education is still very poor, as the necessary elements are not available to cover the essential elements in the education of men. The state is the institution that can implement appropriate education that develops people’s talents and helps shape their moral character (not determine it).

State leaders and rulers have an obligation to educate those under their leadership (Kant 1803/2003, p. 98). There are several reasons why

one can not only ask them, but demand that they bear the costs of education. The clearest and most direct example relates to the collection of taxes, as well as the commitment made to people in assuming the task of their leadership, which undoubtedly is part of humanity, and which must be oriented towards constant progress to the best.

The problem lies in the fact that the rulers seem to have forgotten why man decides to abandon the unrestricted use of his freedom and enter a civil society. All they are doing now is to consolidate their power and, if possible, to extend their limits both internally and externally, by seeking ever more control over their citizens, and by expanding their power among States.

As long as States waste all their strength in their violent attempts of expansion, continually obstructing the slow effort of the way of thinking of their citizens — depriving them of any support in this regard — nothing of this nature can be expected: because it requires a vast internal transformation of each community in order to train its citizens. But all good that it is not grafted into a morally good feeling is nothing but sheer appearance and dazzling misery [Kant, 1784/2006, p. 54].

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In the effort to extend its dominions to other States, it is when the sovereign forgets or ignores the task of educating the people, for, as Kant points out (1798/2004): “the State, for its part, hardly has anything available to pay capable teachers who dedicate themselves to their functions because it needs everything for war” (p.128).

Apparently, the State is not interested in the education of its people. It does not provide the necessary and relevant conditions that guide man to discipline, the cultivation of humanity, civilization and moralization, nor does it realize that a strong State depends on the education given to the people.

If the State does not show the interest it should in this matter, even less does it in an educational project or plan. He is concerned only with strengthening his external power and subjecting the people to a state of complete ignorance, thus seeking to make its citizens totally passive and not carry out, as Kant puts it, *the human task of thinking*.

It is surprising and at the same time disappointing to see how governments adapt curricula to their interests, to the politics in vogue, without even a minimal analysis of the real conditions in which humanity finds itself; for this reason “the whole mechanism of this education has no unity, it is not drawn up and applied according to a plan meditated from above, that meets its purposes, and if it is not kept according to it” (Kant, 1798/2004, p. 128).

The role of the State in education is to cultivate and educate men, the people, and realize that if the necessary areas for integral education (discipline, culturization, civilization, and moralization) are not covered, this will have a negative impact by moving away from the improvement of humanity, which results in the pretensions of uniformity, in outbreaks of intolerance to everything that is presented to us as opposed.

Thus, for example, even if our leaders have no money left for public educational establishments — or in general for anything that concerns a better world — because all their resources are mortgaged in advance for the next war, they will realize that it is in their interest not to at least impede their people's own efforts — indeed weak and slow — in this regard [Kant, 1784/2006, p. 58].

This is a crucial thesis in Kantian thought. While the State emphasizes tasks outside the education of the people, it should not present any objection to the people taking education into their hands. Kant calls for respect for the right of man to make *public use of his reason*, to be allowed to seek the means he deems most appropriate to forge a critical spirit without reprisals from the State; something that is not always easy to achieve.

For the author, another task of the State in education is to change old “customs and practices” that occur in its organization. “In order for a State to be healthy, it is desirable and necessary that from time to time it reforms itself using evolution rather than revolution” (Kant, 1798/2004, p. 128).

In the text *Practical Anthropology* [1798/2007], Kant states: “the means to improve civil society and its political constitution are: (1) education, (2) legislation, and (3) religion” [Kant, 1798/2007, p. 131]. Education is the cornerstone for humanity to move towards progress, towards the best. The leaders of the State should stop and reflect further on the advantages of committing themselves to the education of their people.

But it is an observation as important for a speculative spirit as it is sad for a friend of man to see how the powerful, most of the time, take care of themselves only and do not contribute to the important experiments of education, so that nature moves a little more towards perfection (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 32).

The State presents as the most effective tool to develop the task that history has placed on humanity, *the constant progress of the human being towards the best*. For this to be carried out, it must be considered that the mission of education, of pedagogy, is to seek the improvement of the human





race, even if it occurs after many centuries; the central point is to maintain the purpose, and advance towards the goal. The task of the State is to help promote and develop *cosmopolitan education* that encompasses humanity.

## What is cosmopolitan education?

If talking about the objective that humanity must achieve through education, it is necessary to point out that this task is not a utopian horizon. In Kant (1803/2003), “the idea of an education that develops in men all its natural dispositions is undoubtedly true” (p.33).

I believe that Kant offers one of the best alternatives to achieve the development of humanity and the deployment of the dispositions of men through a cosmopolitan education, so it is worth noting its meaning and the categories proper to the term.

I understand cosmopolitan education as one that contributes to the formation of the individual from a practical philosophical perspective, in which the human being adopts an integrative position with respect to the rest of humanity. The cosmopolitan is required to transcend interests (whether of groups, states, or nations) to work together to achieve a pluralistic, open, and inclusive community, in the interests of better universal coexistence.

*Education is cosmopolitan because it aims to contribute directly to the great good of the world*, since it seeks the integration of humanity, the inclusion of human beings. In the writings on pedagogy Kant (1803/2003) states it as follows: “The art of education or pedagogy needs to be reasoned, if it is to develop human nature so that it can reach its destiny” (p. 35)

It is understood that the entire private good, even the common good of the state itself, must abandon its narcissistic posture of power. Kant (1787/2000) does not specifically refer to the political conditions of the State, as he does not mention them at all in the pedagogy. The term *cosmopolitan* alludes to the categorical imperative and focuses, as in the canon of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the whole world; it means the true panoramic view that overcomes any narrower perspective, even that specific to a species, and is fixed in the ultimate end [p. 456]. Education is cosmopolitan because it aims to contribute directly to the greatest good of the world.

In the section that corresponds to the *Reflections on Anthropology*, Rodríguez (1989, AK. XV 517) points out that Kant opposes the son of the earth to the citizen of the world. In the first case, it is not about





anything but business and things that influence our well-being. In the second, it matters humanity, the whole world, the origin of things, the internal value, the ultimate ends. The focus is, once again, on the *cosmopolitan* concept, and more specifically on the first element of the term 'cosm', which in this case should be understood as the universe in its order (which is, after all, moral), because it appeals to the recognition of freedom and consideration as *ends in itself*, of men.

He who deals "with nature only to increase knowledge in theoretical consideration" is called, according to Kant in the work *Opus postumum* [1920/1991 p. XXI 553], as *cosmotheoros*, i.e., "contemplator of the world", which Kant opposes by the cosmopolitan, understood not as an educated man who has traveled the world, and knows how to move in it, but as a person who "observes the nature around him in practical respect to exercise his benevolence towards it [Kant, 1920/1/1 991, XXVII 2, 673].

Unlike *cosmotheoros* only committed to knowledge, cosmopolitanism is characterized by a practical and even moral-practical attitude. What is decisive is not the existence of political institutions, but, again, that man is a person, which Kant explains in the corresponding part of the *Opus postumum* as being moral.

But cosmopolitan knowledge does not ignore traditional philosophical knowledge. It only relativizes it by understanding all knowledge with a reference to the essential goals of humanity, so that it is not performed merely in a theoretical way. Most interpreters overlook the fact that wisdom, in the cosmopolitan concept of philosophy, is taught by both instruction and example.

Cosmopolitan education must contribute to a formation in which men are oriented to a critical and inclusive position; it must direct their efforts towards an education that promotes tolerance, respect and dignity of human beings wherever they are in the world; to educate, "to enlighten the people is to publicly teach them their duties and rights vis-à-vis the State to which they belong" (Kant, 1798/2004, p. 123). Moreover, not only vis-à-vis the State to which he belongs, but as a citizen of the world from his human situation, which would prevent any kind of aggression towards us.

Cosmopolitan education is far from a proposal in which man remains as a mere spectator of the world, it is required to foster an analysis and understanding about the transcendence of respect, tolerance, internal value, and consideration of ultimate ends.

If arguing the negative, it will be said that the violation of human rights and the outbreaks of racism and intolerance that emerge dangerously in various parts of the world, is a wake-up call about how difficult



these problems are, and the urgency of solving them, but doing so with a serious project, which, although it will yield long-term results, will be more effective than if the conflict is only solved in an emergent way with some program that responds to the fashion or political demand of the State, but not to the underlying problem.

As human beings, we have inalienable rights, which should not be limited to one group of men. The touchstone of cosmopolitan education is precisely that the formation process emphasizes that the same rights apply to all people, and that they cannot be undermined or alienated by racial or cultural arguments.

If, as Echo (2010, p. 283) points out through William of Baskerville, character of the novel *The Name of the Rose* “and from the point of view of the raw material, you are not better than her”, then we are on a symmetry level, no one has a preponderant place compared to others. This invalidates racial positions that look to place themselves in a privileged position with respect to other cultures and, with rational arguments, to dominate them.

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Ultimately, for the good of the world, it all comes from education, which the government should take much more care of, with particular regard to religion and morality. However, they do not take much care to act according to the law, since, having power in their hands, they can impose the immoral through violence. therefore, they prefer that schools teach reading, writing, and calculating on the basis of education based on religion rather than on the basis of morality and its imprint (Kant, 1798/2004, p. 128-129).

Education must be reconsidered in accordance with the needs and demands of humanity, since it is the guiding axis of humanity and there is no other way to prepare, to train the human being for participation in the public sphere. In this sense, the educational policies of the State should be reviewed and, if necessary, reformulated. Today's education demands more than reading and writing, it requires instruction in the recognition and respect of human beings. It may sound naive, but we need a resurgence of humanism.

Humanity must also be a moral community, the realm of ends. Such a form of community is important, as it sets obligations for individuals and make them concern for their life chances and obligations that should constrain our moral status and powers, which have to be consistent with our moral obligations towards humanity (Granja and Leyva, 2008, p. 137).

This is what cosmopolitan education aims at, to consider a free and equal world for all people and will be responsible for reorienting humanity towards this goal as a chronic horizon, as Rodríguez says (1989, Refl.1471a, pp. 650-751[1790s.]), i.e., if we do not reach the goal, at least we are working to find that man is a human being committed to humanity.

The cosmopolitan education must take the principle of art that Kant points out in the pedagogy.

One principle of the art of education, which should be borne in mind by the men who make their plans, is that children should not be educated according to the present, but according to a better state, possible in the future, of the human species, i.e., according to the idea of humanity and its complete destiny. This principle is of the utmost importance (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 36).

This principle fits with Kant's cosmopolitan position, which seeks the total integration of human beings from a panoramic perspective under a goal to achieve in common, a shared commitment for the sake of a better humanity. To conquer this goal, we must assume that position as our own, because it is necessary to take it as a regulatory idea of reason, we must genuinely join in a community of efforts to at least get closer to the realm of ends. Likewise, Kant (1803/2003) states:

Parents in general do not educate their children except in view of the present world, although it is very corrupted. Instead, they should be educated so that a better state can be produced later. But there are two obstacles: (a) fathers only care, ordinarily, that their children prosper in the world; and (b) princes consider their subjects only as instruments of their desires (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 36).

These obstacles can be overcome if education is reformulated and oriented toward a cosmopolitan view. This educational project is theoretical and practical and is strongly influenced by the current discussion on protectionism and human rights and, of course, how they should be presented and taught in our schools.

## The importance of cosmopolitanism in public education. (Towards the Construction of a Cosmopolitan Education)

Many of the challenges we face today are related with education at some point. It is clear to Kant that man, and humanity in general, will only achieve the highest political good, through the cultivation of the various



provisions that nature has conferred on him, which must be conquered throughout the development and historical progress of humanity.

In the text *Practical Anthropology*, Kant (1798/2007, p. 131) poses the following question: ‘what are the means to improve civil society and its political constitution?’ The author’s reply is emphatic: “1) education, 2) legislation, and 3) religion” [p. 89].

The place of education in the Kantian project and in the project of practical philosophy is pivotal insofar as education must be aided by rules and laws to constrain the autonomy of men and religion, considered essential areas of choice of every free will. The last two issues are not addressed in this paper, which is limited to the education aspect.

It should be noted that when Kant [1798/2007, p.131] points out that education, legislation, and religion are the means to improve civil society, there is an addition in the text that states: “all three must be public and conform to nature”. *Man is humanized* through education, and it is *really the first entry point into the public*. At present, it is necessary that this entry into the public leads to the inclusion of people, however, it must be based on very specific conditions that have shaped their conception of the world. To adopt a reductionist position in which only the local is valid is to place oneself in an overpowering relativism, which threatens—whether we want it or not, whether we realize it or not—against other lifestyles that are finally under which we can demand respect for the diversity of individuals that inhabit the planet. Given that contemporary schooling encourages purely localist loyalty confined to areas of the nation-state, and often underestimates the plight of other humans, man does not come to the end of his existence in any way, so a commitment to humanity must be fostered today.

What matters is that the child learns to think from its particularity. Again, in a very contemporary way, Kant mixes this perspective with a notion of development that directs us towards the achievement of humanity’s ultimate goal. It does so by focusing not only on the present but also on future generations.

In what order can progress toward the best be expected? Here is the answer: not the course of things from the bottom up, but from the top down. Through the formation of youth, under family leadership and then in schools, from the lower to the higher levels, with an intellectual and moral culture reinforced by religious teaching, one would finally come not only to educate good citizens, but to educate for the good all that can always progress (Kant, 1798/2004, pp. 127-128).

Kant points out (1803/2003,) “the heart of this task lies in the education of the youth, and says that by it, it will be shown that one’s own ends will not be attained if others are not allowed to attain their own” (p.27). We must understand that we are part of a vast and intricate network of connections that intersect with us from many different directions. We cannot act as if the world were simply our immediate environment or adopt an attitude of complete detachment from the circumstances that present us as unknown or alien to our reality. As Gutiérrez points out (2023, p. 171). “Against utilitarianism, humanism must ensure the health of the soul to avoid becoming mere beings in fact, lacking humanity.” What Kant’s practical philosophy (1803/2003) shows is “the *urgent need* for us to commit ourselves to a common project from a common base, and for that it is necessary to consider what can be shared with humanity” (p. 36). The solution is to protect the intrinsic rights of individuals, including their autonomy, independence, and sense of dignity, namely, human rights.

Every culture begins with individuals, and from here it extends to others, the slow approximation of human nature to its end, is only possible through the efforts of people, of feelings quite large to be interested in a better world, and able to conceive the idea of a more perfect future state (Kant, 1803/2003, pp. 37-38).

Education is the best means of socializing human beings, knowledge and ideas are exchanged, so why not give education the duty to foster a diverse and inclusive society? One of the main responsibilities of cosmopolitan education is to clearly represent the different without pretending to belittle it and showing ourselves different from the rest of the others, but emphasizing that, despite our differences, or perhaps because of them, it is how we can work in favor of a common project that leads humanity towards the realization of the ultimate end:

The foundations of an education must be made cosmopolitaneously. Is the universal good an idea that can be harmful to our particular good? In no way. Although it seems that some sacrifice must be made for it, nevertheless, the good of its present state is favored. And then what noble consequences accompany him! A good education is precisely the origin of all good in the world. It is necessary that the germs that lie in man become increasingly developed (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 36).

Behind education lies the great secret of the perfection of human nature. It must be realized that the particular good is not necessarily opposite to the universal good, on the contrary, the universal good is possible thanks to the sum of the particular goods. Education must seek the

construction of this sum of goods through cosmopolitanism. You have to go back to the panoramic view to identify the specific in general, and the general in the specific:

Human beings are united by many bonds: by bonds of love and compassion as much as by bonds of profit, by the love of justice as much as by the need for justice. Real people often respond narrowly or arbitrarily unequally to the needs of others. But education can go a long way towards making these bonds deeper, more comprehensive and more impartial (Nussbaum, 2007, p. 165).

The needs of others are unequally met for many and varied reasons. What is important is the lack of awareness, in reference to the problems facing humanity in other parts of the world. This may be due to multiple factors, including that we are unaware of the events other human beings are going through, or we feel that what happens elsewhere is beyond our reach and circumstances, and that their problems do not affect us, not realizing that with our indifference and apathy we collaborate negatively to keep such events occurring. A very serious but inevitable issue is that the freedoms and guarantees that we enjoy by virtue of our humanity are unknown. They are often violated, and we do not do anything because we do not know that these kinds of legal protections protect us.

Even if nations should generally base education and political debate on shared national values, commitment to basic human rights should be part of any national education system, and, in a sense, this commitment would lead to the unity of many nations (Nussbaum, 1999, p. 16).

We must build the framework for the foundation of a cosmopolitan education, in human rights. To the extent that it has universalist aspirations, but does not exclude particularities, Kantian cosmopolitanism presents itself as a viable alternative for the construction of a pluralistic, fair, and inclusive society. This claim can be placed on human rights.

For the Stoics, education is about good civic citizenship, which is what educates for global citizenship. Since it intends to unite us in a kind of united front against outbreaks of intolerance, racism and violence that escalate with greater force, cosmopolitanism is a commitment to the defense of the human being.

In addition to being one of the most pressing problems facing our society, education is also one of our highest moral obligations. The formation of good citizens would therefore result in good human beings. The teaching of human rights would surely be a good starting point in



the long and nascent route of cosmopolitan education, about which Gutmann, in Nussbaum (1999) points out the following:

Most nations teach — let alone practice — nothing like basic human rights, including the right to freedom of expression and religious freedom; equal treatment and equal protection under the law; education and economic security; and equal representation in a truly democratic politics (p. 83).

What would have a positive consequence, at least in principle, is that communities, whatever they may be, would be taught a recognized place and should be respected and treated with dignity. It is commonly asserted that the contemporary transcendence of cosmopolitanism lies in educating children from their own lifestyles, but with an eye on the cultures of others. The goal of cosmopolitan education is to introduce people to the concept of pluralism and to help them understand that being different from others does not diminish or deny anyone; rather, it is on the other hand that we are able to distinguish ourselves from the rest of humanity. If we were all the same, where would diversity come from? Being separated from the other is, in my opinion, one of the biggest losses that people can experience. In this sense, Walzer (1998) points out the following:

The goal of cosmopolitan education is not to teach children what differences are supposed to be, but to teach children, who are supposedly different, to be different in the right way (p. 87).

Under no circumstances could cosmopolitanism be viewed as a “theory” that attempts to assign human beings a hierarchy of importance. What cosmopolitanism seeks is state that our differences should not be considered as deficiencies, rather they should be taken as a possibility of complementarity with others; an inclusive point of view that values pluralism, exists only in systems that consider all people and is not based on the experiences of individual, children or members of a particular community or social group. Nussbaum (1999) points out that this is where the State must demand that the various educational institutions teach ideals that support pluralistic, free, peaceful and democratic cooperation among peoples:

In educational terms, this means that students in the United States, for example, can still regard themselves as beings defined in part by their particular affections: their families, their religious, ethnic, or racial communities, or even their country. But they must also, and fundamentally, learn to recognize humanity wherever they find it, without being dete-



red by traits that are alien to them, and be willing to understand humanity no matter how strange their disguises may be (p. 20).

The draft of a cosmopolitan constitution, as the concept indicates, has to cover the largest number of countries (States). This does not undermine the power status of nation-states. If the States were engaged in this adventure, they would be working for the formation of citizens committed to their localities, but with a holistic, universal look, and then we could say that we would be in favor of achieving the highest political good of humanity. According to Walzer (1998), confederations can also teach a minimal curriculum focused on a history of coexistence and joint cooperation, and on the institutions in which such coexistence is embodied (p. 85).

Education should cultivate the skills and virtues of democratic citizenship in all students, including the ability to deliberate on the demands of justice for all individuals. Political deliberation and participation lose importance when the view that people are ends in themselves is disregarded.

Cosmopolitan education offers the possibility of learning more about us through the dialectical relationships we establish with others. Learning to value, to listen and to recognize others as *equal beings in rights*, but *different in particularities*, would offer the possibility of establishing increasingly diverse relationships without discussing in a respectful, deliberate, and democratic way issues essential for human coexistence seems to be an unsolvable problem:

Our author cared above all about the establishment of a universal order based on law, moreover, as a corollary of this new international order and world peace, Kant did not hesitate to elevate dignity and human rights to its highest expression, above any other principle or interest. To achieve this objective, it is essential that nations (here the term “nation” is used as a synonym for the State) renounce their claims, their localist interests in the interest of the development of international law, human rights and a *universal educational system* that promotes tolerance, rationality, and freedom among individuals (Llano, 2002, p. 145-146).

In my opinion, the school is presented as the first space in which recognition is really played through confrontation with others, hence it has been pointed out that the school is the first entry into the public, however, generally educational institutions are either public or private.

But how can private education outstrip public education, or outstrip public education? In general, public education seems to be more ad-



vantageous than private education, not only in terms of skill, but also in terms of the character of the citizen. It is very common for domestic education not only not to correct the faults of the family, but to increase them (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 42).

Public schools are under the responsibility of the State; in the case of Mexico, the territorial entities have federal schools that, as its name indicates, depend on the federal government, but there are also state schools, which depend on the consideration of the state authorities. For its operation there is general (federal) education legislation, along with specific education laws for each of the 32 states. However, they are not fully autonomous, since the Ministry of Public Education, which regulates education issues and dictates educational plans, programs, and models to be implemented at each of the levels and school subsystems, is the State that determines the educational plans and curricula to be implemented. In contrast to public schools are private schools, which are the responsibility of the State, only in terms of regulations, but leaves a certain range of autonomy so that they can add content or extra activities to those marked by official plans and programs. These institutions respond to particular demands of different character, from religious situations, groups or “social classes” or membership or local affiliations, etc.

Private schools are presented as directed to a particular class or social group and reserve the right to provide their services. This type of education tends to be positionist and privileged only by virtue of being a member of a particular group; recognition is not earned, it is granted, something that is otherwise misleading.

As long as education is established as public in the Constitution (article 3, 2022B), it is common to all people, everyone has access to it and educational services cannot be denied under assumptions of race, group membership or religion, as doing so would exclude a part of its population (hence, in many countries, it has been decreed that the institution is secular and free). As Cepeda (2022, p. 213) points out, “education as a fundamental right involves a reconversion of the signifiers that constitute it, i.e., it no longer focuses on the figure of the State but on the uniqueness of the individual recognizing him as a subject of law”. To achieve this, it is intended that education be presented as neutral as possible, without attachment to ideologies, needs or characteristics of a group or sector of society.

Public education has its most obvious advantages here, since it learns to measure its strengths and the limitations imposed by the right of another; it enjoys no privilege because resistance is found everywhere,

and it excels only by merit itself; it is the education that gives the best image of the future citizen (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 43).

In public school, it is assumed that *we are all equal*, there is no preference, no special privilege or treatment. The public space is conquered by the individual, and he has to establish relationships with his other companions, make himself heard and listen to the other, he has to search for his own space and, at the same time, respect the space of the other, because if he does not, he will be in trouble, since he cannot violate the right of others. Relationships must be mediated through the rules imposed by the school, which has the enormous responsibility and opportunity to shape the character of individuals.

The possibility of consolidating a cosmopolitan education fits perfectly into public education, as it is the place where different forms and lifestyles, thoughts and customs converge, and all must be respected, as there is no privileged place absolutely for anyone. The positioning of the subjects depends on themselves, cosmopolitan education demands a strong and serious commitment in the teaching of shared values, tolerance, human rights, and exercises of deliberative and democratic practices that contribute to the formation of inclusive and tolerant subjects (who will become citizens).

It would be interesting to propose that, in the curriculum, in addition to one's own history, a subject be opened that adopts other histories from a humanistic and formative point of view rather than merely informative. There is much to be said about how these concepts can be implemented in the curricula at different levels, but that discussion is for a further paper.

According to Nussbaum's argument (1999), the importance of implementing a cosmopolitan education, which addresses issues in favor of multiculturalism, "is weakened by not being able to contemplate education, as one of its central elements, a wider world respect" (p. 26).

We have locked ourselves into our own ideas and beliefs and lost the horizon of intellect by forgetting the place of others. It would be interesting to know the gaze of the "others" towards us. We do not work for an inclusive society. We have forgotten to commit ourselves as a humanity to a common goal that cries out for our attention. We believe that not being in the place where the events take place exempts us from participating in the denouncement and, why not, from seeking an alternative solution to conflicts.

Cosmopolitan education seeks the integration of men as men. Education needs to be more humanistic and committed to educating citizens who are committed to themselves and others.



Kant's perspective on many and varied issues has placed him as one of the most influential minds in human history. I consider that the educational proposal reflected in *Pedagogy* is salvageable and has much to tell us from a legal-political position of its practical philosophy.

Education, from a Kantian perspective, must be taught from a cosmopolitanist perspective, since it offers the bases that will contribute to the development of the natural dispositions of men with a view to achieving the highest good of humanity (or the highest political good, which is what will lead us to perpetual peace). Nussbaum (1999) puts it this way:

If, as I believe we should, we embrace Kantian morality with all its consequences, we need to educate our children to care about it. Otherwise, we merely educate a nation of moral hypocrites who speak the universalist language, but whose universe, on the contrary, has a restricted and self-serving scope (p. 24).

The commitment that the State must adopt (of course, shared with private institutions) is to develop curricular proposals that educate the individual to insert himself, from his own and particular world of life, into global citizenship, and it requires the teaching of shared values, respect, tolerance, and exercises of deliberative and democratic practices that contribute to the formation of inclusive and tolerant subjects (who will later be citizens). All this with a strict knowledge of human rights with respect to ourselves and others. This requires that public education no longer be part of the machinery that the state uses for its own purposes and interests.

We must review the role we play, and how we do it, in the education of our children, students, etc. We must examine the precepts and parameters according to which education is carried out, from the perspective of Kantian thought.

## Conclusions

Kant's perspective on many and varied topics has placed him as one of the greatest philosophers in human history. I believe that the educational proposal reflected in pedagogy can be rescued and have much to tell us from its practical philosophy. Kant points out in the pedagogy that the two most difficult things that man has discovered are "the art of government and the art of education", however, two centuries after Kant made his statement, there is still discussion about these ideas that far from losing impact, gain more force. Kant offers a solid analysis of the process



that humanity has carried out and the direction it must follow to reach its final destination without undervaluing itself.

Indeed, social conditions have changed, which is why the question, Why do we still not make progress on these issues? Presents as a kind of claim that requires the most urgent attention of humanity as a whole. Perhaps history is proving Kant right, when in Anthropology he made the harsh claim that we have civilized ourselves to excess, but we have not moralized; the answer seems to be positive, many areas of science and technology have seen progress, but the field of humanities seems to have stopped. Kant offers, in my opinion, the best theoretical position regarding the process that has been carried out by humanity and, the orientation that has to be followed to reach its final destination, without it coming to undervalue itself. In this sense, efficiency, technology and economic performance are not the main factors in education, rather, education must contribute to the realization of humanity, and this realization can be achieved through cosmopolitan education, which presents as an alternative for humanity to reach its destiny, although this can be considered a utopia.

The cosmopolitan education should be taken as a regulatory idea, given the view of utopia that it entails, for them it is essential that the commitment to adopt the State (of course, is also a task shared by private institutions), to assume the commitment to educate, and to develop and promote curricular proposals that educate the individual to be able to insert, from their own and particular world of life, to the world citizenship, for which it is required the teaching of shared values, respect, tolerance, exercises of deliberative and democratic practices that contribute to the formation of subjects (who will later be citizens) inclusive and tolerant, based on a strict knowledge of human rights towards ourselves and others; for this reason, it is necessary that public education is no longer part of the machinery that the state uses for its own purposes and interests.

## Note

- 1 The references to Kant's works belong to the classical edition of the Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences, currently the German Academy of Sciences, (Kant's *Gesammelte Schriften* herausgegeben von der Königlich Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin) and are enclosed in square brackets [.]. Even works in Spanish, as they are direct translations. The rest of the above works are quoted in normal brackets.



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# ON THE POSSIBILITY OF A REALIST PEDAGOGICAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

## Posibilidad de un constructivismo pedagógico realista

SANTIAGO TOMÁS BELLOMO\*

Universidad Austral, Buenos Aires, Argentina

[sbellomo@austral.edu.ar](mailto:sbellomo@austral.edu.ar)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5210-3915>

### Abstract

The discussion about the ability of our intelligence to access reality in itself remains as one of the oldest and most exciting questions in philosophy. Piaget reinvented the history of psychology and pedagogy from his scientific discoveries regarding the understanding of the process of knowledge. However, due to his own philosophical inclination, his pedagogical constructivism remained strongly rooted in an immanentist philosophical tradition, to such an extent that the association between pedagogical constructivism and anti-realism constitutes a kind of commonplace and a certain dogmatic assumption. This paper states that this association is not the only possible alternative and that, to a certain extent, it does not even seem to fully respond to the ultimate principles or consequences of Piaget's constructivist findings. It is possible to justify pedagogical constructivism from realistic positions, as long as we reconsider some assumptions that modernity has installed in educational and philosophical circles in an uncritical way. The revision of the notion of representation, conceived according to the Aristotelian tradition and updated by the contributions of constructivism, allows to find a pathway of reconciliation between pedagogical constructivism and a kind of realism that be, in the words of Charles Taylor, at the same time robust and plural.

### Keywords

Constructivism, realism, representation, immanentism, Piaget, epistemic trespassing.

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\* Doctor of Philosophy, Professor and Bachelor of Philosophy and Bachelor of Education Administration and Management. He has completed postdoctoral studies at the University of Saarland, Germany. Professor of the School of Education at Universidad Austral. He has been Under-Secretary of the National Institute of Public Administration of the Nation, Director of Education of the Ministry of Energy and Mining of the Nation and Academic Secretary of the Catholic University of Argentina. He currently serves as Dean of the School of Education at Universidad Austral. He has published three books and twenty articles and chapters on philosophy of education, in particular, philosophy of innovation and environmental education.

### Resumen

La discusión acerca de la capacidad de nuestra inteligencia para acceder al conocimiento de la realidad en sí es y sigue siendo una de las más antiguas y apasionantes de la filosofía. Piaget revolucionó la historia de la psicología y la pedagogía a partir de sus descubrimientos científicos relativos al modo en que el ser humano conoce. Sin embargo, por su misma inclinación filosófica, su constructivismo pedagógico quedó fuertemente arraigado en tradiciones filosóficas inmanentistas, a punto tal que la asociación entre constructivismo pedagógico y antirrealismo constituye una suerte de lugar común y un cierto presupuesto dogmático. Este trabajo intentará demostrar que esta asociación no constituye la única alternativa posible y que, hasta cierto punto, ni siquiera parece responder cabalmente a los principios o consecuencias últimas de los hallazgos del constructivismo de Piaget. Es posible justificar el constructivismo pedagógico desde posiciones realistas, siempre y cuando se revisen algunos supuestos que la modernidad ha instalado de manera no muy crítica en los círculos educativos y filosóficos. La revisión de la noción de representación, concebida según la tradición aristotélica y *aggiornada* por los aportes del constructivismo, permite abrir un camino de conciliación entre el constructivismo pedagógico y un tipo de realismo que sea, como sugiere Charles Taylor, a la vez robusto y plural.

### Palabras clave

Constructivismo, realismo, representación, inmanentismo, Piaget, intrusión epistémica.

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## Introduction

The association between pedagogical constructivism and philosophical immanentism constitutes a kind of common place in the philosophy of education. This is mostly explained by the strong incidence of one of its main referents, Jean Piaget. This author did not hesitate to explicitly associate his intuitions with those of the Kantian tradition, although with certain objections. From then until today, those who work in pedagogy or teacher training often feel compelled to choose one of the following alternatives: either to adhere to anti-realism by finding reasonableness in constructivist pedagogical approaches, or to reject all or part of pedagogical constructivism in defense of realism. The research problem addressed in this paper has to do precisely with the analysis of Piaget's position in this matter. The objective is to demonstrate that the disjunctive pedagogical vs. realism constructivism is false and is installed in the framework of misinterpretations generated in modernity that still retain much of its persuasive force. Since this is a philosophical article, the methodology used is hermeneutic, based on the analysis of Piaget's texts, along with texts of other authors specialized in the subject.

The article begins with a synthetic review that explained the transition from the philosophical realism of classical Greek antiquity to the immanentism of modernity, which configure the context on which Piaget's ideas are based. Its constructivist position is functional to its defense of

Genetic Epistemology based on the rejection of the validity of philosophy itself for the foundation of the scientific task and is constituted on a certain request of positivist principle. This premise, along with the rejection of realism (conceived according to a somewhat naive representational interpretation), contributes to consolidating the dichotomy between pedagogical constructivism and realism that extends to the present day.

The article recovers some exchanges between Charles Taylor and Richard Rorty through which a version of realism is visualized, which is coherent and consistent with the main theses of pedagogical constructivism. Indeed, this version of realism is very similar to Piagetian main intuitions, an aspect that will be evident when identifying the receptive and constructive aspects that configure the philosophical notion of “representation”.

## From Realism to Anti-Realism: Three Fundamental Milestones

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The discussion about the ability of our intelligence to access the knowledge of reality itself is, and remains, one of the oldest and most exciting in philosophy. Plato in his dialogue *Cratylus*, puts on Socrates a dilemma that crosses the discussions of Western philosophy from the Greeks to the present day. The dialectic between *realism* and *anti-realism* or *immanentism* philosophical is stated in these terms:

Let us see, then, Hermogenes, if it also seems to you that this is the case with beings: that their essence is different for each individual as Protagoras maintained by saying that man is the measure of all things (in the sense, no doubt, that as things seem to me, so they are to me, and as they seem to you, so they are to you), or if you believe that beings have a certain consistency in their own essence (385e-386a).

Plato's philosophical realism defends the consistency of reality and the need for our knowledge to be configured as a response to the intelligibility of the world. Not so for Protagoras, his antagonist, for whom the truth about reality is the result of a linguistic construction.

Aristotle separates himself from his master in many ways, but recognizes the human capacity to access knowledge of things themselves. He attributes to the senses this effective ability to penetrate the intelligibility of the world: “The perception of one's own senses is always true and occurs in all animals” (Aristotle, 1978, p. 134 [427b]). For this thinker, the external senses do not fail in their apprehension of the world unless there is an organic injury.

The Thomist tradition recovers the Greek realist heritage in the famous conception of truth as *adequatio*. It is true that judgment unites or separates in the mind which is united or separated in reality. Therefore, there is a truth in things (called the *ontological truth*) and a truth in the intellect (called the *logical truth*). Ontological truth refers to the intelligibility of things themselves, that by which they are knowable (Pieper, 1997, p. 29). To the extent that this intelligibility present in things formally impacts our senses and intellect (through sensible or intellectual intuition); we possess a *logical truth*, which is the one that is forged in our intelligence when we apprehend sensitive and intellectual forms. In this way, correspondence is achieved between what we conceive subjectively and what happens.

It is important to note that the scholastic tradition does not interpret the aforementioned correspondence in terms of the construction of a *tertium quid*, an intra-mental representation that attempts to copy the extra-mental. Based on Aristotelian notions of act and power, and form and matter, it formulates a theory of knowledge in which a continuity between subject and object of knowledge is verified. Because cognitive powers are intentional, they are constitutively receptive and naturally oriented toward objects that transcend them. The formality (substantial or accidental) present in things, being a current principle, exerts efficient causality on the receptivity of the powers of the subject and “informs” them. To some extent, things become immaterially present to sensibility and intelligence. That is why John of St. Thomas, disciple of the aquinate, says that “to know is to become the other” (*feri aliud in quantum aliud*). This is a brief synthesis of the dominant peripatetic realism in the pre-modern Western period.

The abandonment of Aristotelian categories required modernity to rethink the theory of knowledge. There are three milestones that changed this understanding. The first milestone concerns a tendency that some critics of modernity call *foundationalism* (Wittgenstein, 1995, pp. 1-2). Foundations hold up the idea that “knowledge of the conclusion of syllogism requires knowledge of premises, so that if these require indefinitely others to be known, then demonstrative knowledge is impossible. Therefore, there must be proposals that we know, not by inference from others, but by themselves” (Garber, 2007, p. 9). This abstract notion of foundationalism can be difficult to grasp. In Descartes, however, it is easily verified. Not satisfied with the possibility of founding knowledge on sensory data, he turned the evidence of the thinking self (*cogito ergo sum*), the cornerstone of the system. His main objective was to build knowledge



from clear and distinct ideas conceived and displayed in the mathematical way, i.e., as apodictical certainties resulting from an irrefutable deduction. Foundations *originate* from this pressing need for irrefutable foundational knowledge.

In modernity, this *foundationalist* aspiration is directly related to a certain conception of objectivity. The *objective* is that which conforms to the mathematical standards of certainty and evidence, which by their very nature are universal and universally applicable. Thus, the objective of modernity seeks to dispense with any individual or social subjective condition and adopts a “perspective of the unconnected observer” (Taylor, 1985, p. 280); it aims to develop a “look from nowhere” (Nagel, 1996, p. 19).

The second milestone concerns the emergence of the notion of truth as correspondence or as a “copy”, typical of some empiricist conceptions. Once abandoned the Aristotelian theory of forms, modern philosophy is not able to sustain a conception of truth as *adequatio* based on the intentional presence of the object of knowledge in the subject. Knowledge is conceived, therefore, as a constructive process of an intra-mental copy that pretends to be faithful to what it represents. This *representational* or *mediational conception*, once configured, meets the immediate problem of its justification: how can we prove that the representation faithfully reproduces the external reality? We would need a cognitive within the cognitive that ensures correspondence and, thus, another necessity that would extend to infinity, what has been called “homunculus fallacy” (Llano, 1999). The problem does not only concern modern versions of representationalism. Bernache (2021, p. 268) clearly illustrates the variety of difficulties faced by the contemporary Representational Theory of Mind when it tries to sustain the explanatory function attributed to it by its supporters.

Kant’s philosophy synthesizes the efforts to uphold the ideal of universally valid certainty proper to modernity with the tradition of *representational* truth of empiricism. At the same time, as a third milestone, an explicit recognition of the subjective conditions that operate in the very configuration of human knowledge is incorporated. For Kant, knowledge is precisely human since the conditions of subjectivity are part of the way in which internal representation is constructed. Therefore, this representation is not considered or intended to be considered a faithful copy of the extra-mental reality. The construction of the knowledge of the world carries with it the structuring scaffolding of our own categories. In this way, subject and object are co-configured in a symbiotic way. In this regard, Ortiz (2012) states that “the observer and what he sees is determined by his own functioning and by the perspective from which he looks at the phenomenon” (p. 112).



We have a top and a bottom, we conceive the world according to the vertical orientation of our corporeality. Our very size constitutes the threshold of possibility of access to a given world, while hiding other possible worlds.

Likewise, our perception of the temporality of objects brings with it the temporal constitution of subjectivity. If our life were to last a second and, for humanity as a whole, a few hours, the scope of knowledge of what we call the world would be limited by this time horizon. Space and time are conditions of our subjectivity and not intrinsic properties of objects, Kant says. Hence, the need to distinguish between the phenomenon (the intra-mental construction) and the number (the thing itself).

This synthetic compilation allows us to understand the mutation that philosophy experienced from its origins to modernity, and to understand the reasons why the disjunction between realism and anti-realism became so strong. This dilemma is still valid today and is applied in the most diverse fields of knowledge. As far as the pedagogical domain is concerned, there are many who identify Piaget's thought with anti-realism, since he conceives our understanding of the world more as the result of a construction than of an iconic reproduction. Pedagogical constructivism is conceived by some authors as the only reasonable alternative to a naive realism, which simply identifies the premises of classical Aristotelianism with the modern *representational* model:

While the traditional conception of knowledge and the traditional cognitive theories consider that there is an almost iconic correspondence between knowledge and the reality responsible for the data we perceive, cognitive constructivism starts from a different principle. Knowledge is not the computation of a reality, but rather the computation of the descriptions of a reality (Alcalá, 2016, p. 21).

In this way, the realism-anti-realism disjunctive is understood, in the pedagogical field, as a representationalism-constructivism dichotomy. Representationalism is referred to by some authors as a “correspondent theory of truth”, a category under which the positions of Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Locke or Hume (Islas Mondragón, 2022, p. 71) are identified, even though they differ widely. This identification of realism with representationalist theory configures a kind of irrefutable postulate that leads to an induced anti-realism. Anyone who finds reasonableness in Piaget's intuitions will feel obliged to affiliate to philosophical immanentism to recognize the evolutionary and configurative dynamism of our cognitive structures. Some defenders of realism (fundamentally, of Thomistic inspiration)



are quick to denounce constructivism, even though they are acknowledged with valuable contributions or intuitions (Barrio Maestre, 2000).

In the following paragraphs we will try to demonstrate that this dichotomous vision (realism vs. pedagogical constructivism) constitutes a false alternative rooted in two different and complementary misunderstandings. On the one hand, to confuse the epistemic level of pedagogy with that of metaphysics. On the other hand, it is to sustain and perpetuate the naive image of representationalist realism that is inherited from modern empiricism. The next section will analyze the first of the equivocations.

## Abstraction levels and their application to the case of pedagogical constructivism

In order to understand this equivocation, it is necessary to recover some basic notions of Aristotelian logic related to the degrees of abstraction, which the peripatetic philosopher tests in his *Metaphysics* to illustrate the different levels that compose speculative knowledge. According to Aristotle (1985, p. 1076 [1026a20-1026a36]), physical abstraction dispenses with the features of a subject to analyze the common aspects of his species. So, for example, biology studies frogs without being interested in this particular frog. Mathematical abstraction, on the other hand, dispenses with the attributes of the species to focus its analysis on the quantitative dimension in which they share diversity of species. It does not matter in this case whether they are frogs or horses but the quantities associated. Finally, the metaphysical abstraction (considered by some scholastics as *separative*) even dispenses with the quantitative dimension by concentrating its attention on the quality of “entity” of objects. While Gnoseology studies the “entity of reason”, Aristotelian tradition considers it a part of metaphysics. The later philosophical tradition places epistemology within gnoseology, i.e., bordering on metaphysics.

The three degrees of abstraction constitute three great epistemic levels in the peripatetic tradition. The contemporary advance of the specialization and multiplication of the particular sciences turned this distinction into a somewhat vague, general and unfunctional principle. It was necessary to distinguish new classification criteria within each of these major levels to account for the diversity of existing disciplines and subdisciplines, as well as their specific objects and methods. But the distinction of degrees, while excessively general, remains useful in safeguarding the inherent specificity of each of the epistemic levels.





The study of human knowledge admits an approach from the first level of abstraction, as well as from the third. In the first level, there are particular sciences that study partial and phenomenological aspects of the cognitive process (neurology, psychology, pedagogy, etc.). At this level, and according to the object of study and method of each discipline, it is inquired about the way in which the human subject learns, about the biological organs that act in the contest of knowledge, about the incidence of emotions in knowledge, about the place that cognitive structures occupy in the cognitive process, their evolution and their relationship with the environment, among many other issues. On the metaphysical level, however, it reflects on the nature of knowledge considered in itself and in its relationship with the world and language.

There is a direct and natural link between the various levels. However, as Ballantyne (2019) says, it is necessary to be aware of the risk of epistemic trespassing. This occurs when “experts” jump an obvious visible boundary into a domain for which they lack relevant evidence or the ability to interpret that evidence appropriately. But they still speak” (Ballantyne, 2019, p. 369). The problem arises particularly with what the author calls *hybridized questions* that emerge in those border questions whose answer requires interdisciplinarity.

In the case of the discussion of human knowledge, Gilson traces the first symptoms of epistemic intrusion in medieval times. His analysis goes back to Abelard, a medieval monk who studied human knowledge and logic:

The subject was essentially philosophical, because it is one of the fundamental problems that the human mind encounters as it attempts to understand beyond all the particular sciences the conditions that make possible knowledge itself. But unfortunately, when the scientist rises to a problem like this, the ordinary thing is that he does not come to realize that he belongs to an order of non-scientific issues. The best that can happen is that he wants to dismiss it as a futile issue, not amenable to a positive response. However, in some cases it has been tried with more or less success to treat it scientifically, as if it were a scientific problem. After all, nothing more natural. Because problems of this kind arise at the frontier of some particular science, it is not easy to distinguish them from the science that is, in fact, their origin. And the scientist, not fully realizing that what he sees are mere reflections of problems that lie beyond, and thinks, naturally, that he is simply taking the study of his particular science to its ultimate implications (Gilson, 1973, p. 16).

Abelard’s problem is also—in a way—the problem of pedagogical constructivism. When inquiring about the way in which it is known, it is



natural for the teacher to try to configure a philosophical answer related to the question of knowledge itself and the possibility of accessing the truth. This inclination represents an epistemic intrusion. However, philosophical research should not be considered an undesirable risk, much less in this context that especially values discussion and inter and transdisciplinary learning. This intrusion should not be fought with confinement to non-hybrid intra-disciplinary questions, but with what Ballantyne calls “defenses against epistemic intrusion” (2019, p. 376).

In other words, it is not a question of teachers avoiding metaphysical questions, but of having a warning of the epistemic leap of this inquiry, and of having evidence and capacities typical to this domain of knowledge. The problem arises when answers are formulated to metaphysical questions (epistemic grade 3) by appealing to the knowledge of the particular science (epistemic level 1), or vice versa. Given the need to distinguish and respect epistemic levels, it is necessary to ask if Piaget fell into an epistemic intrusion when trying to answer the philosophical question “what is human knowledge?” by appealing to discoveries of the pedagogical discipline.



## Does Piaget fall into an epistemic intrusion?

The question of whether Piaget falls into epistemic intrusion is both simple and complex to solve. Firstly, it is simple because Piaget had philosophical training, acquired philosophical skills, discussed with philosophers of his time, and expressed philosophical formulations or considerations. In one of his last books, *Wisdom and Illusions of Philosophy*, published in 1965, he presents an autobiographical reproduction in which he summarizes his curious path and his assessment of philosophical knowledge.

This is not the moment to go deeper into his disappointment with philosophy and the reasons for this disenchantment. What is evident from the reading of his memoirs is that his approaches of metaphysical level are not done inadvertently, but with full consciousness. In fact, Piaget makes explicit his commitment to Kantism in various paragraphs of his *Six Studies of Psychology* (Piaget, 1954, pp. 69-70). His affiliation is not, however, devotion:

One can feel very close to the spirit of Kantism (and I think so as many supporters of the dialectical method) and consider the *a priori* as dissociable from the notions of chronological or level precedence (...) The epistemic subject's own construction, so rich from the Kantian perspec-

tive, is still too poor, since it is entirely given from the beginning, while a dialectical constructivism - such as the history of science and experimental facts, gathered by studies on mental development, seems to show in its living reality - allows attributing to the epistemic subject a much more fruitful constructivity, although it leads to the same characters of need and rational structure action of the experience of those whose guarantee Kant asked to his notion of *a priori* (p. 71).

Piaget therefore leans towards a constructivism that is founded on a *dynamic*, dialectical, genetic *Kantism*; one that accepts the structuring role of the conditions of the subject while giving a dynamism to the structures themselves. Rolando García says:

The subject of knowledge structures 'reality', i.e., its objects of knowledge, as it structures, first, its own actions, and then its own conceptualizations. Or, more specifically: the subject builds his instruments of organization (structuring) of what we call "the world of experience", since—and this is the core of the problem—only through those organizations (structuring) can he assimilate it (2000, p. 59).

Recognizing Piaget's explicit Kantian affiliation and, at the same time, his attempt to overcome it, why have we said that it is difficult to determine whether he falls into an *epistemic invasion*? Perhaps the most novel and, at the same time, questionable aspect of his contribution lies in the fact that he has denied the very assessment of the epistemology or theory of knowledge of a philosophical nature, and his claim to replace this branch of gnoseology by a non-philosophical knowledge. Piaget thus proclaims the need to set up a Genetic Epistemology, an "essentially interdisciplinary research, which aims to study the meaning of knowledge, of operative structures or notions, drawing on its history and current functioning in a finished science" (Piaget, 1970, p. 90).

Indeed, Piaget proposes to replace philosophical considerations relating to the nature of what we call scientific knowledge (level of abstraction 3) by a new type of interdisciplinary knowledge, which uses its own method of experimental sciences (level 1 of abstraction) to affirm the scope and limits of science.

Piaget's proposal does not fall into an epistemic intrusion in the sense proposed by Ballantyne. Rather, it nullifies the very notion of intrusion by rejecting the distinction of epistemic degrees and their relative autonomy. In this sense, it proposes to invalidate the contribution of philosophy itself (and philosophical epistemology) as "useful to sustain a reasoned position regarding the totality of the real" (Piaget, 1970, p. 52), but not to provide



solid foundations for the development of science. Philosophy still has its objective, but it lacks the value to achieve scientific certainties:

Then it would be possible to distinguish without hurting anyone's convictions, next to strict knowledge, what we might call a "wisdom" (*sophia*), i.e., a set of plausible knowledge grouped according to a general coordination of values (Piaget, 1970, p. 79).

In short, by rejecting the validity of the contribution of philosophy to scientific knowledge, Piaget questions the role of subalternation of sciences regarding it, both at the level of the foundations, as well as in the epistemic or logical procedures valid for the development of scientific knowledge.

This invalidation of the foundational character of philosophy is neither innocuous nor necessarily novel. Somehow, by declaring his preference for strict knowledge on an experimental basis, Piaget places himself in a tradition close to philosophical positivism. Thus, it falls into a certain performative contradiction when declaring -through philosophical arguments not based on empirical proof- the invalidity of philosophy and the constitution of a new discipline: Genetic Epistemology. In his opinion, it seems to offer greater guarantees of solidity and rigor than that provided by the history of philosophy itself. The defense of Genetic Epistemology therefore rests on a request for principle based on negative subjective experiences about philosophy, rather than on a thorough demonstration resolved with the methods defended by its own principles<sup>1</sup>.

At the same time, with his ironclad defense of the certainty of empirical science, Piaget does not want to return to pre-modern positions that envisage the possibility of untainted apprehension of the world. As in Descartes' case, Piaget believes that human knowledge cannot be founded on intuitions derived from sensitivity. These are unreliable and deserve to be tested:

The belief that intuition is both "contact with the object" and "True" requires a double test of fact and normative justification; however, as soon as such evidence is sought, intuition dissolves into experience and deduction (Piaget, 1970, p. 131).

Piaget joins the modern *foundationalist* tradition by proposing to sustain the entire architecture of science in foundations and methods that ensure empirical reliability. Like Descartes, he hopes that nothing will be excluded from the need for thorough demonstration, not even the world's primary intuition.



In short, the Philosopher Piaget admits his adherence to a reformulated version of Kantian constructivism and declares the relative (relatively insignificant) validity of philosophy to guide scientific development and delimit its scope. His philosophical conclusions reveal to be philosophically questionable, which earned him severe criticism of his fellow beings (Merleau-Ponty and Husserl, in particular), something that contributed to deepen his discredit for philosophy. As is often the case, “philosophy always buries its undertakers” (Gilson, 1973, p. 346). Piaget’s genetic epistemology failed to transcend strongly as a philosophical alternative, beyond having set up a circle of followers of Genetic Epistemology quite widespread.

On the other hand, Piaget made one of the most remarkable contributions to the history of pedagogy by highlighting several principles and laws related to the role of cognitive structures in the constitution of human knowledge. His contributions have proved valid — with the necessary corrections and reformulations — not only in the domain of pedagogy, but of all contemporary psychology. Suffice it to illustrate this statement by recalling the Piagetian heritage of numerous contemporary psychologists (Meyer, 2000, p. 514). Piaget’s work illuminated, for example, the discoveries of Aaron Beck, the founder of cognitive therapy. This influence is clearly perceived in the description of the role of cognitive schemes for the configuration of automatic thoughts acting in depressive disorders (Alford and Beck, 1997).

If Piaget’s value is to be found primarily in his scientific contributions and not so much—or not necessarily—in his philosophical contribution, it is worth discussing the almost natural association that he (and many others with him) establishes between his scientific contributions and the Kantian philosophical foundation with which he is naturally related. In other words, recognizing the contribution of constructivism at the pedagogical or psychological level does not imply a natural or necessary filiation to a Kantian-inspired philosophy.

Consequently, it makes sense to discuss whether it is possible to admit any kind of realism that grants participation to the dynamic and structuring elements of the world’s experience without necessarily signifying an abandonment of philosophical realism. A positive answer to this question allows us to resignify the meaning of the term “realism” to free it from the representational burden that feeds the false dichotomy pointed out. Knowing the general terms of the debate developed by Charles Taylor and Richard Rorty may be useful to expand the notion of realism and verify the possibility of its compatibility with pedagogical constructivism.



## Deflationary Realism or Robust Realism

There was a curious relationship between Charles Taylor and Richard Rorty, which the former defines as “friend, adversary and *sparring*” in the foreword to his latest great work, *Retrieving Realism*, co-written with Richard Dreyfus (2016, p. 9). There were numerous oral and written exchanges that both had for years, and in which their points of agreement and dissent were reflected. Unfortunately, the richness of this interaction was prematurely interrupted by Rorty’s passing.

The greatest consensus is observed in the mutual rejection of the modern mediational epistemology that accepts the existence of intra-mental representations whose correspondence with the world must be demonstrated. However, the curious thing is that both authors accuse each other of remaining captive to this epistemology, despite this rejection. In Rorty’s words, “both Taylor and I are proud to have escaped the tent of the collapsed circus that is epistemology—those acres of cloth around which so many of our colleagues continue to beg meaninglessly. But each of us considers that the other is still, so to speak, stumbling in place, between the tangled ropes, without having escaped for good” (Rorty, 1995, p. 29). Now in Taylor’s terms:

It is here that Rorty’s position, which we will call “deflationary realism,” holds that all objects, including those of natural science, are intelligible only against the backdrop of our embedded coping, so the “nowhere” perspective is literally incomprehensible. It differs from our proposal, which we shall call “robust realism,” and which states that to understand the status of the objects of natural science it is necessary to defend the existence of an independent reality. For robust realism, deflationary, it is an anti-realism still attached to that internal-external image (Dreyfus and Taylor, 2016, p. 115).

Unlike Rorty’s proposal, Taylor sincerely believes that human language allows man’s contact with the world. From Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology, Taylor learned that every perceptual act places a person in the presence of things that make sense. This is, in a way, prior to any later articulation that we can regarding them (Taylor, 1958, p. 128). But, at the same time, it is also not affordable by man with total independence of linguistic configurations.

Our apprehension of things is not something that is within us, as opposed to the world; it lies in the way we are in contact with the world, in our being-in-the-world (Heidegger) or being-for-the-world (Merleau-



Ponty). That is why a global doubt about the existence of the world (does the world exist?), which may prove quite reasonable in the representational model, is shown to be incoherent once we have made the anti-foundationalist turn (Taylor, 2003b, p. 167).

Hence Taylor defines his position as a “non-problematic realism” - *Unproblematic Realism*- (Taylor, 2003b, p. 115)<sup>2</sup>. Rorty is not happy with this idea. He calls Taylor’s position “uncompromising realism,” and considers it trivial, common-sense, and uninteresting (Rorty, 2000, p. 127).

The whole defense of the Tajikistani truth rests on this non-problematic postulate which encourages us to accept that the reality of the world is immediately accessible to us through daily dealings. This is a postulate that does not allow rational demonstration, since it constitutes a condition of possibility of our knowledge itself, i.e., a transcendental condition (Bellomo, 2010, p. 162). But this is what Rorty does not approve of, who interprets this position as a naive realism, an uninteresting version of realism (Rorty, 1995, p. 29), which arouses the Taylor’s rejection, who denounces his habit of using ironic and inflated language to characterize the position of his realistic opponents (Taylor, 2003b, p. 177).

Despite these intricate debates, both authors seem to converge towards a thesis that sheds light on a typical aspect of constructivist positions: there is a tension in any process of knowledge between the discovery of the world and its assimilation to internal cognitive structures. In the context of this tension, the search for equilibrium demands a certain priority of the receptive aspect over the asset. Rorty himself, in his laudable review of the book *Sources of the Self*, rescues this trait as one of the defining elements of Tajikistani philosophy (Rorty, 1994, p. 200). Taylor formulates this principle quite clearly in his analysis of McDowell’s work, *Mind and World*:

Critical reasoning is an activity, something we do, in the realm of spontaneity and freedom. But, as far as the knowledge of the world is concerned, it is supposed to be receptive to the way things are. Spontaneity must be combined with receptivity (Taylor, 2002, p. 108).

The spontaneity that Taylor talks about refers to the creative dynamics by which we project on reality aspects that are not of it. Receptive dynamics, by contrast, is one in which reality itself emerges in defiance of our projections. Reality meets us as we try to force it to fit our criteria. “The expression brings the two together, finding and doing,” Taylor says another time. “In the original variant, there is a balance between the two, but the latter is basically at the service of the former” (1997, p. 164; cf. also



2003a, pp. 44-45). Doing is at the service of finding; projecting has to be functional when receiving and letting itself be illuminated.

In his last great work, Dreyfus and Taylor return to this intuition:

Only if something more is said than has already been said in the history of philosophy will we be able to see what philosophers close to common sense, like Aristotle, have always warned, i.e., that we are in contact with the cosmos, but not by virtue of a separate and disembodied contemplative capacity, but by virtue of our material and active body, a body that is linked and that is oriented in the right way to face things. Perhaps a radical advocate of deflationary realism would not hesitate to rebut us and reply that it is true; we must be realistic in relation to the everyday world and the universe, but to say metaphysically that our beliefs correspond to what things are in themselves is therefore also useless (2016, p. 11).

As can be seen, Taylor does not doubt the existence of an independent reality, and the real presence of such a world in our cognition. Its realism aspires to be robust and pluralistic. He describes the nature of this particular type of realism:

According to this vision: 1) There are various ways of accessing reality (therefore, it is pluralistic) that, however, 2) reveal truths that are independent of us, i.e., truths that require us to review our thinking and adjust it to them (and therefore it is robust realism). And, finally, 3) all attempts to redirect the different ways of questioning reality to only one form of investigation that offers a unified theory are doomed to failure (and thus ensures plurality) (Dreyfus and Taylor, 2016, p. 131).

There is a certain conceptual gap when it comes to justifying this assessment. In a way, this is Rorty's concern in characterizing Taylor's position as naive realism. Following the very logic of transcendental approaches, the existence of the extra-mental real being "seems to be reduced to an epistemic condition of experience, without being explained how the extra-mental real being becomes present immediately in the experience" (Bellomo, 2010, p. 177). In this respect, Aristotelian source realism is more persuasive, although it does not know the incidence of the conditions of subjectivity.

Is it possible to establish a dialogue between Taylor's robust realism and the Aristotelian realist tradition? The possibility is certain, though not without complexity. To do this, it is necessary to recover some aspects of Aristotelian form theory, without this meaning a return to classical traditions that do not take into account the configurative aspect of our cognitive structures. In other words, it is necessary to revalue the role of





mediation in knowledge. “Such mediation is a representation, in the sense of a cognitive opening that makes present the known reality in such a way that makes it, in some way, luminous and accessible to human knowledge” (Llano, 2009, pp. 21-22). In terms of Millán Puelles:

Any true proposition is indeed a representation, since it has the nature of a real mediation between a subject that knows and a known object: a mediation by virtue of which it is intellectually given to him. In its most extensive philosophical sense, to represent is to make something present, real or unreal, to a subject capable of knowing, and in this way knowing is to represent and knowledge is a representation (Millán Puelles, 1999, p. 209).

Aristotelian realism, like modern representational theory, conceives the need for cognitive mediations or internal representations for the knowledge of the world. Unlike modern representational epistemology, these are not conceived as intra-mental copies of external reality. The “representation” of Aristotle is not that of a reality that is disjointed and absolutely independent of the reality represented. There is an intentional identification between representation and represented object:

The representative nature that is attached to the concept in classical knowledge theory does not coincide with the modern sense of *representative* or *Vorstellung*. In the realm of realistic metaphysics, the concept does not replace the real form, but rather refers to it, just because it is intentionally identified with it. The ‘being for’ or ‘supposing’ does not mean here to overlaying’ the actual reality with a second instance, possessing an *objective reality* that would dispense with the investigation of real things and cases (Llano, 1999, p. 134).

A thorough understanding of this theory requires drawing the distinction between constituent representations and constituted representations, an aspect that exceeds the claims of the present work, but that sheds light on the complexity and depth of the problem. The final thesis of these reflections is that it is not by accepting the role of mediations and representations in human knowledge of the world that we become victims of modern *mediational epistemology*. Cognitive mediation arises from the efficient action of the world’s properties on our subjectivity, a world known to the human way. It is in and through mediation that the intelligibility of the real becomes present.

Piaget’s pedagogy could well have been framed within a similar philosophical position. By accepting a moment of cognitive adaptation consisting in the accommodation of our schemes to the world, this “re-



vealing” dimension of the world is being recognized that forces us to review our preexisting schemes.

This revealing dimension coexists in tension with our “projective” propensity from which we first try to assimilate the world into our knowledge structures. But if reality resists being caught up in our schemes, it is because it exists in itself and operates in some way, exerting efficient causality on our cognitive powers. In short, this implies the acceptance not only of the independent existence of a world itself—ontologically and epistemologically available to be known—but also of the real possibility of its knowledge.

## Conclusion: on the possibility of a realistic pedagogical constructivism

The possibility of a realistic pedagogical constructivism is not only not contrary to the teaching of pedagogical constructivism itself, but is promoted to a certain extent by its own discoveries.

On the one hand, the moment of accommodation in Piaget’s constructivist paradigm constitutes the instance in which our cognitive structures are forced to reorganize themselves by the demands of external reality. This happens when the previous moment of assimilation of reality to our cognitive structures did not solve the cognitive imbalance, leaving the subject in a situation of imbalance.

Under these assumptions, constructivism not only recognizes the existence of a reality conceived in the transcendental Kantian way, as a primary source of intuitions of sensitivity, but also of a reality endowed with intrinsic meaning that calls our attention and persuades us of the need to make modifications to our judgments and schemes. It is a working reality whose current principles shape our knowledge from an intelligibility revealed in the context of action.

For this revealing dimension of the world to be explained from philosophical realism, it is necessary to recognize the need and existence of mediations in knowledge. But, mediations or representations, in this case, should not be imagined as a *tertium quid* that organizes and to some extent hides or prevents contact with the reality of the world. They should not be considered a “substitute for the reality of things to which the conscious subject can access, thus being blocked in his own isolated entity, unable, completely, to open himself cognitively to other realities” (Millán Puelles, 1999, p. 293). This last meaning leads to the mediational or repre-



sentational image that condemns us to Kantian immanentism, to the distinction between phenomenon and number, a conception that has hastily been adopted and reformulated by constructivism as a basic doctrine.

Mediation or representation to be recognized in realistic constructivism is that conceived as the result of an active influence of the intelligibility of the world in our cognitive powers. Mediation is an enabling medium, an *in quo* element (in which) reality is present. Representation is nothing but reality as it is immaterially present in our subjectivity.

It is not a question of returning to realistic pre-modern positions that do not absolutely conceive the configurative and structuring aspect of knowledge. Indeed, human knowledge implies a tension between discovery and projection that is already discovered in the same configuration of our sensitivity and intelligence. In the first instance, realism takes place when the intelligibility of things becomes present and accessible to us within the framework of our organic and psychological constitution. The world to which we have access constitutes only one part of a reality that is vastly and immeasurably richer than that which comes to our attention in the context of our conditions of subjectivity. But it is finally true.

Some of our mediations, once configured in contact with the intelligibility of the real, become structures of organization of the subsequent knowledge. Its configurative action becomes projective, and is challenged since — in Piaget's terms — we fail to assimilate the reality of the world to our cognitive schemes. Then, a new strongly realistic *momentum* occurs: the intelligibility of the real forces a modification of the same structures, in a virtuous circle that revitalizes and enriches our understanding of the world, in dialogue with our fellow human beings.

If this reconciliation is possible, why did Piaget not adhere to a realistic philosophical positioning if his scientific discoveries paid for this possibility? It is hard to know for sure. It is likely that the strong incidence of Kantism in his time played a very persuasive role in his case, as happened with many other thinkers of his time. As shown, it also seems to have acted in it a very typical inertia of certain authors of science, who are only inclined to accept what has been proven to them according to the canons imposed by their own discipline. Uncritically accepting the fact of intuition of the real, in a non-problematic or problematized realism, seems something alien to the mental categories attached to modern *foundationalism* in general, to which Piaget seems to have aligned filially.

The inclination towards realism or immanentism constitutes a philosophical choice rather than the result in a thorough demonstration. In other words, those who opt for idealism do so not from evidence, but

from the rejection of what for realism constitutes evidence that cannot and should not be demonstrated, something that for immanentism can be considered an equally questionable *foundationalism*.

The impossibility of a full demonstration does not necessarily make realism naive, in the sense of lacking a rational foundation. According to Gilson, it is possible to justify the validity of *methodical realism* from the analysis of the mistakes and dead ends to which immanentism leads by pretending to demonstrate the reality of *esse* from *percibi* (Gilson, 1963, pp. 84-85). This is a demonstration by refusal, rather than a justification by means of a proposal. This justification may not satisfy those who aspire to base realism on irrefutable argumentative demonstrations.

Another possible way to rationally base philosophical realism is the one chosen by some *functionalisms*: these are the ones that recognize the property of our knowledge to converge in explanations that “work” in our relationship with it, that allow us to operate on it and project, even, future behaviors of reality. Functionalist theses, because they lack sufficient reflective depth, clash with the same basic problem when they inquire about its ultimate justification. For some, functionalism constitutes a confirmation of robust realistic hypotheses (Taylor, 2016, p. 124), for others, a vindication of metaphysical skepticism consistent with anti-foundationalist positions (Alcalá, 2016, p. 94).

Therefore, it is likely that the conclusions of this work fully satisfy those who are already inclined in favor of philosophical realism. They will find more or less valuable philosophical arguments to conceive and justify the possibility of a realistic pedagogical constructivism. For those who belong to an immanentist tradition, which does not conceive the possibility of accessing the being of things, surely these arguments are not conclusive. In any case, the fact of presenting the alternative and keeping the disjunction in force constitutes a great contribution in the culture of post-truth.

## Notes

- 1 Cf. Piaget, 1973, p. 90. His arguments translate a classic positivist discourse: let empirical science define the laws that should regulate their functioning. The reliability presumption of empirical science contributes to install a fallacy of *petitio principii* on which the author relies to trust that the empirical sciences, acting in an interdisciplinary way, will know better to establish their own laws, precisely because it assumes that they are more rigorous and, therefore, the only valid to proclaim about the validity of scientific knowledge.
- 2 See also Taylor, 2005, p. 39; 2003, p. 168; 2000, p. 120-121. Taylor also calls his realism as *aggressive (aggressive)* in 1990, p. 265.

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# MODELS OF CRITICAL THINKING: ANALYSIS, CLASSIFICATION, AND PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS

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## Análisis, clasificación y fundamentos filosóficos de los modelos de pensamiento crítico

**ANGÉLICA MARÍA RODRÍGUEZ-ORTIZ\***

Universidad Autónoma de Manizales, Manizales, Colombia

[amrodriguez@autonoma.edu.co](mailto:amrodriguez@autonoma.edu.co)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7710-9915>

**JUAN CAMILO HERNÁNDEZ-RODRÍGUEZ\*\***

Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Manizales, Colombia

[juahernandezr@unal.edu.co](mailto:juahernandezr@unal.edu.co)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6675-3636>

**ANA MILENA LÓPEZ-RÚA\*\*\***

Universidad Autónoma de Manizales, Manizales, Colombia

[ana.lopezru@autonoma.edu.co](mailto:ana.lopezru@autonoma.edu.co)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5566-331X>

**VALENTINA CADAVID-ALZATE\*\*\*\***

Universidad Autónoma de Manizales, Manizales, Colombia

[valentinac@autonoma.edu.co](mailto:valentinac@autonoma.edu.co)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7286-5722>

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- \* Postdoctorate in Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts. Doctor of Philosophy. Master in Education and Bachelor in Philosophy and Letters. Researcher at the Autonomous University of Manizales, attached to the Department of Education, researcher at the SEAD-UAM and Cognition and Education groups. Areas of interest: Analytical philosophy, moral philosophy, epistemology, citizen training, critical thinking.
- \*\* Master in Science Teaching. Bachelor of Philosophy. Professor and professional of Academic Direction of the National University of Colombia, Manizales campus. Researcher of the group Cognition and Education. Areas of interest: Analytical philosophy, non-Western philosophies, critical thinking, critical reading and argumentation.
- \*\*\* Candidate for PhD in Didactics from the Technological University of Pereira. Master in Science Teaching. Bachelor of Basic Education with Emphasis in Natural Sciences and Environmental Education. Coordinator of the Department of Education of the Autonomous University of Manizales. Member of the Research Group Cognition and Education. Areas of interest: didactics, modeling, epistemology of didactics, didactics of natural sciences.
- \*\*\*\* Candidate for PhD in Education from the University of Caldas. Master in Science Teaching. Bachelor of Biology and Chemistry. Research Professor at the Autonomous University of Manizales, attached to the Department of Education. She belongs to the group of Cognition and Education. Areas of interest: metacognition, multimodality, conceptual change and formation of concepts in science.

### Abstract

Today, there are many conceptualizations on critical thinking, and most of them focus on cognitive skills, problem solving, decision-making and action, while others integrate all these aspects. In view of these multiple conceptualizations, a need to classify models arises to better understand their approaches and the scope of the constituent elements that compose the supporting philosophical currents, so teachers know what each of these models contributes to their classroom practices. Objective: To identify the constituent elements of the conceptual foundations of critical thinking for classification into models according to their purposes. Methodology: A conceptual analysis, based on analytical philosophy, was used to review the main theoretical concepts of 44 theorists. Analysis matrices were designed with 12 constituents that aided in evidencing the elements of each model and determining which philosophical currents supported them. Results: Four models were identified: the logical-rational model, the cognitive-emotive model, the cognitive-scientist model, and the sociopragmatic model. These models show the influence of great philosophers' contributions that, based on their epistemic content, have linked criticality as a main element in the construction of knowledge. Conclusions: These models will help teachers train critical thinkers to question and transform their social environment in the classroom.

### Keywords

Critical thinking, rationality, cognition, pragmatism, science, philosophy.

### Resumen

Actualmente abundan conceptualizaciones sobre pensamiento crítico. Gran parte de estas se enfocan en habilidades cognitivas, otras en resolución de problemas; algunas más, en toma de decisiones y acción; y otras, que integran todos los elementos nombrados. Ante la proliferación de concepciones surge la necesidad de hacer una clasificación de estos modelos en aras de comprender mejor sus enfoques y, en especial, la incidencia de las corrientes filosóficas en los elementos constituyentes que los sustentan para que los maestros tengan claridad sobre qué aporta cada uno de ellos en sus prácticas de aula. Objetivo: identificar elementos constituyentes de los fundamentos conceptuales sobre pensamiento crítico para clasificarlos en modelos según sus finalidades. Metodología: análisis conceptual, realizado desde la filosofía analítica para revisar los conceptos esenciales expuestos por 44 autores en sus teorías. Se diseñaron matrices de análisis con 12 constituyentes que permitieron evidenciar los elementos de cada modelo y determinar qué corrientes filosóficas los fundamentan. Resultados: se evidenciaron cuatro modelos: lógico-racional, cognitivo-emotivo, cognitivo-científico y sociopragmático, en los cuales han incidido los aportes de grandes filósofos, quienes en su interés epistémico han vinculado la criticidad y la racionalidad como elementos esenciales en la construcción del conocimiento. Conclusiones: estos modelos aportarán claridad a los docentes, quienes pretenden con su trabajo en el aula formar pensadores críticos que cuestionen y transformen su entorno social.

### Palabras clave

Pensamiento crítico, racionalidad, cognición, pragmatismo, ciencia, filosofía.

## Introduction

Education has been a phenomenon that has demanded from its surrounding theories (pedagogy, didactics, philosophy of education, cognitive sciences, etc.) contributions that allow to form a humanity capable of responding to the demands of its time due to its dizzying changes. As Ador-





no (1998) showed, the ravages of the world wars made education theorists speculate on the need to train thinkers to reflect, problematize and act critically in their diverse environments (school, scientific and social).

Accordingly, UNESCO (2009) also calls for the teaching of philosophy to be oriented towards strengthening criticality. However, as mentioned by Rodríguez (2018) and Hernández (2019), in recent years there has been discourses about the concept of 'critical thinking'. These concepts have led to a lack of understanding of it, as well as a reduction of critical thinking and its complexity by measuring only a few elements of it from psychological tests that account for some skills of scientific thinking. Thus, this would not only be problematic at the theoretical level, since it would lose meaning and value when used indiscriminately, but also at the practical level, since there are no clear definitions or characterizations of what critical thinking is, there would be a discordance or gap between the pedagogical discourse and the teaching practices of teachers (Shulman, 2005).

In line with the above, the position supported here is that, to a large extent, this misunderstanding is due to the little knowledge that certain teachers and theorists have of the philosophical foundation of this concept, as well as the development that has had throughout the history of philosophy. Therefore, the objective of this study was to identify the constituent elements of the conceptual foundations on critical thinking to classify them in models according to their purposes, to understand the essential elements underlying each model and the foundations that philosophy has made to them to evidence the convergences that occur among some theorists for affinity with philosophical-based guidelines that have adopted in their speeches.

To achieve this goal, the selected methodology consisted of a conceptual analysis, from the analytical philosophy. First, the central concepts exposed by 44 theorists in each of their theories were reviewed, as well the meanings and uses assigned to them; subsequently, matrices of analysis with 12 constituents were designed that allowed to evidence, in addition to the elements of each model, the convergences existing between theories and, with it, determine which philosophical currents founded them.

In response to this call to clarify concepts demanded by analytical philosophy, especially as proposed by Wittgenstein (2009a; 2009b), a metatheoretical analysis of the systematization and conceptual developments that have been made around the term 'critical thinking' is carried out in this text.

In this sense, initially, a brief theoretical framework is presented, which shows the general philosophical guidelines that have served as the



basis for the different theoretical perspectives on critical thinking. In the second moment, the methodology used for the analysis is presented in detail. The third section presents the results of the analysis and classification of the four models found. Subsequently, the discussion and the philosophical analysis to each model are presented, especially, the contributions of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Stoics, Nāgārjuna, Śāṅkara, Sexto Empírico, Descartes, Locke, Hume, Kant (with a special emphasis on him), Hegel, Adorno, Horkeimer, Habermas, Marx, Dewey (another great mention), circle of Vienna, Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein, Davidson, Popper, Kuhn, Searle, among others, are supported as essential, since these are the ones that allow to understand in what is thought, criticality and, more properly, critical thinking. Finally, the conclusion, which shows that, although over the last years the cognitive sciences have been essential to understand what is and how critical thinking works, these theories have supported their constructions in the contributions of philosophy throughout history.

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## Theoretical framework

Discourses have emerged in the last decades around the importance of thinking and acting critically. These discourses have been adopted by the institutions in charge of setting educational policies at the national and international levels to make them an important part of their curriculum guidelines. One of the most representative speeches has been the report presented by the Association of American Philosophers Delphi-APA in 1990, in which a little over 40 experts participated, worldwide, to discuss and reach consensus on how to understand critical thinking.

In this exercise, authors such as Paul and Elder (2003) argued that critical thinking can be expressed in a variety of definitions, depending on the objective pursued. However, the most useful definition to assess the ability to think critically leads to consider that:

Critical thinking is the process of analyzing and evaluating thought with a view to improving it. Critical thinking presupposes knowledge of the most basic structures of thought (the elements of thought) and the most basic intellectual norms for thinking (universal intellectual norms). The key to the creative side of critical thinking (real improvement of thinking) is to restructure thinking as a result of analyzing and evaluating it effectively (Paul and Elder, 2003, p. 6).

For the authors, this type of thinking has three components:

- Elements of thought (reasoning).
- Intellectual standards to be applied to elements of reasoning.
- Intellectual traits associated with critically thinking. These are the result of a process in which intellectual norms are applied consistently and disciplined to elements of thought.

In these semantic consensuses, the classical principles exposed by Aristotle in his treatise on logic, and by Kant (2011 [KrV]) in his *Critique of Pure Reason* are taken up to give foundation to the theory. Facione (1990) and Paul and Elder (2003), representative theorists on this topic, agree with the other theorists in the Delphi-APA report to conceive that all reasoning contains inferences and interpretations that account for conclusions and these give meaning to the data. The issues that refer to the principles on intellectual norms are those that allow a critical thinker to achieve clarity, seek conceptual accuracy, preeminence, and depth always based on logical principles, since these give universal standards that must be used to evaluate and check the capacity of reasoning when a human being faces a problem or situation of conflict (intellectual and social) and without neglecting creativity to give solution to problems (Paul and Elder, 2003, pp. 10-11).

It is important to note that after this first attempt to unify meanings around how to understand 'critical thinking', there have been new definitions; while most of them take as a starting point the statements made by Facione (1990; 2007) and Paul and Elder (2003) as well as the agreements of the Delphi-APA report, they start again to propose alternative perspectives to understand what is critical thinking. Some of them go beyond thinking skills at higher levels and link important elements such as emotions and metacognition (Tamayo *et al.*, 2014, 2015). Likewise, to achieve criticality, they also link language, mental states, strategic decision-making and action (Rodríguez, 2018) when thinking and acting critically. In other cases, beliefs and skepticism are linked (Hernández, 2019) as essential elements of criticism. With this, new paths are opened that outline the work routes in the institutions in charge of education to train critical citizens who can carry out analyzes, reflections, understandings and transformations in the social reality in which they live; proposing solutions, based on reasoning, to the problems they face in their daily lives.

It is important to note that despite the fact that several authors as representative as those previously mentioned in this field of knowledge, have chosen other underlying elements to understand critical thinking, including Bailin (1987), Nickerson (1994), Perkins *et al.* (1993), Saiz



(2002), Villarini (2003), Freire (2005), McPeck (2017), Saiz and Rivas (2008), Valenzuela and Saiz (2010) and more, it is evident a coincidence in posing as essential in their theories *to judgment, reason and evaluation* as substantial elements of criticism.

When analyzing these elements in their theories, it is observed that all of them, like the authors of the Delphi report say, agree that Kant (2011 [KrV]) introduces the concept of criticality and Dewey (1989) the concept of critical reflection coupled with Kantian good judgment. However, when reviewing the history of philosophy, it is observed that although the concept 'critical thinking' is recent, this concern has been latent for centuries, not only in Greek philosophy, but in the philosophy of the Vithandins in India.

Therefore, some theoretical guidelines of philosophy that have served as a theoretical magnifying glass to understand criticality will be shown, i.e., theories that have served for the various authors who currently account for critical thinking, in the field of education, to base their positions from the different perspectives and models that surround this phenomenon.

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## Classical traditions and criticism: discernment as the foundation of thought

Even though classical philosophers they did not speak of 'critical thinking' as the term is known today, it is possible to find expressions about its use or descriptions about related concepts (such as *the critique*) that allow us to outline some characteristics that a critical thinker must accomplish.

It is likely that the first Western reference can be found in Parmenides, showing that the one who thinks correctly is the one who chooses the path of truth or "of being", with passages like this:

Well then, I will tell you, listen carefully to my word, which are the only research paths that can be thought; one: what is and what is not possible not to be; it is the way of persuasion (accompanies, indeed, the Truth); the other: what is not and what is necessary not to be. I will show you that this path is completely inscrutable; you will not know what is not (because it is inaccessible) nor will you show it (Eggers Lan and Julià, 1981, DK 28B2).

In this sense, thinking critically would consist in the discernment of what is true with respect to what is not, what is apparent. Plato (2014 [Taet.]) says:

Soc. — That is certainly the task of midwives, and yet it is less than mine. It is not proper for women to give birth sometimes to imaginary beings and other times to true beings, which would not be easy to distinguish. If so, the most important and beautiful work of midwives would be to *discern* [κρίνειν] the truth from the truth. Don't you think?  
Teet. — Yes, I think so. (Plato, 2014 [*Taet.*], 150a-b [italics are proper]).

Even going a little further, Aristotle himself (2011 [*DA*]) explains what this discernment consists of between what is true and what is not: “The soul of animals is defined by two powers, that of discerning—this activity which corresponds to thought and sensation—and that of moving with local movement” (432a16).

For Greek philosophers, criticism -we would say today, *thinking critically*- consists in acquiring criteria to discern the real from the merely apparent; in this sense, in discerning credible judgments or concepts from those that are not, an element that is undoubtedly present in each of the contemporary authors mentioned above.

Similarly, Indian *Vietnamese* philosophers used the term *vikalpa* to refer to this distinction, no longer between judgments and statements, but between perceptions. For example, in his commentary to the *Māṇḍūkya upanīṣad* the philosopher Śaṅkara tells us: “Moreover, if the rope appears as a serpent, no cause is necessary to explain the illusion, only ignorance” (Anónimo, 1998, *Māxēnophobia d. kār.*, § 9, *com. Śaṅ.*).

Thus, as Arnau (2011) explains: “It is worth dwelling on the term *vikalpa*, from the root *kṛp*: “discern”, “separate”, “doubt”, “uncertainty”, “alternative”, “error”, “distinction”. It is the Indo-European root of “cutting”, “separating”; closely linked to the idea of thinking as a power to distinguish” (p. 73, note 29).

It can therefore be inferred that the distinction of perceptions or judgments in classical philosophical traditions is the fundamental characteristic for thinking critically. In fact, going even further, even in Amerindian traditions such as Náhuatl can be found in fragments such as:

Did we really talk here...?  
It's just like a dream, we just get up from sleep,  
We only say it here about the earth... (León-Portilla, 2017, p. 184).

In all three contexts, the critical thinker should be able to discern the real from the merely apparent—even if *perhaps* they differ in how each author or tradition understands these terms. In this sense, for an-

cient traditions, critical thinking was characterized by distinction, clarification and recognition of truth in judgments and sensations.

Now, if for classical traditions critical thinking was based on the distinction of ideas, in the Modernity Kant (2011 [KrV]) focuses its efforts on two key points: reflexivity and decision-making. On the one hand, on the theoretical level, criticism would consist in the study that reason would do on itself to recognize its limits (B23); but, on the other hand, on the practical level, it would consist in that autonomous regulation of the reason of moral actions through universal principles (the categorical imperative). He says:

That morality is not a phantasmagoria—which follows if the categorical imperative, and with it the autonomy of the will, exists in truth and in an absolutely necessary way as an *a priori* principle—requires a *possible synthetic use of pure practical reason*, which we cannot venture without anticipating a *critique* of that same rational capacity (Kant, 2012, Ak.proved, IV, 445).

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Kant thus introduces a fundamental element in describing what we would now call “critical thinking”: determining criteria for decision-making (if any, determined by practical reason). It seems that a human being who thinks critically should not only be able to make judgments about his own thoughts and discriminate against them which ones he can take for true or false; it is also essential that such reflexivity turns into action as soon as his decision-making is consistent with those criteria. In short, a concordance between discourse and action is required, taking rationality as a bridge.

However, other philosophical currents that have also contributed to the understanding of critical thinking and its conceptualization have been analytical philosophy and pragmatic perspectives. Linguistics turned attention again on the ways of seeing, understanding, and explaining thought and the world, taking back the logical and ontological principles that were essential in the philosophical tradition when building knowledge and acting in the world.

Studies in language philosophy by authors such as Peirce (1998), Wittgenstein (2009a and 2009b), Ayer (1961), Austin (1962), Russell (1966), Searle (1969), Popper (1977a and 1977b), Brandom (2004) and others, which will be shown in detail in the discussion of this study, have allowed to relate language, especially from its meaning and use, as well as the a rules and reasons for acting as important elements when thinking critically.

Thus, analysis appears as a basic skill for criticality, but also new conceptions of rationality in which action and experience play an important role to achieve the development of thinking skills at a higher level, required to think, feel, speak and act in a reasonable and coherent way, according to the requirements of the situation faced by an individual (Rodríguez, 2018). Thus, even though in all models appear as essential elements: *rationality, logic, judgment, argumentation and decision-making*, it must be said that the pragmatic perspective provides essential supports to the new perspectives by fixing attention to language and social action as vital elements in the social transformation of which a critical thinker participates.

In this sense, the discussion of the results will show in detail the impact that philosophy has had, from different authors, in each of the models of critical thinking that were found from the review of the definitions of the most outstanding authors in this field.



## Methodology

The methodological design of this research, whose method was the conceptual analysis, carried out from the analytical philosophy, consisted of three phases: 1) review of scientific articles on critical thinking; 2) selection of 44 theorists that had clearly structured a conception of critical thinking; and 3) analysis and classification in four models from the constituents of critical thinking and the incidence of philosophical currents in the 44 selected theorists.

For the theoretical review 135 articles were selected in Scopus and Web of Science from the following descriptors: 'Critical thinking', 'reflective thinking' and 'criticality'. For selecting the theories, those whose authors had their own definitions of 'critical thinking' were used, which made explicit or allowed inferring in their discourse the philosophical currents on which they built their conceptual structures around 'critical thinking' and that these theories were cited by other authors in their studies. Finally, for the analysis and classification of the four resulting models, a matrix was designed to identify the incidence of the various philosophers in the conceptual construction of the analyzed theories (see Table 1).

Table 1

Analysis matrix. Philosophical currents that affect the constituents of critical thinking

Theories of critical thinking	Constituents of critical thinking	Yes	No	How it is evidenced (quote)	Philosophical current that affects it
	Abilities				
	Aptitudes				
	Emotions				
	Willingness				
	Action				
	Decision-making				
	Axiology				
	Social interaction and cooperation				
	Language, rationality and logic				
	Knowledge				
	Skepticism				
	Mental states (beliefs, intention and consciousness)				

Source: own production.

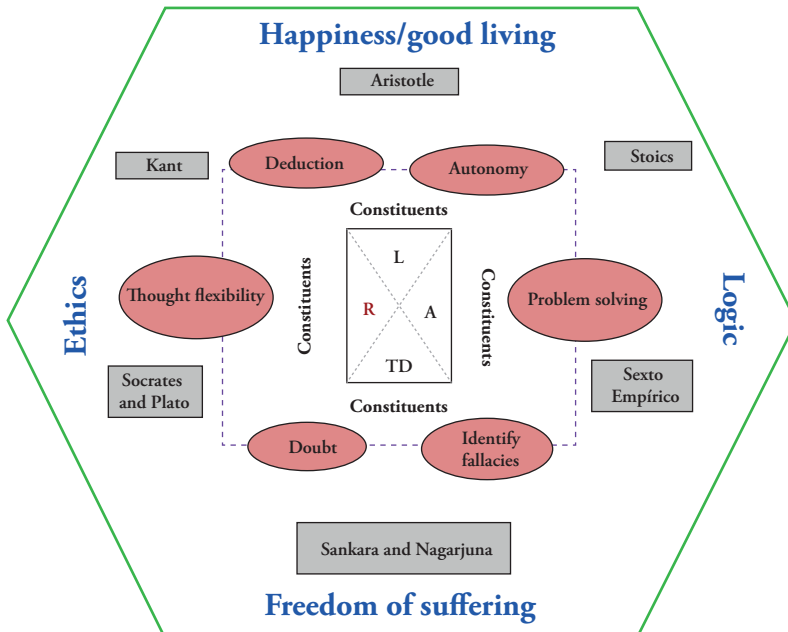
## Results

Once conducted the meta-theoretical analysis, a categorization and clas-sification of the revised theorists was made, with which four resulting models were achieved: logical-rational model; cognitive-emotional mo-del; scientific cognitive model and socio-pragmatic model. In turn, the transversal constituents to the four models were found.

The following four models are shown with their characteristics, au-thors and philosophers who influenced their theoretical constructs:



**Figure 1**  
**Theories linked to the logical-rational model of critical thinking**



Source: own production.

L= logic, A= argumentation, R= rationality, TD= decision-making; these are precisely the constituent elements of the logical-rational model. This is perhaps the first model and is directly imbedded in philosophy. It has as main elements those that appear in the center of the model, highlighting rationality as the central axis of its conceptual gear. In the periphery are the constituents of the model, within which the critique, defined by several authors (see figure 1) is highlighted and on which it is concluded that a critical thinker should be autonomous (free) in his thinking and acting, as will be shown in the discussion.

The second model found is the cognitive-emotional model. This axis of its conceptual gear is based on thinking skills at the higher level and emotions are linked when making decisions and solving problems (see Figure 2).

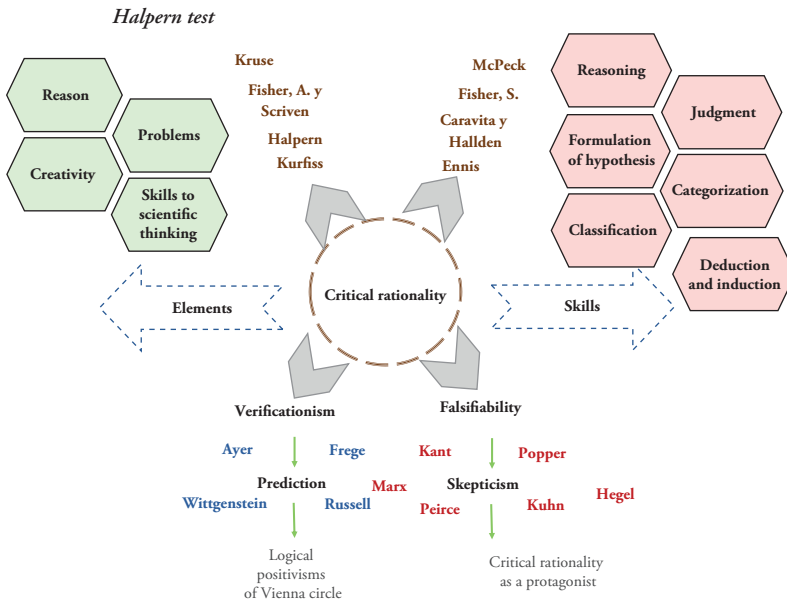
**Figure 2**  
**Theories linked to the cognitive-emotional model of critical thinking**



Source: own production.

For this second model, the theorists that presented in the periphery of the figure base their contributions on the strengthening of thinking skills in the higher levels that appear in the next level of the image, prioritizing the elements that “flood” the larger circle and on which there seems to be consensus among the different authors. Finally, in the outer periphery of the previous image, the philosophers who have influenced the structuring of the model stand out. It is worth clarifying that, although for this study the contributions of philosophy are highlighted, the conceptual constructions that underpin them are also based on the contributions of cognitive sciences. The design of the *Critical Thinking Skills Test*, an instrument that allows evaluating the development achieved in thinking skills, is highlighted.

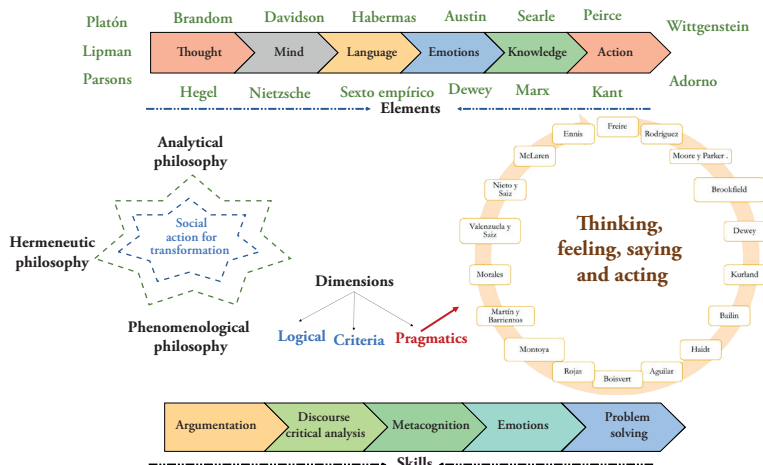
**Figure 3**  
**Theories linked to the cognitive-scientific model of critical thinking**



Source: own production.

In the third model found, critical rationality appears as a foundation. From this, abilities and elements such as the constituents of this work are displayed. In this model, it is worth highlighting the priority given to scientific skills that can be measured, as proposed by Halpern. In the lower part of the model image, two aspects are highlighted: 1) a falsifiability perspective of science in which skepticism confronts dogmatism and 2) a verificationism bet in its conception of science that develops more rigid measurement models from both formal and informal logics. The representative authors of this model are trained in neuroscience and psychology, and appear at the top of the figure and the philosophers on which these theorists are based are shown at the bottom.

**Figure 4**  
**Theories linked to the socio-pragmatic model of critical thinking**



Source: own production.

This is a complex model that integrates constituents of the cognitive-emotional model with elements that favor the interaction of the critical thinker in the social world. In the upper part, there are elements related to the socio-pragmatic theory and the philosophers who have influenced the structuring of the model and who also influenced previous models.

However, considering the social perspective of the model, there is an essential element that has to do with transformation and emancipatory criticality, it is presented in the form of a star. This is how this constituent supports the link of action as an essential principle, since problem solving is not left in a reflection or in decision-making, but is passed to action itself and its impact on the social world, i.e., feeling, thinking, speaking and acting are always present in the critical subject.

The skills are at the bottom of the model, which seem to be shared with other models, but linked to social interaction and without the intention of being measured, since the goal is emancipation and transformation of the world.

## Discussion and Philosophical Analysis

### *Logical-rational model: what does it mean to ‘think critically’ in a philosophical sense?*

While the concept of ‘critical thinking’ has been developed widely by theories in didactics and learning psychology, it is not new and has its roots in the discussions that philosophers have developed around their predecessor concepts: ‘reason’, ‘judgment’ and ‘criticism’. Following is a brief explanation of only five of them.

Perhaps the best way to approach the concept was to refer to its definitions. On the one hand, the concept of ‘reason’ comes from the Latin *ratio*: ‘[...] calculation, proportion, computation, relation, measure, order’ (Lewis *et al.*, 1956, voice *ratio*). To a large extent, the term ‘thinking’ was taking on greater meaning and importance in the 18th century and, above all, the 19th, since authors such as Frege (2016), directed this analysis, not from the field of mental or representations, but from logic and language. In any case, the thought —or better, *the proper use of it*— would consist in knowing how to relate in a truthful and valid way (logically) an idea of another in such a way that “follow” or *infer* one from another (as for Frege, the latter would be the object of study of logic [2016]).

However, the concept of ‘criticism’ comes from the Greek *kríno-mai* (κρίνομαι), which means ‘to distinguish, separate, distinguish, decide, judge, interpret’ (Lydell and Scott, 1996, voice κρίνω). Aristotle (2011 [DA]) explains: “The soul of animals is defined by two powers, that of discerning —this activity corresponds to thought and sensation— and that of moving with local movement” (432a16), something that later the school of the Stoic-megarics systematize in their philosophy; for example, Zenon of Citio: “Speculations of the philosopher... those that Zenon says: know the elements of reasoning [λόγος]<sup>1</sup>, what quality they have, how they harmonize with each other and what are the consequences thereof” (Capelleti, ed., 1996, § 57 / SVF,I, 51).

But what is it about discerning thoughts or feelings? Two examples of ancient philosophy allow us to clarify what these distinctions refer to. On the one hand, Plato, in his first writing or treatise on the epistemology of the history of Western philosophy, uses it to explain what Socrates’ Mathematical Method consisted of:

Soc. — That is certainly the task of midwives, and yet it is less than mine. Because it is not proper for women to give birth sometimes to imaginary beings and other times to true beings, which would not be easy to



distinguish. If so, midwives' most important and beautiful work would be to *discern* what is true from what is not. Don't you think?

Teet. — Yes, I think so.

Soc. — My parting art has the same characteristics as theirs, but it differs in the fact that it assists men and not women, and examines the souls of those who give birth, but not their bodies (Plato, 2014 [*Taet.*], 150a-b [*italics are proper*]).

Thus, criticism is understood as the ability to distinguish the true from the false, among those beliefs with more scientific validity (Gutiérrez-Pozo, 2023). Something similar is indicated by a classic example by the Indian philosopher of the *advaita* school *vedānta* Śaṅkara: "Moreover, if the rope appears as a snake, no cause is necessary to explain the illusion, only ignorance" (Anónimo, 1998, *Mād. kār.* § 9, com. Śaṅ.), metaphor also used by Nāgārjuna (2011 [*MK*]). The term '*vikalpa*' was therefore used in the Indian tradition to refer to the distinction of perceptions (Monier-Williams, 1960, voice वक्लिप). As Arnau (2011) explains: "It is worth stopping at the term *vikalpa*, from the root *kṛp*: "discern", "separate", "doubt", "uncertainty", "alternative", "error", "distinction". It is the Indo-European root of "cutting", "separating"; closely linked to the idea of thinking as a power to distinguish" (p. 73, note 29). This type of skeptical and analytical attitudes to differentiate the real from the illusory, as Arnau (2008) indicates, is typical of the Vithandine philosophers (as the two mentioned): philosophers who with "negative argumentation" sought to refute deceptive or illusory beliefs to achieve the liberation of suffering (*nirvāt/duḥkha*).

Either as in the Greek case, where false concepts, definitions and statements are distinguished from the true; or, in the Indian case, where false perceptions are distinguished from plausible ones, *criticism consists in differentiating what is real from what is not*. Criticizing, in the original sense of the word, consisted of analyzing the parts of a speech or a perception/representation to recognize whether it is false or not.

Accordingly, Sexto Empírico also offers elements about critical reasoning, naturally linked to skepticism. He defines it:

Skepticism is the ability to establish antitheses in phenomena and theoretical considerations, according to any of the tropes; thanks to which we go - by virtue of the equivalence between things and opposing propositions - towards the suspension of judgment and then towards ataraxy (Sexto Empírico, 1996 [*PH*], IV, 8).

While it is true that radical skepticism leads to the suspension of judgment (and, in that sense, is far from the purpose of the scientific



model), the ethical and pragmatic element of this theory is sometimes relegated to the background. However, the analysis of judgments is essential for this school to oppose them and thus avoid suffering by the multiple beliefs that disturb the spirit:

We certainly do not think that the skeptic is completely immune to disturbance, but we recognize that he is disturbed by needs; we agree that he also sometimes experiences cold, as well as thirst and so on. But even in such things ordinary people are tormented twice: by their suffering and - no less - by the fact that they believe that such situations are objectively bad; while the skeptic, by avoiding to think that each of those things is objectively bad, even in them is handled more restrainfully. Therefore, of course, we say that the objective of the skeptic is the serenity of spirit in things that depend on one's opinion and the control of suffering in those who suffer for anything (*PH*, XII, 29-30).

On the other hand, beliefs when supported and reliable, as explained by Gutiérrez-Pozo (2023), not only support knowledge from the method of discovery when making judgments but are required when making criticism. However, the term was rarely used in the tradition. It starts being used from the work of the German philosopher Immanuel Kant, known for cementing his system of thought in “criticism”. Kant clarifies how he conceives criticism as follows:

Criticism of reason, therefore, necessarily leads ultimately to science; on the other hand, the use of the dogmatic of reason without criticism [leads] to unsubstantiated claims, which can be opposed [others] equally plausible, and therefore leads to skepticism (Kant, 2011 [*KrV*], B 23).

Thus, in a context in which science and philosophy were in crisis due to the proliferation of pseudo-scientific and anti-scientific discourses, criticism appears as a method by which it is possible to study the reason —today we would say *the thought itself*— to investigate what are its limits and try to regulate them (today, in the field of didactics, we would call that “metacognition”).

In the practical field, however, Kant provides a second element for criticism: besides the reflection of thought —i.e., that reason studies itself— a fundamental element to speak of a “critical spirit” is autonomy. When asked about what it meant to be enlightened, Kant (2013 [*WA*]) decided to answer deliberately:

*Illustration means the abandonment by a man of a minority whose responsibility is himself. This minority means the inability to use their un-*



derstanding without being guided by someone else. *One is guilty* of this minority when its cause is not a lack of understanding, but a lack of resolve and courage to use one's own without the guidance of someone else. *Sapere aude!* Have courage to use your own understanding! Such is the motto of the Enlightenment (*Ak.*, VIII, 35).

Seen in this way, a critical thinker must be autonomous in his thinking and acting. This not only implies that he must act according to the criteria dictated by his reason, but also that he must be aware that this freedom is responsible for those choices and, therefore, cannot be excused from third parties when answering for them.

Taking up these five authors it can be concluded that:

- *First*, critical thinking is strongly linked to logical analysis and inferences (today we would say argumentation), i.e., *that one idea does follow another* (Frege, 2016).
- *Second*, criticism consists in distinguishing perceptions and judgments that are real and true from those that are not (Aristotle, 2011[DA]; Capelleti, ed., 1996).
- *Third*, critical thinking involves the constant reflection of reason on itself to (self)regulate it and thus avoid falling into confusion or fallacies (Kant, 2011 [KrV]).
- *Fourth*, thinking critically is linked to doubt and negative analysis of one's beliefs to lead a serene life and avoid making mistakes in decision-making because of wrong opinions (Sexto Empírico, 1996 [PH]).
- *And fifth*, the critical thinker should be autonomous and free. Therefore, it must be able to recognize from itself the criteria of thought and action to interact with the world around it and, in that order of ideas, he must be responsible for them without excusing itself in third parties.

## Philosophical incidence in the cognitive-emotional model

Although the origins of the concept 'critical thinking' come from philosophy since Antiquity, and the judgment for criticality is accentuated with Kant, it is only until the beginning of the 20th century that Dewey (1989) speaks of 'reflective thinking'; a term closer to the current and with which, later, authors such as Sternberg (1986), Ennis (1985, 1987, 1994 and 1996), Facione (1990); Facione Facione (1996a and 1996b), Fisher and Scriven (1997), Bailin *et al.* (1999), among others, base their studies around 'cri-





tical thinking'. The theories on this concept are supported, in addition to philosophy, by the contributions of neurophysiology and psychology.

Thus, in the second half of the twentieth century the term 'critical thinking' became more prolific in the literature and began to consolidate two cognitive models in which different authors contributed, in large part, from their definitions: *cognitive-emotional model* and *cognitive-scientific model*. The theorists of both models converged by paying greater attention in their theoretical constructs to the development of higher-level thinking skills (Paul and Elder, 2003). However, some of them work on critical thinking around scientific thinking skills (Ennis and Wier, 1985).

When reviewing the conceptual views of different authors, it can be observed that the studies of Facione (1990 and 1992), Perkins *et al.* (1993), Tishman *et al.* (1994), Facione and Facione (1996a and 1996b), Lipman (1998), Paul and Elder (2003 and 2005), Tamayo *et al.* (2014 and 2015), Shannon and Allen (2001), Hernández (2019) and Nickerson (1994) agree on giving priority to rationality and relate it to cognitive processes. They focus on the development of higher-level thinking skills and problem-solving.

Even if some theorists are closer in their epistemic foundations than others, in the cognitive-emotional model it is possible to observe the priority that is given to the development of skills for logic, argumentation, suspension of judgment, reflection, analysis, evaluation, creativity, self-control, emotional regulation, metacognitive reflection, strategic decision-making and problem-solving approach.

This conceptual commitment to the development of thinking skills (Facione, 1990; Paul and Elder, 2003) led more than forty-six experts to discuss between 1988 and 1989 around reaching a consensus on critical thinking. In this space, six skills were determined by joint assent, which were presented in the results published in the Delphi Report in 1990; among them: *interpret, analyze, evaluate, infer, explain and self-control* (Facione, 1990). Therefore, in accordance with these results, the *California Critical Thinking Skills Test* was designed to evaluate the development of these skills. However, in subsequent analyzes other skills such as creativity and reflection were linked, recovering logic and rational judgment (Lipman, 1998) and contextualizing the exercise of criticality to solve problems (Nickerson, 1994; Tamayo *et al.*, 2015). However, when analyzing the theoretical structure of these authors it is observed that, for the most part, they have taken as a reference Kant's philosophy (2004 [KA] and 2011 [KrV]) to substantiate the origins of their theories, especially the statements about understanding, knowledge and judgment or discernment.



Judgment in a critical thinker must be rational and knowledge-based. This is assumed by the various authors who share these conceptual guidelines. From Kantian philosophy, elements of the conception presented by the German philosopher about rationality are taken up to support logical and argumentation skills and, in turn, they are distanced from the assumption of constitutive principles *a priori* attributed to the faculty of knowing that mediate between understanding and reason itself.

Reflective or critical judgment is an indication of Kant's proposed autonomy. It is an autonomy that gives an essential role to the freedom to make decisions when solving problems, as Nickerson (1994) and Tamayo *et al.* (2015) say. Seen in this way, a critical thinker is able to make judgments based on the knowledge he possesses; a process that he does in a free and autonomous way, since he has the reasons that support the judgment, the valuation of it and the decision made.

Based on Kant's approaches, as well as on the studies on the nature of critical judgment by Evans (2008) and various contributions of cognitive sciences -especially cognitive psychology- the authors of the cognitive-emotional model define the concept of 'critical thinking' and provide tools for teachers to work in the classroom around the development of higher-level thinking skills. Thus, freedom, rational consciousness and will are essential elements, not only for Kantian theory of judgment, but also for this model. However, although in the early days for these theorists pure rationality and logic became constitutive elements of much of the theories that support the model, later some of them began to take contributions from Dewey (1989), Adorno (1920) and Hume (1986 and 2012) to understand reason, not as a dominant and transcendental faculty, but as an essential means for problem solving, without neglecting the role of experience as a constant flow for life itself (Dewey, 1948; Locke, 1999). Emotions and feelings in this process (Hume, 2012) and the role of language for a proposal from the communicative rationality (Habermas, 1987a and 1987b) are determinant. It is a rationality that enables criteria in the issuance of value judgments and links elements of dialogue and critical logic, as well as abduction as a proposal for the construction of knowledge (Peirce, 1992 and 1998), as Lipman does (1998). Many others relate in their theories elements of dialectical argumentation (Hegel, 2010 [PdG]) and skepticism (Descartes, 2014 [Med.]; Dewey, 1989), as well as elements of the critical theory of Horkheimer and Adorno (1998); in addition to the critical historicity, consciousness and the historical context worked by Marx (2014) in his materialism.



Thus, the incidence of various philosophical currents in this model determines the assumption of the theoretical positions adopted by each of the authors and provide the basis for the conceptual gear that sustain cognition and emotions as constituent elements for problem solving. However, the model itself is not enough for the demands of today's world, since only a few of these theorists link action and social interaction in the development of skills and dispositions. However, it is important to note that authors such as Lipman (1998), Nickerson (1994), Tamayo *et al.* (2015) and Hernández (2019) enunciate it, even if they do not give a greater emphasis and sometimes assume as equals 'action' and 'decision-making'. In short, something that stands out in this model is that the different authors remain in a definition of 'critical thinking' focused on the subject and the cognitive processes (rational and emotional) that support the reasons to make judgments and evaluate alternatives to solve problems. It does not consider elements that link collective mental states and neither does social practice to act and transform the world in which they live.



## Incidence of Philosophy in the Cognitive-Scientific Model

However, another model that has been influenced by the logical-rational model -especially, in the theoretical assumptions that support it- is the cognitive-scientific model. By 1882, the *U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences* launched four investigations into the critical thinking of members of the navy. In 2009, Susan Fisher and her team reported on a model whose construct was based on *analytical rationality*. From the contributions of the knowledge built in the cognitive sciences from neuroscience and psychology, Fisher *et al.* (2009) presented the results of these investigations in which tests were designed and validated to measure cognitive processes. Taking contributions from different philosophers and theoreticians of education, they constructed a model that accounts for thinking skills such as classifications, categorizations, hypothesis formulation, judgments and reasoning that the critical thinker must have when faced with problem solving.

The scientific vision of Fisher *et al.* (2009) is very close to that of Ennis (1962 and 1985), McPeck (2017) and that of Caravita and Hallden (1994), who also make a bet towards the search for the truth and in their theories, there is a position of science from a falsifiability perspective, as Fisher herself says. It is shown the incidence, not only of Kuhn (2004), but also of Peirce (1992) and Popper around the conception of science and

the construction of knowledge, not from verificationism, but from falsifiability (Popper, 1967, 1997a, 1977b). As for problems, the rational and creative capacity to solve them, as well as the skills of scientific thinking are essential elements for this model. In terms of Gutiérrez-Pozo (2023), being creative is being critical when it comes to discerning the beliefs that underpin the knowledge one possesses. Thus, the rationality proposed by Kant (2004 [KU] and 2011 [KrV]) and the doubt and analysis of Sexto Empírico (1996 [PH]) come into play, especially to use dogmatism, from skepticism, when refuting and falsifying assumptions that have no clear and reliable basis. Dogmatism is not acceptable in science, nor can it be acceptable in critical thinking.

On the other hand, Kurfiss (1988), Alec Fisher (2001), Fisher and Scriven (1997), Halpern (2003) and Otto Kruse (2017) also work on critical thinking from the development of cognitive skills of scientific thought, linking - as the two authors mentioned - rationality, logic (from a formal conception) and dialectics from the contributions of Platonic and Hegelian theory. As in the previous model, these authors resume the contributions of Marxist theory on historical materialism, especially, they assume historical consciousness to read the problems in context. However, they give priority to skills that can be measured, as proposed by Halpern (1998 and 2006) in his test, model in which the development of five specific skills can be measured: 1) verbal reasoning; 2) hypothesis formulation; 3) argument analysis; 4) decision making; and 5) probability and uncertainty and problem solving. In this model the bet is verificationism and elements of prediction, which allow to evidence elements of analytical philosophy, especially the philosophy of logical positivism, in its conception of science (Ayer, 1961). Therefore, authors such as Frege (2016), Ayer (1991), Russell (1966) and, of course, Wittgenstein's first contributions (2009b) in his *Tractatus*, for whom language and logic delimited thought and the world.

## Incidence of philosophy in the socio-pragmatic model

On the other hand, taking up some of the contributions presented by the theorists of the cognitive-emotional model, a group of scholars conceive new elements to understand critical thinking from a socio-pragmatic perspective. In this model six elements are linked: 1) thought (cognitive processes), 2) mind (beliefs, intentionality and consciousness (individual and collective), 3) language (communicative processes and possibility condition of social reality), 4) emotions, 5) knowledge and 6) action, all



seen in interrelations and as possibility conditions for the interaction of the critical thinker in the social world. Critical capacity in this pragmatic perspective must be assumed in all situations and dimensions of life, but especially in the face of knowledge and culture, since being critical is essential when solving problems that appear in a context (Saharrea, 2022).

Now, perhaps Ennis (1962) is the first to link pragmatics in the processes of critical thinking by exposing three dimensions of this type of thinking: *logic, criteria and pragmatics*. However, these dimensions are exhausted in the issuance of critical judgments. In reality, pragmatics is enunciated, but it does not develop in relation to action and social experience, as theorists who place their bets on a critical thought in which the development of cognitive skills is evident in the actions performed by a critical thinker in the social world <sup>2</sup>.

In reviews and analysis of theories by authors such as Freire (1965), Moore *et al.* (1985), Brookfield (1987), Ennis *et al.* (1987 and 1994), Dewey (1989), Moore and Parker (1991), Kurland (1995), Bailin *et al.* (1999), Bailin (2002), Aguilar (2000), Haidt (2001), Boisvert (2004), Rojas (2006), Montoya (2007), Martín and Barrientos (2009), McLaren (2012), Morales (2012), Valenzuela and Saíz (2010), Nieto and Valenzuela (2013), Rodríguez (2018) and others, there is an emphasis on the pragmatic dimension of critical thinking, understood in the coherence that occurs between thinking, feeling, saying and acting.

Elements such as those exposed in the cognitive-emotional model continue in force, but the pragmatic component and the free and reflective experience in the social sphere are given priority. This is the reason why, in addition to the aforementioned philosophers who support the previous model, the incidence of authors of analytical philosophy, moral philosophy and political philosophy, both classical and contemporary, is also observed.

The incidence of Plato is found in the contributions about language, who from his conceptions of language (1987 [*Crat.*]) and around knowledge (2014 [*Taet.*]) turns out to be a fundamental construct, as is Russell (1966 and 1983) in terms of logical questions and knowledge. For the authors who constitute this model, language occupies a central place in the structure of their conceptions about critical thinking, but not only as a linguistic ability and as an argumentative ability, from its syntactic and semantic components, but from its pragmatic dimension, since with intentional discourses and their analysis it is possible to initiate social transformation processes. For this reason, the philosophy of Habermas (1987a and 1987b), Austin (1962), Searle (1969, 1998 and 2010), Peirce (1929 and 1998) and Wittgenstein (2009a) provide a large part of the



model's references, since they not only allow to link a bridge between language, mind and action in the social world, but also to see discursive rationality from a more practical perspective.

It is also important to note that concepts relating to action are linked to the reasons for acting, making judgments and making decisions; therefore, Kant's contributions (2004 [KU], 2005 [KpV] and 2011 [KrV]) to rationality, freedom, judgment and autonomy are again essential. At the same time, the contributions of Searle (2001), Hume (1986) and Kellner *et al.* (2008) allow understanding this rationality as a construction made by subjects in social interaction using language. Likewise, in this socio-pragmatic perspective, intermediate points between reason and emotions are sought when sustaining the reasons to act, linking mental states as important elements for individual and collective decisions and actions in which beliefs, intentionality and consciousness are involved (Ospina *et al.*, 2022).

On the other hand, beliefs are not only based on scientific knowledge, but also on ethical and political knowledge when deciding and acting critically. As Kurland (1995) explains, knowledge, norms, values and principles turn out to be constituent for the foundation of action (Parsons, 1937) in critical thinking. Thus, the influence of authors such as Nussbaum (2005 and 2010), Lipman (1998), the Platonic Socrates (Plato, 2014), with their contributions from the *majeutics*, Hegel (2010 [PdG] and 2017 [Enz.]), from their dialectical proposal, Habermas (1985), with their moral conscience and communicative action, and Marx (1984), provide tools around historical consciousness for what some of these authors have raised around the citizenship that should exercise every critical thinker. Useful tools when assuming a reflective thought (conscious and self-conscious) and being skeptical, as proposed by Dewey (1989) and Sexto Empírico (1996; 1997), to reach emancipation (Adorno, 1998; McLaren, 2012; Freire, 1965).

In relation to the reflections on emancipatory criticality -and, especially, on the social transformation to which the critical thinker must commit- McLaren (2012) is perhaps one of the most relevant theorists, who together with Freire (1965) focus on the problems faced by the critical thinker. McLaren's theory emphasizes freedom and liberating action for social change. This thinker is supported by different philosophers and sociologists, thinkers such as Nietzsche (2002, 2006 and 2012), Marx (1984), Hegel (2010 [PdG]), Kant (2011 [KrV]), among others, and focuses his proposal on the relationship and coherence between thought and action, for which it is based on the general theory of action proposed by Parsons (1937).





Criticality -understood in the coherence between *language, thought and action* that links the states of mind, emotions and historicity- takes knowledge as a central axis for beliefs with scientific support, since these beliefs are at the base, along with the norms, values and ethical principles of decision-making and the realization of actions in the social world and for change. Therefore, historical and creative thinking, as well as the norms to do what is explicit in the social world, as proposed by Brandom (1994) are central elements, especially considering that decisions and actions must be strategic for a real change in the social world. Thus, the development of higher-level skills such as argumentation, linked to logical and dialectical processes; critical discourse analysis; metacognition; especially for the management of emotions (Davidson, 1976, 1980) and for reflection around the regulation processes to actions and capacities for problem solving are constituents of this proposal.

Thus, no radical positions of philosophical currents are assumed in this conception of criticality, but elements of various currents of philosophy (analytical, hermeneutic and phenomenological) are taken up to support why critical thinking develops in the linguistic-social interaction and is evident in the action itself. In Agüero's (2022) terms, "the conceptual nature of the content of our thoughts and actions makes possible the critical rationality" (p. 96). Most authors understand the latter not only as the corporal movement, but as speech acts, as discourses and liberating actions that affect social transformation through the solution of problems faced by a critical thinker in the exercise of his autonomy and freedom.

Perhaps this is why it can be inferred that this is the model that best links the constituents of the previous models, supporting their contributions from philosophy and cognitive sciences, giving priority to social action for transformation and, although instruments of measurement are not yet available—as is the case with the cognitive-emotional and cognitive-scientific models—given its complexity, the socio-pragmatic model can provide various elements when thinking about forming critical beings capable of responding to the challenges and uncertainties of this changing world.

## Common Constituents in the Four Models of Critical Thinking

After reviewing and classifying the theorists that are part of these four models, it can be observed that there are some transversal constituents to the models found. It is important to note that although some of them pre-



vail under the same term, the meanings vary according to the meanings and functionalities attributed to them.

An example of this is precisely the concept of 'rationality'. Although present in each of the authors, it is assumed especially in the cognitive-emotional and socio-pragmatic models, as well as in some theoreticians of the cognitive-scientific model, since this is not conceived as a finished faculty, nor is it granted the functions of judge, as a determining factor in decision making and actions, as intended in the logical-rational model.

Rationality, in the three remaining models, especially in the cognitive-emotional and socio-pragmatic models, is not a natural faculty; on the contrary, it develops and that development is presented in relation to thinking skills, i.e., it is achieved in a permanent and conscious exercise, and is evident in elucidation, analysis, reflection, judgment, decision-making and, for the case of the last model, in action.

In this sense, even if in the theoretical constructs there is no semantic unification to what the term calls for and varies the functionality attributed to it, as well as its origin (for some authors it is assumed as faculty, for others as disposition and others assume it as capacity), there is no doubt that being rational is an attribute of the critical thinker and, in most cases, this rationality is assumed in relation to capacities to argue, logical capabilities and the issuance of judgments.

Another common element in the four models is, precisely, the judgment. This is supported from different factors (knowledge, beliefs, logical propositions, axiological and normative issues, etc.), however, regardless of the meaning assumed, judgment turns out to be a constitutive element of critical thinking. A critically thinking being is in a position to make value judgments, not only about speeches and reasons to decide and act (socio-pragmatic model), but about the speeches and actions of other social agents.

Similarly, arguing is another essential constituent in these theories. Although some scholars enunciate it as an ability, others as a capacity and a few as a dimension of critical thinking, argumentation is present in every theory studied. Not only is it an essential element to achieve the desired autonomy through the assumption of own judgments and positions, but when it comes to elucidating and evidencing fallacies in the speeches of others. It is worth clarifying that in all four models, argumentation is essential for discussion, social interaction and problem solving, even if in some of the models characterized here is addressed in relation to logical issues, dialogic processes or dialectical exercises.

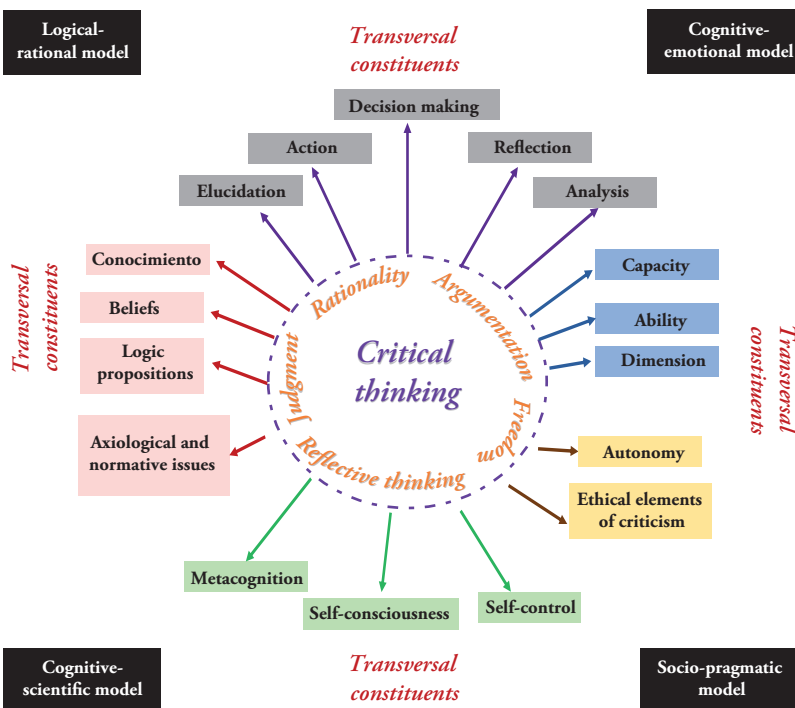




Likewise, reflective thinking is present in the theoretical constructions that support these models. Although some authors refer directly to it, others make it clear in their speeches when they refer to self-awareness, self-control or under the concept ‘metacognition.’ The concept ‘reflection’ is present, with the above exposed, whenever the critical thinker faces the resolution of problems (logical, epistemic, scientific, social, etc.), to respond to the requirements of the social context.

Last but not least is freedom, which in most authors is present in relation to autonomy, linking ethical elements to criticality. In all four models, critical thinking accounts for freedom, and for the socio-pragmatic model, it is the foundation for emancipation and social transformation (see Figure 5).

**Figure 5**  
**General integration of the five models of critical thinking**



Source: own production.

## Conclusions

Thinking about the world, the main issues of existence and social issues is something that concerns the human being, given his nature and ability to inquire and wonder. However, this thinking cannot be reduced to processes determined by purely biological functions, nor to those that are based on sociocultural traditions, since these two conditions of thinking are not sufficient to respond to the challenges imposed in a world where there is a lot of information and disinformation; therefore, in the twentieth century there is a particular interest in the field of education sciences to form critical beings capable of solving the problems that brings with social development. However, although the term 'critical thinking' appears in the 20th century, it had its origin in the theories of rationality and reflective thinking from philosophy. It is precisely that by its very nature, it demands in its action (*the philosophizing*) elements such as inquiry, logic, ethics, analysis, reflection, rationality and conceptual clarity in the construction of knowledge, among other elements required for criticality.

Since Antiquity, as this article attempts to show, various philosophers have expressed their concern to form critical beings with the capacity to respond to the challenges and problems of their environment; virtuous beings, who in their thoughts and actions account for their knowledge, their ways to understand, explain and live in the world (Plato, 2014 [*Taet.*]). As Wittgenstein explained (2009a; 2009b), philosophy fulfills the elucidatory function and the search for clarity to account for reliable knowledge and to solve the problems concerning the human being, processes in which criticality is present. In this sense, *critical thinking is not a matter of fashion, but a necessity that has been present in every era throughout history.*

It can be concluded that while the term 'critical thinking' is a construct that has current foundations in its base provided by cognitive sciences and is used with greater emphasis in reflective discourses around the purpose and requirements of education (pedagogy and didactics), it is undeniable the impact that different currents of philosophy have had on the structuring of it and on the constituents that the different authors mention in their theories.

Hopefully, both teachers -from different sciences and arts in general- as well as philosophers can reflect on the strong theoretical and didactic commitments of this concept and how eventually there could be in the classroom a critical way of thinking, living, and feeling the world.



## Notes

- 1 In Boeri and Salles (eds.) (2014) it is translated by 'speech'. Considering the polysemy of the term and the link that Stoics have with both logic and dialectics and rhetoric, the analysis of thought seems not only to be reduced to reasoning, but also to discourses in general.
- 2 Early studies by Ennis fail to clearly see the role of social interaction and action in his conceptions of critical thinking. Therefore, these first contributions have been mostly used when designing tests that measure scientific thinking skills. However, Ennis *et al.* (1987) and subsequent studies allow us to see the socio-pragmatic emphasis that it gives to its model.

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# USE OF PARADOXES AS DIDACTIC RESOURCES

## THAT DEVELOP CRITICAL THINKING IN STUDENTS

## Uso de las paradojas como recursos didácticos que desarrollan el pensamiento crítico en los estudiantes

RAFAEL FÉLIX MORA-RAMIREZ\*

Universidad Nacional Federico Villarreal, Lima, Perú

[rmora@unfv.edu.pe](mailto:rmora@unfv.edu.pe)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6420-493X>

### Abstract

Education has been challenged by the digital context that benefits virtual platforms that contain creations of youtubers or influencers, which focus on entertaining rather than comprehensively educating the student. In this sense, this article considers paradoxes as didactic resources that can help the development of students' critical thinking during their education. This research is documentary and is based on the consultation of written sources and the Internet. It begins by clarifying the concepts of fallacy and *reductio ad absurdum*, since paradoxes have been seen as very subtle fallacies by some scholars such as Bertrand Russell and, in addition, there are those who use paradoxes to make deductions, as occurs in the *reductio ad absurdum* applied in the ontological argument of St. Anselm of Canterbury. Next, a list of paradoxes is analyzed, but with the objective that they can be used in a classroom. Thus, some paradoxes such as the paradox of Achilles and the Tortoise, Galileo's paradox, Hilbert's hotel paradox, Tristram Shandy's paradox, Protagoras' paradox, etc. are discussed. This work closes by trying to make explicit the affective and emotional aspect that a student experiences when dealing with this kind of problems.

### Keywords

Paradox, fallacy, fractals, didactics, criticism, education.

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\* Doctor and post-doctor in science. Currently, he is responsible for courses in logic, mathematical logic, and legal logic at different universities. He is president of the Peruvian Institute of Logic and Philosophy Research (IPILOF). He's a research professor at RENACYT. He is a member of the Center for Studies of Analytical Philosophy (CESFIA), the Peruvian Society of Philosophy (SPF), the Mexican Academy of Logic (AML), the Holos Siglo XXI Network, the Juan Bautista Ferro Research Group (GI JUBAFE) of the UNI and the Andean Studies Group (GREA) of the UNFV.

### Resumen

Últimamente, la educación se ha visto desafiada por el contexto digital que beneficia a las plataformas virtuales que contienen creaciones de youtubers o influencers, los cuales se enfocan en entretener más que en formar integralmente al estudiante. En este sentido, este artículo considera a las paradojas como recursos didácticos que pueden ayudar al desarrollo del pensamiento crítico del estudiante durante su formación. Esta investigación es documental y se basa en la consulta de fuentes escritas y de internet. Comienza aclarando los conceptos de falacia y reducción al absurdo, pues las paradojas han sido vistas como falacias muy sutiles por algunos estudiosos como Bertrand Russell y, además, hay quienes utilizan las paradojas para realizar deducciones, como ocurre en la reducción al absurdo que se aplica en el argumento ontológico de San Anselmo de Canterbury. Enseguida, se analiza una lista de paradojas, pero con el objetivo de que puedan ser utilizadas en un aula de clase. Así, se trata sobre algunas paradojas como la paradoja de Aquiles y la Tortuga, la de Galileo, la del hotel de Hilbert, la de Tristram Shandy, la de Protágoras, etc. Este trabajo se cierra tratando de explicitar el aspecto afectivo y emocional que un estudiante experimenta cuando trata con esta clase de problemas.

### Palabras clave

Paradoja, falacia, fractales, didáctica, crítica, educación.

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## Introduction

Education cannot compete with the advancement of technology. What can be done is to use technology as a complement to optimize the achievement of goals related to the teaching-learning process. However, technology will not be able to teach humans to think, this can only be done by a teacher who uses strategies to stimulate thinking properly. Precisely, if a teacher uses paradoxes as educational resources in his class, he will achieve something that the technology of our time cannot yet, i.e., provoke debate, enrich thought and generate different points of view that aim to solve some controversial issue.

The objective of this research is to provide a teaching methodology to teachers that guides them to look for paradoxes so that they can improve the contents they disseminate in their class sessions.

The problem to be solved is related to the poor educational level that the current society has. How should paradoxes be used in class sessions to improve the teaching-learning process?

Against this issue, this paper defends the idea that paradoxes serve as educational triggers that motivate students to give their opinion or perspective on the problematic issue presented in class. In this sense, the use of paradoxes in class sessions is more than necessary to achieve the objectives set by the teacher.

Nowadays, technology presents a series of visual and auditory stimuli with which the teacher cannot compete because he is clearly at a disadvantage. With a simple smartphone, a young person can search on the

internet for any doubt he may have and, in addition, can be entertained by video games. Therefore, it is essential to provide the teacher with cognitive tools that help stimulate the thought of his students so that he can make teaching a more interesting event than the one offered by technology today.

The methodology used in this work is based on a qualitative approach (Sampieri *et al.*, 2014). The philosophical method of logical-linguistic analysis within the limits of analytical philosophy has been used (Salazar Bondy, 2000). The criteria for clarity in terminology will thus be respected. As far as argumentation is concerned, all relevant statements at the philosophical level are proved. However, in order to achieve this research, the technique of reading the sources of documentary collection and documentary analysis is used, i.e., different bibliographic bases are reviewed, and the philosophical analysis has been performed. As for the instruments, research sheets (textual, summary, paraphrases and mixed) have been used to select the relevant quotations regarding our topic. Also, information found on the web has been saved to a USB and the electronic means available have been used to type information, as well as to facilitate communication between researchers. Finally, the procedure that has been followed is the following: bibliographic sources were reviewed, several authors were chosen (which make up the theoretical framework of this work), the search for electronic files related to the subject under study was started, the data was classified, i.e., distinguished between books, journal articles and newspaper publication, among others that allow us to defend our research, finally, the publications that were selected were interpreted properly and it was proceeded to make this paper.

As for the structure of this document, it should be mentioned that this paper begins by clarifying the concepts of fallacy and reduction to absurdity. Then, a list of paradoxes is analyzed, but with the aim that they can be used in a classroom. Thus, it is about some paradoxes such as the Achilles and the Turtle paradox, Galileo's paradox, Hilbert's hotel paradox, Tristram Shandy's paradox, Protagoras paradox, etc. Finally, this work tries to make explicit the emotional aspect that a student experiences when dealing with these paradoxes.

## An educational strategy

Education in Peru has long faced serious difficulties. No one is surprised by the low level of education reflected in the PISA (*Program for International Student Assessment*) tests (Gestión, December 3, 2019). Moreo-



ver, the plagiarism scandal detected in the dissertations of various media personages has raised questions about whether the Peruvian education system is truly good.

The average student in the country has a general culture of *youtubers*, *influencers* and fashion reggaetoneros. Most people prefer to watch *Netflix*, a show or a meme from a youth social network like *TikTok*. Very few value culture, genius, creativity, reading, books, great classic films, national theater, etc. For this reason, whoever wants to be an educator in these circumstances should be awarded if they really want to change this calamitous state of affairs.

Being educated does not mean just knowing or memorizing some data; this should be called “being instructed”. An educated person knows the subjects he or she researches, but he or she is also someone who is trained in values. Having values means being a person who is willing to live with dignity, who wants to help others understand the importance of social justice and who understands that solidarity is not a trait of weakness, but a gesture of nobility towards our fellow human beings.

Many factors come together in education, as it is a complex activity. However, we can focus on the question of how to organize the teaching-learning process. What distinguishes a teacher from another is the way to use the teaching resources in order for his students to obtain some specific knowledge, associated with some moral value.

The ideal would be to get students to develop their critical thinking; this ability is seen in various activities such as asking relevant questions, making distinctions, seeking counterexamples, suggesting classifications, analyzing statements, proposing hypotheses, defining concepts, discovering not so obvious options, exposing assumptions, searching for causes, ordering the reasons that support a given thesis, detecting the relations between the parts and the whole, connecting ideas, arguing consistently without falling into fallacies, appreciating the importance of the context to study some social fact, etc. (Rosas *et al.*, 2018). What is more than interesting is that the student can develop a coherent, solid and clear argument using logic to do so (Torres da Silva, 2016).

Getting students to improve their critical thinking so that they have an interest in cultivating it should be the central objective of education.

In this regard, there are two ways of educating that have been overcome. The traditional style of education, in which the teacher was considered the source of knowledge that the student should seek to know, is considered insufficient today. The other style, the behaviorist, which considered that the student should follow the instructions of his teacher and imitate



him in everything, is also considered incomplete. At this time, the most appropriate method to teach is based on constructivist theories of learning represented by Piaget, Ausubel, Bruner and Vigotsky (Solé and Coll, 1995). We affirm that this method is more appropriate because it considers the student as the center of learning (as suggested by Gutiérrez-Pozo, 2023) and, furthermore, because the concept of “competence” that has been used to design syllabi and curricular plans is compatible with the theoretical framework of constructivism, since it requires awareness of the student about his learning and also a critical position about what he is learning.

Constructivism holds “that people form or build much of what they learn and understand” (Schunk, 2012, p. 229). According to this position, the student can build his own knowledge if he really intends to learn. The teacher’s task must be to design the right conditions for the creative and autonomous activity of the student to begin. Schunk writes:

Another assumption of constructivism is that teachers should not teach in the traditional sense of giving instruction to a group of students, but rather should structure situations in which students actively engage with content through material manipulation and social interaction (Schunk, 2012, p. 231).

Likewise, the student cannot learn alone, but rather must have a collaborative spirit so that he can work in community with his fellow students. The idea is that knowledge should be obtained through a shared activity (Schunk, 2012). The following table provides an idea of how constructivist learning environments are created.

**Table 1**  
**Principles governing constructivist learning environments**

• Pose important problems to students
• Structure learning around important concepts
• Explore and value the point of view of students
• Adapt the academic program to consider the ideas and thoughts of the students
• Evaluate students’ learning in the teaching context

Source: Brooks and Brooks, 1999 (cited in Schunk, 2012, p. 261).

A constructivist strategy is problem-based learning (PBL) (Escribano and Del Valle, 2008). These are the fundamental characteristics of this method:

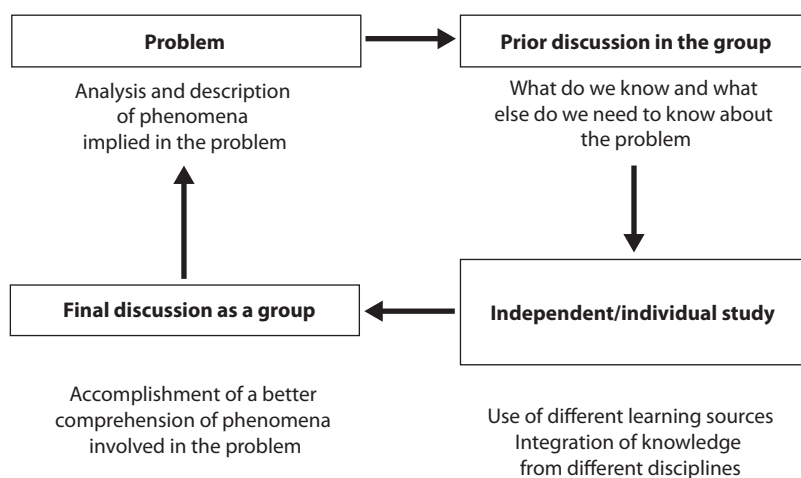


- Learning is student-centered.
- Learning occurs in small groups.
- Teachers are facilitators or guides of this process.
- Problems are the focus of organization and encouragement for learning.
- Problems are a vehicle for developing problem-solving skills.
- New information is acquired through self-directed learning (Manzanares, 2008, p. 15).

From this strategy, the teacher as tutor or guide presents a problem to the student to solve it with his work group. Together they are responsible for researching, reading and consulting in order to arrive at a solution or at least to achieve a better understanding of the question analyzed. Then, they meet to discuss their results and thus fulfill the activity asked by the teacher. This is an effective way to develop critical thinking. Figure 1 illustrates this.

Now the idea is that the most interesting kind of problem, which has not yet been explored sufficiently by teachers, is the problem created by finding and exposing a paradox. Paradoxes can be allied in the teaching-learning process and their use can benefit the educational activity both in the aspect of the achievement of competences and in the moral training of the educator. This research has been based on a documentary study of written sources as well as the Internet.

**Figure 1**  
**Understanding the PBL Process from the Student**



Source: Manzanares, 2008, p. 20.





In this sense, the paradoxes will be exposed as educational resources. Thus, in principle, a distinction is made between fallacy and paradox to show how it is possible that a paradox can be “solved” when it is discovered that, in reality, it was an argument based on a barely perceptible error of reasoning. In addition, it is considered important to approach paradoxes as contradictory elements that can be used in tests for reduction to absurdity. Then, a list of paradoxes is developed, partly overcome by tradition, to reinforce our perspective that the paradoxes can eventually be solved and also to reveal the educational and didactic aspect of them.

## Fallacies and paradoxes

Both paradoxes and fallacies take the form of arguments. However, while paradoxes are arguments that proceed logically and lead to an unexpected contradiction, fallacies are arguments that are logically invalid but persuasive on a psychological level (Copi and Cohen, 2001). Fallacies occur when an argument seems acceptable, but actually hides some error that is not detectable by the eye. For example, the *ad ignorantiam* fallacy may seem right to some. This fallacy arises when someone states cases similar to the following: “since no one has conclusively proven that God does not exist, then we have to accept that God does exist.” The truth is that, in the absence of evidence, nothing can be said or denied about any given matter. Another example is the scarecrow fallacy. Next, the following case is analyzed. Two congressional candidates debate. One says he is vegan because he loves animals; the other takes advantage of that and says he loves animals too, but above all he loves the poor, single mothers and homeless children, implying that his opponent only loves animals, but despises everything else. When noticing that a statement ascribes to the opponent a series of ideas that he has not explicitly mentioned, it is a case of scarecrow fallacy. This is very common in politics.

In relation to paradoxes, there has been an attempt by scholars to reduce paradoxes to fallacies in order to prove that they hid some error. Russell himself tried to prove that Cantor’s paradox was nothing more than a fallacy, but failed in that endeavor. However, by studying this paradox he was able to digest sufficient inputs to propose his own paradox so or more destabilizing than the paradox of the maximum cardinal number of Cantor (Garciadiego, 1992).

The revelation of this or that paradox has been thwarted as a mere fallacy, it has been the subject of controversy. Yet, while a paradox has



managed to be unmasked as a fallacy, no one doubts its prophetic value. The paradox, as a problem that attracts our attention, teaches us that there are limits in our understanding of some phenomenon. Those limits can always be overcome, but the learning we have gained in trying to respond to the challenge posed by the paradox has been invaluable. It is precisely this educational aspect of the paradox that could be rescued, despite the epistemic and cognitive overcoming of it.

## Paradox and reduction to absurdity

Although this is not always the case, one of the common elements of paradoxes is contradiction. In logic, the contradiction has been used in a convenient way especially in those reasonings classified as “reduction to absurdity”.

The structure of the reduction to absurdity starts with an assumption. Then, if both  $P$  and  $P$ 's denial follow from that assumption, then the initial assumption can be denied. For example, this test was successfully used by Euclid to prove that there is no last prime number. Also, by reducing to absurd it is possible to prove that the root of two is not a rational number. Here a simpler case. Suppose you claim that the spider is an insect. If it were, it would have six legs. But after an examination, we noticed that it does not have six legs, but eight legs.

So, we can deduce that it is not true that the spider is an insect. This is a simple case of reduction to absurdity. The logical scheme of the reduction to absurdity would be the following:  $[P \rightarrow (Q \wedge \sim Q)] \rightarrow \sim P$ . The above can be understood as follows. If someone claims that  $P$  and this leads to contradictions of the type  $Q \wedge \sim Q$ , then what has to be accepted is that  $\sim P$ .

This is the way some paradoxes have been used by intellectual tradition. The demonstration of  $A$  was carried out in this way. If  $A$ 's falsehood led to paradoxes, then this proved that  $A$  was not false, but rather true. It is necessary to review an example used by St. Anselm of Canterbury (trad. in 1998) to prove the existence of God. According to this thinker, when it is said that God is the greatest thing that can be thought, anyone who hears this definition can agree and, by that very fact, God would come to exist as a concept in his mind. The question is whether God can exist only as a concept within the human mind and not as a reality outside the human mind. We're going to take a test for reduction to absurdity. If it is false that God can exist outside the mind, that would pose a problem. On the one hand, God is the greatest by definition, but, on the other hand, if



God did not exist outside the mind, then he would not be as great as was initially proposed as he would have a limited existence. This is a paradoxical contradiction. Therefore, it is true that God can also exist outside the mind. This is known as an ontological argument.

Paradoxes not only have the objective of puzzling the audience, they can also be used to reinforce an idea or to discuss fundamental concepts of some discipline. In this sense, paradoxes can be used as teaching resources. The following paradoxes are examined: that of Achilles and the Turtle, that of Galileo, that of Hilbert's hotel, that of Tristram Shandy, that of Protagoras, that of Monty Hall, that of God and stone, that of Epicurus, that of time travel, that of the egg and the hen and some geometric paradoxes. This research ends up trying to explain what a student feels when his or her teacher presents him or her with a paradox. Next, we will study the Achilles and the turtle paradox.

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## Paradox of Achilles and the Turtle

This paradox appears in chapter 9 of Book VI of *Physics* of Aristotle (trad. in 1995) and was raised by Zenon of Elea to prove that the movement is absurd. To achieve this goal, the disciple of Parmenides imagines a supposed race between Achilles and a turtle. As Achilles is an experienced runner, he gives a 10-meter lead to the turtle. The Achilles velocity and the turtle are 10 m/s and 1 m/s, respectively. During the first second of this race Achilles has arrived where the turtle was, but by that same time the turtle will have advanced one meter. As soon as Achilles travels that subway, the turtle will have traveled 0.1 meter. When Achilles goes that .1 meter, the turtle will have gone 0.01 meter and so on. Since space is infinitely divisible, there will always be a small amount of space that the turtle will have advanced to Achilles and therefore Achilles will never be able to reach it. However, on the other hand, it is obvious that Achilles will reach it, because the fastest always reaches the slowest and Achilles is the fastest. This is the paradox.

Some consider that the solution to this problem is based on the idea that an addition of infinite sums does not necessarily give an infinite result. In fact, if we add up the amounts that Achilles travels, namely  $10 + 1 + 0.1 + 0.01 + 0.001 + \dots$  the result we get is  $11 + 1/9$ , i.e.,  $11, \bar{1}$ . This amount is less than 11.12. Thus, we can say that Achilles reaches the turtle when it travels almost 11.12 meters (Sthal, 1971). This solution is controversial, but acceptable to a large number of people. However, the

teaching that this paradox provides can be used in a classroom to motivate learning. It has also been proposed that this paradox is based on a fallacy, namely the fallacy of the continuum. This fallacy holds that many small cumulative differences are not relevant to determining whether or not there is a change. For example, since it is unknown exactly how much money must be taken away from a rich person in order for him/her to become poor, then there is no difference between being rich and being poor. This is incorrect because the fact that we do not know when changes occur does not imply that things do not change. However, because the Achilles paradox makes a pernicious use of the expression “although it will not have reached it will be close to achieve it” (Mora, 2019), it can be said that falls into the fallacy of the continuum as it assumes that it will never go from “will be close to reach it” to “reached it”. Then, Galileo’s paradox will be reviewed.

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## Galileo Paradox

This paradox was raised by Galileo (1945) when he reflected on the relationship between natural numbers and square numbers. If we think about the first ten natural numbers, we will only find three square numbers. If we think about the first 100 natural numbers, we will only find ten square numbers. If we think about 1,000 natural numbers, we will find 31 square numbers. Therefore, there will always be more natural numbers than square numbers and the idea is maintained that the whole is larger than the part, the whole being made up of natural numbers and the part, by square numbers. Now, what if we consider all natural numbers, which are infinite? If the natural numbers are infinite, then the squares are also infinite. But if this is so, then the idea that the whole is greater than the part would no longer be maintained because the whole and the part would be just as infinite. It is also often said that what Galileo concludes is that the relations of greater, lesser and equal, do not have the same sense between finite quantities as between infinite quantities.

This problem would be reviewed later by Georg Cantor, and the solution he proposes is based on the use of the two-way correspondence concept. The idea is that, indeed, the number of natural numbers is the same as the number of square numbers, and this can be checked because each natural number corresponds to a square number, and yes, they are the same kind of infinity, namely, zero  $\aleph_0$  alif. Now, the surprise is that there is not a single type of infinity, but a whole succession of transfinite

numbers. For example, the number of real numbers is larger than the number of natural numbers. It can be concluded that what Galileo found was a paradox from the point of view of the mathematics of his time. However, from another theoretical framework, namely that of mathematics of the nineteenth century, this situation is no longer a paradox but rather a fact. However, again the teaching that this paradox leaves us is very valuable, as it reveals that what we call “knowledge” is relative to a stage of scientific development. Then, we will study the paradox of Hilbert’s hotel.

## Paradox of Hilbert’s hotel

The mathematician David Hilbert (2013) raised some curious counterintuitive ideas about infinity. In the following, an attempt will be made to simulate a class session of a math teacher. Imagine a hotel with endless rooms. Infinite guests arrive at any given time. The hotel is full and all the rooms are occupied. However, a tourist arrives at the moment and asks for a room. At this moment the apprentice is asked, what can be done to bring this new guest in? We need to let him think for a moment. After a time, he is told that the interesting thing is that, despite being full, the hotel could be organized in such a way that this new guest could be admitted. Then, under the manager’s orders, all visitors will be moved to the next room so that the new visitor can get their room. This problem was solved, however, after a while another problem occurred, as an excursion arrived with countless guests. Again, the apprentice is asked, what can be done to bring this excursion of infinite guests? Once again, it is necessary to let him reason for a short time and then comment to him that, although it seems that no more visitors can be admitted, this is not the case. Again, under the manager’s orders the guests of the  $n$  rooms were moved into a  $2n$  room. Thus, the odd rooms were free and since the odd ones are infinite, the tour could find accommodation.

David Hilbert was already aware of the antics of infinity. These paradoxes, in reality, are only ways to spread in a more didactic way the strange nature of infinity. However, it is clear that the way to learn through paradoxes involves trying to solve these mental challenges. Accepting these challenges will make the student more prepared for decision-making in his daily life, as he will have exercised critical thinking in a convenient way. Then, the paradox of Tristram Shandy is analyzed.



## Tristram Shandy's Paradox

Tristram Shandy (a character created by Lawrence Stern) argued that he would not be able to write about his experiences because he realized that it took two years to write about his first two days of life. However, Bertrand Russell (1983) stated that there is a way he can write about his whole life. What would be this way? We must let the pupil think about this. Russell argued that, if Tristram Shandy lived infinite years with high intensity each of his days, the writer could write whatever he wanted about each of his days of life. So the day 1000 would take him to write 1000 years and the day 1600 would take him to write 1600 years. According to Clark:

This is so because every couple of days of life can correspond to a successive couple of years that it takes to write those days, although his memory will need to be pushed back more and more, without limit. For example, he will have to write the 101st and 102nd days about a century later, in the 101st and 102nd years, and the 100th and 102nd days will write them almost a millennium later (2009, p. 239).

At this point, it should be clear that there was a time in history when mathematicians cared very much about the nature of infinity. The professor can also play with his students by proposing these puzzles to them so that they can, little by little, get used to thinking freely and creatively. Next, we will know the paradox of Protagoras.

## Paradox of Protagoras

This paradox is also known as the paradox of lawyers. The first to present it was Aulo Gelio (about 150), but Diógenes Laercio (1985) would write it again later. Protágoras taught a man named Euatlo a lawyer in exchange for half his pay, on condition that he would complete the payment of the teaching when he won his first trial. Obviously, if he lost his first trial, he did not have to pay Protagoras. They both accepted this pact. However, after a certain time Protagoras still did not receive his money for having taught his student, then he asked him the reason and Eulato replied that he had not been able to pay him because he had not yet defended any lawsuit, as he had dedicated himself to other activities. Protagoras then decided to sue him for payment. The two men presented their arguments to the judge. Protágoras pointed out that, despite the result of the trial, Eulato must pay him, since if Protágoras wins the trial, Eulato must pay because the judge's ruling would oblige him and if Protágoras loses the



trial, Eulato must pay him because according to the pact, Eulato would have won his first trial and that implied that he complied with canceling him financially. Eulato also wanted to take the floor. He claimed that he should not pay his teacher because equally, despite the outcome of the trial, he would not be obliged to do so. If Eulato wins the trial, then Protagoras' lawsuit would not take place and therefore the judge could not force him to pay. If Eulato loses his trial, then he would have lost his first trial, and according to the covenant, he should not pay him. The puzzling question is: who is right? Clearly, they cannot both be.

This paradox is very appropriate to formulate it to law students of early years of university, since it allows to know basic concepts of the career such as demand, plea, trial, pact and others. However, it is also useful to be able to differentiate between morality and law and, specifically, between moral norms and legal norms. Thus, the fact that a student must pay his teacher for what he learned could be considered a case of moral norm, however, the fact that the covenants and/or contracts must be fulfilled, can be considered as a case of legal norm. One way to solve this paradox is to determine which type of norm has the highest hierarchy. Leibniz proposed another solution in his doctoral thesis entitled *Disputatio Inauguralis de Casibus perplexis in Jure* de 1666 (published in Artosi *et al.*, 2013). He said Eulato will win the trial, but Protagoras could sue him again. In the latter case, the judge's ruling would be in favor of Protagoras since the condition of winning his first trial would already have been met by Eulato. The Monty Hall paradox will be exposed shortly.

## Monty Hall paradox










In 1975 *The American Statistician* published Steve Selvin's letter (1975) where this paradox appears. It can be discussed concepts related to the probability theory. In a competition show, the driver named Monty Hall, offers contestants a car if they correctly choose a door of three on offer. If they lose, they will be given a comfort gift, namely a goat. A contestant chooses a door and the presenter does not open the chosen door, but opens another door behind which it is discovered that there is no prize. In that case, Monty Hall offers the opportunity to change doors or stay with the chosen one. The contestant begins to doubt that the situation seems to be used by the presenter to somehow persuade him to change doors. But should or should not the contestant change doors? What is the option that will make it more likely to win?

The analysis of this paradox allows to study in more detail the fundamental concepts of probability. In fact, this has been investigated in



Gea *et al.* (2017). If considering that the prize is only behind one of the three doors presented, then it can be said that there is a 1/3 chance of winning. The show host opens one of the empty doors and asks if the person wants to change his/her choice. This could be interpreted as the probability of winning now being 1/2, but in fact it is not. What actually happens is that when you choose a door, you can have three situations, namely, the car can be behind the first or second or third doors.

Table 2  
Outline of the Monty Hall Paradox

	DOOR 1	DOOR 2	DOOR 3
SITUATION 1			
SITUATION 2			
SITUATION 3			

Source: Own production.

*First situation:* if we have chosen the first winning door in which the car is, the presenter will show us an empty door. In that case, if we change, we lose.

*Second situation:* if we have chosen the first losing door, the presenter will show us an empty door because he knows that the car is in the second door. In that case, if we change, we win.

*Third situation:* if we have chosen the first losing door, the presenter will show us an empty door because he knows that the car is in the third door. In that case, if we change, we win.

This indicates that whenever we change, we have a better chance of winning than losing, specifically, twice out of three altogether. It is therefore advisable, despite appearances, to change doors. What is interesting about



this paradox is that it is useful for exploring mathematical concepts associated with probability. Then, the paradox of God and the stone will be studied.

## Paradox of God and the Stone

This paradox, which has medieval roots but appears in Savage (1967), could be taught during philosophy of religion or could even be posed as a challenge for theology students. Can God create a stone so big that he himself cannot lift it? If he can create it, then he can no longer lift it, and thus he could not do everything. If you cannot create it, then you could not do it all. Considering both options, God could not do everything, i.e., he would not be almighty. And if so, can we still call him God? Here the concepts of God and omnipotence are questioned.

A physical version associated with the above is linked to the paradox of the immovable object versus the irresistible force. On the one hand, an immovable object is one that no one or anything can move. On the other hand, an irresistible force is a force that encounters no opposition, i.e., that nothing can offer it resistance. What if an immovable object meets an irresistible force? This is another paradox.

These paradoxes could be replicated under the idea that the expressions “God (who can do everything) creates a stone so big that he cannot carry” and “the irresistible force (to which nothing can be resisted) is resisted by an immovable object”, are contradictory phrases at the semantic level and, therefore, leads to paradoxes. The same is true of phrases such as “even number which is also odd”, “singles who are married”, “square circles”, “the smell of blue”, etc. All these phrases are nonsense and therefore the objects they allude to do not exist. In the first case, God is conditioned by an action that limits his nature, when in principle, nothing can limit him. In the second case, irresistible force also encounters a limitation (the immovable object) that destroys its own definition. What could be stated is that there are no worlds where God creates a stone that cannot be carried and where an irresistible force meets an immovable object. This could be the subject of discussion in a philosophy classroom or even a physics classroom. Next, we will know the Epicurus paradox.

## Epicurus paradox

Lactancio (2014) in *De Ira Dei* attributed to Epicurus a paradox about God (Hickson, 2014). If God exists, why does He allow evil to exist? Maybe he does not know it exists. If so, God would not know everything, and



this is absurd. Maybe he does know it exists, but he cannot help it. If so, God could not do everything and this is absurd. Maybe he does know that it exists, and he can avoid it, too, but he does not want to. But if it were so, God would not be good and this is absurd. So why does God allow evil to exist? Maybe he will do it to prove us. But this is useless because God, being omniscient, already knows what will happen and if so, does not need to prove us. Perhaps this is the devil's fault, yet if God is omnipotent and supremely good, he would have defeated the devil long ago. Another option may be free will. But is it possible that God can create a world with free will and without evil? If it is not possible, God cannot do everything, which is absurd, and if it is possible, then God also created evil, and that would not make it good, but again, this is absurd.

In *Theodicea*, Leibniz (2013) proposes a way to solve the question of the existence of evil in a world created by a very good God. God knows that pure goodness does not produce variety, but a little evil can generate greater good than goodness alone. Savater writes:

Consider, for example, a library, and a work as extraordinary as the *Iliad*. An *Iliad* library is enriched by an important book. But let us imagine a library of ten thousand volumes and that they were all the *Iliad*. It would be a lower place, compared to others with the *Iliad* and nine hundred and ninety-nine other, but different, minor books. In other words, what seems to us to be a deficiency —not all works are as good as the *Iliad*— is actually an enrichment, because there is a diversity that otherwise would not exist (Savater, 2008, p. 111).

Here is another analogy elaborated based on Rawls (2006). This can be compared with the idea of allowing billionaires to exist in societies where there is poverty, social injustice, and inequality. Counterintuitively, it is good to allow very wealthy people to exist, because this generates more economic movement, and the economy could develop conveniently if not for everyone, then at least for the vast majority. In a country where there are no such people, there is no one who invests enough capital to move the economy toward progress. By contrast, in countries where free markets are allowed, economic progress is possible to some extent. Similarly, Leibniz reasons that if there were not a little evil, you could not give all the existing variety compared to other worlds where there is no evil. That is why there is evil in this world. This solution, however, is debatable and students could accept or reject this idea. The aim is to provoke discussion and exchange of views. Then, the paradox of time travel is analyzed.



## Paradox of time travel

This paradox (which is also known as the paradox of the grandfather) was raised in the novel *Le Voyageur Imprudent* by René Barjavel (1944) and can be used to discuss the nature of time with physics or philosophy students. Imagine that a person travels back in time to the past. Now, this unwitting traveler ends up killing his own grandfather. This creates a problem because if the grandfather did not live, then neither did his father and, consequently, the traveler would not exist either. But if that traveler did not exist, then the journey did not occur, the grandfather continued alive, he begat the traveler's father who, in turn, begat the traveler himself. This traveler would then visit the past and kill his grandfather, and so the paradox continues.

The issue relates to our understanding of time. Time can be conceived as linear or circular. This interpretation is cultural, although, since the Enlightenment, the West assumes that time advances forward marking the path of progress. As for the paradox, it could be said that once the traveler kills the grandfather, he should not have been affected, since another timeline would have been created where he was not actually born, but it is not the same traveler, but his version in that new timeline created. This question then involves opening the mind to ideas such as alternate timelines and possible worlds. This is precisely the trend of the latest science fiction films such as 2019's *Avengers: Endgame* and 2022's *Everything Everywhere All at Once*. The topic of possible worlds, in turn, can lead to review basic notions of modal logic. And the idea of alternate timelines allows us to think about whether historical events occur necessarily or contingently. If historical facts are necessary, then there are no alternate timelines; but if historical facts are assumed to be contingent, that means they can occur as not occurring. And the discussion can continue. Then, the paradox of the egg and the hen will be analyzed.

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## Paradox of the egg and the hen

This paradox appears in Question III of Book II of the *Desktop Talks* of Plutarch (1987) and raises the difficulty of deciding the origin of something. It is said that chickens come from an egg and that chickens also produce eggs. And this creates a vicious circle, because it would leave unexplained the idea of whether it was the egg or the chicken first.

In this regard, Aristotle's theory of act and power (trad. 1994) could be considered in order to attempt to evaluate the issue in a certain way. According to the philosopher, movement is the passage from act to power.

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For example, when a seed grows and becomes a plant, it can be said that the power of “being plant” was updated in the seed and thus reached its perfection (*entelechy*). Now, in relation to the paradox, it can be affirmed that there is the power of “being a chicken” in the egg with which it would reach its perfection. In that sense, the egg would be first because while it is true that the egg turns into a chicken, it is not true that the chicken turns into an egg. The chicken produces eggs, which is very different. However, Aristotle also raised controversial metaphysical ideas. For example, he stated that what is first in time at the physical level is not first in being at the metaphysical level. Thus, it can be seen that there is a preeminence of the intellective over the sensible because the first, being immaterial, is neither corrupt nor contingent. At this point it is seen the influence of his master Plato. Aristotle asserts that for the child to become a man, there must somehow be the power to “be a man” as a precondition, as a kind of plan to follow. From this point of view, the power “to be chicken” would come first. As seen within Aristotle’s theory of act and power, the question remains undecided.

However, we can suggest that students pursue up-to-date biological theories on their own, so that they can make a well-founded, scientifically backed judgment, and not just on the basis of free, if interesting, speculation. For example, from evolutionary biology it can be stated that the chicken, as a bird, comes from reptiles. And besides, the reptiles mostly reproduce by eggs. Over hundreds or thousands of years, one of those eggs gave rise to a protochicken, which, when it spawned, gave rise to another egg, from which, through successive breeding processes over hundreds or thousands of years, a chicken emerged as we know it today. If this were true, the egg would come first. But let us remember that science is constantly self-correcting. So in the future this could change. For this reason, it is always urgent to be updated on the progress of science. Next, we will know some geometric paradoxes related to fractals.

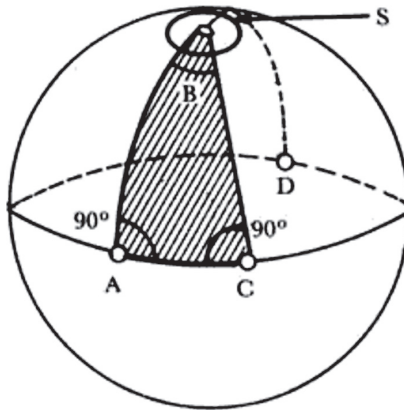
## Geometric paradoxes. Fractals

Geometry is that part of mathematics that studies space. There are many known geometric theorems, especially those dealing with triangles. For example, the Pythagorean theorem is particularly famous. However, there is one property that is widely recognized by students, namely the sum of internal angles of a triangle equals 180 degrees.

The thing is that this truth is acceptable to some extent because there are other geometries where the sum can be more. Think of a sphere.

Let us look at the equator and the triangle formed by meridians coming from the same pole as in the following image.

**Figure 2**  
**Analyzing a Sphere**

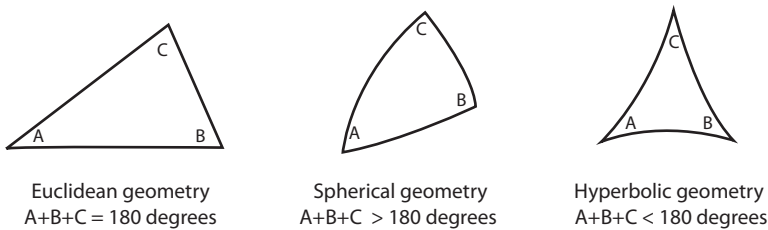


253  
Φ

Source: Sánchez, 2022.

It is evident that the angles that meridians make with the equator are 90 degrees and if we add the angle B at the top, we would have a triangle whose sum of angles is more than 180 degrees. This geometry is called “spherical.” But there is also another called “hyperbolic”, where the sum of internal angles is less than 180 degrees.

**Figure 3**  
**Three Different Geometries**



Source: Own production.

So, when asked, how much do the inner angles of a triangle add up to? The answer should be: “it depends on what geometry we are placing ourselves in.”

Similarly, the question of how many dimensions a figure has depends on the geometry in which we are located. Even the dimension might not be an integer, as occurs between fractals. Precisely, the fractal theory was proposed by Mandelbrot (1983). This is a scientific theory that aims to study the patterns that govern fractures, roughness and cracks. Benoît Mandelbrot writes: “Why is geometry often described as “cold” and “dry”? One reason is their inability to describe the shape of a cloud, a mountain, a shoreline, or a tree. The clouds are not spherical, nor the conical mountains, nor the circular coasts, nor the crust is soft, nor is the ray rectilinear” (Mandelbrot, 1983, p. 15). Fractals are mathematical objects whose basic structure, irregular or fragmented, is repeated at different scales. They have the following traits: they are very irregular, they are self-similar, and their dimensions are given by fractional numbers.

Then, three fractals will be presented and their paradoxical aspects will be analyzed. However, it is important to note that the controversial aspect of these figures disappears when it is understood that they are part of the theoretical framework of a geometry totally different from the usual one.



## Cantor powder

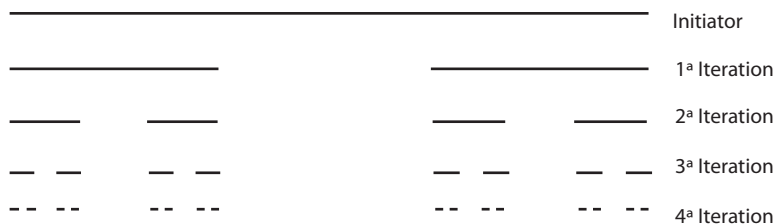
Cantor dust is constructed according to the following steps:

*First step.* It is a line that has to be divided in three. The center segment is then deleted. This is the first iteration.

*Step two.* Divide the other segments into three and delete the middle portion of each of the two segments. This is the second iteration.

*Third step.* The same must be done for the next remaining segments to infinity.

Figure 4  
Iteration of Cantor's powder



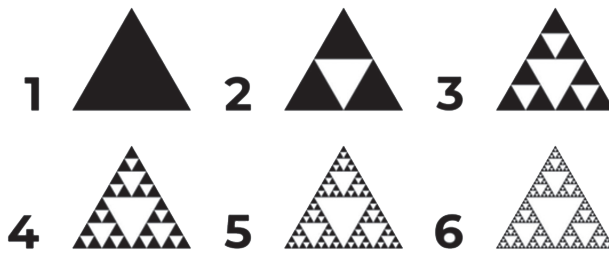
Source: Argote, April 6, 2013.

The figure resulting from applying the above process infinitely is the Cantor dust. The problem with this figure lies in placing it in its geometric space. How many dimensions does it have? It is not a point, it is not a straight line, it is not a figure. What is it? It is a type of figure that corresponds to a fractal. A fractal is a geometric construct whose dimensions are not given by whole numbers, but rather by fractional numbers. The dimension of this figure is between 0 and 1, i.e., 0.6309297.

## Sierpinski triangle

This triangle is constructed following these steps:

Figure 5  
Construction of the Sierpinski Triangle



Source: Olexandrgodomich, 2022.

*First step.* We start from a normal equilateral triangle. Since the side is 2, its perimeter is 6. In addition, we know that the area of the region shaded with black color of this figure is  $\sqrt{3}$  since the formula for finding the area of an equilateral triangle is  $\frac{l^2\sqrt{3}}{4}$  (i.e. side-by-side by  $\sqrt{3}$  between 4).

*Step two.* Next, we divide the area into four, erasing the area piece from the center. The perimeter of the 3 triangles is now:  $3 \cdot 3 = 9$ . Also, since it has been divided between 4 and, in addition, we have left 3 pieces, the area of the shaded region is equal to  $3/4 \sqrt{3}$ .

*Third step.* We reapply this process, i.e., we divide each triangle into four parts and erase the piece of central area. The perimeter of the 9 triangles shall be:  $3 \cdot 3 \cdot 3 (1/2) = 27/2$ . Meanwhile, because it has been divided between 16 and, in addition, we have kept 9 pieces, the area of the shaded region is  $(3/4)^2 \sqrt{3}$ .

*Fourth step.* We continue to implement this process and obtain the following results. The perimeter of the 27 triangles continues to increase

and is:  $3.3.3.3.(1/4) = 81/4$ . And its area, based on similar considerations to the above, equals  $(3/4)^3 \sqrt{3}$

*Step five.* In this fifth phase we apply the same. The new perimeter is:  $243/8$  and the area will be  $(3/4)^4 \sqrt{3}$

As can be seen, this fractal manifests an uncommon relationship between the area and its perimeter. While the perimeter tends towards infinity, the area tends to be zero. In Euclidean geometry it often happens that a figure with an infinite area has an infinite perimeter and, in turn, a figure with an infinite perimeter has an infinite area. In addition, a figure with an area equal to zero should have no graphic existence, which is not the case with the Sierpinski triangle. Also, a figure with perimeter equal to infinity has measures from its sides to infinity or has infinity sides. But, in the triangle analyzed it happens that there are only accumulations of points everywhere. The fractal dimension of this object is 1.58496.

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## Koch Snowflake

This figure is constructed as follows:

*First step.* It starts by analyzing the perimeter of the image (a) in Figure 10 that represents an equilateral triangle. If each side is equal to 1, its perimeter is 3. The area is worth  $(\sqrt{3})/4$  and we know this when applying the equilateral triangle formula.

*Step two.* Divide each side into 3 parts and on the middle parts build other equilateral triangles as in the image (b).  $6 \frac{1}{3}$  segments have been added, but we have deleted  $3 \frac{1}{3}$  segments. In total we have increased 3 segments of  $\frac{1}{3}$ . The new perimeter is:  $3 + 1$ . Since three new equilateral triangles have been added whose sides are worth  $\frac{1}{3}$ , the new area is now worth  $(\sqrt{3})/4 + (\sqrt{3})/12$

*Third step.* Repeat the process. We start by dividing those  $\frac{1}{3}$  segments into three parts and then we do everything else. In the end we have to increase 24 segments of  $\frac{1}{9}$ , but we also erase 12 segments of  $\frac{1}{9}$ . In total we have increased 12 segments of  $\frac{1}{9}$ , or  $\frac{4}{3}$ . The new perimeter is:  $3 + 1 + \frac{4}{3}$ . Because twelve new equilateral triangles have been added whose sides are worth  $\frac{1}{9}$ , the new area is now worth  $(\sqrt{3})/4 + (\sqrt{3})/12 + (\sqrt{3})/27$ .

*Fourth step.* Again, we are going through this whole procedure again. The perimeter would be equal to:  $3 + 1 + \frac{4}{3} + (\frac{4}{3})^2$ . And if we continue like this, this process repeated infinitely will result in the con-



stant increase of a new power of  $(4/3)$ . We will therefore have a figure whose perimeter is  $Z$ .

$$Z = 3 + 1 + 4/3 + (4/3)^2 + (4/3)^3 + (4/3)^4 + \dots$$

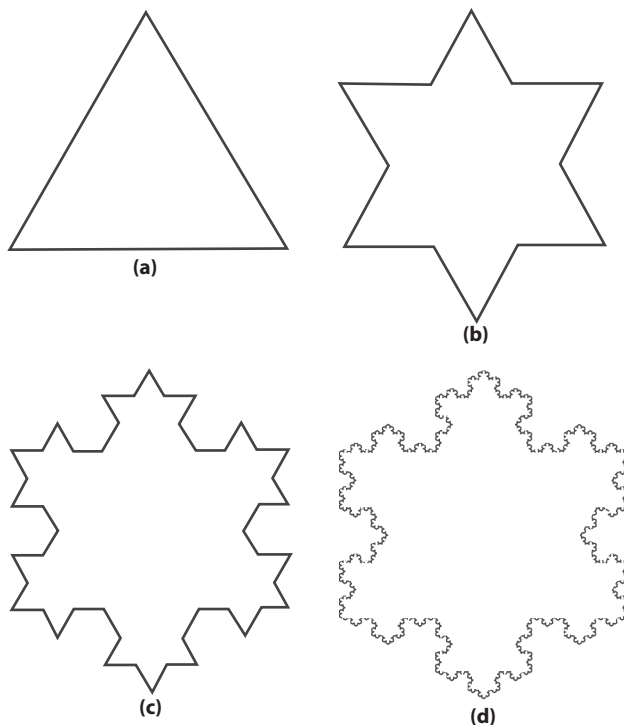
Well,  $Z$  necessarily tends to be infinite. But graphically we observe its finitude. On the other hand, area  $A$  measures

$$A = (\sqrt{3})/4 + (\sqrt{3})/12 + (\sqrt{3})/27 + \dots$$

This means that it tends to be finite, albeit small. This amount does not exceed 0.7 and is approximately 0.6928. Therefore, this figure retains certain properties of the flat figures as the finitude of the area, but distorts others as the infinity of its perimeter.

**Figure 6**  
**Koch Snowflake**

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Source: Northrop, 1949, p. 190.

All two-dimensional flat figures have a finite perimeter because they are bounded by closed lines. However, the figure analyzed has an infinite perimeter despite the fact that it is graphically possible to detect its finitude. With the above, it is stated that this snowflake breaks with one-dimensionality, since it is projected to infinity exceeding the straight segments. But in the two-dimensionality plane the finitude of the area of closed polygons is still respected. Therefore, this snowflake figure is actually a fractal whose dimension is more than that of the line (meters) and less than that of the plane (square meters), i.e., it is between 1 and 2. Exactly, its dimension is 1.26186. Now, there will be a discussion about how a student feels when faced with these paradoxes.

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## How does a student feel about paradoxes?

When a student understands the true and frightening problematic nature of a paradox, he is astonished, but he may feel some vertigo. The same sensation experienced when watching a very interesting series is repeated, and suddenly the triumphant and heroic protagonist is pierced by a sharp sword that the antagonist manages to use with his last breath.

“Ahhh! Ohhh! ... What?...” Surprised students often express themselves emotionally and affectively in the face of these big problems. Even paradoxes may seem to scare them or annoy them. That is the idea. A class cannot become the exposition of a list of knowledge or knowledge that the teacher coolly transmits to his pupils. In fact, a good educational session should motivate them so that they, on their own, can continue researching. And this consideration implies that the teacher must teach transmitting values, i.e., with love, respect, care and diligence. At the same time, there must be authority in the classroom by trying to make students realize that the teacher is a man or a woman of culture. From this perspective, teachers are guardians of culture and thought.

The teacher must be prepared. The education provided must be based on strategies so that the basic concepts of the student can “artificially” enter into crisis. The teacher must dose the use of these powerful paradoxes so that the pupil can learn that even the safest thing in the world falls under the powerful weight of critical thinking. Teachers must help them overcome despondency, fear, lack of freedom, what they will say, abuse and, finally, everything that endangers our humanity. This shows that both reasoning and emotional intelligence are at stake in the educational process (Bravo and Urquizo, 2016).

The student must feel that learning is a beautiful thing. He must feel challenged not so much by the teacher as by his own mind. It is necessary that the teacher can master the use of paradoxes as teaching resources in the current situation of our education. Due to this unfortunate situation, the student assumes that going to school hardly helps him to achieve his most practical goals in order to be able to join the work reality. Paradoxes can serve as support to improve the educational reality. The time has come for that old way of teaching that keeps students away from discussion, controversy, debate and the desire to know more every day to disappear.

## Conclusions

In this article paradoxes have been considered as didactic resources. Thus, the concepts of fallacy and reduction to absurdity were clarified, since paradoxes have been seen as very subtle fallacies by some scholars, and, in addition, there are those who use paradoxes to make deductions as occurs in the reduction to absurdity.

Then a list of paradoxes is analyzed to use them in the classroom. So, it is about some paradoxes such as the Achilles and the Turtle paradox, the Galileo paradox, the Hilbert hotel paradox, the Tristan Shandy paradox, the Protagoras paradox, the Monty Hall paradox, the God and the stone paradox, the Epicurus paradox, the time travel paradox, the egg and hen paradox, and some geometric paradoxes related to fractals.

This research has been completed trying to make explicit the emotional and affective aspect that a student experiences when dealing with this kind of problems, i.e., it tries to explain what a student feels when his teacher presents him a paradox.

There are findings as well as limitations in this work. This research has some difficulties. First, teachers would have to constantly develop academic works to find paradoxes and thus spread them in their different classes. Secondly, the paradoxes that have been selected in this paper have been somewhat known in other academic fields and, in that sense, do not represent any novelty. Finally, thirdly, the fact that there are so many paradoxes could cultivate in students a skeptical perspective about reality and knowledge in such a way that they choose to remain silent rather than continue investigating.

Finally, we will point out the achievements of this paper. This work has sought to reveal the educational and didactic aspect of the paradoxes. It is recommended that the problem generated by the finding and expo-



sure of a paradox be exploited didactically. The truth is that paradoxes can be allied in the teaching-learning process and their use can benefit the educational activity. The teaching that paradoxes leave us is very valuable, as it reveals that what we call “knowledge” is something that can always be constantly expanded. Paradoxes have propedeutical value and, as attention-grabbing problems, teach that there are limits to our understanding of some phenomenon.

The way to learn through paradoxes involves trying to solve the mental challenges posed. With paradoxes, students of any career can think properly about the fundamental concepts of their own specialty. Thus, the education provided must be based on strategies so that the basic concepts of the student can “artificially” enter into crisis. With paradoxes, the pupil learns that even the safest thing in the world falls under the powerful weight of critical thinking. The solution (or dissolution) proposals that inspire the paradoxes are questionable and the students could accept or reject them, precisely, the aim is to provoke discussion and exchange of views. When faced with paradoxes, one feels like talking, expressing opinions, or at least thinking about the issue carefully.

If a response is not forthcoming, the teacher can commit students to researching up-to-date theories on their own so that they can make a well-founded, scientifically-supported opinion, not just on the basis of speculation. A class cannot become the exposition of a list of knowledge that the teacher coolly transmits to his pupils. In fact, a good educational session should motivate students so that they, on their own, can continue researching so that they know more about the issue raised. Teachers must help them overcome despondency, fear, lack of freedom, what they will say, abuse and, finally, everything that endangers our humanity. And the path of research is a good path to exercise our freedom without fear and wanting to know more and more.

When a student understands the true and gloomy problematic nature of a paradox, he is astonished in a way much like that experienced by early philosophers at seeing the order and chaos exhibited by the world. Surprised students often express themselves emotionally and affectively in the face of these big problems. When they know the challenge posed by a paradox, there is some concern on their part. Accepting these challenges will make the student more prepared for decision-making in his daily life, as he will have exercised critical thinking in a convenient way. Likewise, a paradox teaches us what we do not know, makes us aware of our limits. In that sense, it makes us more humble. The student must feel that learning is something revitalizing. Life should not be forgotten dur-



ing the teaching-learning process. The pupil must feel challenged not so much by the teacher as by his own mind.

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# ARMANDO HART AND HIS METHODOLOGICAL KEYS FOR THE TEACHING OF MARXISM

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## Armando Hart y sus claves metodológicas para la enseñanza del marxismo

**YENISEY LÓPEZ-CRUZ\***

Universidad de Oriente, Santiago de Cuba, Cuba

yenisey@uo.edu.cu

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2985-0933>

**LÍDICE DUANY-DESTRADE\*\***

Universidad de Oriente, Santiago de Cuba, Cuba

lidiced@uo.edu.cu

<http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3952-9457>

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\* In 2006, he completed his Bachelor's degree in Marxist-Leninist Philosophy. He achieved the academic title of Master in Cuban and Caribbean Studies in 2019, with the thesis *The Cuban nineteenth-century ethical tradition in the work Ethics, culture and politics, of Dr. Armando Hart Dávalos*. She is currently an assistant professor at Orient University. Their research results have been published in the journal *Santiago*, in the *Caribbean Journal of Social Sciences*, *Griot*, *journal of Philosophy*.

\*\* He received his PhD in Philosophy in 2014 with the thesis *Antonio Maceo Grajales and the Cuban Ethical Thought of the 19th Century. Conceptual approach*. He is a senior researcher and secretary of the Doctoral Program in Historical and Philosophical Sciences. He is currently a senior lecturer at the University of the East. His research results have been published in the journals *Del Caribe*, *Santiago*, *Revista Caribeña de Ciencias Sociales e Islas*. As well as in books forming part of collective of authors and main author.

### Abstract

Armando Hart Dávalos was among the intellectuals who recognized the validity of Marxism when the world was talking about its “crisis”. He assessed about the mistakes made in the assumption of this theory. He also confirmed its usefulness to form in the subjects cultural tools that enable critical thinking and the ability to question the contemporary world. Its reflections are valid for interpreting and transforming the complex social scenarios that characterize reality. In spite of being distinguished as one of the most lucid Marxists, there are not many studies about his reflections. Thus, the present work aims to reveal the methodological keys that are identified in his thought. These keys are necessary for the interpretation and use of Marxism as an educational resource to train the man in charge of changing his context. The results obtained point out as essential keys: the recognition of the anti-dogmatic essence of Marxism, electivism as a theoretical-methodological tool for thinking and doing political praxis, the determining role of material production, including the active role of the subjective aspect, the importance of spiritual life as an essential theme of political life, the relationship between culture and politics, and the recognition of the relative nature of all knowledge associated with political and social processes.

### Keywords

Armando Hart, Marxism, teaching, philosophy, Cuba, keys.

### Resumen

Armando Hart Dávalos (1930-2017) fue uno de los intelectuales que reconoció la validez del marxismo cuando el mundo hablaba de su “crisis”. Realizó valoraciones sobre los errores cometidos en la asunción de esta teoría. Además confirmó su utilidad para formar individuos con un pensamiento crítico capaces de cuestionar el mundo contemporáneo. Sus reflexiones son válidas para interpretar y transformar los complejos escenarios sociales que caracterizan la realidad. A pesar de ser distinguido como uno de los marxistas más lúcidos, no abundan los estudios en torno a sus reflexiones. De ahí que este trabajo pretenda revelar las claves metodológicas que se identifican en su pensamiento. Las que resultan necesarias para la interpretación y la utilización del marxismo en calidad de recurso educativo para formar al hombre encargado de cambiar su contexto. Los resultados obtenidos señalan como claves esenciales: el reconocimiento de la esencia antidogmática del marxismo, el electivismo como instrumental teórico-metodológico para pensar y hacer praxis política, el papel determinante de la producción material, sin desdeñar el papel activo del aspecto subjetivo y la incidencia de la espiritualidad en la política, la relación entre cultura y política, y el reconocimiento del carácter relativo de todo conocimiento asociado a los procesos políticos y sociales.

### Palabras clave

Armando Hart, marxismo, enseñanza, filosofía, Cuba, claves.

## Introduction

To establish a healthy society, it is essential to form rational, critical and forward-looking historical subjects, who, in the face of current challenges, channel personal freedom to question and transform society in favor of a dignified life. Higher Education plays an important role in this task. Institutions where future professionals are trained should contribute to creating sustainable human development and a culture of peace (UNESCO, 2021; Sánchez, 2011).



Among the subjects that favor the mission of the Universities to educate is Philosophy. The teaching of this subject must draw on the entire theoretical foundation that defines the construct of nations, to all the systems and thinkers that have interpreted and transformed contexts, in correspondence with the local emergencies. But particularly those who, as Escalona Delfino defined, become “ideological permanencies”, as “[...] survivals or transhistoric permanencies of social utopias [...]”<sup>1</sup>.

In the case of the history of Cuban ideas, Armando Hart Dávalos bequeathed valuable thought to understand the present and project the future of Cuba and the world. However, his ideas have been little systematized. History has gathered more of his actions in the insurrectional struggle. And in the popular imagination he is remembered for being the Prime Minister of Education and Culture of the Revolutionary Government, and as a Martian promoter. As López and Duany (2022) say, even though many intellectuals have highlighted their theoretical contributions, there is a gap that encourages to undertake studies from the social sciences where their thinking is evaluated in its dimensions and in its organic unit.

In all the documentation generated by this Martian intellectual during his revolutionary practice, a Marxist thought is discovered. If this theory begins being underestimated with the downfall of European socialism, Hart (2005) stands as a defender of it. Reflections that, in the words of Duany (2020), are valuable in times when we talk about the crisis of Marxism and its value as a science and theory for action, in favor of the construction of a world of social justice.

Armando Hart’s understanding of the thought of Marx, Engels and Lenin enabled him to establish the practical and methodological usefulness of Marxism. From this point of view, he developed in his conception critical demonstrations and reflections about this theory as a method that enhances intellectual capacities and social practices necessary in the training of Cuban professionals. His thought constitutes a synthesis, updating and revitalization of it according to the formation process of the subject of social transformation, and they seal their contributions to Cuban revolutionary Marxist thought.

Therefore, these reflections are necessary keys for teaching philosophy in university classrooms. Becoming educational resources to motivate, energize and update the contents not only of that subject, but of the whole discipline of Marxism, one of those defined in the basic curriculum of Cuban university careers, according to the Basic Document for the Design of Study Plan E, prepared by the Ministry of Higher Education (2016).



The latter allows us to identify the lack of a systematized treatment of Armando Hart Dávalos' thought, through which the aspects that, as educational resources, are valuable to form historical subjects committed to their contexts from the discipline of Marxism are revealed.

The objective of this article is to reveal the methodological keys that are identified in the thought of Armando Hart Dávalos. Those that, as an educational resource, from the discipline of Marxism, are valuable to train the man in charge of changing their context. Among these, the assumption of electivism as a theoretical and methodological instrument and the dialectical and materialistic understanding of social processes are identified as essential.

The research is developed from a dialectical materialist approach, supported by the hermeneutic paradigm to interpret and analyze the texts<sup>2</sup>. During its development, the historical logical, the analytical-synthetic, the inductive-deductive methods were used as scientific methods, all useful to meet the goal of this scientific scrutiny.

The result of the investigation has been organized in two stages. It starts by evaluating the behavior of teaching philosophy in Cuban universities. Diagnosis that allows us to recognize how, despite being a neuralgic content in the training of professionals, has faced problems that affect the fulfillment of its educational and instructional objectives.

## Marxism in the training of Cuban professionals

Higher education is increasingly facing serious challenges. As Yanes (2016) points out, the complexity of today's world is emerging of individuals able to interpret contexts from general laws, which allow penetrating the essence of processes and phenomena that occur in nature, society and thought. Empowering universities, within the subjects to teach the contents of the subject of Philosophy, favors the formation of a complex, critical, rational and radical thought (pp. 121-141).

However, in contrast to this, Orozco (2015) points out, there is a tendency to decrease the presence of philosophy and the reduction of its content in curriculum design (p. 326). Today there seems to be an apparent reduction of the academic time of this subject to expand the contents of the profession. For Pupo (2004), today the incalculable practical value of this synthetic-integrative knowledge is unknown, which offers a useful theoretical corpus not only to understand the relationship of man with the world, but to transform it (p.1).



Philosophy offers the subject useful theoretical assumptions to transform himself and to reconstruct his context, determined by the material conditions of life and result of the evolution of human knowledge; it is not something timeless and abstract, but constitutes an expression of its time. Likewise, its historical evolution is characterized by being a process of continuity, rupture and overcoming. It shows the ascension of the process of human knowledge, its own essence and its multifaceted links with reality.

In this path of development of the universal philosophical work, Marxism constituted a special moment of overcoming and breaking. It represented a revolution in thought, characterized fundamentally by the conversion of philosophy into science. As Lenin (1980) pointed out, his genius was "... in having solved the problems previously posed by the advanced thinking of humanity. His doctrine appeared as an immediate direct continuation of the doctrines of the greatest representatives of philosophy, political economy and socialism" (p. 21).

Although it arises in Europe, it is assumed in Latin America by a revolutionary class that lends itself to radical social transformations. His inauguration has been distinguished from other regions of the world. Sánchez (2018) states that it has been in correspondence with the revolutionary political struggles around anti-imperialist, nationalist and patriotic positions, facing the economic, social and cultural political problems generated by neoliberal globalization (Sánchez, 2018).

From January 1, 1959, in Cuba, Marxism was assumed as the theoretical and conceptual support of the entire nascent revolution. In explaining the process of institutionalization and massification of Marxist thought, González (2021) points out that it was still complex, particularly because of the controversies raised between two opposing positions. One represented by those who supported the total Soviet influence, and another, the Cuban socialist, who advocated to resume the historical national socialist thought, but without discarding authentic Marxism. In González's (2021) teaching, Marxism is institutionalized as a "general theoretical foundation within the academic, teaching and research environment". The obligation to study Marxist political philosophy and economics was promoted in all university plans (pp. 2-3).

Today, Marxism becomes part of the basic curriculum of all university careers. The Ministry of Higher Education (Cuba, 2016) states that its mission is to provide students with the philosophical, theoretical, methodological and political-ideological assumptions that underpin the scientific conception of the world, for the practical-revolutionary inter-



pretation of the complex problems of the contemporary world (pp. 17-18). The first subject of the cycle is Philosophy, followed by Political Economy and it concludes with Political Theory.

The teaching of this theory has not been free of errors and complexities, as Ferrer *et al.* (2021) point out. From its inception to the present day, internal and external factors have affected its acceptance and the fulfillment of its social mission. Among them, having a system of outdated knowledge and not problematizing its content (pp. 55-62). The author Carmen Julia Pulido (2018) makes an analysis, in our opinion successful and objective, of the causes and how the crisis is expressed in the teaching of Marxism. She is optimistic when she talks about the future of this discipline, and asserts that the solution lies in the use of the cognitive weapons that this subject offers to evaluate contemporary problems, which constitute our own strengths and which are found throughout Cuban thought. This thought is today poorly exposed, as Guerra points out (2010), there can be “a way of thinking and living critical to the alienations originated by the systems of domination and exclusion” (p.14).

At the end of 2000, the Ministry of Higher Education issued Resolution No. 83 approving amendments to the subjects of the Marxist Discipline. These include time frames, order of precedence, general purpose and methodological indications. Among the lines of work, emphasis is placed on the articulation of Marxism with the most revolutionary ideas of the nation (p. 5).

In correspondence with the above, it is urgent to renew the contents and enrich them from the point of view of followers of Marxism who have enriched it in the light of current emergencies. Such is the case of Armando Hart Dávalos.

## Keys to Teaching Marxism

In the authors' opinion, two keys that are evident in Hart's thought can be assumed as educational resources in the teaching of Marxism: antidogmatism and electivism. Both are effective in valuing all the universal and national theoretical production, facilitating the assumption of the ideas that have resulted from the apprehension of individuals to transform socio-historical contexts.

The first of the keys on which the teacher who teaches the discipline of Marxism must rely is the recognition of its anti-dogmatic essence. Faced with the so-called “crisis of Marxism”, Hart (2005) points



out that this is a body of ideas that are not “eternal truths” or recipes, but that orient and encourage towards the social liberation of the human being (p. 25). He notes that it was conceived not only as a theoretical instrument to interpret different contexts and study social realities and economic trends. Above all, it is an ideological weapon for revolutionary transformation, in a process that also implies its own enrichment. This thinker takes into account the materialistic principle of concrete historical analysis.

As for Hart (2005), Marxism is, and assumes it, a method, an instrument that reveals itself as a scientific foundation and philosophy of praxis for human redemption, of antidogmatic essence, characterized by “being a spiral, which forces permanently its own nature to analyze new behaviors present in real life” (pp. 20-21). It recognizes that cultural heritage cannot be dismissed. The philosophical and social thought of Marx, Engels and Lenin must be studied with a socio-historical analysis, but tempered for the present days. This is possible only because Marxism Leninism is a science that provides tools to understand a reality not foreseen by its founders (pp. 20-21).

In correspondence with the above, antidogmatism characterized Hart’s thought and action. In this way, it leaves for higher education an essential premise, which endures in its lines of work:

Universities cannot live on the sidelines of their times, because they risk being shrouded, as they were before the Reform, in infectious inertia. To do this, they have to be nimbly inserted into the updates of the surrounding environment, with flexibility and without losing rigor, as agents driving development, of the new, they have to be able to ensure the urgent answers that the country demands (Carreras, 2013, p. 320).

Hart (2005) calls to re-read the original works of the classics of Marxism, to scientifically interpret the complex scenario that characterizes human society today (p. 21). Particularly all the contradictions and social phenomena that today affect the world due to unipolarity, imperial hegemonism, neoliberal globalization and the negative impact of science and technology. It is also a valuable theory to understand the revolutionary processes that have taken place in Latin America. In short, the successes and failures of the American left. Among them the nationalist phenomenon, the increase in labor productivity in the most developed capitalist countries and the neo-colonial exploitation in the third world, the scientific-technical revolution and its impact, the strong social antagonisms, globalization and its impact on culture, imperial hegemonism.





As well as: the subjective causes of the disappearance of European socialism, the tendencies and main lines of capitalism and its process of decline, the contradiction between imperialism and neocolonialism, revolutionary despotism, among others. Not to mention the courage to explain the Cuban experience and the mistakes that should not be made.

Following Hart (2005), Marxism is indispensable in vocational training. Not only as a scientific method for studying the reality, but also to revolutionarily transform society and achieve human liberation (pp. 62-71).

Hart (2005) recommends the scholars and professors of this discipline “to relate the ideas put forward by the classics with objective phenomena present in society and in history” (pp.19-29), and alerts them to the danger of teaching this science from the manuals. This criterion is in correspondence with the position taken in the face of the intellectual controversy arising from the teaching of Marxism. He said that for a better understanding of philosophers and their theories it was necessary to move away from interpretations and manuals. It was essential “to go to their original sources to interpret and study what has really happened, with a view to guiding the actions of today and tomorrow” (p. 20). Acting in the classrooms with this idea potentiates in the students critical reflections regarding the reproductive learning.

Another key is associated with Cuban electivism. Hart (2014) assumes electivism as a theoretical-methodological instrument to think and do his political praxis, adjusted to the eagerness to choose the best of all systems, without ascribing to any (p.159). In this sense, it uses electivism as a method to analyze the inheritance of the universal and Cuban philosophical tradition, in its unity, overcoming and breaking. And to develop a critical choice, as opposed to preconceived judgments.

The conception defines the electivism assumed by Armando Hart in his dialectical aspect, i.e., as Pérez notes (2012), the usefulness of making “a coherent critical selection that points to the trends and possibilities of its practical application, considering the mutable character of reality and the level of relativity that accompanies the truth at every moment of the historical development of sciences” (p. 97). Therefore, his proposal was aimed at providing objectivity and scientificity to the analyzes related to the defense of the interests of the oppressed and exploited, “without ideological isms” (Carreras<sup>3</sup>, 2017, p. 30). In other words, this method led him use the necessary arguments to oppose hegemonic theories. Hart therefore rejects “the uncritical assimilation of what comes from the out-



side and accepts its critical assimilation on the basis of the analysis of concrete realities” (Carreras, 2017, p. 107).

Dialectical electivism distinguished, in the words of this Martian intellectual, the assumption of Marxism in the case of Cuba. It thus strongly points out that:

[...] those who understood the ideas of Marx and Engels in the full sense, went to their essences, applied them to the concrete objective reality before them and did so intelligently and without concessions, were able to promote a revolutionary change in history (Hart, 2014, p. 74).

It is essential, then, when explaining in the classrooms how Marxism came and was applied in Cuba, to bear in mind that Cuban thought is characterized by being the result of a process of continuity and rupture. In other words, all our national theoretical construct has been transversed by ideas that seek to solve our local problems, particularly those related with economic and political dependence and the aspiration of a society based on social justice. One of the essences of Marxism is that it constitutes an ideological weapon in favor of the humble and in search of a humanistic social ideal. Therefore, no barrier can be established between national revolutionary thought and Marxist theory. The essence of Marxism, he says, is to be found among Cuban thinkers, which enabled them to achieve what had hitherto been a libertarian utopia, i.e., the construction of a socialist project that is not a copy of European socialism. Hence, Hart (2014) pointed out: “[...] the keys to avoid the mistakes of the so-called real socialism in the Marxist thought are in Cuba” (p.108).

For Hart (2006), Cuban thought is the one that has responded to the nation’s epochal urgencies. He has also been open to all the universal thought that would be useful to him in explaining and transforming his reality (p. 22). And where he considered it, eyes should be directed in order to reveal his particularities and his practical value in carrying out social transformations.

The Cuban educational reform, which must have been carried out with the advent of the triumphant revolution, assumes an educational ideal based on the tradition of struggle and the ideas of Cuban thinkers, in union with the most universal of Western thought. All this to develop skills that will guarantee the training of a professional in correspondence with the imperatives of our reality and contemporary social practice, and in line with the moral values that must distinguish the revolutionary professional.

Coinciding with Pulido (2018), we affirm that the teaching of Marxism suffered from the approach to Cuban thought and the followers



of this theory. It is only on the basis of the ideological significance of the disappearance of the socialist field that steps have been made, still insufficient, to incorporate the subject of Cuban thought into the content of the subject, leaving aside the Latin American thought and much of the universal, with the intention that these contents be addressed in the post-graduate level from what is assumed as continuous training.

## The Role of Subjectivity in the Teaching of Marxism in Cuba

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The distortion of Marxism by some of his followers motivated Hart to reflect on “economic determinism.” Interpretation that minimized the value that the classics gave to the role of subjectivity for social processes. In relation to this, ideas that are revealed as methodological keys for the teaching of this theory are discovered in the thought of this Martian.

Evaluating Hart’s response to the fundamental problem of philosophy is, in our opinion, essential to understand his revolutionary thought and praxis. Meanwhile, as Carreras Varona (2014) indicates, this “opened an unsuspected path to human knowledge to the exercise of the will of man” (p.167). The theoretical clarification of the problems of identity between being and thinking and its dialectical relationship is key in terms of ontological aspect. Hart’s position is materialistic. But it stops to clarify the “unbridgeable gulf” that some followers of Marxism had established between the objective (matter or being) and the subjective (spirit or conscience) (p.166).

For Hart (Carreras, 2014), man is made of flesh and spirit, and in essence constitutes a single identity. Therefore he considered that “the debate around the primary between matter or consciousness must be overcome by highlighting that separating or divorcing these two great components of life is wrong” (pp. 166-167). In this way, it reaffirms the damage done by the reductionist Marxists to the theory, by divorcing the material from the spiritual life. He then calls for a rereading of Marx so as not to be reductionist and to ignore that classical materialism, when valuing subjective factors in historical processes, embodied an ethical notion.

Based on this, Hart (2017) assumes as essential the way in which the classics explained the determining role of material production, without disregarding the active role of the subjective aspect (p.18). He then analyzes one of the fundamental theses of Marxism: the relationship established between economic base and superstructure. For Hart (2005),

this thesis “is the key to open the way for scientific knowledge of the history of society” (p. 4). It warns that, “the foundation of social balance and its coherence lies in it” (p. 6).

However, Armando Hart recognizes that the classics did not stop at delving into the role of the superstructure and its independence from the economic base, as has been pointed out by many as economic determinism. This is a criterion adopted by dogmatic Marxists who did not recognize the dialectical relationship between these elements and ignored that their materialistic essence is “precisely in the cause and effect relationship and its infinite multiplicity of interrelations” (Hart, 2005, p. 6).

Based on this, it is important to establish that Hart does not deny the economic factor as determining the forms of the superstructure, but it considers it important not to underestimate the role of the superstructure or to treat its complexities in an anti-cultural way. It then delves into how the forms of the superstructure affect material life, and stops to explain the dialectical relationship of these elements as an expression of cause and effect, as well as their link with social relations. It calls to study the complexity of this relationship between economic base and superstructure in order to understand the social changes that arise in society in terms of human dignity, and the negative results in the construction of socialism.

This led Hart (2005) to consider the neuralgic of rigorously addressing the role of superstructure. Although material and economic living conditions determine social movements, he asserts. [...] cultural paradigms are required to realize them [...] (p. 13). Therefore, it considers the subjective priority to ensure a social revolution founded on justice, where it is inevitable to safeguard social and human values. Only by respecting this relationship, he asserts, is the victory of socialism assured over the voracious capitalism that destroys humanity (p.13).

By recognizing the political, legal, ideological, moral and cultural superstructure as the way through which the economy operates, Hart (2005) makes clear the danger of underestimating its role, values or dealing with its complexities in an anti-cultural way (p. 40).

## Attending to spiritual production, a contemporary imperative

Linked to what was analyzed before, Hart’s assessments of spiritual life stand out. This topic has attracted the attention of the Martinean in many of his writings, and it is adjusted to the contemporary demands of explai-



ning, understanding and constructing socialism, and they are essentially aimed at valuing, in the light of Leninist theory of Social Revolution, the social revolutions in the 20th century.

According to Hart (2014), it is not a limitation that Marx and Engels were not explicit in assessing the role of spiritual production in the revolutionary process. That was not their social urgency. They were urged to reveal the decisive role of capitalist production in the exploitation of the working class. The essence of the classics was to “separate the chasm created between spiritual and material production” (p. 74), in which is one of their contributions, in recognizing that man needed to have his primary needs of life satisfied, and then to create spiritual production. These assessments are needed in the classroom to support the thesis that Marxism is not a dogma and its validity.

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Hart (2014) uses the philosophical precept of objective conditioning of ideas to explain the fact that the classics of Marxism had not stopped in developing the value of spiritual production in social processes. Not to criticize them, they responded to a social urgency of their historical epoch. The current situation demands, the intellectual affirms, to pay attention to spiritual phenomena, as a vital issue for maintaining revolutionary processes in the universal sense, and the Cuban in particular. It is a task for which all the peoples of America and the world are waiting (p. 85).

In this sense, Hart focuses his attention on such important issues as the objective foundation of the spiritual. The need to use the cultural heritage of peoples in revolutions, the importance of libertarian utopias, and the ideological function of art.

In current social processes, Hart states (Hart and Carreras, 2014), the value of humanity's cultural heritage should not be dismissed. Distorting the philosophical legacy, particularly Marxism, and renouncing the teachings of the first Lenin-led socialist revolution, led to depriving culture of “the rich and unlimited human capacity to create, love, and dream.” As well as the inability to produce the changes needed for the construction of “real socialism” (p. 74). These ideas, in the authors' opinion, reinforce the present value of Marxism and the Socialist Revolution. Theory and social project that show a better world, associated with justice, human dignity, against what prevails and is considered as a standard of quality of life: ideology and the capitalist economic model.

In the case of Cuba, this intellectual is of the view that the construction of socialism starts from a universal heritage, but also from a rich national heritage where the yearnings for justice and the high sense of human sensitivity converge. Therefore, it does not conceive of antago-

nism between national spiritual production and Marxist theory. This reinforces what has already been addressed about the need to update the contents of the discipline of Marxism. Hart was aware that even though the institutionalization of national education had a strong Marxist basis, it was not appropriate to discard the rest of the theoretical work, particularly the national one. Fortunately, the failure to pay attention to national ideas has been overtaken, and the treatment of Cuban thought is enhanced in the curricula.

Hart (2005) reaffirms the value of Marxist theory about social transformations in favor of freedom and the conquest of happiness (p. 26). It agrees with the classics that social revolutions are not random events, but the result of objective and subjective conditions. Already noted by Marx and Engels as the determinant of “social being,” Hart pays attention to “social consciousness.” Particularly the scientific foundation of the human capacity to produce its spiritual life. This means that social utopias are not the product of social alienation and constitute the impulse from which men orient their transformative human practice.

In the same order around spiritual production, the reflections of Hart (2005) reveal the recognition of the ethical foundation of Marxist theory as another key to consider. Although the parents of Marxism did not make extensive ethical reflections, the ethical was reflected in society designed to dignify the human being. And how, by discovering scientific truths, they place the subject at the center of their attention, capable of transforming their reality (pp. 48-49).

This idea is also defended and developed by Vázquez Sánchez (2006), a prominent ethical scholar, when he pointed out:

Although in Marx we do not find an ethics in the strict sense, as a body of truths systematically articulated, it cannot be ignored that, throughout his work, there are explicit -not to mention the most abundant implicit- reflections, affirmations and ideas about the ideological nature of morality and its social historical character, its link with the relations of production and class interests, as well as its function in society, and particularly in socialist society (p. 298).

Hart (2005) in the Marxist critique of capitalism and in the defense of the social utopia of a society of justice and equality discovers the ethical foundation of this theory. Hence he stated:

We can cement ethics from the study of surplus value, and place the honor of work as the essential stone of a civic morality; another element to highlight is the human willingness to associate with the goal of forging a



society enriched materially and spiritually. They constitute fundamental values of ethics: to exalt the honor of work and the social vocation of the human being (Hart, 2005, pp. 48-49).

The above idea is reiterated in the work of the Cuban thinker. It exposes the critique made by the classics of Marxism to the capitalist system. They uncover the immoral foundation of private property and surplus value, and they underpin the moral value of social property and with it the values of socialism: the love of work and collectivism. Hart (2017) reinforces, the Marxist interpretation that “the struggle for the poor” is “the centerpiece of universal ethics”, only in this way, he states, can “the true dimension and scope of the great errors that took place under the banner of socialism in the twentieth century be understood” (p. 43).

This view favors that, in university classrooms, the teacher promotes exchanges in which the current socio-political scenario is debated. Empowering students to take an objective critical position on the Cuban reality and the value of the socialist social project. Pertinent in times when the value of socialism is minimized and capitalism is exalted. Contributing to the formation of students in correspondence with the imperatives of our reality and in accordance with the moral values that must distinguish the revolutionary professional.

It should be noted that ethics is one of the pillars of Hart's thought. His analyzes of the role of ethnicity in the Cuban historical process and in national thought lead to understand why, in his opinion, the foundation of human existence is in morality. But only if we assume the most humanistic ethical postulates that lead to a saying and doing in function of the universal redemption of man. That is, for Hart (2005), “the meaning of human life is in his passion for scientific truth and justice among men” (p. 87).

In the case of the Cuban experience, Hart (2014) identifies Fidel Castro as the most complete Marxist. It considers that it synthesizes the most revolutionary and humanist ethical principles of the twentieth century. It then calls for a study of the thought and actions of the historical leader of the Cuban Revolution. It carries a thought synthesis of the universal ethnicity of America and Cuba. Who in his political praxis recognized the decisive role of moral factors in achieving and defending social achievements (p. 58).

Regarding the reflections on ethics, it is necessary to highlight the timeliness of them in the training of Cuban professionals, considering that Cuban university education has a fundamentally humanistic character, as it is aimed not only to form professional competences, but to form



values that define a better individual, committed to the human species. In correspondence with the primary objective that Hart declares for the Cuban educational system:

Educate for a democratic society, for a free society, prepare each individual to think for himself. If our first duty is to guarantee freedom, let us protect it from ignorance, prejudices and fears, which tend to stop or divert man's march towards the truly free world (Carreras, 2017, p. 593).

Based on the above, Hart manifests another key to take into account in the teaching of Marxism, in this case the relationship established between culture and politics, which he discovers as one of the peculiarities of our theoretical construct, and from which his conception of "cult politics" is founded. The legacy that, as he pointed out, is inherited from the founding fathers of the nation to Fidel Castro: "Felix Varela taught us to think; José de la Luz y Caballero taught us to know; José Martí taught us to act, and Fidel Castro taught us to overcome" (Hart, 2014, p. 58).

Viscerally Martian, Hart (2018) understands politics as "sensitivity to the problems of others, politics as art or the ability to reach others, politics as identification with the aspirations and objectives of the people [...]" (p. 91). Assuming this led him to develop a conception and a political praxis that is in correspondence with what Max Weber (2000) established as an intellectual and "vocation politician" (pp. 21-23).

Therefore, Hart (Carreras 2018) introduces the theme of culture to signify the role of subjectivity in politics. He insists on warning that "[...] culture is not advice to the life of man, it is committed to the destiny of humanity and situated in the nervous system of civilizations" (p. 36). Based on the broad possibilities of achieving human dignity through the link between culture and politics, he warns that, in the face of new contexts, "the need for the unity of our peoples is so profound that it is manifested not by political means, but by cultural means" (p. 174).

Armando Hart, in his position as Minister of Education of the revolutionary Government, stated in the message to the Cuban people: "[...] in a political system in which the moral dignity of the human person represents its highest end, political action, singularly in the economic order, and educational action, are complemented as correlative factors of an inclusive process, aimed at raising the living standards of the people" (Carreras, 2013, p. 313).

His reflections demonstrate that the analysis of culture requires not to do abstraction of its ideo-political dimension, because that would obviate the purpose of its transformative function. In this sense, Hart





(Carreras, 2018) stated: “[...] everyone who assumes from politics the defense of sovereignty and social transformations in our peoples and countries in favor of justice for all has to be a faithful defender of the cultural purposes at longer range” (p. 21). He therefore defended socialist ideology, since “[...] it is about expanding freedom, expanding democracy and deepening the field of art” (p. 81).

These reflections are opposed to the false conception of political neutrality of art. According to Hart (Carreras, 2018) there is a “subtle, dialectical and consequently contradictory nexus between art and politics” (p. 90). What emerges during all of humanity’s historical development. Where, as the intellectual says, the political and ideological role of art is noticed, as a “form of expression that facilitates the transmission of the ideological message” (p. 97).

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All of the above revolves around the importance that Hart gives to subjectivity in the construction of socialism, linked to issues related to the ideal of culture of making politics. Particularly when assessing the Cuba case, where he affirms that the cultural heritage of the nation that accompanies our political process must be taught in depth. The conjugation of this legacy with the tradition of Marxist thought will make it possible to form a critical aptitude on strong cultural and scientific bases that allow the defense of our national identity.

Everything that Hart addresses about the political-cultural relationship is essential content of Political Theory. The thought of this intellectual is a must reference in this subject. It offers a system of ideas about politics, from a Marxist-Leninist perspective that revitalize and update this content. His ideas support the objective and classist character of politics, its relationship with class struggle, political participation, political socialization, political culture, democracy, among other aspects. It is all the more useful given that it does so by judging national reality and leftist movements in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. His analysis is not contemplative, his criticism is not counterrevolutionary at all. It is aimed at revealing those deficiencies that break the socialist ideal.

To interpret social processes, Hart (2014) urges us to understand the dialectic of knowledge. Only a dialectical reflection of history makes it possible to remove from it the ways to better build the future. It calls for promoting a critical culture about the development of science, which is opposed to the adoption of rigid models or schemes in social life. This leads to another key to be considered in the teaching of Marxism: the recognition of the relative character of all knowledge, implicit in this is



the revolutionary practical value of the materialism of Marx and Engels. He puts it this way:

Neither deny the possibilities of new knowledge nor elevate the truths discovered to the category of absolute and immutable values. Today's knowledge helps to shape tomorrow's future, as yesterday's made possible our present's. It is in the chain and the process itself of knowing where the true has been, it is in the cause-effect relationship and its possibilities of entanglement that lies the essence of Marx's gnoseology (p.79).

Throughout Hart's work, he alludes to the obligatory study of social processes that have occurred throughout the development of humanity. But not only of the most universal, but of the stages of struggles carried out by each of the peoples. Well, the truth of the present is the result of all national and local history. To explain the present and project the future, one must know the past.

Therefore, we return to the point in which Hart refers to the importance of the assumption of Marxism-Leninism from the conjugation of universal culture, with politics and the ethical sense of life. Achieving a better world requires not ignoring the ethical foundations of the humanist and universal liberation movement that was created under Marxism. This was and has always been the position taken by Cuban thought with respect to Marxist theory. We have been able to guide ourselves by their methods of historical analysis to conquer our reality. Armando Hart (2014) stresses it as follows:

We Cubans assume the scientific, economic and social discoveries of Carlos Marx from the spiritual and ethical culture of our America. We were guided by Marx's thought, because his contributions and his universal humanist sense—the starting point of socialist ethics—served us to interpret human history, gave us clarity in the study of the economic and social evolution of Cuba and Latin America, gave us the methods of historical analysis to confirm the popular root of our patriotism [...] (p. 88).

In present-day Cuba, as Díaz Canel (2022), President of the Republic, is aware that Marxism was merged with the solid political tradition inherited from libertarian struggles (p. 4). This has allowed the consolidation of a socialist conception with solid scientific foundations, the same that, through revolutionary practice, managed to create a humanist society and social justice. This confirms the methodological value of taking the lessons of history. In order to achieve a better future, it is necessary to apply objectively and concretely every knowledge acquired from history, always con-



sidering their economic conditioning. Doing so gives this process a variety of possible practical outcomes from which the real story is formed.

All of this indicates that our nation's educational horizons are based on critical, authentic and deeply humanistic knowledge. Those that constitute tools in the teaching process of Marxism. It is worth promoting teaching from antidogmatic positions, recognizing the active role of the subjective in social transformations, the objective character of utopias and social movements to promote practical and lasting changes. As well as the value of human consciousness, a fundamental agent of social practice, and of ethics in the revolutionary struggle, led by the working class to overcome social inequalities.

All of them provide the educational process with the possibility of translating the emerging problems facing humanity, since teaching must become a process of training professionals with a high sense of universal, prepared to face new contexts and challenges.

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## Conclusions

What has been assessed so far allows us to affirm that the ways and methods used to fulfill the social mission of the discipline of Marxism in Cuban higher education are still insufficient. Hence, this work is a call to the scientific efforts of the national thought, where are the historical and ideological foundations of the Cuban social project. The results would contribute to form transforming subjects of a reality that claims to work in function of the survival of the human species.

The Marxist ideas of Armando Hart Dávalos constitute valuable tools to fulfill the social mission of the discipline of Marxism to enhance in future professionals a critical thought and a social praxis committed to contemporary social urgencies.

Scientific result are identified as methodological keys that as an educational resource contribute to motivate, dynamize and update the discipline of Marxism in the following: the recognition of the antidogmatic essence of Marxism, Cuban electivism as theoretical-methodological instrumental, the explanation to the fundamental problem of Philosophy, the argumentation of the determining role of material production, the ethical foundation of Marxism, the recognition of the dialectical relationship between material and spiritual life, the incidence of spirituality in political life, the relationship between culture and politics, and the relativity of knowledge associated with the understanding of political and social processes.

## Notes

- 1 The quote is taken from an unpublished material kept by the authors with the title “Antonio Maceo: a brief look at the philosophical premises of his thought and other determinations”. They prepare a book on the studies of José Antonio Escalona Delfino, a university professor who carried out scientific inquiries into Maceista thought, using historical and philosophical assumptions. A summary of the article is published in the journal *Santiago*, No. 120, 2009, pp. 26-42.
- 2 See Bueno (2022, pp. 95-96) who in the introduction of his article explains what is understood as hermeneutics and its validity for studies such as the one proposed.
- 3 Eloísa Carreras Varona is the executor of Armando Hart's documents. She directs the project *Crónicas*, which publishes, under her responsibility, the documents of who was her husband in life.

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# STUDENT PERCEPTION ABOUT DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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## Percepción estudiantil sobre la discriminación y el racismo en la educación superior

**PATRICIA CECILIA BRAVO-MANCERO\***

Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo, Riobamba, Ecuador  
patybravom@hotmail.com  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4671-8611>

**TANIA MARÍA GUFFANTE-NARANJO\*\***

Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo, Riobamba, Ecuador  
tguffante@unach.edu.ec  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4903-8694>

**MARTHA YOLANDA FALCONÍ-URIARTE\*\*\***

Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo, Riobamba, Ecuador  
yfalconi@unach.edu.ec  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9027-6902>

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\* PhD in Education. Professor at the Faculty of Education. Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo.

\*\* PhD in Educational management. Professor at the Engineering Faculty. Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo.

\*\*\* Master in Local Development. Post-graduate studies analyst. Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo.

### Abstract

This article examines the perceptions of discrimination and racism among college students. The guiding question is: What perceptions do students have about discrimination and racism in the university context? Racism is regarded as an ideology that engenders inequality. The ideology is based on biological particularities to establish differentiation. Consequently, discrimination refers to situations of exclusion, segregation, and restriction based on stereotypes that limit the rights of a group of individuals. The study combines quantitative analysis with descriptive analysis and cross-sectional design. 263 students from four Faculties of the National University of Chimborazo participated. In order to collect the necessary information, a survey titled "Perception Questionnaire on Racism and Discrimination in Higher Education" was drafted. The results indicate that 29.9% of students have experienced racism and discrimination, 89.7% have never engaged in such behavior, and 57.7% have witnessed its various manifestations in social interactions. The primary causes of discrimination include race, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and/or disability. Exclusion manifests itself in explicit and covert ways, with psychological, verbal, and physical violence being the most egregious forms of its exercise. Finally, there is a denial and normalization of the phenomenon that is rooted in institutional dynamics.

### Keywords

Racism, discrimination, stereotypes, prejudices, exclusion, inequality.

### Resumen

Este artículo examina la percepción estudiantil sobre discriminación y racismo en la educación superior. La pregunta que orienta el estudio es: ¿Qué percepciones tienen los estudiantes sobre la discriminación y el racismo en el contexto universitario? El racismo es considerado una ideología que naturaliza la desigualdad y que toma como base las particularidades biológicas para establecer situaciones de diferenciación social. Así, la discriminación se refiere a circunstancias de exclusión, segregación, restricción debido a estereotipos que limitan los derechos de las personas. El estudio fue de carácter cuantitativo, descriptivo y transversal. Participaron 263 estudiantes provenientes de cuatro facultades de la Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo. Los datos de la investigación fueron recogidos mediante el Cuestionario de Percepción sobre racismo y discriminación en la Educación Superior. Se evidencia que el 29,9% de estudiantes manifiesta haber experimentado racismo y discriminación; el 89,7% afirma que nunca lo han ejercido y el 57,7% aduce que ha observado diversas manifestaciones en las interacciones. Los principales focos de la discriminación son: etnia, género, identidad sexual, situación socioeconómica y/o discapacidad. Las manifestaciones de la exclusión son explícitas e implícitas y las formas más evidentes de ejercerlos son a través de violencia psicológica, verbal y física. Finalmente, existe una negación y naturalización del fenómeno que se encuentra enraizado en la dinámica institucional.

### Palabras clave

Racismo, discriminación, estereotipos, prejuicios, exclusión, desigualdad.

## Introduction

Racism and discrimination are complex phenomena that have been addressed through various studies which show that, despite their nature, they are present in social dynamics as they have the capacity to reinvent and express themselves in multiple ways. Higher Education institutions are not different because manifestations of segregation, exclusion and se-





paration in different university spaces are lived and observed. Although there are several proposals to minimize their impact on coexistence, concrete actions that have been implemented in the university environment are sporadic, mainly because the existence of the problem is denied.

For understanding the problem at the university, the article entitled: “Student Perception of Discrimination and Racism in Higher Education”, whose objective is to describe the perception of students about racism and discrimination in the institution of higher education is presented. Hence, the idea advocated in the study is that racism and discrimination have been naturalized in the university environment and show different manifestations, actors and actions.

Due to the impact and validity of the problem on the well-being and coexistence of the actors, it is necessary to investigate the problem so that people be aware of the existence and deeply reflect about its manifestations and forms of expression, in order to work on guidelines and intervention mechanisms that ensure a climate of respect and healthy coexistence for all members of the university.

Regarding the methodology, it corresponds to a quantitative, descriptive, explanatory and transversal research. The sample was composed of 263 students from four academic units: Political and Administrative Sciences, Education Sciences, Health Sciences and Engineering, during the academic period 2021-1S.

The information was collected through the Perception of Racism and Discrimination Questionnaire, which was composed of 19 items distributed as follows: seven items that study lived racism and discrimination; six discrimination or racism exercised; five discrimination and racism observed in the center and one item that questioned the actions carried out by the University to address this problem. The instrument presented five response options. Prior to its implementation, the study participants accepted the letter of informed consent.

The results indicate that some students have experienced situations of racism and discrimination, a minority group accepts that it has exercised it and others accept that they have observed certain actions of exclusion. There are two main manifestations of their presence in coexistence: explicit and implicit. At the same time, explicit violence has two forms of expression: verbal and physical violence, while implicit violence is manifested through psychological violence. The most significant of the findings is the naturalization, denial and invisibility of the problem and, therefore, the scarce intervention for its eradication.



The paper presents the following structure: state of the art in which the problem and its implications are described; theoretical framework in which the main conceptualizations are presented; methodology that refers to the steps and procedures; results obtained in the field work; and, finally, discussion and conclusions about the findings.

## State-of-the-art

Racism and discrimination are concrete actions that are manifested in the daily life of relations in Ecuadorian society and that assume different forms of expression to reveal segregation and exclusion towards others, those considered “different” or “minorities”. Following Wieviorka (2009), racism is the personalization of discrimination based on innate characteristics, which, according to this way of understanding differences, establish intellectual, physical and moral particularities. From these peculiarities, practices of denial, inferiorization and exclusion are justified. Saltzman (1992) argues that in order to understand what happens in higher education, it is necessary to recognize the validity of patriarchy and the capitalist system, which configure certain mechanisms of hegemony and power in institutions, in which separation and exclusion are concretized based on characteristics of the subjects, such as sex, gender identity, social class, disability and ethnic condition.

Regarding ethnicity, Walsh (2007) points out that the history of the so-called conquest of America is an example of domination, classification and stigmatization, since through what Anibal Quijano (2000) called “coloniality of power”, race was used as the reason to classify the population in castes, spaces, functions, and on the basis of which work was divided and work roles were assigned. These actions created the prospect of superiority of one race over another and, according to Zapata Olivella (1998), led to the exploitation of Indians and blacks in the Americas. Furthermore, it should be mentioned that, despite not being institutionalized, racism is far from disappearing, since new ways of expressing it have been introduced and therefore it remains in force in the idiosyncrasy.

Higher education institutions reproduce different mechanisms of discrimination within their academic spaces that are crossed by negative mental constructions regarding individual differences. These perceptions result in acts of violence that affect institutional coexistence. In this sense, Troyano (2010) points out that the University must offer mechanisms to eradicate and break down the mental barriers that separate, and generate



spaces for dialogue and the construction of new forms of relationship, sustained in the respect and valuation of others.

## Conceptions on racism and discrimination

For Knauth (2000), racism is a word that justifies differences in consideration of physical characteristics. In this respect, Taguieff (2001) affirms that racism is articulated to the theory of inequality of human races, whose main postulate is based on biological determinism, which translates into discriminatory practices linked to preconceived ideas and attitudes of segregation. For his part, Wieviorka (2009) states that racism establishes categories of people based on phenotypic traits, the same that become in intellectual and moral characteristics. This is a conception that is based on the biological characteristics of the subjects.

Hence, racism is an ideology that naturalizes inequality based on the biological characteristics of the subjects, to justify situations of social differentiation. Over time it has been used to defend supremacy over the other, which places him in a state of disadvantage. Denial of diversity is meant to set in motion, homogeneous models of citizenship, uniform standards of being and acting. Thus, racism becomes one of the main causes of inequality, which seeks to make invisible and/or deny the other, as a result of a classification system in which the biological foundation defines it, and at the same time generates conditions of political, economic, cultural, environmental, legal order that preserve inequality, marginalization and exclusion.

Likewise, Mato (2021) states that racism classifies human beings into upper and lower castes. The author argues that this trend founded European colonialism, and likewise, has served as a basis for the structuring of racist policies and practices that persist in social coexistence. Therefore, higher education institutions are key systems for breaking the reproduction of racism and violence in society (Mato, 2021).

On the other hand, the Inter-American Convention against All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance (OAS, 2019), in article 1, states that discrimination represents any act of exclusion that has the purpose of restricting the right to equality and the exercise of fundamental human rights of an individual or group. Hence, discrimination is seen as an act that affects the human rights of those affected by unequal treatment and limits personal and social development.

Every act of separation involves a set of prejudices and stereotypes, which show the exclusion of certain people or groups, arguing that differences



are the cause of rejection. In this sense, Puertas (2004) argues that the stereotype is translated into a set of ideas that serve to value positively or negatively the particularities of a group or person, while prejudice, in a concrete action on individuals or groups, based on stereotypes that have been built on direct or indirect experiences.

For Jiménez *et al.* (2019), differences are not the cause of inequalities, rather they are the product of asymmetrical social and cultural relations and have been institutionalized by groups that hold power and maintain relations of racism and discrimination towards people with socially valued characteristics in a negative way.

In Ecuador, as in other contexts, the characteristics that determine segregation are combined in the aspects mentioned before. As in other countries of the region, the Ecuadorian population is diverse in terms of its ethnic structure, due to the process of Spanish colonization and subsequent mixes. However, the footprint of the Spanish conquest remains in force (SENESCYT, 2015, p. 21). These facts alone explain the social origin of inequality and the mechanisms of domination and segregation.

It should be noted that the Political Constitution of Ecuador (2008, p. 11), in article 11, paragraph 2, of its normative text, states that all citizens have the same rights, duties and opportunities and are therefore equal. The provision states that there should be no personal distinction for any differentiation that impairs the fulfillment of citizens' rights. However, measures and actions to enforce compliance remain weak because manifestations of discrimination exceed the possibilities for intervention. Thus, it is necessary to know the complexity of the factors that cause it, as well as the weak interventions at the governmental and institutional level.

In accordance with the above and in response to the provisions of national legislation, the Higher Education Council CES (2013) proposed a social and educational project based on interculturality and mainstreaming of the principles of equality and equity. This proposal incorporated in the different moments of curricular concretion the aforementioned constructs, with which it was intended, according to Larrea (2014), the execution of a curricular model based on the inter and transdisciplinary organization of knowledge and learning, that offers solution to problematic situations of reality and that at the same time allows a contextualized and flexible organization of the theoretical-methodological and procedural contents addressed in the different professional fields. This curricular model left behind, for a period of time, the disciplinary treatment of the contents, addressing them through the integrative projects of knowledge in a holistic way and with a better understanding of reality.



## About Stereotypes and Prejudices

For Barrera *et al.* (2021) a close relationship between stereotype, prejudice and discrimination is evidenced because its production is basically based on diversity as the basis of differentiation and, therefore, separation. So, what is different is the subject of ideas, imaginaries, subjective constructions of reality, so a stereotype always seeks a social reference group to make comparisons. Although they share some common elements, the three terms are expressed differently.

Huici (1999) argues that stereotypes involve cognitive and rationalized elements that are expressed in beliefs about the traits that define the group. They are standards that simplify reality to establish parameters of action or similar ways of thinking. On this basis, Del Olmo (2005) argues that stereotypes emphasize how subjects relate. Stereotypes therefore consist of simple ideas that divide and pigeonhole individuals or groups. According to stereotypes, people belonging to certain groups act in accordance with what is expected of them, given their situation and origin.

In this study, stereotypes are considered as ideas shared by members of a group and that justify ways of acting against people or groups belonging to certain categories such as sex, ethnicity, gender identity or origin. Thus, they include preset mental representations that can be positive or negative. In addition, they are determined by the social context and justify actions of violence, exclusion or indifference. They are linked to prejudices as they are the basis for their manifestation.

As for prejudices, Huici (1999) asserts that they are more linked to practical manifestations of pre-established ideas about the group, i.e., they are the result of a negative perception. For Del Olmo (2005), the two categories analyzed are related because the two are culturally learned and can be both negative and neutral or sometimes even positive. The author argues that once they are acquired, it is difficult to change them.

Gordon Allport (1979, p.7) was also concerned with studying the subject of prejudice. What was important in his contribution was not the concept of prejudices but the explanation that prejudices are not part of the personality, as was considered until now, but were ideas sustained about something or someone and therefore learned in the interaction with others.

For Del Olmo (2005), we consider mental images that facilitate the structuring of predictive categories of the behaviors of individuals based on pre-established ideas about them.

In this way, prejudices represent concrete acts of violence in the presence of minority groups, considering them a threat to preserve the



rules of social coexistence established and in force in society. Their development requires, first, erroneous and generalized beliefs, i.e., stereotypes and, second, unfavorable attitudes. It should be noted that prejudices have different forms of expression, including visible and invisible ones. The former result in direct, hostile and close attitudes, while the latter admit expression forms of indifference and distancing.

## Forms of racism and discrimination in higher education institutions

According to Collins (2012), structural or systemic racism is rooted in social and institutional dynamics. In this sense, ethnicity is not the only indicator of their existence. On the contrary, there are other elements that structure it today such as the sociocultural context, the increase in economic inequalities, globalization, the migratory phenomenon, among others. Hence, more subtle forms of expression are evident in the institutions, but equally dangerous, since this phenomenon has been transformed according to contexts and situations and has even been naturalized, so that it is part of the relations between actors. According to Balibar and Wallerstein (1991), there are multiple ways to express racism, as many as the myriad interactions in which it occurs.

As in all other organizations and institutions, racism and discrimination are problems present in the higher education institutions or in universities and polytechnic schools. In many of them, they have been naturalized and are strengthened to the extent that these institutions do not at least have statistical data to recognize the diversity existing within the institutions. This situation undoubtedly affects the determination of policies and actions aimed at ensuring the fulfillment of universal rights such as access to education. Mato (2020), confirms the above when saying:

In Latin America, educational policies, systems and institutions do not guarantee all population groups equal access to education, let alone higher education. While the existing rules do not explicitly exclude any of them, several population groups are excluded in practice, due to various types of factors. Among others, the location of educational centers,... ends up excluding... indigenous peoples and people of African descent from their educational rights, and... from access to higher education...; the curricula of professional careers do not usually contain contents or educational paths oriented by the objective of promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship between the ethnic groups of the respective countries... it is evident... because these principles are not part of



them,... moreover, these curricula do not include knowledge, ways of producing knowledge, languages and other elements specific to the respective cultures (pp. 238-239).

This is observed in the limitations that young people have to access university careers, because the system far from reducing the gaps, has deepened the levels of exclusion, with emphasis on applicants from rural and marginal urban sectors, who do not even apply for quotas to enter universities.

Likewise, Larrea (2014) points out that the study programs at the university level lack training fields that articulate knowledge, research or methods, with ancestral knowledge, denying the possibility that this cultural richness is part of the curriculum.

This shows that the training of future professionals is framed in a single curriculum, without admitting the possibility of building a diverse university, where new knowledge emerges and is built from the approach and valuation of ancestral knowledge, scientific, formal and non-formal, cohabiting in the territories, violating one of the rights recognized in the United Nations Declaration, Article 4 (UN, 1992, Rodríguez, 2015) that establishes the need for states to promote knowledge and recognition of all cultures that inhabit a geographical space and provide the opportunity for all citizens to have the same opportunities to access an education that they value and respect their ways of learning.

The consequences of the implementation of a single educational model, which ignores or denies the existing epistemologies and world-views, language and history of minority groups of the population as indigenous and Afro-descendants, affecting their possibilities of access, permanence and graduation, interferes in the quality of training offered by the Universities and, therefore, in the achievement of academic objectives. For Mato (2019) it limits the possibility of the exchange of knowledge and experiences that, on the one hand, strengthen learning, and on the other, improve the understanding of social problems.

Problems such as those mentioned require the urgent response of the Universities to achieve the construction and implementation of inclusive and intercultural educational models, which are mainly concerned with the individual, the subject and their subjectivity, to promote support and accompaniment programs for students with diverse educational needs and abilities as a result of situations of exclusion or marginalization that they have faced during their lives.



## On expressions of racism and discrimination in the classroom

Higher education institutions are spaces in which relationships are woven, denoting the cultural and social representations entrenched in university actors: authorities, teachers, students and administrative staff (Aguayo and Piña, 2016). In academic coexistence, professors play a key role since they are those who are in the most direct contact with students both in classrooms as in other training scenarios, being these the spaces where those relations of inequality and exclusion present in society occur.

Racism and other forms of discrimination are expressed primarily in two forms: visibly or explicitly and invisibly or implicitly. In general, visible racism is defined by being open, most often violent. It manifests as physical assault, insults, or psychological intimidation. At the same time, it promotes prejudices and stereotypes; it regularly seeks to demonstrate physical, cultural and social aspects of individuals or groups. In addition, it involves not only negative perceptions of others, but also behaviors of rejection, violence and aggressiveness (Castellanos, 2001, p. 608). The aggressors use these resources to exercise power, advantage and superiority over others.

These explicit manifestations are also evident in university classrooms. The low expectations of professors are reflected in the academic performance or development of students. These expectations are based on ethnicity, abilities, social status, gender identity, age, among others. Aguayo and Piña (2016) consider that they are latent when the knowledge, actions or ways of thinking of the students are validated or invalidated. In addition, they are visualized in the classification of the group in “the most” or “the least able”; in the number of opportunities to improve academic performance; the possibility of speaking, dissenting or expressing their opinions; in the types of tasks that are assigned; in the complexity of team work; in the overlap of the dominant culture through the use of Spanish without considering the students’ language of origin.

It is also evident in the relationships among the students themselves. At the same time, it can be seen in the structuring of working groups and in the assignment of team members. From this perspective, the criterion of “affinity” to develop collaborative activities is considered. Behind these elections, however, is the segregation of certain actors by the ideological assumptions underlying minority cultures.

Regarding the hidden forms of racism and through which discrimination and racism have been naturalized in the relationships between teachers-students, it is evident in situations such as: the homogenization



of groups where the diversity present in educational spaces is not recognized or at least not considered; their history, culture, worldview, language or knowledge, which leads to an education based on the approach of scientific-Eurocentrist disciplinary contents and the implementation of unique methodologies that do not know the ways of learning, thinking and understanding the reality of students

Coelho and Silva (2020) consider that one of the causes of racism is, first, the denial of its existence. For this reason, the problem is minimized to a situation of racial discrimination, ignoring other forms or attributing its origin to a difficulty in interpersonal relations, i.e., simplifying the problem. In this respect, Vergara (2022) ensures that prejudices are not only present in the personal reading of reality, but have close relationship with the context to which the subjects belong. Hence, racism is not an individual personal interpretation of difference, but a social, historical and cultural construction of diversity.

This shows that racism in the university context is current and is reinvented daily because it has less explicit forms of manifestation. For example, social pressure does not let students to express to avoid rejection by their peers or teachers. Therefore, they do and say what is expected of them in exchange for being socially accepted.

It should be noted that racist attitudes and discrimination in the classroom are standardized by actors and, in most cases, undetectable. At the same time, they are dynamic, transforming and reinventing themselves along with social changes. Some of these subtle expressions can be seen in treating a professor or classmate differently, criticizing their physical appearance, how they dress or speak, and taking them away from jobs or conversations. These attitudes stigmatize, separate or classify, in an underhand way and as a result cause psychological difficulties for those affected as well as a climate of tension in the university environment.

According to Agüero (2022), it is expected that a culture of collaboration and work will be generated within the university to improve the environment in which they develop. The author also points out that mutual understandings create bridges for a more assertive communication, based on respect as the primary value of interactions between institutional actors.

## Materials and methods

This section describes the process for conducting this research. First, it presents the population that participated in the study; second, it explains



the way in which the data were collected; and finally, it exposes the process for treating the data.

### *Participants*

A sample of 265 students from four faculties of the National University of Chimborazo was recruited. The participants were selected considering that the elements represent the academic units of the institution and were distributed as follows: 97 (36.60%) of Engineering, 76 (28.68%) of Political and Administrative Sciences, 76 (19.62%) of Education, Human and Technology Sciences and 40 (15.09%) of Health. Two participants who did not consent to participate in the study were excluded from the results. The mean age of the participants (n=265) was 21.9 years. Regarding gender, 110 (41.5%) identified with male gender, 154 as female (58.11%) and 1 (0.38%) LGBTI. The ethnic distribution of the population was conformed as follows: 238 (89.81%) students recognized themselves as mestizos, 23 (8.68%) as indigenous, two (0.75) as Afro-descendants and two claimed to be white. We also established the presence of four (1.51%) participants who had motor, hearing and myopia disability.

### *Assessment*

The evaluation was carried out by applying the Perception Questionnaire on Racism and Discrimination in Higher Education, which was written to collect information on the situation of the phenomenon investigated in the university context. The instrument was composed of 19 aspects, distributed as follows: seven items addressed discrimination and lived racism; six discrimination or racism exercised; five discrimination and racism observed in the University and an item that dealt with the actions carried out by the University to address this problem. Depending on the aspect consulted, the response options varied. In addition, prior to the application of the instrument, two content validations were performed, which contributed to improve the drafting of the items.

### *Procedure*

The participants answered the online questionnaire, for which they were sent an access link. All participants included in the study responded to the letter of informed consent, accepting or rejecting their participation in the research. First, demographic information was collected. Several questions were then asked concerning discrimination and racism expe-



rienced, exercised and/or observed. With the obtained data, the results were processed, analyzed and interpreted.

## Analysis and results

The results are distributed by sections, and relate to the basic questions that were constructed for the study. First, demographic data are presented, then the results on racism and discrimination exercised, lived and finally on those perceived by students.

### *Demographic data*

265 students from four faculties of the National University of Chimbo-  
razo participated, of which 97 (36.6%) belong to the Faculty of Enginee-  
ring, 76 (28.6%) to Political and Administrative Sciences, 52 (19.6%) and  
40 (15%) to Health Sciences. In terms of gender identity, 110 (45.5%)  
students identified as male, 154 (58.1%) as female and one (0.38%) as  
LGBTI. In relation to ethnicity, 238 (89.8%) are recognized as mestizos;  
23 (8.68%) as indigenous; two (0.75%) said they are montubous; two  
(0.75%) said they are white. When asked whether they have any condition  
of deficiency, 261 (98.4%) participants said that they did not, while four  
(1.51%) answered affirmatively. Out of the four students, two have motor  
impairment, one visual and one hearing impairment.

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### *Discrimination and racism experienced*

It was observed that 29.9% of participants said they experienced various forms of racism and discrimination. These actions involved various mem-  
bers of the institutional community, such as authorities (1.64%), profes-  
sors (16.39%), administrative staff (4.92%) and classmates (44.26%) and  
students from other semesters (19.67%).

Students place the main causes of discrimination and racism in  
variables such as ethnicity, sexual orientation, socio-economic situation,  
gender identity or having a condition of disability. Regarding the situa-  
tions in which these actions have been developed, 32.6% said that during  
classes, 18.8% stated that during tasks/group work, 18.8% said that in in-  
stitutional events and 15.8% indicated that in programs planned by class-  
mates. In relation to the manifestations of discrimination and violence,  
the population under investigation considers that in the university com-  
munity, it occurs in the following ways: psychological aggression (38.4%);

low expectations of professors regarding their academic performance (30.7%); threats, contempt, indifference and/or attitudes of rejection (26.9%); verbal aggression, through insults, threats, appellations (26.9%) and finally, physical aggression (1.92%) with the use of blows. As for the frequency these situations are experienced, 13.4% state that sometimes, while 3.1% consider that always. In addition, students who were violent respond that they reported on the situations they experienced to professors (43.7%), authorities (31%) and student representatives (18.7%).

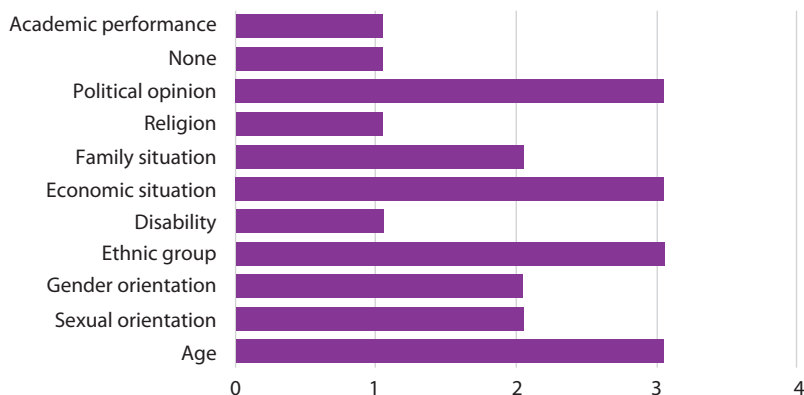
### *Discrimination and racism*

In the second phase of data collection, 97 of the initial 265 participants responded because the questionnaire presented the option of moving to the next section, in case they had not engaged in violence or were unwilling to respond. Thus, 89.7% of participants said they have never done so, 8.2% stated that rarely, while 3.2% stated that many times. Regarding those who have been the object of their attitudes, as shown in Figure 1, 39% indicated that they do it to their classmates, 20.9% to professors, 20% to students of other semesters, 8.5% to the authorities and 6.6% to the administrative staff of the institution. As for the causes of discrimination, 36.5% of participants stated that they had ethnic conditions, 15.3% because of their socio-economic situation, 13.7% because of their sexual orientation, 13.7% because of their gender identity, 10% because of their religious beliefs, while 7.4% said they had some kind of disability.

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**Figure 1**  
**Causes of discrimination and racism**



Source: Higher Education Discrimination and Racism Questionnaire  
Own elaboration 2022.

### *Observed discrimination and racism*

In the third stage of data collection, 57.7% of respondents observed manifestations of discrimination and racism, 28.9% never did, 9.35% said that many times and 4.1% said that always. According to the data obtained, the students state that 39% of the situations of discrimination and racism occurred by classmates, 20.9% by professors, 20% by students of other semesters and 8.5% by the authorities of their academic units. When asked about the causes of attitudes, 20.6% of the respondents consider that because of ethnicity, 15.6% because of socio-economic situations, 14% because of sexual orientation, another similar percentage because of gender identity, 10.2% because of religious beliefs, 7.9% because of differences in political positions, 7.4% because they have some type of disability, 6.3% because of economic situations, 3.7% because of age and 14.3% because they do not respond. Regarding the situations in which they noticed the manifestations of violence, 31% observed during the development of classes, 23.8% during institutional events, 17.4% during the performance of group work and/or tasks, 14.6% during social events planned by peers, 11.9% when performing administrative procedures. The types of discrimination observed vary, with psychological assaults (37.7%) being the most frequent, followed by low professor expectations (28.5%), verbal assaults (27.5%), and physical assaults (4%). The majority of students asserted that they never reported the violence they observed (69.5%), while a smaller group reported that they ever did (30.4%). When they reported situations, they did so first to their student representatives (44.9%), second to professors (21.7%) and DEBEYU (21.7%) and finally to the authorities (11.5%). They also report that the authorities sometimes acted (47.4%) to counter these situations. Among the measures taken by the authorities to counter discrimination and racism, it is mentioned that they implemented strategies to strengthen relationships among students (22.5%), calls for attention (19.3%), conversations about the problem (18%), talks by DEBEYU (14.8%), do not give importance (12.9%) to the application of sanctions (14.8%) and did not make decisions (3.8%).

### *Discussion*

The results show that most students do not perceive the existence of racism and discrimination in the university context (70%). Coelho and Silva (2020) argue that the denial of the problem, contrary to evidencing its absence, leads to think that the problem has been naturalized or made invisible. Therefore, it is interesting to analyze the results of those who

recognize their presence and identify the way in which it is presented, the contexts, its manifestations, representations and actors, since in some cases they experienced it directly, in others they were those who exercised discrimination actions on different actors and in other circumstances, acted as passive observers of segregation acts.

The relationships among the members of the university context are constructed from sociocultural and historical assumptions that educational actors have about diversity. For Robles and Ortiz (2017) these interactions can lead to the assessment of the other, but also to its exclusion. The denial of the other, considering it different, with its own characteristics and needs, leads to disagreements, disputes, divergences and discrepancies.

Teacher-student and peer interactions can become difficult, depending on the positive and negative mental constructions existing in the face of the cultural complexity of educational actors. These mental constructions determine the exercise of power, authority, discrimination and/or control. As stated by Foucault (1979), power is dynamic, it is not possessed, it is exercised in different ways. Therefore, it produces a permanent struggle of forces. The subjects are not neutral actors in this coexistence either, since they express and assume different roles such as responding, resisting or neutralizing the actions of professors and their own peers.

Discrimination brings with it negative ideas and subordination of some to the supremacy of others, marking limits, distances, and in contrast to the rights of equality that allow the possibility of establishing a climate of respect in the classroom.

As for the forms of discrimination and racism, it is evident that the deployment of visible and invisible devices to demonstrate power is common. This power is observed in some cases by professors who establish vertical relationships with students, invalidating or expressing indifference towards their living conditions, beliefs, practices or ways of learning. This hegemony is expressed through the formation of the working groups according to their apparent capacity, the evaluation system that does not consider the individualities of the students, the opportunities and spaces for action, the predominant language used in the teaching-learning process, the way they refer to them, the low or high expectations on their academic performance, depending on the group of belonging, among others.

For Puertas (2004), mental constructions about others, on the one hand deny their existence, and on the other, are expressed through discriminatory behaviors, which focus on homogenizing those who are recognized as different or excluding them from academic groups. This demonstrates the existence of power relations also among peers, detected



in the development of curricular and extracurricular activities executed in different university scenarios, granting as the main cause of these behaviors the rejection of students from ethnic groups.

The problem described is present in the social and academic interactions that occur in the university educational context. However, they are not reported (56%), which reveals the low importance and at the same time the naturalization of the phenomenon. Due to the low level of complaints, interventions to reduce their impact are scarce. This shows the urgency of implementing strategies to reduce the practices of racism and discrimination in the IES. In this context, it is necessary to strengthen the implementation of an intercultural curriculum model oriented to the integral and inclusive development of all members of the university community, which allows improving personal and interpersonal competences for their subsequent performance in the social sphere. Finally, a deep reflection is required to deconstruct the myth of equality and strengthen the approach of diversity from an understanding of the encounter.

Because of these situations, education is based on the idea of homogeneity that builds stereotypes about what should be an ideal student and qualifying those who do not fit the established parameters. Thus, prejudices are established towards students who do not fit into the “normalized” model. Therefore, their academic capacity is judged, they are supposed to fail school because of their ethnic, social, economic, gender or other different way of being and acting.

Del Olmo (2005) argues that quality higher education should be responsible for promoting respect and attention to diversity; it should value individual skills and use them as an enrichment source of the academic experience of actors; it should build bridges to overcome tensions in relationships and difficulties in the educational process. Finally, it should be noted that the role of the professor in the classroom is decisive because positive expectations about their students are the gateway to guarantee an environment in which the rights and freedoms of students are respected.

## Conclusions

It is concluded that racism and discrimination are part of an ideology woven as a result of socioeconomic-historical and cultural relations based on inequality. In this way, they have been naturalized in the university environment and despite the existence of a set of regulations, there are few efforts made to face the problem.





The analysis allowed us to determine that the expressions and forms of racism and discrimination are present in the institution of higher education, being significant the number of students who declare to be victims of these behaviors generated by various institutional actors and during the development of academic activities such as extracurricular; in the professor-student relationship, between academic peers or in the relationship with other university actors, which implies that these manifestations are not isolated, on the contrary they could be part of practices that have been naturalized and are present in the institutional dynamics. They impact on “others”, i.e., those who are considered minorities or different from the majority, and express themselves through physical or psychological attacks that undoubtedly affect all areas of life.

On the other hand, it was established that a group of students admitted having done discriminatory and racial actions against classmates, professors, students of other semesters, authorities and administrative staff of the institution (10%). The focus is on those considered different, whether because of their ethnic origin, socioeconomic situation, sexual orientation, gender, generational differences, religious beliefs, political position or because they have a disability. This shows that manifestations of racism and discrimination are not related to the role they play within the institution, but rather it constitutes a problem that comes from the family-social environment that is reproduced in university settings.

In addition, it was found that most students acknowledge having observed discriminatory and racist behaviors by classmates, professors, students from other semesters, as well as by academic authorities (58%). These psychological, verbal and physical aggressions occur in classes, during institutional events, in the performance of group activities, in social events, when they performed administrative procedures, which is extremely worrying, because in addition to the disadvantages faced by sectors of the population by a certain condition, they are in an environment of insecurity and instability that will undoubtedly affect not only their academic performance, but their personal growth.

Finally, most students do not report the observed acts of violence and when they do so they turn to different actors such as student representatives, professors, student welfare department and finally the authorities; however, it is concluded that the measures adopted do not have a significant impact, as they are limited to specific actions that do not solve this problem.





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## Publication guidelines in «Sophia»



ISSN: 1390-3861 / e-ISSN: 1390-8626

### 1. General Information

«Sophia» is a scientific publication of the *Salesian Polytechnic University of Ecuador*, published since January 2006 in an uninterrupted manner, with a fixed biannual periodicity, specialized in Philosophy of Education and its interdisciplinary lines such as Epistemology, Deontology, Aesthetics, Critical Studies, Hermeneutics, Axiology, Ontology, Philosophical Anthropology, Sociology, Philosophical Analytics, among others, all linked to the field of Education.

It is scientific journal, which uses the peer-review system, under double-blind review methodology, according to the publication standards of the American Psychological Association (APA). Compliance with this system allows authors to guarantee an objective, impartial and transparent review process, which facilitates the publication of their inclusion in reference databases, repositories and international indexing.

«Sophia» is indexed in **(SCOPUS)** Emerging Sources Citation Index **(ESCI)** from Web of Science; in Scientific Electronic Library Online **(SciELO)**; in the Scientific Information System **(REDALYC)**; in the directory and selective catalog of the Regional Online Information System for Scientific Journals of Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal **(LATINDEX)**, in the Matrix of Information for the Analysis of Journals **(MIAR)**, in Integrated Classification of Scientific Journals **(C.I.R.C.)**, in the Academic Resource Index **(Research Bible)**, in the Ibero-American Network of Innovation and Scientific Knowledge **(REDIB)**, in the Portal for the dissemination of scientific production **(Dialnet)**; in Latin American Bibliography in Journals of Scientific and Social Research **(BIBLAT)**; in the Directory of Open Access Journals **DOAJ** and in repositories, libraries and specialized catalogs of Latin America.

The journal is published in a double version: printed (ISSN: 1390-3861) and digital (e-ISSN: 1390-8626), Spanish and English, each work being identified with a DOI (Digital Object Identifier System).

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## 2. *Scope and policy*

### 2.1. *Theme*

Original contributions in Philosophy of Education, as well as related areas: Epistemology, Deontology, Aesthetics, Critical Studies, Hermeneutics, Axiology, Ontology, Philosophical Anthropology, Sociology, Philosophical Analytics,... and all interdisciplinary related disciplines with a philosophical reflection on education

### 2.2. *Contributions*

«Sophia» publishes critical studies, reports and proposals, as well as selected state-of-the-art literature reviews related to Philosophy of education. Accepting also results of empirical research on Education, written in Spanish and/or English.

The contributions can be:

- **Reviews:** 10,000 to 11,000 words of text, including charts and references. Justified references would be specially valued. (current and selected from among 70 works)
- **Research:** 8,000 to 9,500 words of text, including title, abstracts, descriptors, charts and references.
- **Reports, studies and proposals:** 8,000 to 9,500 words of text, including title, abstracts, charts and references.

### 2.3. *Characteristics of the content*

All works presented for publication in «Sophia» must comply with the characteristics of scientific research:

- Be original, unpublished and relevant
- Address issues that respond to current problems and needs
- Address issues that respond to current problems and needs
- Contribute to the development of scientific knowledge in the field of Philosophy of Education and its related areas
- Use adequate, clear, precise and comprehensible language
- Not have been published in any medium or in the process of arbitration or publication.

Depending on the relevance of the article, it will be considered as special contributions and will occasionally be published:

- Works that exceed the stated extent
- Works that do not correspond to the subject of the reflection foreseen for the respective issue

## 2.4. Periodicity

«Sophia» has a biannual periodicity (20 articles per year), published in January and July and counts by number with two sections of five articles each, the first referring to a **Monographic** topic prepared in advance and with thematic editors and the second, a section of **Miscellaneous**, composed of varied contributions within the theme of the publication.

## 3. Presentation, Structure and Submission of the Manuscripts

Texts will be presented in Arial 12 font, single line spacing, complete justification and no tabs or blank spaces between paragraphs. Only large blocks (title, authors, summaries, keywords, credits and headings) will be separated with a blank space. The page should be 2 centimeters in all its margins.

Papers must be submitted in a Microsoft Word document (.doc or .docx), requiring that the file be anonymized in File Properties, so that the author/s identification does not appear.

Manuscripts must be submitted only and exclusively through the OJS (Open Journal System), in which all authors must previously register. Originals sent via email or other interfaces are not accepted.

### 3.1. Structure of the manuscript

For those works that are empirical investigations, the manuscripts will follow the IMRDC structure, being optional the Notes and Supports. Those papers that, on the contrary, deal with reports, studies, proposals and reviews may be more flexible in their epigraphs, particularly in material and methods, analysis, results, discussion and conclusions. In all typologies of works, references are mandatory.

### A. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Its purpose is to contribute to the progress of knowledge through original information, following the IMRDC structure: Introduction (objectives, previous literature). Materials and methods, Analysis and Results, Discussion, integration and conclusions. Following the criteria set by UNESCO, it is these types of scientific texts are also called as: “original memories”

The recommended structure, especially in works that include empirical research, is the following:

**1) Title (Spanish) /Title (English):** Concise but informative, in Spanish on the first line and in English on the second. A maximum of 85 characters with spaces are accepted. The title is not only the responsibility of the authors, changes being able to be proposed by the Editorial Board.

**2) Identification data:** Of each of the authors, organized by priority. A maximum of 3 authors will be accepted per original, although there may be excep-



tions justified by the topic, its complexity and extent. Next to the names must follow the professional category, work center, email of each author and complete ORCID number. Aspects that must be included in the Cover Letter, must also be uploaded to the OJS system of the journal, in the Metadata section and /or in a word document attached to the file containing the work proposed for the evaluation.

**3) Abstract (Spanish) / Abstract (English):** It will have a minimum length of 210 and a maximum of 220 words in Spanish; and 200 and maximum 210 words in English. The abstract will describe concisely and in this order: 1) Justification of the topic; 2) Objectives; 3) Methodology; 4) Main results; 5) Main conclusions. It must be impersonally written "This paper analyzes...". In the case of the abstract, the use of automatic translators will not be accepted due to their poor quality.

**4) Keywords (Spanish) / Keywords (English):** A maximum of 6 keywords must be presented for each language version directly related to the subject of the work. The use of the key words set out in UNESCO's Thesaurus and of the journal itself, located in the following link: [https://sophia.ups.edu.ec/tesauro\\_sophia.php](https://sophia.ups.edu.ec/tesauro_sophia.php), will be positively valued.

**5) Introduction and state of the issue:** It should include the problem statement, context of the problem, justification, rationale and purpose of the study, using bibliographical citations, as well as the most significant and current literature on the topic at national and international level..

**6) Material and methods:** It must be written so that the reader can easily understand the development of the research. If applicable, it will describe the methodology, the sample and the form of sampling, as well as the type of statistical analysis used. If it is an original methodology, it is necessary to explain the reasons that led to its use and to describe its possible limitations.

**7) Analysis and results:** It will try to highlight the most important observations, describing them, without making value judgments, the material and methods used. They will appear in a logical sequence in the text and the essential charts and figures avoiding the duplication of data.

**8) Discussion and conclusions:** Summarize the most important findings, relating the observations themselves with relevant studies, indicating contributions and limitations, without adding data already mentioned in other sections. Also, the discussion and conclusions section should include the deductions and lines for future research.

**9) Supports and acknowledgments (optional):** The Council Science Editors recommends the author (s) to specify the source of funding for the research. Priority will be given to projects supported by national and international competitive projects. In any case, for the scientific evaluation of the manuscript, it should be only anonymized with XXXX for its initial evaluation, in order not to identify authors and research teams, which should be explained in the Cover Letter and later in the final manuscript.

**10) The notes (optional)** will go, only if necessary, at the end of the article (before the references). They must be manually annotated, since the system of footnotes or the end of Word is not recognized by the layout systems. The



numbers of notes are placed in superscript, both in the text and in the final note. The numbers of notes are placed in superscript, both in the text and in the final note. No notes are allowed that collect simple bibliographic citations (without comments), as these should go in the references.

**11) References:** Bibliographical citations should be reviewed in the form of references to the text. Under no circumstances should references not mentioned in the text be included. Their number should be sufficient to contextualize the theoretical framework with current and important criteria. They will be presented alphabetically by the first last name of the author.

## ***B. REVIEWS***

Literature reviews are based on the analysis of major publications on a given topic; Literature reviews are based on the analysis of major publications on a given topic; Its objective is to define the current state of the problem and to evaluate the investigations carried out. Its structure responds to the phases of the theme/ problem, contributions of researchers or teams, changes in theory or main theoretical currents; unsolved problems; current and future trends (Giordanino, 2011). According to UNESCO, this type of work is also known as “recapitulative studies”

**1) Title (Spanish) /Title (English):** Concise but informative, in Spanish on the first line and in English on the second. A maximum of 85 characters with spaces are accepted. The title is not only the responsibility of the authors, changes being able to be proposed by the Editorial Board.

**2) Identification data:** Of each of the authors, organized by priority. A maximum of 3 authors will be accepted per original, although there may be exceptions justified by the topic, its complexity and extent. Next to the names must follow the professional category, work center, email of each author and complete ORCID number. Aspects that must be included in the Cover Letter, must also be uploaded to the OJS system of the journal, in the Metadata section and /or in a word document attached to the file containing the work proposed for the evaluation.

**3) Abstract (Spanish) / Abstract (English):** It will have a minimum length of 210 and a maximum of 220 words in Spanish; and 200 and maximum 210 words in English. The abstract will describe concisely and in this order: 1) Justification of the topic; 2) Objectives; 3) Methodology; 4) Main results; 5) Main conclusions. It must be impersonally written “This paper analyzes...” In the case of the abstract, the use of automatic translators will not be accepted due to their poor quality.

**4) Keywords (Spanish) / Keywords (English):** A maximum of 6 keywords must be presented for each language version directly related to the subject of the work. The use of the key words set out in UNESCO’s Thesaurus and of the Journal itself will be positively valued.

**5) Introduction:** It should include a brief presentation of the topic, the formulation of the purpose or objective of the study, the context of the problem and the formulation of the problem that is proposed, the presentation of the



idea to be defended, the justification explaining the importance, the relevance of the study; the methodological framework used, and finally, a brief description of the structure of the document. In the justification it is necessary to use bibliographical citations as well as the most significant and current literature on the subject at national and international level.

**6) Body or development of the document:** It implies putting into practice throughout the text, a critical attitude that should tend towards the interpellation, in order to attract the attention of the topic and the problem treated. The writer must generate in the reader the capacity to identify the dialogical intention of the proposal and to promote an open discussion.

**7) Conclusions:** Objectively state the results and findings. Offer a vision of the implications of the work, the limitations, the tentative response to the problem, the relations with the objective of the research and the possible lines of continuity (to fulfill this objective it is suggested not to include all the results obtained in the research). The conclusions should be duly justified according to the research carried out. The conclusions may be associated with the recommendations, evaluations, applications, suggestions, new relations and accepted or rejected hypotheses.

**8) Bibliography:** It is the set of works used in the structuring of the scientific text. It should include only the reference of the works used in the research. Bibliographical references should be ordered alphabetically and conform to the international APA standards, in their sixth edition.

### 3.2. Guidelines for references

#### PERIODIC PUBLICATIONS

**Journal article (author):** Valdés-Pérez, D. (2016). Valdés-Pérez, D. (2016). Incidencia de las técnicas de gestión en la mejora de decisiones administrativas [Impact of Management Techniques on the Improvement of Administrative Decisions]. *Retos*, 12(6), 199-2013. <https://doi.org/10.17163/ret.n12.2016.05>

**Journal Article (Up to six authors):** Ospina, M.C., Alvarado, S.V., Fefferman, M., & Llanos, D. (2016). Introducción del dossier temático “Infancias y juventudes: violencias, conflictos, memorias y procesos de construcción de paz” [Introduction of the thematic dossier “Infancy and Youth: Violence, Conflicts, Memories and Peace Construction Processes”]. *Universitas*, 25(14), 91-95. <https://doi.org/10.17163/uni.n25.%25x>

**Journal article (more than six authors):** Smith, S.W., Smith, S.L. Pieper, K.M., Yoo, J.H., Ferrys, A.L., Downs, E.,... Bowden, B. (2006). Altruism on American Television: Examining the Amount of, and Context Surrounding. *Acts of Helping and Sharing. Journal of Communication*, 56(4), 707-727. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00316.x>

**Journal article (without DOI):** Rodríguez, A. (2007). Desde la promoción de salud mental hacia la promoción de salud: La concepción de lo comunitario en la implementación de proyectos sociales. *Alteridad*, 2(1), 28-40. (<https://goo.gl/zDb3Me>) (2017-01-29).



## BOOKS AND BOOK CHAPTERS

**Full books:** Cuéllar, J.C., & Moncada-Paredes, M.C. (2014). *El peso de la deuda externa ecuatoriana*. Quito: Abya-Yala.

**Chapter of book:** Zambrano-Quiñones, D. (2015). El ecoturismo comunitario en Manglaralto y Colonche. En V.H. Torres (Ed.), *Alternativas de Vida: Trece experiencias de desarrollo endógeno en Ecuador* (pp. 175-198). Quito: Abya-Yala.

## DIGITAL MEDIA

Pérez-Rodríguez, M.A., Ramírez, A., & García-Ruíz, R. (2015). La competencia mediática en educación infantil. *Análisis del nivel de desarrollo en España*. *Universitas Psychologica*, 14(2), 619-630. <https://doi.org/10.11144/Javeriana.upsy14-2.cmei>

It is prescriptive that all quotations that have DOI (Digital Object Identifier System) are reflected in the References (can be obtained at <http://googl/gfruh1>). All journals and books that do not have DOI should appear with their respective link (in their online version, if they have it, shortened by Bitly: <https://bitly.com/>) and date of consultation in the indicated format.

Journal articles should be presented in English, except for those in Spanish and English, in which case it will be displayed in both languages using brackets. All web addresses submitted must be shortened in the manuscript, except for the DOI that must be in the indicated format (<https://doi.org/XXX>).

### 3.3. Epigraphs, Figures and Charts

The epigraphs of the body of the article will be numbered in Arabic. They should go without a full box of capital letters, neither underlined nor bold. The numbering must be a maximum of three levels: 1. / 1.1. / 1.1.1. A carriage return will be established at the end of each numbered epigraph.

The charts must be included in the text in Word format according to order of appearance, numbered in Arabic and subtitled with the description of the content.

The graphics or figures will be adjusted to the minimum number required and will be presented incorporated in the text, according to their order of appearance, numbered in Arabic and subtitled with the abbreviated description. Their quality should not be less than 300 dpi, and it may be necessary to have the graph in TIFF, PNG or JPEG format.

## 4. Submission Process

The receipt of articles is permanent, however, considering that the publication of the Sophia Journal is bi-annual, the manuscripts must be sent at least one period before the date stipulated in the corresponding Call.

The manuscripts must be sent through the OJS (Open Journal System) system of the journal, for which it is necessary that the author previously registers in



the respective space (enter in the following link: <http://sophia.ups.edu.ec/index.php/sophia/user/register>, complete the form and follow each of the suggested steps).

The two documents that must be sent are:

**1) Presentation and cover (Use official model), which will appear:**

**Title.** In Spanish in the first line, in letter Arial 14, with bold and centered, with a maximum of 85 characters with space. In English in the second line, in letter Arial 14, in italics and bold.

**Full names and surnames of the authors.** Organized in order of priority, a maximum of 3 authors are accepted per original, although there may be exceptions justified by the topic, its complexity and extent. Each name must include the name of the institution in which he/she works as well as the city, country, email and ORCID number.

**Abstract (Spanish)** It will have a minimum length of 210 and a maximum of 220 words. It must include 1) Justification of the topic; 2) Objectives; 3) Methodology; 4) Main results; 5) Main conclusions. It must be impersonally written "The present paper analyzes..."

**Abstract.** Summary with all its components, translated into English and in cursive. Do not use automatic translation systems.

**Keywords (Spanish):** 6 standardized terms preferably of a single word and of the UNESCO and the Journal's Thesaurus separated by commas (,).

**Keywords.** The 6 terms above translated into English and separated by comma (,). Do not use automatic translation systems.

In addition, a statement must be included (using a template called: Presentation) in which it is explained that the submitted manuscript is an original contribution, not sent or being evaluated in another journal, confirmation of the signatory authors, acceptance (if applicable) of formal changes in the manuscript according to the norms and partial transfer of rights to the publisher. This document must be signed and recorded through the OJS system, in the section: "Complementary files".

**2) Manuscript** totally anonymized, according to the guidelines referred in precedence.

All authors must register with their credits on the OJS platform, although only one of them will be responsible for correspondence. No author can submit or have in review two manuscripts simultaneously, estimating an absence of four consecutive numbers (2 years).

## ***5. Publication interval***

The interval between receipt and publication of an article is 7 months (210 days).



## Normas de Publicación en «Sophia»



ISSN: 1390-3861 / e-ISSN: 1390-8626

### 1. Información general

«Sophia» es una publicación científica de la Universidad Politécnica Salesiana de Ecuador, editada desde junio de 2006 de forma ininterrumpida, con periodicidad fija semestral, especializada en Filosofía de la Educación y sus líneas interdisciplinarias como Epistemología, Deontología, Estética, Estudios Críticos, Hermenéutica, Axiología, Ontología, Antropología Filosófica, Sociología, Analítica Filosófica... vinculadas al ámbito de la educación.

Es una revista científica arbitrada, que utiliza el sistema de evaluación externa por expertos (*peer-review*), bajo metodología de pares ciegos (*double-blind review*), conforme a las normas de publicación de la American Psychological Association (APA). El cumplimiento de este sistema permite garantizar a los autores un proceso de revisión objetivo, imparcial y transparente, lo que facilita a la publicación su inclusión en bases de datos, repositorios e indexaciones internacionales de referencia.

«Sophia» se encuentra indexada en (SCOPUS) Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI) de Web of Science; en Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO); en el Sistema de Información Científica (REDALYC); en el directorio y catálogo selectivo del Sistema Regional de Información en Línea para Revistas Científicas de América Latina, el Caribe, España y Portugal (LATINDEX), en la Matriz de Información para el Análisis de Revistas (MIAR), en Clasificación Integrada de Revistas Científicas (C.I.R.C), en Academic Resource Index (Research Bible), en la Red Iberoamericana de Innovación y Conocimiento Científico (REDIB), en el Portal de difusión de la producción científica (Dialnet); en Bibliografía Latinoamericana en Revistas de Investigación Científica y Social (BIBLAT); en el Directorio de Revistas de Acceso Abierto DOAJ y en repositorios, bibliotecas y catálogos especializados de Iberoamérica.

La revista se edita en doble versión: impresa (ISSN: 1390-3861) y electrónica (e-ISSN: 1390-8626), en español y en inglés, siendo identificado además cada trabajo con un DOI (Digital Object Identifier System).

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## 2. Alcance y política

### 2.1. Temática

Contribuciones originales en materia de Filosofía de la Educación, así como áreas afines: Epistemología, Deontología, Estética, Estudios Críticos, Hermenéutica, Axiología, Ontología, Antropología Filosófica, Sociología, Analítica Filosófica,... y todas aquellas disciplinas conexas interdisciplinariamente con una reflexión filosófica sobre la educación.

### 2.2. Aportaciones

«Sophia» edita estudios críticos, informes, propuestas, así como selectas revisiones de la literatura (*state-of-the-art*) en relación con la Filosofía de la Educación, aceptando asimismo trabajos de investigación empírica, redactados en español y en inglés.

Las aportaciones en la revista pueden ser:

- **Revisiones:** 10.000 a 11.000 palabras de texto, incluidas tablas y referencias. Se valorará especialmente las referencias justificadas, actuales y selectivas de alrededor de unas 70 obras.
- **Investigaciones:** 8.000 a 9.500 palabras de texto, incluyendo título, resúmenes, descriptores, tablas y referencias.
- **Informes, estudios y propuestas:** 8.000 a 9.500 palabras de texto, incluyendo título, resúmenes, tablas y referencias.

### 2.3. Características del contenido

Todos los trabajos presentados para la publicación en «Sophia» deberán cumplir con las características propias de una investigación científica:

- Ser originales, inéditos y relevantes
- Abordar temáticas que respondan a problemáticas y necesidades actuales
- Aportar para el desarrollo del conocimiento científico en el campo de la Filosofía de la Educación y sus áreas afines
- Utilizar un lenguaje adecuado, claro, preciso y comprensible
- No haber sido publicados en ningún medio ni estar en proceso de arbitraje o publicación.

Dependiendo de la relevancia y pertinencia del artículo, se considerarán como contribuciones especiales y ocasionalmente se publicarán:

- Trabajos que superen la extensión manifestada
- Trabajos que no se correspondan con el tema objeto de la reflexión prevista para el número respectivo

## 2.4 Periodicidad

«Sophia» tiene periodicidad semestral (20 artículos por año), publicada en los meses de enero y julio; y cuenta por número con dos secciones de cinco artículos cada una, la primera referida a un tema **Monográfico** preparado con antelación y con editores temáticos; la segunda, una sección de **Misceláneas**, compuesta por aportaciones variadas dentro de la temática de la publicación.

## 3. Presentación, estructura y envío de los manuscritos

Los trabajos se presentarán en tipo de letra Arial 12, interlineado simple, justificado completo y sin tabuladores ni espacios en blanco entre párrafos. Se separarán con un espacio en blanco los grandes bloques (título, autores, resúmenes, descriptores, créditos y epígrafes). La página debe tener 2 centímetros en todos sus márgenes.

Los trabajos deben presentarse en documento de Microsoft Word (.doc o .docx), siendo necesario que el archivo esté anonimizado en Propiedades de Archivo, de forma que no aparezca la identificación de autor/es.

Los manuscritos deben ser enviados única y exclusivamente a través del OJS (Open Journal System), en el cual todos los autores deben darse de alta previamente. No se aceptan originales enviados a través de correo electrónico u otra interfaz.

### 3.1. Estructura del manuscrito

Para aquellos trabajos que se traten de investigaciones de carácter empírico, los manuscritos seguirán la estructura IMRDC, siendo opcionales los epígrafes de Notas y Apoyos. Aquellos trabajos que por el contrario se traten de informes, estudios, propuestas y revisiones sistemáticas podrán ser más flexibles en sus epígrafes, especialmente en Material y métodos; Análisis y resultados; Discusión y conclusiones. En todas las tipologías de trabajos son obligatorias las Referencias.

### A. INVESTIGACIONES EMPÍRICAS

Su objetivo es contribuir al progreso del conocimiento mediante información original, sigue la estructura IMRDC: Introducción (objetivos, literatura previa), Materiales y métodos; Análisis y Resultados; Discusión, integración y conclusiones. Siguiendo los criterios planteados por la Unesco, es este tipo de textos científicos se llaman también como: “memorias originales”

La estructura recomendada, especialmente en trabajos que incluyen investigaciones empíricas, es la siguiente:

**1) Título (español) / Title (inglés):** Conciso pero informativo, en castellano en primera línea y en inglés en segunda. Se aceptan como máximo 85 caracteres con espacio. El título no solo es responsabilidad de los autores, pudiéndose proponer cambios por parte del Consejo Editorial.







**2) Datos de Identificación:** Nombres y apellidos completos de cada uno de los autores, organizados por orden de prelación. Se aceptarán como máximo 3 autores por original, aunque pudieren existir excepciones justificadas por el tema, su complejidad y extensión. Junto a los nombres deberá incluirse, el nombre de la institución en la que trabaja así como la ciudad, el país, el correo electrónico y número completo de ORCID de cada autor aspectos que deberán constar de modo obligatorio en la Carta de Presentación, además deberán ser cargados en el sistema OJS de la revista, en la sección Metadatos y/o en un documento word adjunto al archivo que contiene el trabajo que se propone para la evaluación.

**3) Resumen (español) / Abstract (inglés):** Tendrá como extensión mínima de 210 y máxima de 220 palabras en español; y de 200 y máximo de 210 palabras en inglés. El resumen describirá de forma concisa y en este orden: 1) Justificación del tema; 2) Objetivos; 3) Metodología y muestra; 4) Principales resultados; 5) Principales conclusiones. Ha de estar escrito de manera impersonal "El presente trabajo analiza...". En el caso del abstract no se admitirá el empleo de traductores automáticos por su pésima calidad.

**4) Descriptores (español) / Keywords (inglés):** Se deben exponer máximo 6 términos por cada versión idiomática relacionados directamente con el tema del trabajo. Será valorado positivamente el uso de las palabras claves expuestas en el Thesaurus de la UNESCO y en el de la propia revista localizado en el siguiente enlace: [https://sophia.ups.edu.ec/tesauro\\_sophia.php](https://sophia.ups.edu.ec/tesauro_sophia.php)

**5) Introducción y estado de la cuestión:** Debe incluir el planteamiento del problema, el contexto de la problemática, la justificación, fundamentos y propósito del estudio, utilizando citas bibliográficas, así como la literatura más significativa y actual del tema a escala nacional e internacional.

**6) Material y métodos:** Debe ser redactado de forma que el lector pueda comprender con facilidad el desarrollo de la investigación. En su caso, describirá la metodología, la muestra y la forma de muestreo, así como se hará referencia al tipo de análisis estadístico empleado. Si se trata de una metodología original, es necesario exponer las razones que han conducido a su empleo y describir sus posibles limitaciones.

**7) Análisis y resultados:** Se procurará resaltar las observaciones más importantes, describiéndose, sin hacer juicios de valor, el material y métodos empleados. Aparecerán en una secuencia lógica en el texto y las tablas y figuras imprescindibles evitando la duplicidad de datos.

**8) Discusión y conclusiones:** Resumirá los hallazgos más importantes, relacionando las propias observaciones con estudios de interés, señalando aportaciones y limitaciones, sin redundar datos ya comentados en otros apartados. Asimismo, el apartado de discusión y conclusiones debe incluir las deducciones y líneas para futuras investigaciones.

**9) Apoyos y agradecimientos (opcionales):** El Council Science Editors recomienda a los autor/es especificar la fuente de financiación de la investigación. Se considerarán prioritarios los trabajos con aval de proyectos competi-



vos nacionales e internacionales. En todo caso, para la valoración científica del manuscrito, este debe ir anonimizado con XXXX solo para su evaluación inicial, a fin de no identificar autores y equipos de investigación, que deben ser explicitados en la Carta de Presentación y posteriormente en el manuscrito final.

**10) Las notas** (opcionales) irán, solo en caso necesario, al final del artículo (antes de las referencias). Deben anotarse manualmente, ya que el sistema de notas al pie o al final de Word no es reconocido por los sistemas de maquetación. Los números de notas se colocan en superíndice, tanto en el texto como en la nota final. No se permiten notas que recojan citas bibliográficas simples (sin comentarios), pues éstas deben ir en las referencias.

**11) Referencias:** Las citas bibliográficas deben reseñarse en forma de referencias al texto. Bajo ningún caso deben incluirse referencias no citadas en el texto. Su número debe ser suficiente para contextualizar el marco teórico con criterios de actualidad e importancia. Se presentarán alfabéticamente por el primer apellido del autor.

## **B. REVISIONES**

Las revisiones de literatura se basan en el análisis de las principales publicaciones sobre un tema determinado; su objetivo es definir el estado actual del problema y evaluar las investigaciones realizadas. Su estructura responde a las fases del tema/problema, aportes de investigadores o equipos, cambios en la teoría o las corrientes teóricas principales; problemas sin resolver; tendencias actuales y futuras (Giordanino, 2011). De acuerdo con la UNESCO, este tipo de trabajos se conocen también como: “estudios recapitulativos”

**1) Título (español) / Title (inglés):** El título del artículo deberá ser breve, interesante, claro, preciso y atractivo para despertar el interés del lector. Conciso pero informativo, en castellano en la primera línea y en inglés en la segunda línea. Se aceptan como máximo 85 caracteres con espacio. El título no solo es responsabilidad de los autores, también los Miembros del Consejo Editorial puede proponer cambios al título del documento.

**2) Datos de Identificación:** Nombres y apellidos completos de cada uno de los autores, organizados por orden de prelación. Se aceptarán como máximo 3 autores por original, aunque pudieren existir excepciones justificadas por el tema, su complejidad y extensión. Junto a los nombres deberá incluirse, el nombre de la institución en la que trabaja así como la ciudad, el país, el correo electrónico y número completo de ORCID de cada autor aspectos que deberán constar de modo obligatorio en la Carta de Presentación, además deberán ser cargados en el sistema OJS de la revista, en la sección Metadatos y/o en un documento word adjunto al archivo que contiene el trabajo que se propone para la evaluación.

**3) Resumen (español) / Abstract (inglés):** Tendrá como extensión mínima de 210 y máxima de 220 palabras en español; y de 200 y máximo de 210 palabras en inglés. El resumen describirá de forma concisa y en este orden:



1) Justificación del tema; 2) Objetivos; 3) Metodología; 4) Principales resultados; 5) Principales conclusiones. Ha de estar escrito de manera impersonal “El presente trabajo analiza...” En el caso del abstract no se admitirá el empleo de traductores automáticos por su pésima calidad.

**4) Descriptores (español) / Keywords (inglés):** Se deben exponer máximo 6 términos por cada versión idiomática relacionados directamente con el tema del trabajo. Será valorado positivamente el uso de las palabras claves expuestas en el Thesaurus de la UNESCO y en el de la propia revista.

**5) Introducción:** Deberá incluir una presentación breve del tema, la formulación del propósito u objetivo del estudio, el contexto de la problemática y la formulación del problema que se propone enfrentar, la presentación de la idea a defender, la justificación que explica la importancia, la actualidad y la pertinencia del estudio; el marco metodológico utilizado, y finalmente, una breve descripción de la estructura del documento. En la justificación es necesario utilizar citas bibliográficas así como la literatura más significativa y actual del tema a escala nacional e internacional.

**6) Cuerpo o desarrollo del documento:** Implica poner en práctica a lo largo de toda la exposición, una actitud crítica que deberá tender hacia la interpelación, a efectos de concitar la atención del tema y el problema tratados. El escritor deberá generar en el lector la capacidad de identificar la intención dialógica de la propuesta y propiciar en él una discusión abierta.

**7) Conclusiones:** Expone de manera objetiva los resultados y hallazgos; ofrece una visión de las implicaciones del trabajo, las limitaciones, la respuesta tentativa al problema, las relaciones con el objetivo de la investigación y las posibles líneas de continuidad (para cumplir con este objetivo se sugiere no incluir todos los resultados obtenidos en la investigación). Las conclusiones deberán ser debidamente justificadas de acuerdo con la investigación realizada. Las conclusiones podrán estar asociadas con las recomendaciones, evaluaciones, aplicaciones, sugerencias, nuevas relaciones e hipótesis aceptadas o rechazadas.

**8) Bibliografía:** Es el conjunto de obras utilizadas en la estructuración del texto científico. Deberá incluir únicamente la referencia de los trabajos utilizados en la investigación. Las referencias bibliográficas deberán ordenarse alfabéticamente y ajustarse a las normas internacionales APA, en su sexta edición.

### 3.2. Normas para las referencias

#### **PUBLICACIONES PERIÓDICAS**

**Artículo de revista (un autor):** Valdés-Pérez, D. (2016). Incidencia de las técnicas de gestión en la mejora de decisiones administrativas [Impact of Management Techniques on the Improvement of Administrative Decisions]. *Retos*, 12(6), 199-2013. <https://doi.org/10.17163/ret.n12.2016.05>

**Artículo de revista (hasta seis autores):** Ospina, M.C., Alvarado, S.V., Fefferman, M., & Llanos, D. (2016). Introducción del dossier temático “Infancias y



juventudes: violencias, conflictos, memorias y procesos de construcción de paz” [Introduction of the thematic dossier “Infancy and Youth: Violence, Conflicts, Memories and Peace Construction Processes”]. *Universitas*, 25(14), 91-95. <https://doi.org/10.17163/uni.n25.%25x>

**Artículo de revista (más de seis autores):** Smith, S.W., Smith, S.L. Pieper, K.M., Yoo, J.H., Ferrys, A.L., Downs, E.,... Bowden, B. (2006). Altruism on American Television: Examining the Amount of, and Context Surrounding. Acts of Helping and Sharing. *Journal of Communication*, 56(4), 707-727. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00316.x>

**Artículo de revista (sin DOI):** Rodríguez, A. (2007). Desde la promoción de salud mental hacia la promoción de salud: La concepción de lo comunitario en la implementación de proyectos sociales. *Alteridad*, 2(1), 28-40. (<https://goo.gl/zDb3Me>) (2017-01-29).

## LIBROS Y CAPÍTULO DE LIBRO

**Libros completos:** Cuéllar, J.C., & Moncada-Paredes, M.C. (2014). *El peso de la deuda externa ecuatoriana*. Quito: Abya-Yala.

**Capítulos de libro:** Zambrano-Quiñones, D. (2015). *El ecoturismo comunitario en Manglaralto y Colonche*. En V.H. Torres (Ed.), *Alternativas de Vida: Trece experiencias de desarrollo endógeno en Ecuador* (pp. 175-198). Quito: Abya-Yala.

## MEDIOS ELECTRÓNICOS

Pérez-Rodríguez, M.A., Ramírez, A., & García-Ruiz, R. (2015). La competencia mediática en educación infantil. Análisis del nivel de desarrollo en España. *Universitas Psychologica*, 14(2), 619-630. <https://doi.org/10.11144/Javeriana.upsy14-2.cmei>

Es prescriptivo que todas las citas que cuenten con DOI (Digital Object Identifier System) estén reflejadas en las Referencias (pueden obtenerse en <http://goo.gl/gfruh1>). Todas las revistas y libros que no tengan DOI deben aparecer con su link (en su versión on-line, en caso de que la tengan, acortada, mediante Bitly: <https://bitly.com/> y fecha de consulta en el formato indicado.

Los artículos de revistas deben ser expuestos en idioma inglés, a excepción de aquellos que se encuentren en español e inglés, caso en el que se expondrá en ambos idiomas utilizando corchetes. Todas las direcciones web que se presenten tienen que ser acortadas en el manuscrito, a excepción de los DOI que deben ir en el formato indicado (<https://doi.org/XXX>).

### 3.3. Epígrafes, tablas y gráficos

Los epígrafes del cuerpo del artículo se numerarán en arábigo. Irán sin caja completa de mayúsculas, ni subrayados, ni negritas. La numeración ha de



ser como máximo de tres niveles: 1. / 1.1. / 1.1.1. Al final de cada epígrafe numerado se establecerá un retorno de carro.

Las tablas deben presentarse incluidas en el texto en formato Word según orden de aparición, numeradas en arábigo y subtituladas con la descripción del contenido.

Los gráficos o figuras se ajustarán al número mínimo necesario y se presentarán incorporadas al texto, según su orden de aparición, numeradas en arábigo y subtituladas con la descripción abreviada. Su calidad no debe ser inferior a 300 ppp, pudiendo ser necesario contar con el gráfico en formato TIFF, PNG o JPEG.

#### 4. *Proceso de envío*

La recepción de artículos es permanente, sin embargo, considerando que la publicación de la Revista Sophia es semestral, el envío de los manuscritos deberá efectuarse al menos un período antes de la fecha estipulada en la Convocatoria correspondiente.

Los manuscritos deberán remitirse a través del sistema OJS (Open Journal System) de la revista, para lo cual es necesario que el autor se registre previamente en el espacio respectivo (ingrese en el siguiente link: <http://sophia.ups.edu.ec/index.php/sophia/user/register>, complemente el formulario y siga cada uno de los pasos que se sugieren).

Los dos documentos que deben ser enviados son:

**1) Carta de presentación o Cover letter** (usar modelo oficial), en la que aparecerán:

**Título.** En castellano en la primera línea, en letra Arial 14, con negrita y centrado, con un máximo de 85 caracteres con espacio. En inglés en la segunda línea, en letra Arial 14, en cursiva y con negrita.

**Nombres y apellidos completos de los autores.** Organizados por orden de prelación, se aceptan como máximo 3 autores por original, aunque pudieren existir excepciones justificadas por el tema, su complejidad y extensión. Junto a cada uno de los nombres deberá incluirse, el nombre de la institución en la que trabaja así como la ciudad, el país, el correo electrónico y número de ORCID.

**Resumen.** Tendrá como extensión mínima 210 y máxima 220 palabras. El resumen describirá de forma concisa y en este orden: 1) Justificación del tema; 2) Objetivos; 3) Metodología; 4) Principales resultados; 5) Principales conclusiones. Ha de estar escrito de manera impersonal “El presente trabajo analiza...”.

**Abstract.** Resumen con todos sus componentes, traducido al inglés y en letra cursiva. No utilizar sistemas de traducción automáticos.

**Descriptores.** Máximo 6 términos estandarizados preferiblemente de una sola palabra y del Thesaurus de la UNESCO y de la propia revista, separados por coma (,).



**Keywords.** Los 6 términos antes referidos traducidos al inglés y separados por coma (,). No utilizar sistemas de traducción automáticos.

Además, se deberá incluir una: **Declaración** (usar modelo denominado: Presentación) en la que se explica que el manuscrito enviado es una aportación original, no enviado ni en proceso de evaluación en otra revista, confirmación de las autorías firmantes, aceptación (si procede) de cambios formales en el manuscrito conforme a las normas y cesión parcial de derechos a la editorial. Este documento deberá ser firmado y consignado a través del sistema OJS, en la sección: **“Ficheros complementarios”**.

**2) Manuscrito** totalmente anonimizado, conforme a las normas referidas en precedencia.

Todos los autores han de darse de alta, con sus créditos, en la plataforma OJS, si bien uno solo de ellos será el responsable de correspondencia. Ningún autor podrá enviar o tener en revisión dos manuscritos de forma simultánea, estimándose una carencia de cuatro números consecutivos (2 años).

## *5. Intervalo de publicación*

(El tamaño y estilo de la letra tal como se encuentra el numeral 4 (Proceso de envío)

El intervalo comprendido entre la recepción y la publicación de un artículo es de 7 meses (210 días).



## Indications for External Reviewers of «Sophia»

The **Board of External Reviewers of «Sophia»** is an independent collegiate body whose purpose is to guarantee the excellence of this scientific publication, because the blind evaluation - based exclusively on the quality of the contents of the manuscripts and carried out by experts of recognized International prestige in the field - is, without a doubt, the best guarantee for the advancement of science and to preserve in this header an original and valuable scientific production.

To this end, the **Board of External Reviewers** is made up of several scholars and international scientists specialized in **Education**, essential to select the articles of the greatest impact and interest for the international scientific community. This in turn allows that all the articles selected to publish in «**Sophia**» have an academic endorsement and objectifiable reports on the originals.

Of course, all reviews in «**Sophia**» use the internationally standardized system of double-blind peer evaluation that guarantees the anonymity of manuscripts and reviewers. As a measure of transparency, the complete lists of reviewers are published on the official website of the journal (<http://Sophia.ups.edu.ec/>)

### *1. Criteria for acceptance/rejection of manuscript evaluation*

The editorial team of «**Sophia**» selects those that are considered more qualified in the subject of the manuscript from the list of reviewers of the Board of Reviewers. While the publication requires the maximum collaboration of reviewers to expedite the evaluations and reports on each original, acceptance of the review must be linked to:

- a. **Expertise.** Acceptance necessarily entails the possession of competences in the specific theme of the article to be evaluated.
- b. **Availability.** Reviewing an original takes time and involves careful reflection on many aspects.
- c. **Conflict of interests.** In case of identification of the authorship of the manuscript (despite their anonymity), excessive academic or family closeness to their authors, membership in the same University, Department, Research Group, Thematic Network, Research Projects, joint publications with authors... or any other type of connection or conflict / professional proximity; The reviewer must reject the publisher's invitation for review.
- d. **Commitment of confidentiality.** Reception of a manuscript for evaluation requires the Reviewer to express a commitment of confidentiality, so that it cannot be divulged to a third party throughout the process.



In the event that the reviewer cannot carry out the activity for some of these reasons or other justifiable reasons, he/she must notify the publisher by the same route that he/she has received the invitation, specifying the reasons for rejection.

## *2. General criteria for the evaluation of manuscripts*

### *a) Topic*

In addition to being valuable and relevant to the scientific community, the topic that is presented in the original must be limited and specialized in time and space, without excessive localism.

### *b) Redaction*

The critical assessment in the review report must be objectively written, providing content, quotes or references of interest to support its judgment.

### *c) Originality*

As a fundamental criterion of quality, an article must be original, unpublished and suitable. In this sense, reviewers should answer these three questions in the evaluation:

- Is the article sufficiently novel and interesting to justify publication?
- Does it contribute anything to the knowledge canon?
- Is the research question relevant?

A quick literature search using repositories such as Web of Knowledge, Scopus and Google Scholar to see if the research has been previously covered, may be helpful.

### *d) Structure*

Manuscripts that refer to «Sophia» must follow the IMRDC structure, except those that are literature reviews or specific studies. In this sense, the originals must contain summary, introduction, methodology, results, discussion and conclusion.

- The **title, abstract, and keywords** should accurately describe the content of the article.
- The **review of the literature** should summarize the state of the question of the most recent and adequate research for the presented work. It will be especially evaluated with criteria of suitability and that the references are to works of high impact - especially in WoS,





Scopus, Scielo, etc. It should also include the general explanation of the study, its central objective and the followed methodological design.

- In case of research, in the **materials and methods**, the author must specify how the data, the process and the instruments used to respond to the hypothesis, the validation system, and all the information necessary to replicate the study are collected.
- **Results** must be clearly specified in logical sequence. It is important to check if the figures or charts presented are necessary or, if not, redundant with the content of the text.
- In the **discussion**, the data obtained should be interpreted in the light of the literature review. Authors should include here if their article supports or contradicts previous theories. The conclusions will summarize the advances that the research presents in the area of scientific knowledge, the future lines of research and the main difficulties or limitations for carrying out the research.
- **Language:** It will be positively assessed if the language used facilitates reading and is in favor of the clarity, simplicity, precision and transparency of the scientific language. The Reviewer should not proceed to correction, either in Spanish or English, but will inform the Editors of these grammatical or orthographical and typographical errors.
- Finally, a thorough **review of the references** is required in case any relevant work has been omitted. The references must be precise, citing within the logic of the subject at study, its main works as well as the documents that most resemble the work itself, as well as the latest research in the area.

### *3. Relevant valuation dimensions*

For the case of empirical research articles, «**Sophia**» uses an evaluation matrix of each original that responds to the editorial criteria and to compliance with the publication guidelines. In this sense, the reviewers must attend to the qualitative-quantitative assessment of each of the aspects proposed in this matrix with criteria of objectivity, reasoning, logic and expertise.

If the original is a review of the literature (status of the matter) or other type of study (reports, proposals, experiences, among others), the Editorial Board will send to the reviewers a different matrix, including the characteristics of Structure of this type of originals:



STUDIES, REPORTS, PROPOSALS AND REVIEW	
Valuable items	Score
01. Relevancy of the title (clarity, precision and with a maximum of 85 characters).	0/5
02. They summarize (In an alone paragraph and without epigraphs, minimum / minimal: 210-220 words).	0/5
03. Introduction (brief presentation of the topic; formulation of the problem; it designs to defending or hypothesis to demonstrating; I target; importance of the topic; current importance; methodology; structure of the document).	0/5
04. Review of the bibliographical foundation (Beside using current bibliography to consider the incorporation of Sophia's documents).	0/10
05. Structure and organization of the article (argumentative capabilities, coherence and scientific redaction).	0/10
06. Original contributions and contextualized analyses.	0/5
07. Conclusions that answer to the topic, to the problem and to the raised aim.	0/5
08. Citations and references of agreement to the regulation and to the format requested by the magazine (Any document and author who consists in the section of bibliography must consist in the body of story and vice versa).	0/5
Maximun total	50 points



RESEARCHES	
Valuable items	Score
01. Relevancy of the title (clarity, precision and with a maximum of 85 characters).	0/5
02. They summarize (In an alone paragraph and without epigraphs, minimum / minimal: 210-220 words).	0/5
03. Introduction (brief presentation of the topic; formulation of the problem; it designs to defending or hypothesis to demonstrating; I target; importance of the topic; current importance; methodology; structure of the document).	0/5
04. Review of the bibliographical foundation (Beside using current bibliography to consider the incorporation of Sophia's documents). Methodological rigorous and presentation of instruments of investigation.	0/10
05. Structure and organization of the article (argumentative capabilities, coherence and scientific redaction). Analysis and results of investigation with logical sequence in the text. Presentation of tables and figures without duplicity of information.	0/10

06. Original contributions and contextualized analyses of the information.	0/5
07. Discussion, conclusions and advances that answer to the topic, to the problem and to the raised aim.	0/5
08. Citations and references of agreement to the regulation and to the format requested by the magazine (Any document and author who consists in the section of bibliography must consist in the body of story and vice versa).	0/5
Total	50 points

#### 4. Ethical issues

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- a. **Plagiarism:** Although the journal uses plagiarism detection systems, if the reviewer suspects that an original is a substantial copy of another work, he must immediately inform the Editors citing the previous work in as much detail as possible.
- b. **Fraud:** If there is real or remote suspicion that the results in an article are false or fraudulent, it is necessary to inform them to the Editors.

#### 5. Evaluation of the originals

After the quantitative-qualitative evaluation of the manuscript under review, the reviewer may make recommendations to improve the quality of the manuscript. However, the manuscript will be graded in three ways:

- a. **Rejection** due to detected deficiencies justified and reasoned with quantitative and qualitative assessment. The report should be longer if a score of less than 40 of the 50 possible points is obtained.
- b. **Acceptance without review**
- c. **Conditional acceptance** and therefore review (greater or lesser). In the latter case, it is necessary to clearly identify which review is necessary, listing the comments and even specifying paragraphs and pages suggesting modifications.

## Indicaciones para revisores externos de «Sophia»

El **Consejo de Revisores Externos de «Sophia»** es un órgano colegiado independiente cuyo fin es garantizar la excelencia de esta publicación científica, debido a que la evaluación ciega —basada exclusivamente en la calidad de los contenidos de los manuscritos y realizada por expertos de reconocido prestigio internacional en la materia— es la mejor garantía y, sin duda, el mejor aval para el avance de la ciencia y para preservar en esta cabecera una producción científica original y valiosa.

Para ello, el **Consejo de Revisores Externos** está conformado por diversos académicos y científicos internacionales especialistas en **Filosofía de la Educación**, esenciales para seleccionar los artículos de mayor impacto e interés para la comunidad científica internacional. Esto permite a su vez que todos los artículos seleccionados para publicar en «Sophia» cuenten con un aval académico e informes objetivables sobre los originales.

Por supuesto, todas las revisiones en «Sophia» emplean el sistema estandarizado internacionalmente de evaluación por pares con «doble ciego» (*double-blind*) que garantiza el anonimato de los manuscritos y de los revisores de los mismos. Como medida de transparencia, anualmente se hacen públicos en la web oficial de la revista (<http://Sophia.ups.edu.ec/>) los listados completos de los revisores.

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### 1. Criterios de aceptación/rechazo de evaluación manuscritos

El equipo editorial de «Sophia» selecciona del listado de evaluadores del Consejo de Revisores a aquellos que se estiman más cualificado en la temática del manuscrito. Si bien por parte de la publicación se pide la máxima colaboración de los revisores para agilizar las evaluaciones y los informes sobre cada original, la aceptación de la revisión ha de estar vinculada a:

- a. **Experticia.** La aceptación conlleva necesariamente la posesión de competencias en la temática concreta del artículo a evaluar.
- b. **Disponibilidad.** Revisar un original exige tiempo y conlleva reflexión concienzuda de muchos aspectos.
- c. **Conflicto de intereses.** En caso de identificación de la autoría del manuscrito (a pesar de su anonimato), excesiva cercanía académica o familiar a sus autores, pertenencia a la misma Universidad, Departamento, Grupo de Investigación, Red Temática, Proyectos de Investigación, publicaciones conjuntas con los autores... o cualquier otro tipo de conexión o conflicto/cercanía profesional; el revisor debe rechazar la invitación del editor para su revisión.
- d. **Compromiso de confidencialidad.** La recepción de un manuscrito para su evaluación exige del Revisor un compromiso expreso de

confidencialidad, de manera que éste no puede, durante todo el proceso, ser divulgado a un tercero.

En caso que el revisor no pueda llevar a cabo la actividad por algunos de estos motivos u otros justificables, debe notificarlo al editor por la misma vía que ha recibido la invitación, especificando los motivos de rechazo.

## *2. Criterios generales de evaluación de manuscritos*

### *a) Tema*

La temática que se plantea en el original, además de ser valiosa y relevante para la comunidad científica, ha de ser limitada y especializada en tiempo y espacio, sin llegar al excesivo localismo.

### *b) Redacción*

La valoración crítica en el informe de revisión ha de estar redactada de forma objetiva, aportando contenido, citas o referencias de interés para argumentar su juicio.

### *c) Originalidad*

Como criterio de calidad fundamental, un artículo debe ser original, inédito e idóneo. En este sentido, los revisores deben responder a estas tres preguntas en la evaluación:

- ¿Es el artículo suficientemente novedoso e interesante para justificar su publicación?
- ¿Aporta algo al canon del conocimiento?
- ¿Es relevante la pregunta de investigación?

Una búsqueda rápida de literatura utilizando repositorios tales como Web of Knowledge, Scopus y Google Scholar para ver si la investigación ha sido cubierta previamente puede ser de utilidad.

### *d) Estructura*

Los manuscritos que se remiten a «**Sophia**» deben seguir la estructura señalada en las normas de publicación tanto para las investigaciones empíricas como para revisiones de la literatura o estudios específicos. En este sentido, los originales han de contener resumen, introducción, metodología, resultados, discusión y conclusión.

- El título, el resumen y las palabras clave han de describir exactamente el contenido del artículo.

- La revisión de la literatura debe resumir el estado de la cuestión de las investigaciones más recientes y adecuadas para el trabajo presentado. Se valorará especialmente con criterios de idoneidad y que las referencias sean a trabajos de alto impacto —especialmente en WoS, Scopus, Scielo, etc. Debe incluir además la explicación general del estudio, su objetivo central y el diseño metodológico seguido.
- En caso de investigaciones, en los materiales y métodos, el autor debe precisar cómo se recopilan los datos, el proceso y los instrumentos usados para responder a las hipótesis, el sistema de validación, y toda la información necesaria para replicar el estudio.
- En los resultados se deben especificar claramente los hallazgos en secuencia lógica. Es importante revisar si las tablas o cuadros presentados son necesarios o, caso contrario, redundantes con el contenido del texto.
- En la discusión se deben interpretar los datos obtenidos a la luz de la revisión de la literatura. Los autores deberán incluir aquí si su artículo apoya o contradice las teorías previas. Las conclusiones resumirán los avances que la investigación plantea en el área del conocimiento científico, las futuras líneas de investigación y las principales dificultades o limitaciones para la realización de la investigación.
- Idioma: Se valorará positivamente si el idioma utilizado facilita la lectura y va en favor de la claridad, sencillez, precisión y transparencia del lenguaje científico. El Revisor no debe proceder a corrección, ya sea en español o inglés, sino que informará a los Editores de estos errores gramaticales u ortotipográficos.
- Finalmente, se requiere una profunda revisión de las referencias por si se hubiera omitido alguna obra relevante. Las referencias han de ser precisas, citando en la lógica de la temática a estudiar, sus principales obras así como los documentos que más se asemejen al propio trabajo, así como las últimas investigaciones en el área.



### *3. Dimensiones relevantes de valoración*

Para el caso de artículos de investigaciones empíricas, «**Sophia**» utiliza una matriz de evaluación de cada original que responde a los criterios editoriales y al cumplimiento de la normativa de la publicación. En este sentido los revisores deberán atender a la valoración cuali-cuantitativa de cada uno de los aspectos propuestos en esta matriz con criterios de objetividad, razonamiento, lógica y experticia.

Para el caso de artículos reflexivos, estudios, revisiones de literatura (estado de la cuestión) u otro tipo de estudio (informes, propuestas, experiencias, entre otras), el Consejo Editorial remitirá a los revisores una matriz distinta, comprendiendo las características propias de estructura de este tipo de originales:

ESTUDIOS, PROPUESTAS, INFORMES Y EXPERIENCIAS	
Ítems valorables	Puntaje
01. Pertinencia del título (claridad, precisión y con un máximo de 85 caracteres).	0/5
02. Resumen (En un solo párrafo y sin epígrafes, mínimo/máximo: 210-220 palabras).	0/5
03. Introducción (breve presentación del tema; formulación del problema; idea a defender o hipótesis a demostrar; objetivo; importancia del tema; actualidad; metodología; estructura del documento).	0/5
04. Revisión de la fundamentación bibliográfica (Además de usar bibliografía actual considerar la inclusión de documentos de Sophia).	0/10
05. Estructura y organización del artículo (capacidad argumentativa, coherencia y redacción científica).	0/10
06. Aportaciones originales y análisis contextualizados.	0/5
07. Conclusiones que respondan al tema, al problema y al objetivo planteado.	0/5
08. Citaciones y referencias de acuerdo a la normativa y al formato solicitado por la revista (Todo documento y autor que conste en la sección de bibliografía debe constar en el cuerpo del artículo y viceversa).	0/5
Total máximo	50 puntos

INVESTIGACIONES	
Ítems valorables	Puntaje
01. Pertinencia del título (claridad, precisión y con un máximo de 85 caracteres)	0/5
02. Resumen (En un solo párrafo y sin epígrafes, mínimo/máximo: 210-220 palabras).	0/5
03. Introducción (breve presentación del tema; formulación del problema; idea a defender o hipótesis a demostrar; objetivo; importancia del tema; actualidad; metodología; estructura del documento).	0/5
04. Revisión de la fundamentación bibliográfica (Además de usar bibliografía actual considerar la inclusión de documentos de Sophia). Rigor metodológico y presentación de instrumentos de investigación.	0/10

05. Estructura y organización del artículo (capacidad argumentativa, coherencia y redacción científica). Análisis y resultados de investigación con secuencia lógica en el texto. Presentación de tablas y figuras sin duplicidad de datos.	0/10
0.6. Aportaciones originales y análisis contextualizados de los datos.	0/5
0.7. Discusión, conclusiones y avances que respondan al tema, al problema y al objetivo planteado.	0/5
0.8. Citaciones y referencias de acuerdo a la normativa y al formato solicitado por la revista (Todo documento y autor que conste en la sección de bibliografía debe constar en el cuerpo del artículo y viceversa).	0/5
Total máximo	50 puntos

#### 4. Cuestiones éticas

- Plagio: Aunque la revista utiliza sistemas de detección de plagio, si el revisor sospechara que un original es una copia sustancial de otra obra, ha de informar de inmediato a los Editores citando la obra anterior con tanto detalle cómo le sea posible.
- Fraude: Si hay sospecha real o remota de que los resultados en un artículo son falsos o fraudulentos, es necesario informar de ellos a los Editores.



#### 5. Evaluación de los originales

Una vez realizada la evaluación cuanti-cualitativa del manuscrito en revisión, el revisor podrá realizar recomendaciones para mejorar la calidad del original. Sin embargo, se atenderá a la calificación del manuscrito de tres maneras:

- Rechazo** debido a las deficiencias detectadas, justificadas y razonadas con valoración cualitativa y cuantitativa. El informe ha de ser más extenso si obtiene menos de los 30 de los 50 puntos posibles.
- Aceptación sin revisión.**
- Aceptación condicionada** y por ende con revisión (mayor o menor). En este último caso, se ha de identificar claramente qué revisión es necesaria, enumerando los comentarios e incluso especificando párrafos y páginas en las que sugieren modificaciones.

## Protocol of Manuscript Evaluation for External Reviewers

### Instructions

- The fulfillment of each one of the articles will be valued in agreement to the following protocol.
- The total sum of the articles will determine the approval or rejection of the article.
- The minimal puntaje in order that the article is approved will be of 44/50.

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Article Details		
Date of submission for evaluation:	Date of return of evaluation:	Article code:
Title of the article to be evaluated:		
SECTION: REPORTS, STUDIES, PROPOSALS AND REVIEWS		
01.- Relevancy of the title (clarity, precision and with a maximum of 85 characters)	Mandatory comments:	
	Value from 0 to 5	
02.- They summarize (In an alone paragraph and without epigraphs, minimum / minimal: 210-220 words).	Mandatory comments:	
	Value from 0 to 5	
03.- Introduction (brief presentation of the topic; formulation of the problem; it designs to defending or hypothesis to demonstrating; I target; importance of the topic; current importance; methodology; structure of the document)	Mandatory comments:	
	Value from 0 to 5	
04.- Review of the bibliographical foundation (Beside using current bibliography to consider the incorporation of Sophia's documents).	Mandatory comments:	
	Value from 0 to 10	



05.- Structure and organization of the article (argumentative capabilities, coherence and scientific redaction)	Mandatory comments:	
	Value from 0 to 10	
06.- Original contributions and contextualized analyses	Mandatory comments:	
	Value from 0 to 5	
07.- Conclusions that answer to the topic, to the problem and to the raised aim	Mandatory comments:	
	Value from 0 to 5	
08.- Citations and references of agreement to the regulation and to the format requested by the magazine (Any document and author who consists in the section of bibliography must consist in the body of story and vice versa)	Mandatory comments:	
	Value from 0 to 5	
OBTAINED PUNCTUATION	Of the total of 50 predictable points, this assessor grants:	

<b>REDACTED OPINION</b> More detailed if the work does not get 44 points, to inform the autor (s).  This text is sent verbatim to the autor (s) anonymously			
<b>RECOMMENDATION ON HIS PUBLICATION IN SOPHIA</b>			
Validation criteria	Result		
	Yes	Yes, with conditions	No
01. Widely recommended			
02. Recommended only if his quality is improved attending to the totality of the suggestions realized by the revisers			
03. His publication is not recommended			
<b>PROPOSED CHANGES</b> (In case of "Yes, with conditions")			

Protocolo de evaluación de manuscritos  
para revisores externos

Instrucciones

- El cumplimiento de cada uno de los ítems será valorado de acuerdo al siguiente protocolo.
- La suma total de los ítems determinará la aprobación o rechazo del artículo. El puntaje mínimo para que el artículo sea aprobado será de 44/50.

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Datos del artículo	
Fecha envío evaluación:	Fecha devolución evaluación:
Código artículo:	
Título del artículo a evaluar:	
SECCIÓN: ESTUDIOS, PROPUESTAS, INFORMES Y REVISIONES	
01.- Pertinencia del título (claridad, precisión y con un máximo de 85 caracteres)	Comentarios obligatorios:
	Valore de 0 a 5
02.- Resumen (En un solo párrafo y sin epígrafes, mínimo/máximo: 210-220 palabras).	Comentarios obligatorios:
	Valore de 0 a 5
03.- Introducción (breve presentación del tema; formulación del problema; idea a defender o hipótesis a demostrar; objetivo; importancia del tema; actualidad; metodología; estructura del documento)	Comentarios obligatorios:
	Valore de 0 a 5
04.- Revisión de la fundamentación bibliográfica (Además de usar bibliografía actual considerar la inclusión de documentos de Sophia)	Comentarios obligatorios:
	Valore de 0 a 10
05.- Estructura y organización del artículo (capacidad argumentativa, coherencia y redacción científica)	Comentarios obligatorios
	Valore de 0 a 10

06.- Aportaciones originales y análisis contextualizados	Comentarios obligatorios:	
	Valore de 0 a 5	
07.- Conclusiones que respondan al tema, al problema y al objetivo planteado	Comentarios obligatorios:	
	Valore de 0 a 5	
08.- Citaciones y referencias de acuerdo a la normativa y al formato solicitado por la revista (Todo documento y autor que conste en la sección de bibliografía debe constar en el cuerpo del artículo y viceversa)	Comentarios obligatorios:	
	Valore de 0 a 5	
PUNTUACIÓN OBTENIDA	Del total de 50 puntos previsibles, este evaluador otorga:	



<p><b>OPINIÓN REDACTADA</b> (Más detallada si el trabajo no tiene 44 puntos, para informar al autor/es)</p> <p>Este texto se remite textualmente al/ los autor/es de forma anónima</p>			
<b>RECOMENDACIÓN SOBRE SU PUBLICACIÓN EN SOPHIA</b>			
<b>PUBLICABLE</b>	<b>Resultado</b>		
	<b>SI</b>	<b>Sí, con condiciones</b>	<b>NO</b>
01. Ampliamente recomendado			
02. Recomendado sólo si se mejora su calidad atendiendo a la totalidad de las sugerencias realizadas por los revisores			
03. No se recomienda su publicación			
<p><b>MODIFICACIONES PROPUESTAS</b> (En caso de «Sí, con condiciones»)</p>			

## Checklist prior to sending the manuscript

1. CHECK OF THE MANUSCRIPT, PRIOR TO SENDING	
To facilitate the process of evaluation of the manuscript and to accelerate the report of its possible publication, a final self-review of the manuscript is advised, checking the following questions.	
COVER LETTER	
Title of the manuscript in spanish (maximum 85 characters).	
Title of the manuscript in english (maximum 85 characters).	
The two versions of the title of the manuscript are concise, informative and collect as many identifiable terms as possible.	
The abstract in spanish is included, in a single paragraph and without epigraphs (minimum / maximum: 210/220 words).	
The abstract in english is included, in a single paragraph and without epigraphs (minimum / maximum: 210-220 words).	
Abstracts in spanish and english respond in order to the following issues: justification of the subject, objectives, study methodology, results and conclusions.	
It includes 6 descriptors (in english and spanish) (only simple words, not phrases or combinations of words), with the most significant terms, and if possible standardized.	
The texts in english (title, abstract and descriptors) have been written or verified by an official translator or expert in this language (The use of automatic translators is prohibited).	
All the identification data of the authors are included in the order stipulated in the norms: identification and correspondence data, professional filiations, last academic degree...	
The first and last name of the authors has been normalized.	
Each author is identified with their ORCID code.	
The maximum number of authors is three, with the exception of those works that justify a higher but limited number of authors	
The author(s) have duly signed the letter of presentation of the article, which includes the partial transfer of rights and the declaration of conflict of interest.	
MANUSCRIPT	
It includes title of the manuscript, abstract, and keywords. All in spanish and english.	



An introduction is included that in order contains: brief presentation of the subject; problem formulation; Idea to defend or hypothesis to prove; objective; Importance of the theme; relevance; methodology; structure of the document.	
The text is within the minimum and maximum extension: In the Review sections: 10,000/11,000 words of text (including references). In the research section: 8,000/9,500 words of text (including references). Reports, Studies: 8,000/9,500 words of text (including references).	
In case of research, the manuscript responds to the structure required in the guidelines (IMRDC).	
In the case of a report, study or review, the manuscript respects the minimum structure required by the guidelines.	
The review work includes three citations from three previous issues of Sophia Journal.	
The manuscript explicitly cites and cites the used sources and materials.	
The methodology described for the research work is clear and concise, allowing its replication, if necessary, by other experts.	
The conclusions follow on objective and problem raised are supported by the results obtained and presented in the form of a synthesis.	
If statistical analyzes have been used, they have been reviewed/contrasted by an expert.	
The citations in the text are strictly in accordance with the APA 6 regulations, reflected in the instructions.	
In case of use of final notes, it has been verified that these are descriptive and cannot be integrated into the general citation system. Footnotes are not acceptable.	
The final references have been rigorously reviewed and only those that have been cited in the text are included.	
The final references conform in style and format to the international standards used in Sophia.	
The number of references is according to the theoretical basis of the study carried out	
DOIs have been included in all References that carry it in the following format: doi: <a href="https://doi.org/XXXXXX">https://doi.org/XXXXXX</a>	
All web addresses of references have been shortened with Google Url Shortner	
If figures and charts are included, they should provide additional and not repeated information in the text. Their graphic quality has been verified.	
The number of charts and / or figures does not exceed 6	
If the case, financial support is declared.	
<b>ASPECTOS FORMALES</b>	



The rules have been strictly observed in the use of bold, capital letters, italics and underlines.	
Arial font, size 12 has been used.	
A single line spacing (1) has been used without tab.	
The epigraphs have been properly and hierarchically numbered in Arabic.	
Double spaces have been deleted.	
The typographic quotes « » (with alt + 174 and alt + 175 for opening and closing) have been used.	
Word dictionary for surface spelling has been used.	
The text has been supervised by external staff to ensure grammar and style.	
<b>PRESENTATION</b>	
Attached is a cover letter indicating originality, novelty of the work and section of the journal to which it is addressed, and if appropriate, informed consent of experimentation.	
The cover letter includes an attachment signed by all authors, being responsible for the authorship and giving the copyright to the publisher.	
The manuscript is uploaded to the platform in Word format and without authors identification	
<b>ANNEXED DOCUMENTS</b>	
Attached are the two attached documents: the cover letter and the manuscript.	
The accompanying documents and annexes have been published with Figshare.	

## Chequeo previo al envío del manuscrito

1. CHEQUEO DEL MANUSCRITO, PREVIO AL ENVÍO	
Para facilitar el proceso de evaluación del manuscrito y acelerar el informe de su posible publicación, se aconseja una autorevisión final del manuscrito, comprobando las siguientes cuestiones.	
DOCUMENTO PORTADA (Cover Letter)	
Se incluye título del manuscrito en español (máximo 85 caracteres).	
Se incluye título del manuscrito en inglés (máximo 85 caracteres).	
Las dos versiones del título del manuscrito son concisas, informativas y recogen el mayor número de términos identificativos posibles.	
Se incluye resumen en español, en un solo párrafo y sin epígrafes (mínimo/máximo: 210/220 palabras).	
Se incluye abstract en inglés, en un solo párrafo y sin epígrafes (mínimo/máximo 210-220 palabras).	
Los resúmenes en español e inglés responden ordenadamente a las siguientes cuestiones: justificación del tema, objetivos, metodología del estudio, resultados y conclusiones.	
Se incluyen 6 descriptores (en español e inglés) (sólo palabras simples, no sintagmas o combinaciones de palabras), con los términos más significativos, y a ser posibles estandarizados.	
Los textos en inglés (título, resumen y descriptores) han sido redactados o verificados por un traductor oficial o persona experta en este idioma (Se prohíbe el uso de traductores automáticos).	
Se incluyen todos los datos de identificación de los autores en el orden estipulado en la normativa: datos de identificación y correspondencia, filiaciones profesionales, último grado académico.	
Se ha normalizado el nombre y apellido de los autores.	
Cada autor está identificado con su código ORCID.	
El número máximo de autores es tres, a excepción de aquellos trabajos que justifiquen un número mayor limitado.	
El autor/es ha firmado debidamente la carta de presentación del artículo, en la que consta la cesión parcial de derechos y la declaración de conflicto de intereses.	
MANUSCRITO	
Se incluye título del manuscrito en español, inglés, resumen, abstract, descriptores y keywords	





Se incluye una introducción que en orden contiene: breve presentación del tema; formulación del problema; idea a defender o hipótesis a demostrar; objetivo; importancia del tema; actualidad; metodología; estructura del documento.	
El trabajo respeta la extensión mínima y máxima permitidas: Sección de Revisiones: 10.000/11.000 palabras de texto (incluidas las referencias). Investigaciones: 8.000/9.500 palabras de texto (incluidas referencias). Informes, Estudios: 8.000/9.500 palabras de texto (incluidas referencias).	
En caso de investigación, el manuscrito responde a la estructura exigida en las normas (IMRDC).	
Si se trata de un informe, estudio o revisión, el manuscrito respeta la estructura mínima exigida en las normas.	
En los trabajos de revisión se incluyen tres citas de tres números anteriores de la Revista Sophia.	
El manuscrito explicita y cita correctamente las fuentes y materiales empleados.	
La metodología descrita, para los trabajos de investigación, es clara y concisa, permitiendo su replicación, en caso necesario, por otros expertos.	
Las conclusiones responden al objetivo y al problema planteados, se apoyan en los resultados obtenidos y se presentan en forma de síntesis.	
Si se han utilizado análisis estadísticos, éstos han sido revisados/contrastados por algún experto.	
Las citas en el texto se ajustan estrictamente a la normativa APA 6, reflejadas en las instrucciones.	
En caso de uso de notas finales, se ha comprobado que éstas son descriptivas y no pueden integrarse en el sistema de citación general. No se aceptan notas a pie de página.	
Se han revisado rigurosamente las referencias finales y se incluyen solo aquéllas que han sido citadas en el texto.	
Las referencias finales se ajustan en estilo y formato a las normas internacionales utilizadas en Sophia.	
El número de referencias está de acuerdo a la fundamentación teórica del estudio realizado	
Se han incluido los DOI en todas las Referencias que lo lleven con el siguiente formato: doi: <a href="https://doi.org/XXXXXX">https://doi.org/XXXXXX</a>	



Todas las direcciones web de las referencias han sido acortadas con Google Url Shortner	
Si se incluyen figuras y tablas éstas deben aportar información adicional y no repetida en el texto. Su calidad gráfica se ha verificado.	
El número de tablas y/o figuras no sobrepasa las 6.	
En su caso, se declaran los apoyos y/o soportes financieros.	
<b>ASPECTOS FORMALES</b>	
Se ha respetado rigurosamente la normativa en el uso de negritas, mayúsculas, cursivas y subrayados.	
Se ha utilizado letra Arial, tamaño 12.	
Se ha usado un interlineado sencillo (1) y sin tabulaciones.	
Se han numerado los epígrafes en árabe de forma adecuada y jerárquicamente.	
Se han suprimido los dobles espacios.	
Se han empleado las comillas tipográficas « » (con alt+174 y alt+175 para apertura y cierre).	
Se ha utilizado el diccionario de Word para corrección ortográfica superficial.	
Se ha supervisado el trabajo por personal externo para garantizar la gramática y el estilo.	
<b>PRESENTACIÓN</b>	
Se adjunta carta de presentación indicando originalidad, novedad del trabajo y sección de la revista a la que se dirige, así como, en su caso, consentimiento informado de experimentación.	
La carta de presentación incluye un anexo firmado por todos los autor/es, responsabilizándose de la autoría y cediendo los derechos de autor al editor.	
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<b>DOCUMENTOS ANEXOS</b>	
Se adjuntan los dos documentos anexos: la carta de presentación y el manuscrito.	
Los documentos complementarios y anexos han sido publicados con Figshare.	



## Cover Letter

### Section (Mark)

Monographic Dossier \_\_\_\_

Miscellaneous \_\_\_\_

**Title in Spanish: Arial 14 bold and centered.**

**Maximum 85 characters with spaces**

*Title in English: Arial 14 cursive. Maximum 805 characters with spaces*

### Name author 1 (standardized)

Professional category, Institution, Country

Institutional email

ORCID

### Name author 2 (standardized)

Professional category, Institution, Country

Institutional email

ORCID

### Name author 3 (standardized)

Professional category, Institution, Country

Institutional email

ORCID

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### *Abstract (Spanish)*

Minimum 210 and maximum 220 words. It must include 1) Justification of the topic; 2) Objectives; 3) Methodology; 4) Main results; 5) Main conclusions. It must be impersonally written "The present paper analyzes..."

### *Abstract (English)*

*Minimum 200 and maximum 210 words. It must include 1) Justification of the topic; 2) Objectives; 3) Methodology; 4) Main results; 5) Main conclusions. It must be impersonally written "The present paper analyzes..." Do not use automatic translation systems.*

### *Keywords (Spanish)*

6 standardized terms preferably of a single word and of the UNESCO Thesaurus separated by commas (,).

### *Keywords*

*The 6 terms referred to in English separated by commas (,). Do not use automatic translation systems.*

### *Financial Support of Research (optional)*

Entity:

Country:

City:

Subsidized project:

Code of the project:

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## Cover Letter

### Sección (Marcar)

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Miscelánea \_\_\_\_

**Título en español: Arial 14 negrita y centrado.**

**Máximo 85 caracteres con espacios**

*Title in English: Arial 14 cursiva. Máximo 85 caracteres con espacios*

### Nombre autor 1 (estandarizado)

Categoría profesional, Institución, País

Correo electrónico institucional

ORCID

### Nombre autor 2 (estandarizado)

Categoría profesional, Institución, País

Correo electrónico institucional

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### Nombre autor 3 (estandarizado)

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Correo electrónico institucional

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## Resumen

Mínimo 210 y máximo 220 palabras. Debe incluir 1) Justificación del tema; 2) Objetivos; 3) Metodología; 4) Principales resultados; 5) Principales conclusiones. Ha de estar escrito de manera impersonal “El presente trabajo analiza...”

## Abstract

*Mínimo 200 y máximo 210 palabras cursiva. Debe incluir 1) Justificación del tema; 2) Objetivos; 3) Metodología; 4) Principales resultados; 5) Principales conclusiones. Ha de estar escrito de manera impersonal “El presente trabajo analiza...” No utilizar sistemas de traducción automáticos.*

## Descriptores

6 términos estandarizados preferiblemente de una sola palabra y del Thesaurus de la UNESCO separados por coma (,).

### *Keywords*

*Los 6 términos referidos en inglés separados por coma (,). No utilizar sistemas de traducción automáticos.*

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Entidad:

País:

Ciudad:

Proyecto subvencionado:

Código de proyecto:



## PRESENTATION

### Cover Letter

Mr. Editor of «Sophia»

Having read the regulations of the journal «Sophia» and analyzed its coverage, thematic area and approach, I consider that this journal is the ideal one for the dissemination of the work that I hereby attach, for which I beg you to be submitted for consideration for publication. The original has the following title “\_\_\_\_\_”, whose authorship corresponds to \_\_\_\_\_.

The authors (s) certify that this work has not been published, nor is it under consideration for publication in any other journal or editorial work.

The author (s) are responsible for their content and have contributed to the conception, design and completion of the work, analysis and interpretation of data, and to have participated in the writing of the text and its revisions, as well as in the approval of the version which is finally referred to as an attachment.

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## PRESENTACIÓN

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## Announcements 2023-2025 / Convocatorias 2023-2025

## ANNOUNCEMENTS 2023-2025

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### Sophia 36

#### Philosophical approach to learning as a cognitive process

**Descriptors:** Philosophical basis of learning; Learning as a cognitive process; Learning as a product and as a process of knowledge; Philosophical foundation of learning theories; Psychological and pedagogical foundations of learning; Philosophical foundations of multiple intelligences and education; Emotional intelligence and its impact on educational processes; Science and philosophy of human emotions: educational repercussions; Sense and meaning of cognitive processes; Memory, thought and language as the main cognitive processes of the human being; Cognitive processes and meaningful learning.

Generation of articles from representatives of philosophy prominent in the central theme and its implications in psychology, pedagogy or other disciplines.

**Deadline for receipt of manuscripts:** July 15, 2023

**Publication date of this issue:** January 15, 2024

### Sophia 37

#### Physics, metaphysics and education

**Descriptors:** Philosophical reflections on the interpretation of physics; Metaphysics in the twenty-first century; History of physics and its educational approach; Relations between conceptions of physics in the history of philosophy; Problem of sense and truth in the philosophy of physics; Nature and implications of thermodynamics; Epistemology and guiding principles of current physical theories; Philosophical foundations of quantum mechanics; Philosophical implications of quantum theory; Philosophical implications of Newtonian physics; Philosophical implications of the theory of relativity; Pedagogical strategies in the teaching-learning of physics; Educational proposals to boost the understanding of physics; Philosophical implications of current theoretical physics.

Generation of articles from representatives of philosophy prominent in the central theme and its implications in psychology, pedagogy or other disciplines.

**Deadline for receipt of manuscripts:** December 15, 2023

**Publication date of this issue:** July 15, 2024.

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Sophia 38

The inductive method in the humanities and pedagogy

**Descriptors:** Scientific activity and reflection on the method of knowledge; The inductive method in the social sciences; Induction, experience and action as the foundation of pedagogy; The methods of knowledge and learning in the humanities; Value and limits of the experimental method in the human sciences; Value and limits of pedagogical positivism; Reflections on the scientific method and implications in the learning processes; Applications of the inductive method in education; Usefulness of the inductive method for psychology; Pedagogical proposals of an inductive character in the human sciences.

Generation of articles from representatives of philosophy prominent in the central theme and its implications in psychology, pedagogy or other disciplines.

**Deadline for receipt of manuscripts:** July 15, 2024

**Publication date of this issue:** January 15, 2025

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## CONVOCATORIAS 2023-2025

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### Sophia 36

#### Enfoque filosófico del aprendizaje como proceso cognitivo

Descriptores: Bases filosóficas del aprendizaje; el aprendizaje como proceso cognitivo; el aprendizaje como producto y como proceso del conocimiento; fundamento filosófico de las teorías del aprendizaje; fundamentos psicológicos y pedagógicos del aprendizaje; fundamentos filosóficos de las inteligencias múltiples y educación; la inteligencia emocional y su incidencia en los procesos educativos; ciencia y filosofía de las emociones humanas; repercusiones educativas; sentido y significado de los procesos cognitivos; memoria, pensamiento y lenguaje como principales procesos cognitivos del ser humano; procesos cognitivos y aprendizajes significativos.

Generación de artículos desde representantes de la filosofía destacados en el tema central y sus implicaciones en la psicología, en la pedagogía o en otras disciplinas.

**Fecha límite para la recepción de manuscritos:** 15 de julio de 2023

**Fecha de publicación de esta edición:** 15 de enero de 2024

### Sophia 37

#### Física, metafísica y educación

Descriptores: Reflexiones filosóficas acerca de la interpretación de la física; la metafísica en el siglo XXI; historia de la física y su planteamiento educativo; relaciones entre concepciones de la física en la historia de la filosofía; problema del sentido y de la verdad en la filosofía de la física; naturaleza e implicaciones de la termodinámica; epistemología y principios rectores de las teorías físicas actuales; fundamentos filosóficos de la mecánica cuántica; implicaciones filosóficas de la teoría cuántica; implicaciones filosóficas de la física newtoniana; implicaciones filosóficas de la teoría de la relatividad; estrategias pedagógicas en la enseñanza-aprendizaje de la física; propuestas educativas para dinamizar la comprensión de la física; implicaciones filosóficas de la física teórica actual.

Generación de artículos desde representantes de la filosofía destacados en el tema central y sus implicaciones en la psicología, en la pedagogía o en otras disciplinas.

**Fecha límite para la recepción de manuscritos:** 15 de diciembre de 2023

**Fecha de publicación de esta edición:** 15 de julio de 2024

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## Sophia 38

## El método inductivo en las humanidades y en la pedagogía

Descriptores: La actividad científica y reflexión sobre el método de conocimiento; el método inductivo en las ciencias sociales; inducción, experiencia y acción como fundamento de la pedagogía; los métodos de conocimiento y aprendizaje en las humanidades; valor y límites del método experimental en las ciencias humanas; valor y límites del positivismo pedagógico; reflexiones sobre el método científico e implicaciones en los procesos de aprendizaje; aplicaciones del método inductivo en la educación; utilidad del método inductivo para la psicología; propuestas pedagógicas de carácter inductivo en las ciencias humanas.

Generación de artículos desde representantes de la filosofía destacados en el tema central y sus implicaciones en la psicología, en la pedagogía o en otras disciplinas.

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